

## Community & Watershed Forestry Projects

This section provides more detailed grant information and guidance for projects within the Community & Watershed Forestry program. This program provides financial assistance to partners to identify locations in need of riparian forest buffers, conversion of lawn to habitat, and urban tree-planting, and to design, implement, and establish those practices. This program supports projects that produce conventional buffers and multifunctional buffers - a buffer type that provides an opportunity to harvest products such as nuts, berries, woody florals, forbs and potentially woody biomass in addition to the conventional buffer of riparian tree and shrub species.

Eligible applicants include municipalities and municipal entities, institutes of higher education, and conservation related non-profits. Each grant requires a 20% match (cash or non-cash match is accepted).

### Ready-To-Go Checklist

This checklist is to be used by the applicant to determine if their project is “Ready-To-Go”. If you have questions regarding this checklist, please contact your [DCNR Regional Advisor](#).

Yes	Item
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contacted BRC Regional Advisor
<input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinate technical assistance with <a href="#">Regional Watershed Forestry Specialists</a> (if necessary)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eligible applicant
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eligible project scope
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clear, concise and detailed project description included
<input type="checkbox"/>	Realistic, accurate, and detailed cost estimate / budget, including list of eligible cash / non-cash project costs.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Match secured and Letters of Match Commitment stating amount and source uploaded
<input type="checkbox"/>	Properly completed Resolution Page
<input type="checkbox"/>	Properly completed Grant Agreement Signature Page

### Helpful Documents for Community & Watershed Forestry Projects

DCNR’s website includes information about all three of the Community & Watershed Forestry practices eligible for funding through this opportunity: [Riparian Forest Buffers, Urban and Community Forestry, Conversion of Lawn to Habitat](#), including a variety of guidance documents, grant requirements, and grant management forms that should be helpful in developing your Grant Application.

## General Information and Funding Conditions

1. The minimum grant amount awarded is \$50,000. There is a soft cap of \$250,000 per application. The Department may award higher grant amounts at its discretion based on funding availability.
2. All projects require a minimum of 20% match. Match may be cash or non-cash and must be directly related to the approved scope of work. DCNR reserves the right to negotiate with applicants on the final award amount, acreage and scope of work.
3. Cash contributions being provided by other organizations to be used as a portion of the required local match should be transferred to the applicant/grantee to expend. If an outside organization/agency wishes to expend funds on behalf of the applicant/grantee, an agreement defining roles and responsibilities must be executed by all parties. Draft Agreements should be provided to DCNR for review and approval prior to execution.
4. Each application can include multiple planting sites. However, it is suggested that each application focus on one Community and Watershed Forestry practice (riparian forest buffers, lawn to habitat, or urban and community forestry), unless multiple practices will be deployed on a single property (e.g. riparian buffer and lawn to habitat project on the same property). The applicant does not need to have selected sites and/or committed landowners at the time of application. However, applications including selected sites and/or committed landowners will receive higher scores due to that “shovel ready” status.
5. Applicants who undertake a riparian forest buffer or lawn to habitat project must be willing to enter into a landowner agreement with each participating landowner for a minimum of 25 years. The agreement will address establishment and stewardship requirements and other considerations. Urban and community forestry applicants must be willing to manage a stewardship program to ensure survivability of community tree plantings. Urban and community forestry projects do not require a landowner agreement, but they must occur on publicly accessible property.
6. All construction must be completed in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws, including but not limited to permit approvals, the Uniform Construction Code (UCC), Americans with Disabilities Act, and Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry Regulations.
7. Generally, procurement of labor and materials related to funded projects should follow the Bureau’s [Competitive Bid Policy](#).
8. Funding acknowledgement signage is required to be installed at any Riparian Forest Buffer or Lawn to Habitat planting site that is on public property. Funding acknowledgement signage is not required for installations completed on private property; however, it is strongly encouraged to assist with long term program promotion and stewardship at the site.

## Project Types

The Community & Watershed Forestry grant opportunity supports several types of practices—riparian forest buffers, lawn to habitat, and urban and community tree planting. Applicants should review the following brief project descriptions to ensure that their proposal will address the required elements for each respective project type. We suggest you review the links provided at the end of this document to prepare the most competitive grant application possible.

### 1. Riparian Forest Buffers

Riparian forest buffers are the trees, shrubs, and grasses planted along streams that play an important role in maintaining the health of our waterways. These streamside forests serve as a transition from land to water. Riparian forests act as filters for the sediments and pollutants from farm fields, residential lawns, and roadways to help keep them from reaching the water. More details about grants to support this practice are available via the [Riparian Forest Buffer fact sheet](#).

### 2. Lawn to Habitat

DCNR supports the effective conversion of lawn to habitat across Pennsylvania to reduce the environmental impacts associated with mowing, including to improve water quality within local waterways and watersheds. The Lawn to Habitat grant opportunity provides funding to promote and facilitate the conversion of presently maintained lawn to actively managed upland forest (300- ft or further away from a waterbody) or perennial native meadow. More details about grants to support this practice are available via the [Lawn to Habitat fact sheet](#).

### 3. Urban and Community Forestry

Through the Urban and Community Forestry grant opportunity, DCNR offers funding to support sustainable urban and community forestry programs across Pennsylvania. This effort aims to build capacity within communities to plan for, plant, and care for trees. It also supports educational training to help citizens understand the diverse benefits of trees and the importance of proper tree planting and maintenance. More details about grants to support this practice are available via the [Urban and Community Forestry fact sheet](#).

## Resources

The following resources may be helpful for developing a competitive Grant Application.

### [Grant Program – Grant Management Documents](#)

- [Community & Watershed Forestry Program FAQ](#)
- [Community & Watershed Forestry Landowner Agreement Template](#)
- [Community & Watershed Forestry Budget Template](#)

### [Grant Program – Policies](#)

- [Community & Watershed Forestry Administrative Instructions & Process](#)
- [Community & Watershed Forestry Eligible and Ineligible Project Activities / Costs Policy](#)
- [Competitive Bid Policy](#)
- [Mini Grant Management Policy](#)
- [Sign Policy](#)