



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

Rebecca Tepper, Secretary

Grant Announcement

BID # BD-26-1042-ENV-ENV01-126735

Project # FY27LAND0014

BID ENV 25 DCS 04

Posting Date: Monday, March 23, 2026

Woodlands Partnership Implementation Grant

FY 2027

1. Grant Opportunity:

A. OVERVIEW AND GOALS: In support of Section 91 of Chapter 209 of the Acts of 2018, and Chapter 364 of the Acts of 2024, which established the Woodlands Partnership of Northwest Massachusetts (“Woodlands Partnership”) and called for partnership and collaboration among state, regional, and local governments to advance the goals of the Woodlands Partnership, the Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs (EEA) hereby offers grants to communities that have voted to participate in the Woodlands Partnership (by Select Board or Town Meeting votes) and to regional organizations which work to engage in activities and programs to advance the goals of the Woodlands Partnership in the region.

B. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: This bid is open to municipalities that have voted to join the Woodlands Partnership and Regional Planning Agencies (RPAs), Regional Fire Districts or regional environmental, cultural, or economic development organizations named as WP Board members or working in the WP region.

If a municipal vote to join the Partnership is still pending, this vote (by Select Board, Town Meeting, City Council or Signature of the Mayor) must be taken prior to the grant application deadline. Municipalities may submit an application for projects within their town or city, and/or participate as a joint partner with one or more other communities on a regional application.

Applications submitted by Regional Planning Agencies (RPAs) or regional organizations named as WP Board members or working in the WP region must reflect a regional project.

C. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS: EEA seeks to further two goals of the Woodlands Partnership within communities that have officially voted to join the Woodlands Partnership. These goals are: 1) increase economic development related to sustainable forestry and natural resource-based tourism in the municipalities and, 2) increase forest conservation and sustainable forestry on private and municipal lands.

Proposals can be for a project within a single municipality or for planning work or implementation of a

project across municipal boundaries or for the entire Woodlands Partnership region.

Tasks suitable for funding under this bid include, but are not limited to:

- Innovative projects that support local sustainable forestry, forest conservation, riparian restoration or natural resource-based tourism including those outlined in the Woodlands Partnership 2023 Plan;
- Acquisition of trail easements, river protection easements or municipal forest or conservation land or the purchase of conservation restrictions to conserve forest;
- Studies to inform natural resource-based tourism programs or implementation of projects such as signage, tourism facilities or woods roads or trail repairs that support hiking, bicycling, rafting, hunting, fishing or other outdoor recreational activities;
- Planning work and/or the implementation of demonstration or research forests;
- Projects that increase or improve visitor use and access to publicly accessible town forests, publicly accessible trails, or rivers.
- Studies or inventories required to prepare a forest carbon credit market project, or forest stewardship plan and/or other, related tasks such as implementation of a forest stewardship climate plan;
- Technical assistance to landowners that promotes sustainable forestry practices or enhance opportunities for natural resource-based tourism; or
- Planning work or other activities to assist communities with funding applications to secure additional financial assistance to further the Woodlands Partnership goals;

Municipalities may apply for up to \$25,000 to pursue eligible projects within their community, or partner with additional communities on a regional grant of up to \$75,000. A municipality submitting a regional grant of >\$50,000 must identify at least two additional communities to participate in the project. RPA's and regional organizations may submit an application for a regional grant and are encouraged to include the municipality/municipalities in which the project is located as a partner(s).

For example, multiple communities interested in forest stewardship for municipal lands may submit a regional application to increase coordination for forest stewardship across town boundaries. The application is eligible for the full \$75,000 if three or more communities participate. Regional proposals require the endorsement, via a letter of support on Town letterhead, from each community that is participating in the proposal.

Applicants may pursue a regional grant that extends beyond the Woodland Partnership region as long as the applicant(s) can demonstrate that the Woodlands Partnership grant funds are focused on the WP region and other funding is used for the work outside the region.

Municipalities may, subject to EEA approval and following public procurement laws, sub-contract with a non-profit, planning consultant, regional planning agency, construction firm, or other appropriate vendor to complete approved proposals. Regional organizations may, with EEA approval, sub-contract with a vendor appropriate to the proposed activity.

A regional organization named as a WP Board member or working in the WP region may apply for a regional project on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Board with the Committee's approval.

Note that the following activities are *ineligible* for funding:

- Maintenance activities or activities or equipment purchases that are or were previously funded by municipal budgets;
- Motorized vehicles;
- Municipal staff costs;
- Projects that do not directly support sustainable forestry and natural resource-based tourism goals.

