STATE OF MAINE

Department of Department of Environmental Protection

*Division of Environmental Assessment, Invasive Aquatic Species Program*


RFA# 202111188

Invasive Aquatic Plant Removal Cost Share Application

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| **RFA Coordinator** | *All communication regarding the RFA must be made through the RFA Coordinator identified below*.**Name:** Denise Blanchette **Title:** Biologist II**Contact Information: denise.l.blanchette@maine.gov** |
| **Submitted Questions Due** | *All questions must be received by the RFA Coordinator identified above by:***Date:** January 17, 2022, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time |
| **Application Submission** | Applications *must be received by the Division of Procurement Services by:***Submission Deadline:** All applications (1-year applications and 2-year applications) are due February 1, 2022, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time. Application*s must be submitted electronically to the following address:***Electronic (e-mail) Submission Address:** Proposals@maine.gov |

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**RFA TERMS/ACRONYMS with DEFINITIONS**

The following terms and acronyms, as referenced in the RFA, shall have the meanings indicated below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Term/Acronym | Definition |
| Department | Department of Environmental Protection |
| RFA | Request for Application |
| State | State of Maine |
| IASP | Invasive Aquatic Species program |
| CBI | Courtesy Boat Inspection |
| DASH | Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting |
| OSHA | Occupational Safety and Health Administration |

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# Application Details and Instructions

1. **Purpose and Background**

The Department of Environmental Protection (“Department”) is seeking proposals to plan and manage the removal of known invasive aquatic plant infestations as defined in this Request for Applications (RFA) document. This document provides instructions for submitting proposals, the procedure and criteria by which the Provider(s) will be selected, and the contractual terms which will govern the relationship between the State of Maine (“State”) and the awarded Bidder(s).

The application for 2022 funding has been modified from previous applications. Please read the entire application before you begin your application.

Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) awards Cost Share Grants to lake organizations that conduct invasive aquatic plant control projects. Eligible organizations include municipal and county governments, quasi-municipal organizations and 501(c)(3)-eligible organizations.

Applicants should identify clear goals, utilize proven and effective methods, indicate the likelihood of long-term success, and include a plan for monitoring effectiveness of removal efforts. Grants are awarded following DEP Invasive Aquatic Species Program’s priorities. First-priority projects address incipient invasive plant infestations with potential for eradication or established infestations that present a high risk of spread in otherwise un-infested areas of the state. Second-priority projects aim to reduce spread of invasive aquatic plants within and between waterbodies, i.e., invasive plant removal near boat access points and in areas with high boat traffic. DEP uses boat inspection and vulnerability index data to assess risk of spread from specific waterbodies. Third-priority projects support recurring maintenance projects.

Please note: OSHA commercial dive standards apply to operations that compensate SCUBA and/or Surface Supplied Air divers for plant control work (link: [OSHA Standards for Commercial Diving Operations](https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owastand.display_standard_group?p_toc_level=1&p_part_number=1910#1910_Subpart_T)).

Objectives for controlling these established infestations include reducing the likelihood of spread to other waters, limiting the impact on natural habitat and human use of the water body, and maintaining property values. This grant opportunity is intended to support local removal programs that achieve local and statewide objectives of improving aquatic habitat.

1. **Eligibility to Submit Bids**

Eligible organizations include municipal and county governments, quasi-municipal organizations (including water districts) and 501(c)(3)-eligible organizations.

This grant is for invasive aquatic plant control projects on infested lakes, which utilize techniques as follows:

1. Manual control techniques such as placement of benthic barriers, plant removal by hand, and plant removal by hand with suction dredge (i.e., Diver Assisted Suction Harvest or DASH).
2. Chemical plant control only if DEP has endorsed use of herbicides and according to DEP’s February 27, 2020 document regarding chemical control of established infestations. [2020 Document on Herbicides](https://www.maine.gov/dep/water/invasives/Maine_DEP_Herbicide_Guidance_27_February_2020.pdf)
3. Plant surveys directly related to removal efforts, i.e., surveying infested areas prior to and/or after removal if needed to focus removal efforts or monitor efficacy of removal.
4. Surface support directly related to the removal operation. The application must show how these expenses are integral to the removal operation.
5. Other expenses directly related to invasive aquatic plant removal.
6. **Application Scope and Evaluation Categories**
7. ***Project Purpose and Scope***

The project purpose should provide a description of the overall work that will be done. The following should be addressed is this section:

1. the lake’s characteristics including physical attributes, beneficial use areas, aquatic habitat, swimming areas, boat access sites, and boating use areas
2. the invasive species targeted, its extent and how it threatens public access, recreational uses or ecological integrity of the water body
3. Previous control strategies and actions and efficacy of those efforts
4. Proposed control strategies for this grant cycle. The control activities outlined should utilize proven and effective methods, indicate the likelihood of success, and include a plan for monitoring effectiveness of removal efforts.

Reviewers consider feasibility of project success, the potential for achieving long-term reduction of the infestation and the clarity in explanation of grant expenditures. Please provide as much detail as possible in describing your project. The Department prefers projects that provide multi-year planning and demonstrate how each year builds off the progress of previous work. Multi-Year Management Plans receive additional points in scoring.

1. ***Goals***

Goals for spread prevention, early detection and management: the application should clearly and realistically state the ultimate goal(s) of the proposed plant control, prevention effort.

1. ***Objectives***

The application should state primary activities to achieve goals for the following:

* 1. invasive plant spread prevention early detection management/control
1. ***Monitoring***

Annual plant surveys are essential to monitoring progress of a project. The application should describe the planned pre- and post-removal monitoring to assess effectiveness of management. Applicants applying for the first time must have completed at least a Level 2 plant survey (boat ramps, areas of concentrated boat traffic and shallow, sheltered coves) per the Lake Stewards of Maine (LSM) Invasive Aquatic Plant Screening Survey Procedures and include a map in the application.. Returning applicants must provide a map of infested areas planned for management using Google My Maps, Survey 123, or other Geographic Information System showing infested areas from the most recent survey. Grant funds support only plant surveys to direct plant removal during the removal activity.

1. ***Local Resources***
* ***Training and Experience***

Application proposals demonstrating trained and experienced staff and volunteers are given additional consideration by reviewers. The application should explain whether specific elements of your program are locally developed and maintained or contracted to another entity. Please be specific and detailed in describing your program. Include details such as number of boats and crew, contingency plans for equipment failure, the length of time the program has operated, tenure of current staff and manager or contractor on the project

DEP also considers the applicant’s performance under past cost share grants and the organization’s experience in managing other projects and grants, if applicable, when reviewing the application. Applicants lacking experience with aquatic plant management should describe their capacity to manage the project, including examples managing other grants or projects

* ***Match***

Applicants must bring their own resources to the project in the form of cash and in-kind support (volunteer services or donations of goods and services). A minimum 20% cash match is required for each grant application proposal. Higher grant scores are given for groups providing greater than the minimum match. The Department prefers projects that maximize local match and demonstrate strong community support and the ability to sustain over the long term for invasive aquatic species prevention and control. If this is an established infestation requiring recurring management, describe how the project will be sustained. This section of the application should detail all aspects of local support and funding that is included in the budget table in Part IV of the application. Support letters are encouraged but not required.

1. **Awards**

The Department anticipates making multiple awards as a result of this RFA process. Only one award shall be made for an area with an invasive aquatic plant confirmed and documented by the Department. The Department keeps a list of documented invasive aquatic plant infestations.

If you are applying for removal on multiple waterbodies, please submit one application.

Starting in 2022, bidders can apply for one or two years of performance.

Any person aggrieved by the award decision that results from this Request for Applications may appeal the decision to the Director of the Bureau of General Services in the manner prescribed in 5 MRSA § 1825-E and 18-554 Code of Maine Rules, Chapter 120 (found here: [Chapter 120](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/policies-procedures/chapter-120)).  The appeal must be in writing and filed with the Director of the Bureau of General Services, 9 State House Station, Augusta, Maine, 04333-0009 within 15 calendar days of receipt of notification of contract award.

1. **Statute**

[**Chapter 3 and Chapter 20-A**](https://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/38/title38sec410-N.html) in Maine Revised Statutes Title 38 charge the Department with developing programs to reduce the spread of and control invasive aquatic plants (<https://legislature.maine.gov/legis/statutes/38/title38ch3sec0.html>; <https://legislature.maine.gov/legis/statutes/38/title38ch20-Asec0.html>). Lake organizations removing infestations of invasive aquatic plants are contributing significant financial, volunteer, and in-kind resources to reduce the impact of the infestation. Revenue for preventing and managing invasive aquatic species in Maine is generated from an annual fee on motorized watercraft and seaplanes using inland waters. A statutory change in 2014 requires that the Department Commissioner use at least 20% of the Department’s dedicated Invasive Aquatic Plant and Nuisance Species Fund for eradication activities.

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# KEY PROCESS EVENTS

## **Submitting Questions about the Request for Applications**

Any questions must be submitted by e-mail to the Grant Coordinator identified on the [Grant RFPs and RFAs webpage](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/grants) by January 25, 2022 at 11:59 p.m. local time. Submitted Questions must include the subject line: “RFA# 202111188 Questions”. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete/on time e-mail transmission and receipt.

Question & Answer Summary: Responses to all questions will be compiled in writing and posted on the following website: [Grant RFPs and RFAs](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/grants). It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain a copy of the Question & Answer Summary. Only those answers issued in writing on this website will be considered binding.

## **Amendments to the Request for Applications**

All amendments (if any) released in regard to this Request for Applications will be posted on the following website: [Grant RFPs and RFAs](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/grants). It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain amendments. Only those amendments posted on this website are considered binding.

## **Submitting your Application**

1. **Applications Due:** Applications must be received by the date on the cover page of this RFA. Applications received after the 11:59 p.m. deadline will be ineligible for award consideration for that annual application enrollment period.
2. **Submission Instructions:** Applications are to be submitted to the State of Maine Division of Procurement Services, via email, to Proposals@maine.gov.
	1. Only applications received by email will be considered. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete e-mail transmission and receipt.
	2. Only applications received by e-mail will be considered. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete e-mail transmission and receipt.
	3. E-mails containing links to file sharing sites or online file repositories will not be accepted as submissions. Only e-mail applications that have the actual requested files attached will be accepted.
	4. Encrypted e-mails received which require opening attachments and logging into a proprietary system will not be accepted as submissions. Please check with your organization’s Information Technology team to ensure that your security settings will not encrypt your proposal submission.
	5. File size limits are 25MB per e-mail. Applicants may submit files separately across multiple e-mails, as necessary, due to file size concerns. All e-mails and files must be received by the due date and time listed above.
	6. Applicants are to insert the following into the subject line of their email submission: **“RFA# 202111188 Application Submission – [Applicant’s Name]”**
	7. Applications are to be submitted as a single, typed, PDF or WORD file and must include pages11-16 of this RFA document.

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# APPLICATION EVALUATION AND SELECTION

## **Scoring Weights and Process**

1. Scoring Weights: The score will be based on a 100-point scale and will measure the degree to which each application meets the following criteria.

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| **Scoring Criteria** | **Maximum Points Available** |
| Project Purpose and Scope | 30 points |
| Goals | 10 points |
| Objectives | 20 points |
| Monitoring | 15 points |
| Local Resources* Training/Experiences
* Match
 | 25 points 15 points10 points |
| **Total Points** | **100 points** |

1. Scoring Process: The Grant Review Team will use a consensus approach to evaluate and score all sections listed above. Members of the review team will not score those sections individually but, instead, will arrive at a consensus as to assignment of points for each of those sections.

Regarding the proposed funds requested and the proposed work, the Grant Review Team will consider the degree to which the project represents a good return for the investment (money, time) as well as whether the project work and cost estimates (tasks & budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes, along with the amount and quality of proposed matching funds or services.

 Final Award Determination

The Department will determine awards based on final score and available funds. Higher scores will receive higher level of funding. If the total initial awards exceed available funding after scoring, the Department will decrease final awards based on the level of funding requested and available funds.

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APPLICATION COVER PAGE

**Handwritten Applications Will Not Be Accepted**

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| **Applicant’s Organization Name:** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Name of Application:** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Point of Contact for Application** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Tel:** | Click or tap here to enter text. | **E-mail:** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Point of Contacts’ Street Address:** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Point of Contacts’ City/State/Zip** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Dollar Amount of Application:** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **One or Two Year Proposal** | [ ]  One Year [ ]  Two Year |

* No personnel currently employed by the Department or any other State agency participated, either directly or indirectly, in any activities relating to the preparation of the Applicant’s application.
* No attempt has been made, or will be made, by the Applicant to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit an application.
* The above-named organization is the legal entity entering into the resulting agreement with the Department should they be awarded a contract.
* The undersigned is authorized to enter contractual obligations on behalf of the above-named organization.

To the best of my knowledge, all information provided in the enclosed application, both programmatic and financial, is complete and accurate at the time of submission.

