



GENERAL GUIDELINES

SFY2016
REGIONAL WATER PLAN SEED GRANT

Revised September 2015

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CONTACT

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INTRODUCTION

Under O.C.G.A. 28-5-120, the Georgia Environmental Protection Division is authorized to make grants to eligible recipients for projects related to water management, both quality and quantity. Using this authority, the Division has established the Regional Water Plan Seed Grant program that provides funds to eligible recipients in Georgia to support and incentivize local governments and other appropriate water users as they collect and manage the requisite data and information and undertake their implementation responsibilities as provided in the applicable Regional Water Plans.

Eligible recipients of the Regional Water Plan Seed Grant funds include local, regional and State units of government, local authorities which operate local government service delivery programs, regional commissions, resource conservation and development councils, local school systems, State college and universities, and State agencies. Local governments must have Qualified Local Government status as of September 30, 2015, in compliance with the requirements of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 and Service Delivery Strategy Law of 1997. State law currently prohibits non-governmental organizations (such as private firms and nonprofit organizations) from receiving Grant funds directly; however, these organizations are encouraged to foster partnerships with eligible applicants to develop projects.

Maximum reimbursement for a Regional Water Plan Seed Grant is capped at **\$75,000** and limited to 60 percent of the total project cost. Therefore, award recipients must provide **a minimum match** of 40 percent of the total project cost. 10 percent of the total project cost must come in the form of cash match. The cash match must be expended to pay for specific elements of the project budget and may not include direct costs, indirect costs, equipment operation costs, or in-kind services. Projects must clearly identify the sources of cash match in their application, and the use of the cash match in their budgets. Applicants who are able to demonstrate a match commitment of 50 percent or greater or a cash match of 20 percent or greater will receive priority consideration for funding. See Appendix A: MATCH FAQs SHEET of the application for more information.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS

Types of Regional Water Plan activities and projects that are eligible for funding by the Regional Water Plan Seed Grant include:

- Undertaking programs to address critical information and/or data needs;
- Tracking and analyzing available monitoring data and reporting on water resource conditions;
- Developing guidelines for Regional Water Plan implementation;
- Preparing and distributing technical guidance on Regional Water Plan management practices; and
- Providing technical assistance to support implementation of Regional Water Plan management practices.

REQUIREMENTS FOR FUNDING

At a minimum, applications must address the Requirements for Funding below in order to be considered for funding:

- Applications must include an endorsement from the relevant Regional Water Planning Council or Councils that at a minimum describes how the project is consistent with the Council's implementation priorities, the vision and goals articulated in their regional water plan(s).
- Applications must demonstrate significant coordination between the applicant, Council(s), and the Division during preparation of the application.
- Project proposals must demonstrate the state, regional and/or local benefits of the project including but not limited to enhancing water supply or water quality improvements that also provide water supply benefits.
- Project proposals must be consistent with the policies and implementation actions in the Georgia Comprehensive State-wide Water Management Plan. Additional information can be found at <http://www.georgiawaterplanning.org/>
- Applicants must schedule and participate in a project development meeting with Division staff.
- Commit to a minimum 40% Project Match with 10% of the total project cost in the form of cash contribution.

COMPETITIVE CRITERIA

In addition to the Requirements for Funding, some criteria are assigned priority according to Division rules and guidelines. These priorities are incorporated into the competitive scoring process used to allocate funds.

