

Watershed Protection Grant explained:

These 2-year "implementation" grants come from Section 319 of the Clean Water Act. It is federal money that is distributed to the states. In the case of Maine, the money goes to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The DEP then awards the money through a competitive grant program. The application deadline this year is May 15, 2020. If the grant is awarded it will most likely start in early 2021 (perhaps late 2020) and run for 2 years.



These grants are all about controlling erosion into a lake from its surrounding watershed (all the land that drains to a lake). Erosion has been cited by Maine DEP as the number one threat to water quality in Maine lakes. Excessive erosion can cause massive algae blooms because eroding soil particles contain phosphorus - a plant nutrient that is naturally limited in lakes but common on land. Too much phosphorus eroding into a lake causes the algae to bloom. These blooms ruin water quality, recreation, wildlife habitat and even lead to a crash in shoreline property values. Lake Anasagunticook has had at least one such bloom in the past and we're trying to prevent it from happening again.

As Environmental Planner for the Androscoggin River Watershed Council (ARWC) I am writing one of these implementation grants for Lake Anasagunticook. The grantee will be the Oxford County Soil & Water Conservation District. LAA and the District are paying for me to write the grant. If the grant is awarded, the District will then hire me as a subcontractor to perform the field work. The District handles the financial record keeping. This is an arrangement that has worked very well in recent years...DEP likes us. We have been successful obtaining 319 grants in recent years for Ellis Pond (Roxbury and Byron), North Pond (Norway), and Hogan & Whitney Ponds (Oxford).

All contributors such as LAA, the towns, road organizations, Pine Shores Subdivision, Canton Water District, the Canton snowmobile club, local businesses and private landowners will be partners who will help determine how the grant money is spent.

These grants allow us to share the costs of fixing erosion problems. Let's say, for example, there's a town road erosion problem that will cost a total of \$4,000 to fix. The grant can pay roughly half of the expense - so in this case the grant reimbursement to the town would be \$2,000. Similar cost-sharing (scaled appropriately to the individual situation) can be done with private property owners, lake associations, private road associations, etc.

Overall, we need to raise 40% of the project total in local match. This will determine how much grant money we can apply for. For example, if \$40,000 were raised in local match then we could apply for \$60,000 in grant funds. Local match can consist not only of cash, but also "in-kind" donations of volunteer labor, supplies or equipment. All of the potential partners listed above are being asked to provide cash and in-kind match. We're not singling out any one entity to provide all of the match!

One of the things that LAA will do to meet its in-kind match is serve on the steering committee for the project. These projects always have a local steering committee that helps determine how grant funds are spent. Any participation of LAA on the committee, as well as LAA members' attendance at grant workshops or making improvements in erosion control on their properties counts as in-kind....so it all adds up.

LAA will pledge \$4,000 **cash** match + \$3,000 **in-kind** match. LAA's generous contribution of cash + in-kind match will help us raise a larger amount of local match so we can apply for the largest amount of grant funding possible. It is an investment in maintaining water quality in the lake for years to come!

Questions? anasagunticook@gmail.com