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## CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS (CFP)

### Seeking Participants to Receive Community-based Technical, Financial and Training Assistance For Stormwater Management and Ecological Restoration in the Southeast New England Program Watershed

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#### *Timeline*

- Solicitation release date on **March 10, 2020**.
- Two opportunities to attend an informational conference call on **March 18** or **March 20, 2020**.
- Final submission for training and services participant application is due by **5:00pm on April 15, 2020**.
- Selected participants will be notified on **April 30, 2020**.

The Southeast New England Network (SNEP Network) is seeking municipalities, tribes and nonprofits representing communities in the Southeast New England watershed to receive technical, financial, and training assistance focused on stormwater/watershed management and ecological restoration.

#### *SNEP Network Mission:*

Empowering communities to achieve healthy watersheds, sustainable financing and long-term climate resilience through management of stormwater and restoration projects.

#### *Background*

The SNEP Network is seeking municipalities, tribes or nonprofits in the Southeast New England region (see Attachment 1, SNEP Boundary Map) who want to work with us over the coming year to create innovative and leveraged opportunities for enhanced stormwater management and associated ecological restoration and climate resilience. The Network is a partnership of organizations representing environmental nonprofits, academic entities, regional planners, and consultants who offer training and workshops in leadership development, financing, stormwater/watershed management, ecological restoration, and climate resilience (see Attachment 2, SNEP Network Partners). The Network also provides technical assistance services for stormwater/watershed

management, ecological restoration and climate resilience challenges across Southeast New England through a pool of pre-qualified consultants when warranted (visit <http://snepnetwork.org/contractor-pool/> for more information).

The Network is a 5-year effort sponsored by the US EPA Southeast New England Program (SNEP) to support communities in Rhode Island and Southeast Massachusetts that seek innovative solutions to managing stormwater and restoring ecological habitats. The Network encompasses partners having a wide range of skills and expertise representing organizations across Southeast New England and beyond. Through an unprecedented grouping of regional experts who live and work in the SNEP region, as well as collaborative problem solving, the SNEP Network delivers creative and effective solutions to build local capacity for improving watershed health, sustainable financing approaches, and improved on-the-ground stormwater management opportunities.

### ***The Opportunity***

The Network recognizes that communities in the region differ greatly based on particular circumstances, and therefore is offering two options for delivery of technical, financial and training services to communities. The two options are intended to provide flexibility for all situations to ensure diverse community participation. In particular, greater participation from indigenous and immigrant communities and communities of color is desired. The two options for delivery of services offered are as follows:

***Option One*** offers basic requests for assistance through our online portal to connect respondents with resources and partners in the region that can be quickly and efficiently provided in a matter of days or weeks. Please select this option if you do not yet know what services you might need.

***Option Two*** provides feasibility and planning services, to help a community better understand what information and processes will lead to improved stormwater management, ecological restoration or climate resilience and are intended to be provided over a period of several months. This option also provides more in-depth assistance to communities with established stormwater and restoration programs to advance their practice to the next level; this could include enhanced efforts to expand the geographic scope of stormwater retrofits, advance restoration activities to achieve multiple benefits (e.g. water quality, flooding and/or climate resiliency) or advance programmatic improvements such as asset management and financing solutions.

The Option Two applications are the focus of this Call for Participants, and the Network will identify and select up to six (6) communities in the SNEP region to receive support from the Network partners based on the responses to the solicitation. The Network's training and technical service's strategic areas currently includes the following:

- Financing and Leadership Training
- Stormwater Management
- Low Impact Development Checklist and Ordinance Review
- Green and Natural Infrastructure Solutions
- Pollutant Load Assessment and Monitoring

This offering of SNEP training and technical services will be delivered between **April 30, 2020 and September 30, 2021**. A core group of between 3-6 representatives from each applicant (depending on need) will work with the SNEP team(s) to develop a detailed schedule of customized services to meet the community's needs as described in their responses to this CFP. This effort will specifically focus on community-scale and/or watershed-scale applications that are cost effective and that provide new opportunities for communities to build

local capacity and move towards more sustainable financing and long-term climate resilience for stormwater management and ecological restoration efforts. While this technical assistance will help improve awareness of novel approaches and may help communities meet the requirements of MS4 (stormwater) permits, the SNEP Network is primarily focused on creating more efficient and effective stormwater/watershed management and ecological restoration outcomes for communities, rather than meeting specific MS4 permit requirements. The Network acknowledges that state governments in Massachusetts and Rhode Island have made significant investments and progress assisting with municipal community resilience, and our services are intend to complement and leverage this ongoing work.

### ***Available Services***

The following is an inventory of available services that can be provided via one or more Network teams:

1. Training:
  - Financing trainings focused on long-term sustainable resources for communities to plan and implement stormwater/watershed management and ecological restoration projects;
  - Training focused on enhancing leadership skills of elected or appointed leaders as well as senior professional staff (e.g., mentorship skill development, effective governance and policy development, environmental finance, effective communication tools, and problem solving skills);
  - Trainings or workshops focused on community climate resilience, adaptation planning, and nature-based solutions such as green or natural infrastructure;
  
2. Technical Assistance:
  - Assistance in planning, and as relevant, engineering (including conceptual designs) for best management practice retrofits for stormwater and watershed management including nature-based approaches using green and natural infrastructure concepts;
  - Desktop mapping and analysis using ArcGIS for assessing priority drainage basins, pollutant loading and “hotspots”, and green and natural infrastructure analysis;
  - Assistance completing Low Impact Development (LID) checklists and/or developing municipal specific ordinance/by-law language for low impact development and associated best management practices for stormwater/watershed management and ecological restoration;
  - Assistance in identifying low-cost “every day” stormwater retrofits and maintenance recommendations to enhance pollution prevention and mitigate localized flooding;
  - Assistance in planning and implementation of land conservation/protection, agricultural conservation practices and habitat restoration efforts linked to the community’s long-term watershed protection and/or climate resilience objectives.
  
