**STATE OF MAINE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**RFA SUBMITTED QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SUMMARY**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **RFA NUMBER AND TITLE:** | RFA #202412211 – Coastal Sand Dune Restoration and Protection Grants |
| **RFA ISSUED BY:** | Department of Environmental Protection |
| **SUBMITTED QUESTIONS DUE DATE:** | January 21, 2025 |
| **QUESTION & ANSWER SUMMARY ISSUED:** | February 3, 2025 |
| **APPLICATION DUE DATE:** | February 24, 2025 |
| **APPLICATIONS DUE TO:** | Proposals@maine.gov |

**Provided below are the submitted written questions received by the Department and the Department’s answers.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **1** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part 1, Section A, Purpose and Background, Page 4 | How much funding is available with the coastal dune protection/restoration grants? |
| **Answer** |
| Funds totaling $1,000,000 will be available for awarded projects. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **2** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part 1, Section D. Awards, Page 5 | Can the Department provide any guidance regarding how many awards it anticipates making, the individual award amounts it anticipates making, and/or what requested funding amount(s) might be considered competitive? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department anticipates making multiple awards. The number of awards granted, and the individual reward amounts, will be dependent upon the number of successful applications received and amounts requested. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **3** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV, Section A. Evaluation Process, Page 10 | Would an “à la carte” style proposal be competitive? For example, would an application that outlines a scope of work for dune restoration and identifies a range of restoration tasks with specific cost figures for each and describes what could be accomplished based on how much money DEP could award be competitive? In other words, is it acceptable and perhaps even useful to submit an application that describes ‘x feet of dune at the project site can be restored for this much money, y feet of dune for this much money, or z feet of dune for this much money’ to allow the proposal evaluation team to decide how much funding to award the project? |
| **Answer** |
| While an applicant could provide estimates for various elements of a proposed project, the application should identify one total figure for the complete project. An applicant may choose to submit multiple applications for one project site based on project scope of work. As stated in Part I (D) of the RFA, final award amounts may be more or less than requested.  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **4** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV, Section D. Selection and Award, Page 12 | When does the Department anticipate making awards and when would the funding be available? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department will review applications and award grants as expeditiously as feasible following the February 24 application deadline. The Department anticipates that funds would be available by the spring of 2025. Dune restoration, beach nourishment, or vegetation planting projects will require timing approval from the Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife if performed after March 15 and before September 15 (beach nourishment) or October 1 (dune restoration and vegetation planting). Therefore, applicants should anticipate this requirement will apply to projects seeking to proceed this spring. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **5** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV, Section E. Contract Administration and Conditions, Page 12 | Can the grant funds be used to reimburse project costs if the applicant were to begin project work prior to the award start date? For example, if the applicant would need to start project activities before the contractual award start date in order to begin restoration efforts prior to the start of the summer 2025 beach tourist season, would the cost of those activities, if included in the awarded scope of work, be reimbursed? |
| **Answer** |
| No. Grant funds may not be used to reimburse project costs if work starts prior to the award date. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **6** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, Section A. Eligible Activities, Page 7 | Will the State of Maine consider the implementation of hard seawalls (concrete, vinyl, or FRP seawall or bulkhead structures that hold soils in place behind them)? Or will the state be relying solely on natural erosion control, integrating living components, such as plantings, with structural techniques? |
| **Answer** |
| Eligible projects must restore, protect, nourish, conserve or revegetate a coastal sand dune system and/or provided technical assistance or education to support sand dune restoration or protection. Hard seawalls are not eligible for grant awards, because they do not meet these eligibility criteria. Additionally, the Department’s [Chapter 355 Coastal Sand Dune Rules](https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/rules/06/096/096c355-2024-095%20%28AMD%29.doc) prohibit the construction of new seawalls in coastal sand dune systems. A dune restoration project using biodegradable stabilization materials, in conjunction with sand and gravel, would be eligible for a grant award (see [P.L. 2023 ch. 97](https://legislature.maine.gov/backend/App/services/getDocument.aspx?documentId=100699) for permitting criteria for dune restoration projects using biodegradable stabilization materials). |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **7** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, Section C. Non-allowable Use of Funds, Page 7 | Does the public access requirement mean that the applicant must provide public access from within the ownership parcel, or is it less specific and just that the public has access to the beach/dune in front of the project sites? |
| **Answer** |
| The project must be located wholly on public property, or if not, public access is granted by easement in perpetuity. In addition to permanent deeded access to the beach and dune, there must be an existing or proposed footpath to the beach located within or immediately adjacent to the project area that is protected by a permanent deed or easement.  |