



Central Virginia Planning  
District Commission

# *Water Relief Mini Grant Purpose and Guidelines*

*Funding the planning, design, and construction of small Best Management Practice projects to improve water quality and reduce run-off in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.*



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## **Grant Program Overview**

The Central Virginia Planning District Commission (CVPDC) Water Relief Mini Grant is a reimbursement grant program that will provide up to \$4,500 in funding for the construction of on-the-ground Best Management Practice (BMP) projects or the evaluation and design support for the implementation of BMPs that will improve water quality and support the protection of local waterways that are part of the larger Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis through October 30, 2026, or until all grant program funds are expended. Projects must be completed by February 1, 2027, to receive reimbursement. This program is funded by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and CVPDC as part of Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP). WIPs are roadmaps for how the Chesapeake Bay states and District of Columbia, in partnership with federal and local governments, will attain the Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). In Virginia, the TMDL calls for a 20.5% reduction in nitrogen, 25.2% reduction in phosphorous and 20.8% reduction in sediment delivered into the Chesapeake Bay.

## **Grant Program Goals**

1. Advance the installation of BMPs that improve water quality by supporting the reduction of sediment, nutrients and surface run-off.
2. To pilot BMP projects and education throughout the CVPDC region within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.
3. To provide a simple, streamlined grant application process.

## **Eligible Applicants**

Applicants can be from local municipalities, non-profit organizations, schools, community organizations or private organizations. Applicants are eligible to submit multiple grant applications. Applicants with multiple BMP projects are encouraged to contact the Kelly Hitchcock, Deputy Director of Planning at [kelly.hitchcock@cvpdc.org](mailto:kelly.hitchcock@cvpdc.org) for a more detailed discussion of potential projects/applications.

Applicants must be located within the four-county CVPDC region within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed (Amherst County; Northern Appomattox, Bedford, and Campbell Counties; the Towns of Amherst and Appomattox; and the City of Lynchburg). See map on final page, project site must be within the blue outlined "Chesapeake Bay Watershed".

## **Eligible Projects**

Projects must construct or develop design for a BMP improvement that addresses a water quality need. Projects will address impervious surfaces, erosion, excess run-off, poor drainage, poor vegetation, and other problem areas. A site evaluation should be conducted to determine characteristics such as slope, soil, drainage patterns, sunlight and shade, and features such as property boundaries, right-of-way, topography, utilities, and stormwater conveyance. Funding can be applied to project planning, design, and construction for new BMP projects or BMP projects that are currently in development. Funding can also be applied to improving an already completed BMP. Work should begin within 60 days of award notification, and all projects for planning, design, and construction must be complete by February 1, 2027.

## ***BMP Selection***

BMPs can incorporate low impact development (LID) and green infrastructure principles or be simpler vegetation plantings. Improvements should be based on mimicking natural processes that result in infiltration, evapotranspiration, or use of stormwater to protect water quality through natural features. Applicants should implement BMPs approved by DEQ's BMP Clearinghouse.

Examples of eligible BMP projects are listed below. For more details on eligible BMPs, see the Best Management Practices Toolkit on the CVPDC website. Coordinate with CVPDC staff to determine if your project idea is eligible for the grant program.

- Green Infrastructure – Implementing green roofs, rain gardens, bioswales, permeable pavements, and/or other improvements.
- Riparian Buffers – Establishing vegetated buffers along waterways.
- Constructed Wetlands – Creating or restoring wetlands.
- Pervious Surfaces – Using porous materials for pavements, driveways, and sidewalks.
- Vegetated Swales – Planting vegetation channels or ditches along roads or in developments.
- Stormwater Bioretention – Constructing bioretention basins.
- Vegetated Conveyance – Mimicking natural drainage patterns to slow and treat stormwater runoff.
- Water Harvesting and Reuse – Collecting stormwater for non-potable uses.
- Erosion Control Measures – Implementing erosion control practices.
- Urban Tree Canopy Expansion and Conservation Landscaping – Increasing tree and native vegetative planting.

## ***Ineligible Projects***

This grant program does not fund public education initiatives that do not directly lead to the physical construction or land evaluation/design of BMPs.

## ***Funding and Match***

The program provides 100% project funding and requires no match. A funding award up to \$4,500 award is available, and the minimum award given is \$1,000. While no cash match is required, preference will be given to applications that demonstrate in-kind, which include volunteer time or donated services and items, or additional cash contribution. See Water Relief Mini Grant Rating Guidelines for application rate factors.

The Water Relief Mini Grant is a reimbursement program. Reimbursement is applied after the completion of the BMP project. To receive reimbursement, participants shall complete their BMP project (construction or design) no later than February 1, 2027, and submit a Project Completion Report by February 15, 2027. Funds may be combined with other grant or cost-share resources for a new or on-going BMP project.

Eligible expenses during the grant period include personnel and fringe, travel, supplies, design/evaluation services of an engineer/consultant (CVPDC can assist with coordination) contractual costs, labor, and maintenance.

## ***Application Process***

Complete the Water Relief Mini Grant Application found on the CVPDC website ([www.cvpdc.org](http://www.cvpdc.org)). Submit the application with all relevant attachments to the CVPDC at [communications@cvpdc.org](mailto:communications@cvpdc.org).

## ***Timeline***

Below are important application and project dates. CVPDC staff will communicate the result of each application with their applicant within two weeks of submission.

- Friday, October 30, 2026 - Final day to submit applications.
- Monday, February 1, 2027 – Project must be completed.
- Monday, February 15, 2027 – Project Completion Report submission deadline.

## ***Project Evaluation***

CVPDC staff will pre-screen each application to ensure requirements are met, and work with the applicant if there are any questions. See the Mini Grant Rating Guide for more details. Applications will be evaluated based on the following:

- Alignment with the Chesapeake Bay WIP goals to reduce nutrient, phosphorus, and sediment run-off.
- Project design – BMP design is adequately documented.
- Project Evaluation – Details outlining the need for evaluation/design assistance and confirmation of commitment to advance future construction.
- Project readiness – BMPs are ready to be implemented and can be completed by February 1, 2027. If grant funds are to be used for planning purposes, will be based on commitment to have a completed evaluation and details on process intended to advance future implementation.
- On-going monitoring and maintenance – Demonstrate that future maintenance of BMP has been addressed.
- In-kind match documentation – Projects that demonstrate community involvement and in-kind match will be prioritized.

## ***Post-Project Completion***

BMP construction or evaluation/design project shall be completed by February 1, 2027, for full reimbursement. Award recipients should recognize DEQ's Chesapeake Bay WIP program and goals in any publicity materials throughout the grant period.

When the BMP project is complete, recipients shall submit the Project Completion Report by February 15, 2027. When submitting the completion report, include all receipts from project expenses and any in-kind matches. Before and after photos of the area and BMP should be included with the submittal.

## ***Additional Information***

If you need additional information or have any questions regarding the mini grant program, reach out to CVPDC at [kelly.hitchcock@cvpdc.org](mailto:kelly.hitchcock@cvpdc.org).