3. Capacity Building:
  - Assistance with community engagement, partnership building and facilitation for stormwater/watershed management and ecological restoration topics across the Southeast New England watershed (including tribal and environmental justice communities).

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### ***How to Indicate Interest***

Municipalities, tribes or nonprofits working in communities within the SNEP area are welcome to apply for training and technical services assistance.

To submit a basic request for services described under Option One above, or if you do not yet know the services you require, please use the SNEP Network online portal at <http://www.snepnetwork.org/assistance-form>.

To submit a request for Option Two services, please submit a **Call for Participants Application** to the New England Environmental Finance Center (NE EFC) via the SNEP Network's website at <http://snepnetwork.org/call-for-participants>. Contact Jon Kachmar at [jon.kachmar@maine.edu](mailto:jon.kachmar@maine.edu) for questions and assistance related to submissions including if you need an alternative format for submitting this application. If you have specific questions about the viability of a proposed submission for services in advance of responding to this CFP, please contact the appropriate SNEP Network Liaison listed below:

- Contact Elizabeth Scott at [elizabethscottri@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethscottri@gmail.com) or 401-743-3934 for projects located in Rhode Island.
- Contact Kimberly Groff at [kimberlygroffma@gmail.com](mailto:kimberlygroffma@gmail.com) or 508-932-5528 for projects located in Massachusetts.

The SNEP Network will provide two opportunities via conference calls to answer any questions about the training and technical assistance services on **March 18, 2020 from 1:00pm-2:00pm** or **March 20, 2020 from 11:00am-12:00pm**. To get call-in information, go to <http://snepnetwork.org/events/call-for-participants-informational-call/>.

All of the following questions will require a response via the online Call for Participants Application form. Please be as succinct as possible to meet the 500 word limit per question.

1. What training and/or technical services is your community requesting?
2. Provide an overview of the basic elements of your stormwater, watershed and ecological restoration planning and/or implementation to date.
3. What is needed to improve overall stormwater management, watershed protection or ecological restoration within your community?
4. What are the biggest challenges that your community faces in effective stormwater/watershed management and ecological restoration (e.g., flooding, groundwater recharge, erosion, poor water quality)
5. Who would participate on behalf of your community and have each of the named people and organizations committed to full engagement? (e.g., municipal planners, public works or highway staff, town engineers, consultant designers and engineers, highway department staff, conservation agents, or tribal representatives)
6. Does your community have experience with green and/or natural infrastructure? Having limited experience is a valid answer; applicants will not be penalized for this in the review process.

### ***Selection, Evaluation and Local Commitment***

The SNEP Network Core Team, comprised of the NE EFC, Elizabeth Scott Consulting, Kimberly Groff Consulting, and Throwe Environmental, will evaluate all submissions and select up to six (6) communities to receive services based on successfully completing the Call for Participants Application and meeting the selection criteria. The SNEP Core Team reserves the right to reject any or all submissions that do not meet the goals and terms of this CFP.

The following selection criteria will be used to evaluate eligibility and rank applications for selection (total of 50 points possible):

1. Does the application for services align with the Network’s mission to empower communities to achieve healthy watersheds, sustainable financing and long-term climate resilience through management of stormwater and restoration projects? (10 points)
2. Will the results of the training and/or technical assistance have utility and relevance to other communities in RI and MA within the SNEP watershed and improve knowledge transfer and learning? (10 points)
3. Does the project advance multiple stormwater management and/or climate resilience objectives? (10 points)
4. Will the services contribute to a regional or watershed scale approach to stormwater management and/or ecological restoration, or lead to identifying on-the-ground projects or adopting new approaches to problem solving? (10 points)
5. Does the application for services demonstrate a commitment from the community’s staff and leadership to improve level of practice - towards a long-term and/or sustainable approach to stormwater management, ecological restoration and climate resilience? (10 pts)

Applications selected to receive services through this solicitation will require the following commitments. No cost-share is required, however applicants must commit staff and/or volunteer board members’ time (estimated at 60 hours per person over 6 months) to ensure completion of training and technical assistance services from the SNEP Network. The entity must also agree to submit documentation of time spent on the project using the in-kind services form provided by NE EFC. Time committed will include the following activities:

**Minimum Commitments Expected:**

- Establish a person as a single point of contact to manage a core team (or steering committee) within the community to steer the assistance;
- Identify and complete outreach to critical stakeholders, partners and community officials who will be involved in the trainings or technical assistance, including outreach to indigenous and immigrant communities, and communities of color.
- Coordinate, schedule, send invitations and attend meetings, trainings and workshops and provide scribes as needed;
- Provide access to relevant planning documents, budget information, and other relevant information and data as needed;
- Consider nature-based solutions (green and natural infrastructure) and regional partnerships during meetings, trainings or workshops for achieving sustainable, long-term climate resilience;

**Commitments for Successful Applicants:**

Successful applicants chosen to receive services will be required to assist in developing a memorandum of understanding that describes the services that will be provided and the commitments made by the applicant to support the implementation of services. Depending on the awarded services, this may include a signed letter of support from leadership of the organization, involvement of key community leaders, community outreach and engagement efforts, presentations of findings including possible financing and leadership training, and intent to leverage the results of services to the broader SNEP region as a peer mentor/resource.

Attachment 1—SOUTHEAST NEW ENGLAND REGION BOUNDARY



