

TRANSMITTAL MEMO

TO: MISSISQUOI BASIN WATER QUALITY COUNCIL (BWQC)
FR: MISSISQUOI BASIN CLEAN WATER SERVICE PROVIDER (CWSP) STAFF
RE: MATERIALS FOR MEETING ON 4/3/24
DA: 3/28/24

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Greetings, Missisquoi BWQC members and others. The next meeting will take place on April 3. Meeting materials are attached. Please let me know if you have any questions. Also please let me know if you will be unable to attend the meeting.

1. Conflict of interest disclosures, if any

This recurring agenda item provides BWQC members and others opportunity to note possible conflicts of interest regarding agenda items.

2. Seating of any new representatives or alternates

This standing agenda item allows BWQC members to acknowledge new representatives or alternates.

3. Budget Adjustment Requests

This agenda item (which staff proposes become a standing item) allows BWQC members an opportunity to ask questions about budget adjustments approved by staff or by staff and the Chair/Vice Chair. In cases where action by the full BWQC is required, the item will be used as a placeholder for such discussions.

4. Brainstorming session on overcoming obstacles to project advancement

As staff have noted in materials prepared for another basin, as we approach the second anniversary of the BWQC's creation and have had time to form opinions about 'what works and what doesn't, CWSP staff (and others) felt that BWQC members might welcome the chance to take part in a brainstorming session focused on overcoming obstacles to project advancement. Using an online brainstorming template, we will facilitate a rapid-fire, results-oriented session. Our goal is to encapsulate our collective experiences and insights. Please come to the meeting prepared to share your ideas.

5. Potential changes for Round 5 Call for projects

The next Call for Projects will open on April 17, with a deadline of May 22. For now, staff anticipate the announcement will be similar to previous ones. However, we understand it could be advantageous to adjust the announcement. Staff will briefly review the announcement with BWQC members and may propose changes to reflect issues raised during the brainstorming session or other potential CWSP initiatives.

6. DEC clean water network summit (April 5)

To recap memos included in earlier packets, the Clean Water Network Summit will be held on April 5, 2024, at St. Leo's Hall in Waterbury, starting at 9:00 AM.

DEC will host the event to bring clean water practitioners together to discuss challenges and opportunities. It will include presentations, panel discussions, and project updates. In-person attendance is encouraged, and refreshments and lunch will be provided to the first 100 registrants. If needed, CWSP may assist with travel expenses.

One item on the agenda is the so-called Slam. During the "slam," CWSPs and BWQCs will present updates on their activities. Currently, CWSP staff for Basins 6 and 7 anticipate that the presentations will include "Snapshots" of the CWSP's progress as well as achievements of the Basin Councils. The slides might also include results of the Brainstorming session" on "overcoming obstacles" earlier on this agenda.

7. Updates and conclusion

Once again, time will be available for discussion of updates and potential future meeting topics. If you would like to mention any of your own please let us know.

Thanks to all who participate.

AGENDA

Missisquoi Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC)

Wednesday, April 3, 2024

11:00AM -1:00 PM

Remote /Zoom meeting

(Zoom details below)

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Meeting protocols
3. Conflict of interest declarations, if any
4. Review/adjust and approve agenda
5. Approval of minutes
6. Public comment not related to items on agenda
7. Seating of any new reps or alternate(s)
8. Budget adjustment requests
9. Brainstorming session on overcoming obstacles to project advancement
10. Potential changes for Round 5 Call for projects
11. DEC clean water network summit (April 5)
12. Updates and conclusion

Please Note: The schedule for the upcoming application round in Missisquoi Basin is as follows:

Round	Open	Deadline
5	April 17, 2024	May 22, 2024

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81332571725?pwd=UktCekQ5R2ZSbVNtMXlUclpYnVl3UT09>

Meeting ID: 813 3257 1725

Passcode: 103651

One tap mobile

+13052241968,,81332571725# US

+13092053325,,81332571725# US

Staffing provided by Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NRPC), the Basin 6 Clean Water Service Provider. NRPC's physical / mailing address is 75 Fairfield Street, St. Albans, Vermont 05482.