D. APPLICATION DEADLINE: 11:59 pm on Friday, May 15th, 2026.

E. FUNDING AVAILABILITY: The Woodlands Partnership Implementation Grant Program is a reimbursement program. Maximum grant awards are \$25,000 per municipal proposal and \$75,000 for regional proposals for eligible projects within the Woodlands Partnership region, unless increased at the discretion of the Secretary:

Reimbursement rate: Up to 100% of total eligible project costs.
Match in the form of volunteer or municipal staff time or additional municipal or regional planning agency funds is encouraged but not required.

Maximum award: Up to \$25,000 per municipal proposal and up to \$75,000 will be available per regional proposal. Exceptions may be made at the Secretary's discretion.

If Regional Planning Agencies, a regional organization, or a community submits a regional grant to benefit more than one community, the application may seek \$25,000 for each community participating up to the \$75,000 limit for regional proposals. Proposals are expected to vary in the amount of funding requested based on the anticipated activity.

A community may receive funding for both an individual municipal grant as well as participate in a regional application submitted by another municipality, RPA or regional organization. However, municipalities may not receive funding for more than one municipal grant per community.

F. BUDGET REQUIREMENT: An application must include a budget outlining total project costs and associated services or tasks. Grantees may submit invoices for costs incurred as tasks are completed. The community will be reimbursed for the balance of any grant funds upon receipt of all required deliverables, including final report that details all costs incurred and matching funds spent with final proof of payments. Only work completed during the period of the executed contract will be eligible for reimbursement.

G. REGULATIONS, STATUTES, OR AUTHORIZATION GOVERNING THIS GRANT PROGRAM: This bid is issued in support of Chapter 209 of the Acts of 2018, Section 91, which created the Woodlands Partnership, established a process for communities in the region to opt into the WP, called for partnership and collaboration among state, regional, and local governments to advance the WP, and specified purposes for the WP. Such purposes are compatible with those of EEA and with funding authorized in line item 2000-7072 of Section 2 of Chapter 209 of the Acts of 2018 and Chapter 268 of the Acts of 2022.

H. CONTACT INFORMATION:

Vanessa Farny
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge St. – Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114
vanessa.farny@mass.gov

2. Instructions for Application Submission

A. APPLICATION SUBMISSION: Applications with all supporting documents must be received electronically by **Friday, May 15, 2026 at 11:59 pm**. Electronic applications must include all required documents identified below and be submitted online through the [EEA Grant Management System](#).

Applications must be submitted through the EEA Grant Management System to be considered eligible. Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted.

Applicants are required to establish a “Business, Municipal, Nonprofit User” user profile on the system to submit an application. Please allow a few days to establish and verify your profile and navigate the new Grant Management System. Once verified, you will receive an email notification and access to the Grant Management System for your municipality or organization.

To create an applicant profile:

- From <https://greenhub.appianportals.com/applicants-portal/page/grantee-portal>, click on “Login to Applicant Portal”
- Select “Business, Municipal, Nonprofit User Log in/Register.
- Use your previously established log-in to enter the system, or if you are seeking to create a Login, select “Create an Account”. Follow the instructions provided.
- For help, see [EEA’s Grant Management System User Guide or Instructional Videos](#).

This portal will serve as your locale to view all grant information. You may then view the FY27 Woodlands Partnership Grant Program funding opportunity and apply through the Grant Management System.

Applicants may save a draft application and return to modify and/or submit until the application deadline. After the deadline, applicants will not be able to edit, add files or submit materials. Please note that the “Grant Primary Contact” must be a valid system user and will receive all relevant notifications and updates to the grant record.

EEA shall make no allowance for technical difficulties or inability of the respondents to utilize the online system. No applications will be accepted after the deadline for any reason.

Digital files uploaded to the application site must be provided in Microsoft Office compatible format or unlocked Adobe Acrobat. A few tips:

- Filter programs by Program Name or Agency to navigate to EEA’s FY27 Woodlands Partnership Grant Program.
- To start an application, click the “Apply” button.

- The “Summary” tab will show the general grant program information. The “Policies and Procedures” tab will show the program procedures, custom application questions, and required documentation.
- Click on the “Start Grant Application” button on the top right to enter the grant application form.
- In the “Upload Documentation” section, download, complete, and re-upload the required template documents. Upload any supporting documentation or materials under “Additional Documentation”.
- Submit your grant application when complete. No changes may be made after submitting.

B. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS: A complete application includes:

- The completed application form with a 1-2 page project description as requested. If the project description references recommendations from the WP Plan, a Master Plan or other plan, Climate Vulnerability Assessment, or other document, include a copy of relevant pages. If a trail, trail access, or trail easement is proposed, please include a map or sketch plan that identifies the proposed location of the trail, the affected landowners or agencies and any other relevant details that will be useful in the project’s evaluation.
- An itemized project budget that reflects the full project costs, identifies any match proposed, and the total funding request for eligible project costs.
- A project timeline with task-by-task description of proposed project components including anticipated start date and completion dates for tasks and/or components; the date by which any product will be delivered and/or outcome(s) will be realized.
- For regional applications, a letter(s) of support and/or commitment(s) to participate from each municipality within the project boundaries.
- For municipal applications, a letter signed by an authorized signatory for the applicant organization (e.g., Chair of the Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator or Mayor), authorizing the project manager to apply for the grant on behalf of the municipality.

C. ESTIMATED AWARD DATE: Awards will be announced as soon as is feasible after the grant application deadline. Contract negotiations will begin immediately thereafter.

D. ESTIMATED CONTRACT START DATE: Notwithstanding any verbal representations by the parties, or an earlier start date listed in the Standard Contract Form, and only after an award is issued and a final scope of services has been negotiated, the effective start date of a contract shall be the latest of the following dates: the date the Standard Contract Form has been executed by an authorized signatory of the contractor and the procuring department; the date of secretariat or other approval(s) required by law or regulation; or a later date specified in the Standard Contract Form.

3. PERFORMANCE AND CONTRACT SPECIFICATIONS

A. EVALUATION CRITERIA: Proposals will be evaluated based on the following considerations:

- Project clearly advances of one or both of the goals of the Woodlands Partnership identified above (20 Points)
- Budget reflects an efficient use of funding to address a demonstrated, prioritized need within the community or region (10 Points);

- If previously awarded a Woodland Partnership grant, Applicant(s) have demonstrated the capacity to complete proposed project(s) in the timeframe identified in the application (10 Points);
- Project achieves a product that is readily usable (whether a plan, design or physical structure) to further the above goals (10 Points);
- Project is informed by, has incorporated, or will solicit community input (5 Points)
- Project includes an educational or technical assistant component (5 Points);
- Municipal partner(s) are involved and/or the project deliverables are directly transferrable to other communities in the WP (10 Points);
- Project reflects committed match in the form of volunteer time or staff time or donated services or materials or by leveraging other, non-state sources of funding (10 Points); and
- Project promotes climate change resilience or achieves climate mitigation (10 Points)
- Evidence the project will have an overall benefit to the community and/or WP region (10 Points).

Note that EEA reserves the option to interview some or all of those submitting a proposal for the purpose of clarifying a proposal prior to making a final award.

B. DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED IF SELECTED TO RECEIVE FUNDING: If an application is selected to receive funding, each non-state project partner seeking funding will be required to submit the following forms to complete a contract:

- Commonwealth Standard Contract Form;
- Commonwealth Scope and Budget Form;
- Completed Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing; and

Respondents may review the Commonwealth Standard Contract Form, Commonwealth Scope and Budget Form, and Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing prior to submission of a Response, available under the Forms and Terms tab of this Commbuys posting, as well as: <https://www.mass.gov/lists/osd-forms>.

C. PROJECT TERMS: Awarded projects must abide by the Standard Commonwealth of Massachusetts Terms and Conditions. All contracts are subject to successful negotiation of a Final Scope of Services. EEA does not guarantee that any contracts may result from this bid. It is anticipated that projects will commence when the relevant contract is executed.

D. ANTICIPATED DURATION OF CONTRACTS: Contracts awarded will begin on the date of contract execution or a specified later date. Awards for FY 27 will end on June 30, 2027 unless project applicant is informed otherwise by EEA in writing. Deliverables for these contracts must be received, along with final billing, by July 31, 2027. Extension of a contract is at the sole discretion of EEA.

All contracts shall be subject to available funding, if available funding ceases for any reason, a contract shall be deemed under suspension and contract performance must halt. A contractor will not be entitled to compensation for any performance provided during the period of contract suspension. EEA may lift the suspension if additional funding is received. In the absence of foreseeable available funding, EEA may terminate the contract.

