

LAND ACQUISITION FOR SOURCE WATER PROTECTION FUNDING

Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) Program

May 2023



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

Apply for funding to protect your community's drinking water supply. Protecting your municipality's public water supply is a high priority. Municipalities, land trusts, and soil and water conservation districts can receive state money to purchase land that is near their public drinking water sources. Awardees will then protect that land and make sure it is only used for activities that will not harm their public water supply.

Program Overview

The **Water Quality Improvement Project Program (WQIP)** is a **competitive, statewide, reimbursement grant program**. One kind of grant offered through this program is Land Acquisition for Source Water Protection. This project type provides funding to protect sources of public drinking water by funding land acquisition. The grant provides money to purchase parcels and/or conservation easements for land that is near an active public drinking water supply.

- **Maximum grant amount: \$5,000,000**
- **Required local match: 25% of requested grant amount**
- **Advance Payment: Awardees may request advance payment of transactional and purchase costs**
- **Riparian Buffer: Variable riparian buffer width depending on parcel location**
- Eligible project costs include: buying land or development rights; transactional costs such as surveys, appraisals, transfer taxes, and title reports; and riparian buffer or wetland restoration costs.

Applicants do not need to have their parcels identified at the time of application but must have a drinking water source targeted for protection identified.

For full grant details view the **WQIP Program Overview** at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/4774.html>.

Why Should You Apply?

- Prevent pollution from entering the public drinking water supply.
- Reduce out of pocket costs with available grant funding.
- Avoid paying preventable drinking water treatment costs.
- Increase community confidence in their local public drinking water.
- Support other environmental interests such as preserving open space.

Eligible Applicants

- Municipalities
- Not-for-profit corporations (such as Land Trusts)
- Soil and water conservation districts

How to Apply

WQIP is part of the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA). To apply visit <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/cfa>. **Applications are due July 28, 2023 at 4:00 PM.**

KEY POINTS

- **\$5,000,000** maximum grant amount
- **25%** local match
- **Advance Payment Option**
- Eligible Applicants: **Municipalities, not-for-profit organizations, and soil and water conservation districts**
- Application Deadline: **July 28, 2023 at 4:00 PM**

Road Map for Success

Below are some of the steps to consider before starting a WQIP Land Acquisition Project for Source Water Protection.

Step 1. Learn more about the grant program

- Visit [DEC's WQIP webpage](https://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/4774.html) (<https://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/4774.html>) to learn more about the grant program and when funding is available.
- Visit [DEC's WQIP Land Acquisition Projects for Source Water Protection Toolkit](https://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/115920.html) (<https://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/115920.html>) webpage to learn more about land acquisition and available resources for an awardee to complete such a project.

Step 2. Gather information

- Review your previous source water assessment plan (SWAP), wellhead protection plan, drinking water source protection plan (DWSP2), or other source water protection plan to understand the area that drains to your surface water intake or groundwater well.
- Partner with your drinking water operator if your community does not have such a plan and you are looking to understand where your water comes from.

Step 3. Prioritize parcels

- Use the information gathered in Step 2 to prioritize parcels or an area for outright purchase or conservation easement that will protect the public drinking water source.
- If you need assistance with identifying parcels, consider working with land acquisition and source water protection experts in your area that could aid with the Town's land acquisition for source water protection goals. For example, a consulting firm or land trust may be a great partner and aid with the transaction side (e.g., appraisals, surveys, environmental assessments, title, etc.) of the land acquisition program.

Step 4. Apply for funding

- Utilize the information gathered in Steps 2 and 3 to fill out a WQIP Land Acquisition application when available through the [Consolidated Funding Application](https://apps.cio.ny.gov/apps/cfa/) (<https://apps.cio.ny.gov/apps/cfa/>).

Step 5. Acquire parcels

- If you receive a WQIP Land Acquisition grant, acquire parcels for source water protection.
- Review [DEC's WQIP Land Acquisition Projects for Source Water Protection Toolkit](https://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/115920.html) (<https://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/115920.html>) webpage for program and document resources that will aid with the land acquisition process.

Step 6. Steward land

- Steward the land and make sure it is only used for activities that will not harm the public drinking water source.

CONTACT INFORMATION

On the web: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/4774.html>

Kristin Martinez

Environmental Program Specialist, Division of Water

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-3507

P: (518) 402-8086 | F: (518) 402-9029 | kristin.martinez@dec.ny.gov

www.dec.ny.gov