- Project proposals must specifically identify the Regional Water Plan(s) and management practices or other recommendations from each plan that the project is designed to implement.
 - If project proposal addresses data or information needs, the applicant must specify the connections between the data to be collected and specific management practices or other recommendations in the Regional Water Plan(s) and demonstrate how the data will be applied or integrated in the Regional Water Plan(s) or plan implementation.
 - If project proposal includes water quality monitoring, a detailed State Sampling Quality Assurance Plan (SQAP) or Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) will be required. The requirements for SQAP are contained in EPD's Guidance On Submitting Water Quality Data For Use By The Georgia Environmental Protection Division In 305(b)/303(d) Listing Assessments (SQAP) [May 2007].
- Project proposals must be consistent with the implementation priorities, the vision and goals articulated in the applicable Regional Water Plan(s). To ensure this consistency, proposals must demonstrate significant coordination between the applicant, Council(s), and the Division during preparation of the application.
- Project proposals must demonstrate how the project will enable continued and new implementation of Regional Water Plan management practices and other Regional Water Plan recommendations. Applications that do not clearly demonstrate this will not be considered for funding.
- Project proposals must demonstrate how the effectiveness (i.e., measure of success) of the project will be evaluated. Numerical measures should be used where appropriate.
- Project proposals must demonstrate cost effectiveness of both Grant and Local funds. Cost effectiveness is defined as having the largest possible impact with the funds available. Project proposals with excessive indirect cost rate match is discouraged.

ADDITIONAL PRIORITIES

Additional priority, which may increase competitiveness, will be given to project proposals that:

- Demonstrate a watershed management approach utilizing collaboration with multiple Regional Water Planning Councils, cooperating partnerships, the Division and/or involving multi-governmental agencies, and other implementation stakeholders.

- Coordination with other water management projects and activities within the watershed as well as projects conducted across jurisdictional boundaries.
- Demonstrate additional environmental benefits including but not limited to protection of in-stream flows, water conservation, air quality and energy conservation.
- Demonstrate a match commitment of 50% or higher will receive additional points during project review. Note, this will lead to a higher total project cost and the cash match must still equal 10 percent of the total project cost.
- Demonstrate a cash match commitment of 20% or higher will receive additional points during project review.

NOTE:

Project applicants who have received grant funds in past years but have NOT demonstrated successful administration of previous Section 319(h), Section 106, Section 604(b) or other grant funded projects may receive a reduction in points during project review. Successful administration includes but is not limited to: completing all project activities during the contract period, meeting all required deadlines, completed the project on time and on budget, expending all grant funds requested on project activities, and providing adequate documentation as requested by Division.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

APPLICATION MATERIALS THAT DO NOT ADHERE TO THE PROVIDED FORMAT AND GUIDELINES MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR FUNDING.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

SFY2016 Regional Water Plan Seed Grant applications must be postmarked by

December 1, 2015

Any application postmarked (or hand-delivered) after this date will not be considered for funding.

Completion of All Sections of the Application

A successful project proposal is thoroughly planned, well prepared and concisely packaged. All activities and project information should be consistent throughout the application materials. Please follow ALL instructions and complete ALL sections. If you feel a section of the application does not pertain to your project, then use a "Not Applicable (N/A)" response. **DO NOT LEAVE ANY SECTIONS BLANK.** Incomplete applications may not be considered for funding. Before submission, please verify that all sections of the application have been completed in accordance with the information provided in this Guidelines document.

Required Format, Electronic Copies via Mail (No Faxes or Emails)

Applications must be typed in MicroSoft WORD and must be single-spaced and in 12-point normal font. Please number pages and include the project name and applicant name on each page. A cover page should be the only item before the application. Please include all appendices and attachments at the end and in electronic format as applicable. **PACKETS MUST INCLUDE ONE DIGITAL COPY SAVED TO A CD, AND BE SUBMITTED VIA MAIL.**

Deadlines for Pre-Application Meeting or Conference Call and Draft Application Reviews

All applicants are required to meet with GAEPD Grants Unit Staff to discuss the project proposal before an application is submitted. Project partners, consultants, or other affiliated parties are welcome to attend, but the primary applicant **MUST** be in attendance. **All pre-application meetings MUST be completed by November 16, 2015.**

Eligible applicants must address their SFY16 Regional Water Plan Seed Grant application packets as follows:

SFY2016 Regional Water Plan Seed Grant Application
ATTN Barbara Stitt-Allen
Watershed Protection Branch
Grants Unit
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Suite 1462
Atlanta, GA 30334

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Project Title:

2. Lead Organization and Primary Contact:

Please provide the name, address, telephone number, fax number and email of the lead organization and primary contact.