E. DELIVERABLES, OWNERSHIP, AND CREDIT DUE: Grant recipients agree to share the product of the funded activities with EEA and with other communities in the Commonwealth through reports, meetings, workshops, and to highlight these activities in print, on the web or other media outlets. EEA Woodlands Partnership grant program funding must be acknowledged in any press or other materials issued by the applicant or its partners pertaining to the project.

F. REPORTING: A brief project update with a summary of tasks achieved will be required three to four months after contracting via an electronic copy submitted via email. A final report will be required at the time that reimbursement is requested. The final report must provide a description of the completed tasks as contracted. All final reports and deliverables are requested to be sent via email.

G. INVOICING: The Woodlands Partnership Grant Program is a reimbursement program. Award recipients must submit a billing form with proof of payment for all project costs for which reimbursement is sought. Only approved expenses incurred by the contracted entity during the period of contract, and for which appropriate documentation is submitted, are eligible for reimbursement.

4. MISCELLANEOUS

A. TYPE OF PROCUREMENT: Grant

B. USE OF THIS PROCUREMENT BY SINGLE OR MULTIPLE DEPARTMENTS: This bid is a single department procurement.

C. REQUEST FOR SINGLE OR MULTIPLE CONTRACTORS: This bid may result in multiple contracts.

D. BID DISTRIBUTION METHOD: This bid has been distributed electronically using the COMMBUYS system. It is the responsibility of every Applicant to check COMMBUYS for any modifications to a bid to which they intend to respond. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and its subdivisions accept no liability and will provide no accommodations to Applicants who fail to check for amended bids and submit inadequate or incorrect responses. Potential applicants are advised to check the "last change" field on the summary page of bids for which they intend to submit a response to ensure they have the most recent bid files. The application and answers to questions will be posted on COMMBUYS and the [DCS website](#).

E. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS TO THIS BID:

A. Application form

Attachment A

Woodlands Partnership Implementation Grant Program

APPLICATION FORM QUESTIONS – FY2027

Deadline: Friday, May 15, 2026

Application must be completed online at the EEA Grant Management System:
<https://greenhub.appianportals.com/applicants-portal/page/grantee-portal>

The Grant Manager for the Applicant must create an account and submit responses to the following questions. ***This Form is provided here for reference only.***

Please reach out to Vanessa Farny, Land and Forest Grant Manager, at vanessa.farny@mass.gov or (857) 330-1978 with any questions.

PROJECT DETAILS

1. Describe briefly the proposed project including the goals, measures of success and/or any planned tasks for accomplishing the project.
2. What are the community needs that the project will address?
3. How has community input has been considered or reflected in the proposed project?
4. How do project goals advance the applicable goals of the Woodlands Partnership? Specifically, will the project conserve regional forest and/or increase economic development through sustainable forest products, outdoor recreation, and natural resource and tourism-based businesses?
5. Does the project contain an educational or technical assistance component? If yes, describe.
6. Does the project promote climate change resilience or mitigation? If yes, please describe.
7. Does the project improve trail resources? If so, How does the public presently accesses the trail system and/or where public access is proposed?
8. Does the project require any permits? If so, will permits will be issued prior to contracting? If any permits are required, the permit or application for the permit must be submitted with the grant application. Should the project be selected for funding, the permit will be required prior to contracting.
9. Describe the deliverable(s) that will be submitted and/or readily usable at the end of the project (whether a plan, design or physical structure).

10. Does the project require long-term maintenance (of trails, sites or other features)? If yes, who will be responsible for long-term stewardship or upkeep? Please describe the resources identified to accomplish long-term stewardship, and next steps to ensure the facilities, site or features will be maintained appropriately after the project is completed.

For Regional Projects:

11. Identify the collaborating municipality/ies.
12. Is the deliverable transferable to other communities in the Woodlands Partnership? If so, how do you propose to ensure the deliverable is shared/transferable?

2. PROJECT BUDGET

This grant program is a reimbursement program. Grant recipients are reimbursed after invoices have been received from the municipality, regional organization or their contactors and work has been completed. Costs incurred prior to an executed contract are ineligible for reimbursement. Municipal staff time, volunteer hours, and donations are also ineligible for reimbursement.

Attach a detailed budget with total project costs. Please make sure to identify the source of all local funding including donations and municipal funds and other funding sources.

1. Does the budget reflect matching funds? If yes, describe. Please note that evidence of these contributions will need to be submitted for purposes of reimbursement.
2. Have you explored other sources of funding for this project? If so, please identify.