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DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES
BUREAU OF PUBLIC HEALTH
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Municipal Shellfish Management Mini-Grant Request for Proposals

Posted December 18, 2023

Deadline: March 3, 2024

The Maine Department of Marine Resources' Nearshore Marine Resource Program invites proposals for two-year projects that will improve management and conservation of municipally managed shellfish resources. Specifically, this funding opportunity seeks to support new or significantly expanded projects that restore shellfish flats, improve shellfish habitat productivity, find and fix pollution sources, work with town and state officials to open closed flats, preserve or expand intertidal access, or increase volunteer participation in municipal management and conservation activities.

Eligibility

Applications may be developed by harvesters, shellfish wardens, town officials, or other stakeholders including non-profit organizations, but must be submitted by or on behalf of a Municipal or Regional Shellfish Program. Grant funding will go to the town that administers the Municipal or Regional Shellfish Program. A Shellfish Program may submit only one proposal for this funding opportunity.

Types of Projects

Proposed projects can work with any species of shellfish that are municipally managed and must include a component that evaluates the effectiveness of the proposed effort. Eligible projects could include, but are not limited to:

- Seeding efforts to supplement shellfish resources and assessment of success
- Use and assessment of conservation closures to protect shellfish resources
- Remediation of pollution sources
- Efforts to enhance seed growth, for example, with upwellers or other gear
- Predator protection
- Population surveys, including innovative survey designs
- Preservation and expansion of intertidal access

Award Amount

The Municipal Shellfish Management Mini-Grant has a total of \$20,000 available. Individual awards are capped at \$7,000. Matching funds are not required, but if matching funds are being used, they should be included in the budget.

Timing

The deadline for applications is March 3, 2024, with a two-year award period of May 1, 2024 to April 30, 2026. Grant funding may only be used to support costs and activities that occur after the grant has been awarded.

Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses include personnel/contractors, supplies, travel expenses, and 'other' (please describe). Indirect is capped at 10%.

Ineligible Expenses

Activities that are an ongoing part of the organization's mission with no clear start or end date, or those that have been implemented for more than three years and are continuing without expansion.

Deliverables

- Proposed projects must include a minimum of two outreach efforts that extend beyond the municipality in which the project is completed. Possible outreach activities include, but are not limited to:
 - A presentation of the project and results at the Fishermen's Forum, a Regional Shellfish Meeting (not the municipality's Shellfish Committee Meeting), or other conference
 - A 1-2 page summary of the project presented as an info sheet to be distributed to other municipal Shellfish Conservation Programs.
 - An article in a regional newspaper
 - An educational/outreach pamphlet to be distributed in the community
- Funded projects will be required to submit a final report within 90 days of the project's completion. The Final Report template will be supplied to funded project teams.

Towns that fail to meet the outreach and final report requirements will not be considered for future funding opportunities through this program and will be required to return funding they have received for this project.

Proposal Application Process

All proposals must be submitted on the provided Municipal Shellfish Management Mini-Grant Proposal Application Form, available [here](#). The completed application Proposal Application Form should be emailed to DMRPublicHealthDiv@maine.gov by 11:59 PM on March 3, 2024.

The Proposal Application Form includes:

- Section 1: Project Information
 - Project Title
 - Municipal or Regional Shellfish Program
 - Budget Request
 - Start and End Dates (must be between May 1, 2024-April 30, 2026)

- Section 2: Contact information
 - Project Coordinator (name, affiliation, email, phone)
 - Key Personnel (name, affiliation, email, phone)
 - Town Administrator (name, mailing address, email, phone)
 - Town Financial Contact (the person who would sign the contract on behalf of the town; name, mailing address, email, phone)
 - Acknowledgement that Project Coordinator and Key Personnel named in the proposal have been contacted, know that they are included in the proposal, and have agreed to participate
- Section 3: Project Narrative (2-3 pages)
 - *Problem Statement*: What is the problem you intend to address and why does it matter for the health and sustainability of shellfish harvesting? How will the results of this project benefit the shellfish community?
 - *Solutions*: How will you address this problem? How is your approach innovative and timely? What specific strategies and activities will you engage in, where, and when? What products (if any) will you produce? How will you evaluate the success of your proposed efforts?
 - *Capacity*: Who is involved in this project, what are the specific roles and responsibilities of each key member, and why is this group well positioned to do the work you propose?
 - *Limiting Factors*: Are there any specific challenges or limiting factors that could shape your ability to achieve success in your project?
 - *Outreach*: How will the project team work to share data with the town, state, and other interested parties? Please describe how the team plans to achieve the deliverable of two outreach activities for this funding opportunity.

- **Section 4: Project Budget**

Each category should have a subtotal, and the entire budget should have a total amount. Match is not required, but if matching funds are needed to complete the work, please include that in the budget. If shellfish harvesters are involved, you may wish to budget for their time, or include that time as match if their involvement meets conservation time requirements. The budget should include a short justification for the first four categories (how will the funds be used?)

- Personnel/Contractors
- Supplies
- Travel
- Other (please describe the expense)
- Total Direct Cost (sum of above costs)
- Indirect (capped at 10% of Direct Cost)
- Total Budget (Direct + Indirect), not to exceed \$7,000 in requested funds.

Proposal Review Criteria

- Measurable benefit to shellfish harvesters and the community
- Innovation and relevance to emerging issues/timeliness

- Well-developed plan for evaluation of project success (ie, comparison against a control, comparison to previous efforts, comparison across multiple locations, comparison to traditional methods)
- Demonstrated capacity of project team to complete the work
- Plan for outreach efforts to communicate the results beyond the municipality in which the project was completed. Reviewers will favor activities with a high-impact potential, such as a presentation at the Fishermen’s Forum.
- Total budget in relation to the proposed work.

Proposal Review and Funding Mechanism

- Proposals will be reviewed based on the above Review Criteria in March by a committee consisting of Department of Marine Resource Scientists and outside reviewers with a background in shellfish management.
- Projects selected to receive funding will be scheduled for quarterly milestone check-ins with the Nearshore Marine Resource Program at 6, 12, 18, and 24 months into the project period to ensure progression towards the project goal(s) and to also provide opportunities for questions and assistance.
- Projects selected to receive funding will be funded through a service contract with the State of Maine and will be eligible to receive Advance Funding for the entire amount of the award, upon submission of an invoice to the Department of Marine Resources. Towns must fill out a State of Maine vendor form, if they have not already done so. Towns must be able to provide the Department a certificate of insurance showing liability insurance covering the proposed work.

Questions

Meredith White, DMR Nearshore Marine Resource Program Supervisor: meredith.m.white@maine.gov, 207-350-7163

Funding Source

The Commissioner of Maine’s Department of Marine Resources has approved the use of \$20,000 from the Coastal Fisheries, Research Management, and Opportunity Fund for the 2024 Municipal Shellfish Management Mini-Grant Program.