It is acceptable to also include a secondary point of contact (for instance, when an applicant would like to include a contact for a major project partner). However, a primary contact **must** be provided for the applying organization to serve as a point of contact for invoicing, documentation and reporting.

3. Project Goals

The Project Goals section should **clearly state the overall goal of the proposed project in a concise manner**. Applicants are encouraged to think of this section as a “sound byte” that provides an accurate account of what their project will accomplish in the grant period. The information provided must be factual and all objectives should be realistic and attainable.

- Provide the applicable Regional Water Plan(s) management practices to be implemented with this project.
- Provide the description associated with each management practice to be implemented.
- Include quantifiable goals such as numbers to be addressed, percent achieved, and minimum targets.
- Focus on the implementation of management practices that provide water supply benefits.

4. Project Background

The Project Background section puts the project goals in a specific context and provides the justification for funding a particular project. Include all relevant supporting information in a summary format. The following list is not all inclusive; but, provides some examples of what is expected in the Project Background:

- State in a **clear and concise** manner and articulate how the proposed project is consistent with the implementation priorities and the vision and goals articulated in the applicable regional water plan(s).
- Include relevant information about how the proposed project activities are appropriate and relate to the Regional Water Plan(s).
- Clearly identify how the project will enable continued and new implementation of regional water plan management practices and other regional water plan recommendations.

5. Project Activities

The Project Activities should detail the actions that will be taken in order to achieve the project goals, the methods of implementation for each activity, and the measures of success that will be used to assess the effectiveness of each activity. All items must be directly correlated to the Budget and Project Implementation Schedule.

Project Activity: *Identify and describe the main strategies for achieving the project goals. Please include as many activities as are necessary to accomplish the project.*

Tasks: *Describe the specific tasks that are necessary to complete each project activity. Please be detailed and specific about the project activities that will be completed using available resources, and provide quantifiable information where appropriate.*

Deliverables: *Identify any items that will be delivered as a result of each task. Provide quantifiable information where appropriate. Examples of deliverables include, but are not limited to: maps, reports, pictures, monitoring data, and monitoring reports.*

Measures of Success: *Describe what evaluation criteria will be applied to each task to assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of the associated activity. Criteria should target both quantifiable and qualitative results to be achieved. Where appropriate, describe how particular criteria will be measured.*

6. Roles and Responsibilities of Partnering Organizations

A description of the roles and responsibilities for all Partnering Organizations allows for a clear delineation of duties and will help maintain a sense of accountability for project partners. Identify and include all Federal, State, regional and local organizations that will contribute time, services or resources to this project and provide a detailed explanation of the expected responsibilities of each partner. **Please note that private organizations that will be reimbursed as paid sub-contractors on the project are not considered to be Partnering Organizations.**

Organization Name	Specific Responsibilities
(Lead Organization)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide 40% of total project costs (matching funds or in-kind services)• Request payments from GAEPD on a quarterly basis• Pay funds to appropriate contractor(s) and vendor(s), and request reimbursements from GAEPD• Track all grant funds expended and all match values provided in accordance with the implementation schedule• Track all project activities in accordance with the implementation schedule• Complete and submit quarterly progress reports with invoices to GAEPD by January 15th, April 15th, July 15th, and October 15th of each project year (Payment of invoice is contingent on work completed and a review of the quarterly report.)• Complete and submit close-out report at conclusion of project• (ADD OTHERS AS APPROPRIATE)
GAEPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide 60% of total project costs• Review and approve project deliverables• Participate in meetings, as appropriate• Provide project oversight and contract management• Provide monitoring guidance and training
(Partnering Organization)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">••