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| **Name (Print):** Click or tap here to enter text. | **Title:** Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Authorized Signature:** | **Date:** Click or tap here to enter text. |

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DEBARMENT, PERFORMANCE and NON-COLLUSION CERTIFICATION

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| **Applicant’s Organization Name:** | Click or tap here to enter text. |

*By signing this document, I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that the aforementioned organization, its principals and any subcontractors named in this application:*

1. *Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, and declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from bidding or working on contracts issued by any governmental agency.*
2. *Have not within three years of submitting the application for this contract been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for:*
	1. *Fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a federal, state or local government transaction or contract.*
	2. *Violating Federal or State antitrust statutes or committing embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;*
	3. *Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State or Local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (b) of this certification; and*
	4. *Have not within a three (3) year period preceding this application had one or more federal, state or local government transactions terminated for cause or default*.
3. *Have not entered into a prior understanding, agreement, or connection with any corporation, firm, or person submitting a response for the same materials, supplies, equipment, or services and this application is in all respects fair and without collusion or fraud. The above-mentioned entities understand and agree that collusive bidding is a violation of state and federal law and can result in fines, prison sentences, and civil damage awards.*

**Failure to provide this certification may result in the disqualification of the Applicant’s application, at the discretion of the Department.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name (Print):** Click or tap here to enter text. | **Title:** Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Authorized Signature:** | **Date:** Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| Waterbody Name:Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Midas # Click or tap here to enter text. | Lake Maps Included: [ ] YES [ ] NO | Invasive Plant: Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Town(s) containing shoreline: Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Public Access (check all that apply) |  [ ]  State [ ]  Municipal [ ]  Private [ ]  None  |
| Number of Public Access Points: Click or tap here to enter text.  |
| Total Acreage of Waterbody: Click or tap here to enter text. Estimated % of invasive aquatic plant coverage: Click or tap here to enter text. |
| CBI Coverage: [ ]  YES [ ]  NO  | (If Yes) How long? Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Name Inlets/outlets: Click or tap here to enter text. |

**PART I: WaterBody Information**

**Part II: Invasive Aquatic Plant management PROGRAM**

**Part III of the application requires completion of five narrative sections (A through E below) and two tables. You may add additional table rows as needed. Refer to Scoring Weights and Process in the RFA above for information to include as you complete the management program below. If applying for work on multiple waterbodies, describe the purpose and scope of work for your entire program in PART III, including all waterbodies for which you are requesting funding.**

1. **Project Purpose and Scope**

Click or tap here to enter text.

1. **Goals for spread prevention, detection and plant management**

Click or tap here to enter text.

1. **Objectives (i.e., specific activities) to achieve the goals.**

Click or tap here to enter text.

1. **Monitoring**

Click or tap here to enter text.

1. **Local Resources**

Click or tap here to enter text.

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| Plant Location/Map | Aquatic Plant InventoryMixed with natives, monoculture invasive | Plant Density * Heavy
* Moderate
* Sparse mixed with natives
 | Priority for removal: * High
* Medium
* Low
 | Uses affected – Boating, fishing, launches, swimming, campgrounds, Others | Desired Condition* Return to previous
* Maintenance
* Prevent the spread
* Clear for boat traffic
* Others
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**Assessment and Prioritization of Infested Areas**

**Strategy and Timeline**: indicate management or control action(s) and timeline proposed by site. Order the sites from higher to lower priority. NOTE: If applying for two years of funding, complete a strategy and timeline table for each year.

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| Site | Who | Control Method | Needed resources | When |
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PART III: ESTIMATED COST INFORMATION:

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| **Table 1. Actual Cash Expenses: List paid staff hours, rate, and total costs by category (e.g. divers). Staff with identical duties and hourly rate should be grouped together. List ALL cash expended for your total project whether from the DEP grant or other sources (e.g., cash match).**  |
|  |  |  | **Column A** | **Column B** | **Column C** | **Match source (Town, Private, Association, etc.)** |
| **Expenses: divers, boat captain, surface support, other goods and services.** | **Total # hours** | **Hourly Rate****($50 per Hr. Max Diver Rate)** | **Total Costs** | **Grant $(Total Costs Covered by Grant)** | **Cash Match: Columns A - B = Cash Match** |
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| **TOTAL CASH EXPENSES**  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Table 2. Volunteer time and In-Kind Donations: group volunteer duties by category, e.g., divers, boat captain, surface support. Specify Other, e.g., outboard service, storage, barrier cleaning, donation of collection bags, etc.** |
|  | **Column A** | **Column B** | **Column C** | **Column D** | **Match Source (Town, Association, Private, Other Donation)** |
| **Volunteer Categories: Divers = $50/hour; other volunteers = $24.21/hour** | **Number of Volunteers** | **Number of Hours** | **Volunteer Match (Column B $50 diver or volunteer rate )** | **Non-cash donations of goods and services** |
| **Diver(s)**  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Boat Captain(s)**  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Surface Support** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Other (specify):** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Other (specify):**  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Other (specify):** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **TOTALS** |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Table 3. Project Financial Summary** |
| **Total Grant Request****(Table 1, Column B)** | **Total Cash Match****(Table 1, Column C)** | **Total Volunteer and In-Kind Match (Table 2, Column C+D)** | **Total Project** **Cost** |
|  |  |  |  |