NRPC will ensure public meeting sites are accessible to all people or provide an opportunity to request accommodations. Requests for free interpretive or translation services, assistive devices, or other requested accommodations, should be made to Amy Adams, NRPC Title VI Coordinator, at 802-524-5958 or aadams@nrpcvt.com. NRPC will accommodate requests made no later than 3 business days prior to the meeting for which services are requested, and will strive to accommodate all other requests. This support is provided in accordance with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

Approval of minutes

**Missisquoi Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC)
MINUTES**

Wednesday, February 7, 2024

11:00 AM-1:00 PM

Virtual Meeting/Held Via Zoom* (computer/smartphone/tablet etc.)

<https://youtu.be/fnnj6t63M5Y>

**A VIDEO RECORDING OF THE MEETING IS AVAILABLE THROUGH
THE NRPC YOUTUBE CHANNEL (Link above).
THE WRITTEN MINUTES ARE A SYNOPSIS OF THE DISCUSSION AT THE
MEETING. MOTIONS ARE AS STATED. MINUTES WILL BE SUBJECT TO
CORRECTION BY THE COUNCIL. CHANGES, IF ANY, WILL BE RECORDED IN THE
MINUTES OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

Council Members: Lindsey Wight (Q), Ted Sedell (Q), Barry Lampke (Q), Beth Torpey (Q), Kent Henderson (Q), Allaire Diamond (Q), Dave Allerton (Q), Dan Seeley (Q), Mel Auffredou (Q), Bridget Butler

(Q= towards quorum)

Staff: Dean Pierce, Sara Gratz

Others present: July Medina-Triana, Karen Bates, Jim Pease (and Jim's Otter Pilot AI), Caroline Foley, and Hannah Mahar

1. Welcome and Introductions

Lindsey Wight opened the meeting as chair at 11:02 am.

2. Meeting protocols

Lindsey went over meeting protocols.

3. Conflict of interest declarations, if any

Mel Auffredou announced that has a project application that is up for review, and will need to recuse herself when that goes to vote.

4. Review/adjust and approve agenda

No adjustments were made.

5. Approval of Minutes

Dan motioned to approve the minutes and Kent seconded. Motion carried.

6. Public comment not related to items on agenda

No public comments were made.

7. New rep or alternate seating (if required)

No new reps or alternates were seated.

8. Application for funding-Round 4

a. Marsh Brook Floodplain Restoration

Mel gave a presentation on the Marsh Brook Restoration Project application that the Franklin County NRCD submitted. The site of the project is near the mouth of Marsh Brook at Lake Carmi State Park and has full support from the Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation.

The application is seeking approval for the preliminary design phase of the project, which would help determine the best approach moving forward. The options they are considering include implementing strategic woody additions, or floodplain lowering. They are also expecting to implement streambank stabilization in one area, and are expecting that they will need to have a historic and archeological review conducted. The annual phosphorus reduction from this project is estimated to be around 16.5 kg per year and the cost effectiveness is estimated to be between \$3,776 and \$8,622 per kilogram.

Discussions followed pertaining to methods for estimating costs, permitting requirements, and questions related to applying for funding.

Kent motioned to approve the project and Allaire seconded. Mel recused. Motion carried.

9. Confirming of form of Policy on Budget Adjustments

Dean presented the policy for budget adjustments that was adopted at the previous meeting and asked the Council to take action on it again because the previous version did not have the language written in policy format. Dan motioned to accept the policy and Allaire seconded. Motion carried.

10. Phosphorus Crediting

Dean gave an update on estimating phosphorus credits, sharing DEC's plans to establish methods for calculating them on other project types, such as river corridor easements, forest lands sector projects, conservation easements on agricultural lands, and wetland protection and restorations. Currently, these project types are ineligible for CWSP funding. Dean recommended that anyone with questions should reach out to him or DEC.

11. Clean Water Network Summit

Dean gave a reminder about the Clean Water Network Summit and encouraged Council members to sign up if they plan to attend. He also shared that it was originally planned to be a hybrid event but now it is strictly in-person.

A short discussion followed, expressing disappointment that the event no longer had a hybrid option, noting that travel can be a barrier to some who would like to attend.

12. Updates and Conclusion

Dean shared that DEC has released new guidance on project development and suggested that it could be a topic for an upcoming meeting.

a. Input on Cost effectiveness threshold

Dean gave an update on the input that other CWSPs are giving to DEC regarding a cost effectiveness threshold. He shared that the consensus is generally that it is still too early to make that determination because the CWSPs need more experience with processing applications.

b. Adoption of completed projects

Dean shared that the CWSP are waiting for DEC guidance on the adoption of completed projects and suggested that the Council will possibly adopt a policy on the subject after the DEC guidance is released.

Lindsey called the meeting to an end at 12:15 pm. Allaire motioned to adjourn and Ted seconded. Motion carried.

Budget adjustment requests

MEMO

TO: MISSISQUOI BASIN WATER QUALITY COUNCIL
FR: CWSP STAFF
RE: BUDGET ADJUSTMENT PROTOCOL
DA: 3/28/24

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The Missisquoi Basin BWQC has adopted a policy for approving budget adjustments.

- **Purpose:** To streamline the process for making modest adjustments to previously approved project budgets.
- **Eligibility:** Approved projects are eligible for adjustment according to this policy.
- **Approval Process:**
 - Adjustments up to 10% of the budget or \$10,000 can be approved by CWSP staff at their discretion.
 - Adjustments over 10% but less than 20% of the budget or \$20,000 can be approved by CWSP staff with concurrence from the BWQC Chair and Vice Chair or two BWQC members without conflicts of interest.
 - Adjustments over 20% of the budget or \$20,000 require approval by a vote of the BWQC.
- **Exceptions:** Projects with estimated total costs of \$150,000 or more have higher approval thresholds.
- **Transparency:** Budget changes approved by CWSP staff or the Chair and Vice Chair are to be listed as information items on the meeting agenda.

This agenda item (which staff proposes become a standing item) allows BWQC members an opportunity to ask questions about budget adjustments approved by staff or by staff and the Chair/Vice Chair. In cases where action by the full BWQC is required, the item will be used as a placeholder for such discussions.

No action on budget requests is anticipated at the meeting on April 3.

Brainstorming session on overcoming obstacles to project advancement

MEMO

TO: MISSISQUOI BASIN WATER QUALITY COUNCIL
FR: CWSP STAFF
RE: BRAINSTORMING SESSION
DA: 3/28/24

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The agenda for the upcoming “Clean Water Network Summit” has multiple items relating to the ability of CWSPs and their partner organizations to complete projects to fulfill the goals of Act 76. See box below. (The complete agenda is presented later in this packet.)

As staff have noted in materials prepared for another basin, as we approach the second anniversary of the BWQC’s creation and have had time to form opinions about ‘what works and what doesn’t, CWSP staff (and others) felt that BWQC members might welcome the chance to take part in a brainstorming session focused on overcoming obstacles to project advancement. Using an online brainstorming template, we will facilitate a rapid-fire, results-oriented session. Our goal is to encapsulate our collective experiences and insights. Please come to the meeting prepared to share your ideas.

Agenda Items related to Project Completion:

- 5. Progress Towards Targets (11:15-Noon) and Capacity
 - a. DEC presentation of system wide progress in relation to targets through 2023 (p reductions by project stage and type, and number of projects and funding allocated across the full CWSP system.)
 - b. Capacity Discussion (11:30-12:00) Discussion: Capacity challenges and opportunities Moderator: Lyn Munno - Lunch 12:00-1:00pm
- 7. Problem solving panel discussions- 2:00pm-3pm a. ID and Developing Projects panel discussion (60min) Panelists: Dan Albrecht, Allaire Diamond, Patrick Hurley, Lauren Weston Moderator: Chris Rottler

Potential changes for Round 5 Call for projects

MEMO

TO: MISSISQUOI BASIN WATER QUALITY COUNCIL
FR: CWSP STAFF
RE: CALL FOR PROJECTS
DA: 3/28/24

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The next Call for Projects will open on April 17, with a deadline of May 22.

As of this writing, staff anticipate the announcement will be similar to previous ones. However, we understand it could be advantageous to adjust the announcement.

