

# WNY GREAT LAKES RESTORATION GRANT PROGRAM FUNDING OPPORTUNITY OVERVIEW



The **Western New York Great Lakes Restoration Grant Program** provides funding for environmental restoration projects within the Niagara River/Lake Erie watershed in Western New York. Funding is provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and administered locally by Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper and partners. This program supports on-the-ground environmental improvements while helping organizations build capacity to manage federal funding. If your organization is new to federal grants, you are encouraged to apply. This program is structured to reduce barriers and provide support throughout the process.

## Who Can Apply?

Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations, Tribal governments, municipal governments, quasi-municipal entities, and public or nonprofit educational institutions. Prior federal grant experience is not required. Technical assistance will be provided to selected awardees.

## Eligible Projects

Projects must occur within the Niagara River/Lake Erie Watershed in Western New York and address at least one of the following:

- Invasive species control
- Habitat restoration
- Stormwater runoff reduction

Projects must include meaningful community participation (such as volunteer engagement, public meetings, youth involvement, or outreach activities). Education-only projects are not eligible, but educational components may be included within a restoration project.

## Funding Available

- **Total funding available:** Up to \$1,650,000
- **Individual Awards:** \$25,000 – \$500,000
- **Anticipated awards:** Up to 10
- **Match requirement:** None

## Federal Requirements

Because this funding originates from EPA, awardees must comply with federal requirements such as financial documentation, procurement standards, and reporting. You do not need federal systems fully established before applying. Training and one-on-one assistance will be provided to help selected organizations meet requirements.

## Application Process

This is a two-stage process:

**Stage 1:** Letter of Intent (LOI) – Short submission with no detailed budget required. BNW will review all LOIs and invite up to 30 applicants to submit a full application.

**Stage 2:** Full Application (by invitation only) – Includes detailed work plan, budget, and landowner letters (if applicable). Final award decisions will follow review.

## Next Steps

1. Review full RFA carefully. Go to [bnwaterkeeper.org/grantprogram](https://bnwaterkeeper.org/grantprogram) for detailed instructions.
2. Attend informational webinar on **Thursday, March 26, 2026 at 11:00 AM**. Register at [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_dRx2RkcTTAOI32DRymN4Cw](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_dRx2RkcTTAOI32DRymN4Cw)
3. Submit Letter of Intent through online portal no later than **Friday, April 17, 2026 (3:00 PM ET)**.

## Key Dates

- **Letter of Intent Due:**  
April 17, 2026 (3:00 PM ET)
- **Full Applications (by invitation):**  
June 2026
- **Awards Announced:**  
November 2026
- **Project Performance Period:**  
January 1, 2027 – September 30, 2029

In partnership with:

