

DNREC Soliciting Grant Applications for Projects to Improve Water Quality in Delaware

Delawareans – along with government agencies and non-profit organizations throughout the state – can help support Delaware’s continuing quest for clean water by taking advantage of an annual grant opportunity administered by the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control and funded through the federal Clean Water Act. Clean Water Act Section 319 Nonpoint Source grant funding for Delaware of \$425,000 was recently [announced by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#), with additional funds expected to be released to the state in 2021.

DNREC is soliciting – and encouraging – proposals for the Section 319 grants awarded for projects that reduce Delaware’s nonpoint source (NPS) pollution and improve water quality, chiefly by reducing nutrients and sediment that drain or leach into impaired Delaware waters. NPS pollution is caused by rainfall including stormwater moving over and through the ground. As runoff moves, pollutants are picked up and carried along with it, and deposited into lakes, rivers, wetlands, coastal waters, and ground water.

DNREC will accept Section 319 grant proposals for reducing NPS pollution from Monday, Dec. 7 until Feb. 8, 2021.

While eligible Section 319 projects may target any source of NPS pollution, grant applications most frequently involve agriculture, forestry production, construction, shoreline stabilization, large septic systems, and water flow engineering efforts. A predominant 319 grant focus is on

watersheds with water quality impairments caused by polluted runoff.

“While there has been vast improvement in Delaware’s water quality, challenges still persist, and meeting those challenges is crucial in our state’s fight to achieve clean water for everyone,” said DNREC Secretary Shawn Garvin. “The Clean Water Act grants offer leverage for government agencies and nonprofit organizations in making the most of that fight. These grants help fund investments in cover crops, nutrient management, land conservation, stormwater retrofits, and tree planting projects – all of which enhance and improve water quality statewide.”

Past Delaware 319 grant recipients and their projects have included:

- The Kent and Sussex Conservation Districts for implementing agricultural best management practices (BMPs) including cover crops, nutrient management planning, water control structures, and structural BMPs to address manure storage and composting. The Delaware Botanic Gardens for urban type BMPs such as living shorelines and stormwater facility enhancements to further water quality benefits. Delaware’s Center for the Inland Bays also used 319 grant funding for living shorelines to help filter nonpoint source pollutants.
- The Delaware Wild Lands organization for implementing reforestation practices in the form of tree plantings on marginal cropland areas, enhancing both water quality and wildlife habitat benefits.
- The Sussex Conservation District in cooperation with the Delmarva Poultry Industry for implementing various agricultural BMPs on poultry farm production areas, including tree plantings used as windbreaks, grass buffers, pollinator habitat areas, shallow water ponds for wildlife habitat and nutrient filtering capabilities.

All projects must include match funding from a non-Federal

source totaling at least 67% of the overall project cost.

More information on applying for a Clean Water Act Section 319 grant, along with the application form and a DNREC NPS program contact, can be found on the DNREC website at <https://de.gov/319grants>.

About DNREC

The Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control protects and manages the state's natural resources, protects public health, provides outdoor recreational opportunities and educates Delawareans about the environment. The Division of Watershed Stewardship develops and implements innovative watershed assessment, monitoring and implementation activities. For more information, visit the [website](#) and connect with DNREC on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#).

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