7. Project Location

Project Area Description and Map: *Identify the approximate size and location of the proposed project area on a map (paper and electronic copies). Be sure to include the ENTIRE project area on one map. The project area should be of an appropriate size to ensure the project activities will have a significant impact. If necessary due to size, attach the map as an application appendix, and reference the appendix in this section.*

8. Project Budget

The Project Budget delineates proposed Grant and non-federal grant matching expenditures by **item class categories** (A-G) as shown on Page 12. The project proposal must provide sufficient detail to justify all project costs, which must correspond directly to the Project Activities (For example, if a turbidity meter is listed as an equipment budget item, the Project Activities must include a task that would require the purchase of a turbidity meter – i.e. TSS monitoring.)

Also, identify funding source for match (name of organization/person, cash, or in-kind.)

- **Applicants MUST use the budget format included in the application template.**
- **All project proposals are limited to \$75,000 in requested grant funding.**

Item Class Categories:

- **Personnel (A):** *Personnel budget items must include the position title, salary rate, percentage of full-time equivalent (FTE), resulting dollar amount, number of years to be reimbursed, and a description of responsibilities for each position cited, regardless of funding source. Attach a description of qualifications, skills, education for each person that you will be seeking to work on this project using federal funds (this should not be a resume).*
- **Fringe Benefits (B):** *Fringe benefit budget items must include the position title, percentage of FTE, resulting dollar amount, fringe rate (as a percentage of salary), and number of years to be reimbursed for each position cited, regardless of funding source.*
- **Travel (C):** *Travel budget items should be calculated by multiplying the number of expected travel miles by the current federal mileage rate. Applicants should also clearly identify the personnel traveling by position title, and the type and purpose of travel. Travel must be associated with a project activity/task. **NOTE: out-of-state travel must be pre-approved by GAEPD and is dependent upon reason for travel and cost.***

The **State Mileage Rate** for 2015 is \$.575 per mile. For more information, please visit the following website: <http://sao.georgia.gov/state-travel-policy>

- **Equipment (D):** *All equipment budget items and costs MUST be itemized separately. Please include brief descriptions, specifications or actual quotes AND associated activity/task to justify the proposed costs. The term “Equipment” applies only to items with a useful life of more than one (1) year and an acquisition cost equal to or greater than \$5,000.*

- **Supplies (E):** *Supply budget items may be collectively summarized by type (monitoring, administrative, printing, etc.) as long as the collective total for each type is less than \$2,000. Otherwise, they MUST be itemized separately.*
- **Contractual (F):** *Contractual budget items represent formal financial relationships between the lead organization and subcontractors, and must identify the type of subcontractor and the applicable project activities. For each large subcontract item (\geq \$30,000), a detailed budget breakdown using the same item class categories MUST be attached as an appendix to the application. A copy of the bid request or job announcement, and contractual agreement must be submitted to GAEPD.*
- **Construction (G):** *GAEPD Grant funds CANNOT be applied to this category, which refers to infrastructure and related building costs.*
- **Other (H):** *Other budget items and costs must be itemized separately.*
- **Indirect Charges (J):** *Indirect Charge costs are limited to 0% of the Grant's Total Direct Charges. Applicants are encouraged to count 100% of their Indirect Charges as match.*

PLEASE SEE EXAMPLE PROJECT BUDGET ON PAGE 12

Example Project Budget:

Item	Item Class Category	Grant Funds (60% Maximum)	Non-Federal Matching Funds (40% Minimum)	Total
A	Personnel: One (1) (Name position if any) - ? FTE (\$?/year) for 1 year Description of Duties: (explain here)			
	Sub Total:			
B	Fringe Benefits: One (1) (Name position if any) - ? FTE (??) for 1 year			
	Sub Total:			
C	Travel: Staff Position: (Name position if any) Purpose of Travel: (Explain here) ? miles x \$.565/mile			
	Sub Total:			
D	Equipment: Equipment: (What kind) Purpose/use: (describe)			
	Sub Total:			
E	Supplies: Supplies: (What kind) Purpose/Use: (describe)			
	Sub Total:			
F	Contractual: Contractor Name: (enter name) Description of Duties: (describe)			
	Sub Total			
G	Construction: Does not apply to GAEPD Section 319(h) Grants	N/A	N/A	N/A
H	Other:			
	Sub Total			
I	Total Direct Charges: (Sum of A-H)			
J	Indirect Charges: Indirect Charge Rate	N/A		
K	Total: (Sum of I and J)			

