

Growing Greener Grants

Agricultural Advisory Board

December 22, 2016

Tom Wolf, Governor

Patrick McDonnell, Acting Secretary

Growing Greener Program

- What is the Growing Greener program?
 - Statewide program begun in 1999 providing grants to implement local watershed-based conservation efforts, including:
 - Ag BMP implementation
 - Streambank restoration
 - Urban stormwater infiltration/reduction
 - Abandoned mine drainage treatment
 - Conservation district watershed specialist funding
 - Funding also to PennVEST, DCNR, PDA and repayment of GG 2 bond

Objectives of DEP Growing Greener

- Watershed Restoration and Protection
- Support priority conservation activities of the Department
- Involve local stakeholders in water quality improvement projects

Growing Greener Funding

- How is the program funded?
 - Funded thru the Enviro. Stewardship Fund, initially by state appropriation and GG 2 bond
 - Current dedicated funding from ESF, revenue from:
 - Trash tipping fees
 - Act 13 of 2012
 - Amounts available to DEP for grants vary from year to year depending on revenues into ESF
 - 2016 funding level expected to be \$18.7 million

▶ Applying for Growing Greener Grants

- The opening of grant rounds announced annually
 - Open for at least 60 days to apply
- Signup on DEP website for notification when grant program opens
- Apply using application form, following program guidelines

How projects are evaluated

- Projects evaluated by several program staff
 - Administrative review assessing:
 - Completeness of application - Follow the checklist
 - Project description - Clear and concise
 - Budget outlining the various project tasks/deliverables
 - Understandable, complete, on proper worksheets
 - Partner roles – Explain who will do what for the project
 - Administrative costs – keep to a minimum, 5% max
 - Match obligations – are they met, are they exceeded?
 - 15% match requirement

How projects are evaluated

- Projects evaluated by several program staff
 - Benefits review assessing:
 - Statewide priorities – does it address any of these:
 - Restoration activities addressing polluted streams
 - Streamside forested buffer establishment
 - Implementing ag BMPs to address ag runoff concerns
 - Implementing practices addressing MS4 obligations
 - Regional priorities – does it address any of these:
 - Regionally defined ranging from ag to urban stormwater
 - Priority watersheds including Ches Bay

How projects are evaluated

– Benefits review assessing:

- Cost of the project – is it cost effective (bang for the buck)
- Special program considerations:
 - Watershed Renaissance
 - Healthy Waters
- Consistency with overall watershed strategy
- Potential to improve water quality!

How projects are selected

- **Projects selected based on their technical merit following criteria evaluation**
 - There is no discussion with the applicant during the evaluation and selection process
 - Make your submission complete and understandable
 - All projects are compared against each other and the strongest projects are selected for funding
 - Historically approximately 50% funded
 - Project evaluation, selection takes approx. 6 months involving numerous staff
 - 4 years to complete project

Types of common GG projects

- Education and Outreach
 - Such as outreach to landowners on pollutant reduction strategies
 - Agriculture
 - nutrient trading, runoff reduction, ag compliance
 - Stream side restoration
 - Forested buffers, protect property, safety, road stability
- Watershed Group Organization
 - Provide for public input on environmental issues
 - Public directed actions to address water quality concerns

Types of common GG projects

- Design and construction of practices
 - Most common category of projects
 - Agriculture projects to address:
 - Water quality concerns on the farm
 - Barnyards, stream buffers/fencing/crossings, field practices, manure storage, manure treatment
 - Stream Restoration
 - Property protection, animal and equipment safety

Extent of Ag projects under GG

- Common types of projects
 - Individual farm improvement
 - Projects addressing several farms in a priority area
 - Regional projects to support ag BMP implementation
 - TAG grant for engineering assistance
- Amount provided for ag projects in the past
 - 2012: 18 projects for \$4.5 million
 - 2013: 23 projects for \$4.8 million
 - 2014: 23 projects for \$7.6 million
 - 2015: 30 projects for \$6.4 million

Extent of Ag projects under GG

- Future perspective
 - BMP implementation is the main focus
 - Currently a stronger priority on N, P, and sediment reduction practices in the Ches Bay watershed
 - Support farmers working to comply with state regs
 - Revised to further support ag work (regional projects)
 - Better verification of continued life of the practice
 - Looking to fully restore priority impaired waters
 - Looking to focus on recoverable waters

Growing Greener Program Summary

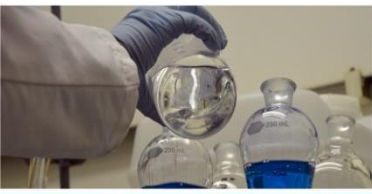
- Projects selected statewide based on their merits to restore or protect water quality
- Projects address various sources such as:
 - Agriculture
 - Urban/residential runoff
 - Abandoned Mine Drainage
 - Streambank erosion
- Significant investment in ag projects in the past and increased emphasis currently

Growing Greener Program Summary

- What is the expected outcome of GG
 - Reduced pollution loads
 - Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Sediment
 - Reduction in storm water runoff
 - Volume, and therefore intensity
 - Long-term streambank stability
 - Increase local involvement in water quality activities
 - Restored/Improved streams and lakes!

Growing Greener Program

Questions?



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