At the meeting on April 3, Staff will briefly review the announcement with BWQC members and may propose changes to reflect issues raised during the brainstorming session or other potential CWSP initiatives. Staff will also provide an update on

- 1) prequalification of contractors, and
- 2) the funding available for various categories of projects (i.e., ID/Assessment, Project Development, Design/Implementation, and--if available--Operation and Maintenance).

**FIFTH CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR CLEAN WATER PROJECTS IN
THE MISSISQUOI/ROCK/PIKE BASINS**

ISSUED APRIL 17, 2024

PROPOSALS DUE MAY 22, 2024 @ 5:00 PM

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/a491ae5d6de84767a530478dc921f4d3>

A. Introduction

The Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NRPC), in its role as the Clean Water Service (CWSP) Provider for Basin 6 (Missisquoi/Rock/Pike watersheds), is again accepting applications for funding for projects that improve water quality. Projects must be in keeping with the vision set forth by Act 76, the Clean Water Service Delivery Act, and policies and guidance set forth by [the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation](#) to implement the Act. **The CWSP has ample funding available to carry out eligible projects in the basin.**

B. Eligible Projects

Projects eligible for funding must be best management practices or other programs designed to improve water quality. Projects must not be required by a permit (10 VSA, Chapter 47), or subject to the requirements of Vermont Agricultural Water Quality statutes (6 V.S.A, Chapter 215). Funding may be available for the portion of projects that exceed requirements set forth in the statutes above. Project eligibility shall be determined by the Clean Water Initiative Program [FY23 funding policy, as updated](#), along with [Appendix A \(Screening form\)](#) and [Appendix B \(regarding project types\)](#).

• **Generic Eligible Project Types**

Agricultural Pollution Prevention –Engineering Design
Agricultural Pollution Prevention – Implementation
Road Project – Preliminary Engineering Design
Road Project – Final Engineering Design
Road Project – Implementation
Stormwater Master Plan - Project Identification
Stormwater – Preliminary Engineering Design
Stormwater – Final Engineering Design
Stormwater – Implementation
Roads/Stormwater Gully - Design
Roads/Stormwater Gully - Implementation
Forestry – Design
Forestry – Implementation
Lake Wise Assessments - Project Identification
Lake Watershed Action Planning (LWAP) - Project Identification
Lake Shoreland – Preliminary Engineering Design
Lake Shoreland – Final Engineering Design
Lake Shoreland – Implementation
Stream Geomorphic Assessment Phase 1 - Project Identification
Stream Geomorphic Assessment Phase 2 (River Corridor Plan) - Project Identification
Dam Removal – Preliminary Engineering Design
Dam Removal – Final Engineering Design
Dam Removal – Implementation
Floodplain/Stream Restoration – Preliminary Engineering Design
Floodplain/Stream Restoration – Final Engineering Design
Floodplain/Stream Restoration – Implementation
River Corridor and Wetland Easement – Design
River Corridor and Wetland Easement – Implementation
Riparian Buffer Planting
Wetland Restoration – Preliminary Engineering Design
Wetland Restoration – Final Engineering Design
Wetland Restoration – Implementation
Project Development
Block Grants
Operations and Maintenance
Agricultural Pollution Prevention –Engineering Design
Agricultural Pollution Prevention – Implementation
Road Project – Preliminary Engineering Design
Road Project – Final Engineering Design
Road Project – Implementation
Stormwater Master Plan - Project Identification
Stormwater – Preliminary Engineering Design
Stormwater – Final Engineering Design
Stormwater – Implementation
Roads/Stormwater Gully - Design

- **Currently Eligible Project Phases**

- i. Assessments / Identification
- ii. Development
- iii. Design
 - 30% AKA Preliminary
 - 100% AKA Final
- iv. Implementation ¹

For details relating to the eligible project types and phases , see DEC’s updated [FY23 funding policy](#) .

C. Eligible Entities

The CWSP is authorized to provide grant funding to qualified non-profit watershed organizations, natural resource conservation districts, regional planning commissions, other non-profit organizations, and municipalities. Projects not sponsored by one of these entities may still be eligible for funding via contracted services. Ineligible entities include Private citizens, individuals; Private for-profit businesses and industries; Private for-profit colleges and universities; Federal agencies.