➤ **Cash Match Details:**

Provide the dollar amount and the source(s) of the cash match. Provide details on what item(s) is paid for with the cash match.

9. Project Implementation and Drawdown Schedule

All project proposals must include a Project Implementation and Drawdown Schedule, which details expected execution of tasks, state and federal reporting requirements, and expenditure of funds. **Please note that Regional Water Plan Seed Grant projects CANNOT exceed eighteen (18) months in duration.**

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND DRAWDOWN SCHEDULE

Applicants are now required to prepare and submit a Section 9: Project Implementation and Drawdown Schedule Gantt Chart, which can be downloaded from the GAEPD website at:

<https://epd.georgia.gov/regional-water-plan-seed-grant-funds>

Full instructions are included with the Gantt Chart Excel File.

The Gantt Chart is formatted to fit one 11 x 17 inch sheet, but can be expanded or shortened as appropriate by the applicant.

10. Project Attachment(s):

Provide list of all documents and supporting files included with application.

APPENDIX A

MATCH FAQs SHEET

WHAT IS LOCAL MATCH?

Local match is a resource commitment beyond the grant dollar amount requested, and is required as part of a Regional Water Plan Seed Grant contract to implement the project. The applicant and contributing project partners identify budget expenses and provisions that will be paid as match in non-federal dollars when submitting the initial application.

HOW MUCH LOCAL MATCH IS REQUIRED?

A minimum 40% of the total project cost is the required minimum local match for all Regional Water Plan Seed Grant projects. 10% of the total project cost must be in the form of cash. Additional local match of 50% or above, and/or a cash match of 20% or more is encouraged; and may result in the project proposal receiving priority consideration for funding.

Example Calculation for Determining Match Commitment: Grant Funds Requested x 2/3 = Required Minimum Non-Federal Matching Funds

<i>Grant Funds Requested:</i>	<i>\$75,000 (60% of Total Project Cost)</i>
<i>Minimum Local Match Required:</i>	<i>\$37,500 (40% of Total Project Cost less cash)</i>
<i>Minimum 10 % cash match required:</i>	<i>\$12,500 (10% of Total Project Required)</i>
<hr/>	
<i>Total Project Cost:</i>	<i>\$125,000</i>

WHAT CAN BE USED AS LOCAL MATCH?

Local match **must be from non-federal sources**.

CASH MATCH: Cash contributed specifically to cover the actual costs of the project.

These costs **may not** include:

1. Indirect costs
2. Equipment operation
3. In-kind services

IN-KIND MATCH: Contributions made directly in the form of efforts or goods, with dollar value specified, to implement the project. These amounts must be:

1. Verifiable (see section below regarding tracking local match commitments);
2. Directly related to accomplishing project goals;
3. Not already being counted as match for another project;

HOW DO I TRACK LOCAL MATCH CONTRIBUTIONS?

1. Local match contributions must be tracked on a quarterly basis along with invoicing for Grant funds and progress reports;
2. Match contributions must be entered into the lead organization's accounting records and be auditable from those records (i.e. type, quantity, value of contribution, date of contribution, signature of contributor/partner organization);
3. When recording in-kind match, accounting records must show how the value placed on the match was derived (i.e. number of volunteer or personnel or meeting space hours and hourly rate for each, etc.);
4. Volunteer hours and services must be documented to the extent feasible.