D. Evaluation Process

All design and/or implementation projects will be evaluated using the CWSP’s prioritization system. This system emphasizes phosphorus reduction benefits (estimated using DEC’s [Interim Phosphorus Reduction Calculator Tool](#) and other DEC approved methods) and phosphorus reduction cost effectiveness. The model also considers project life span, operation and maintenance costs, conformance with applicable Tactical Basin Plan, and Co-benefits identified in the application materials.

A list or lists of eligible projects will be presented to the CWSPs Basin Water Quality Council ([BWQC](#)). The BWQC will meet quarterly to evaluate projects and recommend qualified projects for advancement.

E. Awards Process

Determination of project awards will take place at or following the quarterly BWQC meetings. Once the BWQC finalizes a list or lists of projects for funding and the CWSP confirms the project’s eligibility, they will take one of the two paths below.

1. For projects with a sponsor that is an eligible prequalified entity, the CWSP will determine if the entity has the experience and financial and staffing capacity to carry out the project. If so, the CWSP will develop a subgrant or contract with the sponsoring entity, depending on the nature of the work. If not, the project will follow the second path.
2. For projects lacking an eligible prequalified sponsor, or if the sponsor does not have the capacity to manage the project, the CWSP will either manage the project or identify another entity to manage the project following the CWSPs procurement process.

¹ Although the Funding Policy authorizes use of CWSP funds for Operation and Maintenance activities, those activities will be the subject of a Call for Applications issued in the next few months.

F. Application

- To apply, please fill out the new project application form for this funding round. <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/a491ae5d6de84767a530478dc921f4d3>
- In addition to answering the questions in the form, you will need to upload the following documents:
 - Indication of Landowner support (if applicable);
 - Completed [DEC screening form](#);
 - Completed DEC [Interim Phosphorus Reduction Calculator Tool](#) (if applicable) or [Functioning Floodplain Initiative Tool](#) outputs;
 - Project budget;
 - Map of Project Area;
 - Project Schedule.
- If applicable, you also need to supply a [Vermont Division for Historic Preservation Project Review Form](#). We encourage you to pay close attention to DEC's cultural resource assessment requirements, as they can have an impact on both project schedule and budget.

G. How this call for projects compares with earlier rounds

- This call for projects will resemble previous ones in most respects. The CWSP strongly desires to receive applications for projects at all stages of development, including 1) early stage (ID/Assessment and development), 2) design (preliminary, final), and 3) implementation. If you have an idea for a project application, we very much want hear about it.

H. Additional Information

For additional information, or if you have any questions, please contact

Dean Pierce dpierce@nrpcvt.com 802-524-5958

Also please visit the CWSP Projects & Funding page at

<https://www.nrpcvt.com/services-programs/water-resources/cwsp-projects-funding/>

and NRPC's RFQ page at

<https://www.nrpcvt.com/about-nrpc/rfp-rfq/>

for any updates relating to the application process.

DEC clean water network summit (April 5)

MEMO

TO: MISSISQUOI BASIN WATER QUALITY COUNCIL
FR: CWSP STAFF
RE: CLEAN WATER NETWORK SUMMIT
DA: 3/28/24

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To recap memos included in earlier packets, the Clean Water Network Summit will be held on April 5, 2024, at St. Leo's Hall in Waterbury, starting at 9:00 AM.

DEC will host the event to bring clean water practitioners together to discuss challenges and opportunities. It will include presentations, panel discussions, and project updates. Attendance is encouraged; however, it is my understanding that lunch will not be provided late registrants. If needed, CWSP may assist with travel expenses.

One item on the agenda is the so-called Slam. During the "slam," CWSPs and BWQCs will present updates on their activities. Currently, CWSP staff for Basins 6 and 7 anticipate that the presentations will include "Snapshots" of the CWSP's progress as well as achievements of the Basin Councils. The slides might also include results of the Brainstorming session" on "overcoming obstacles" earlier on this agenda.

Updates and conclusion