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GOVERNOR KATHY HOCHUL

GOVERNOR HOCHUL AWARDS \$166 MILLION IN GRANTS TO 187 WATER QUALITY PROJECTS ACROSS THE STATE

\$101 Million Awarded to Projects Benefitting Environmental Justice Communities

Funding to Modernize Aging Water Infrastructure, Mitigate Climate Change, Combat Harmful Algal Blooms, Protect Drinking Water, and Prevent Potential Contamination

EFC to Remove Population Threshold, Allowing Larger Municipalities to Compete for Hardship Financing

Governor Kathy Hochul today announced more than \$166 million is being awarded to 187 projects to improve water quality across the state. The grants support projects that will help protect drinking water, update aging water infrastructure, combat contributors to harmful algal blooms, and improve aquatic habitat in communities statewide. More than \$101 million of the funding will support water quality improvements for environmental justice communities, which have been disproportionately impacted by environmental pollution.

"New York's record investments in water quality continue to protect New Yorkers' health, the economy, and quality of life," **Governor Hochul said**. "Communities across the state will benefit from this critical water infrastructure funding, which will protect water quality, prevent pollution and improve habitats."

More than \$146 million is being awarded today to 81 projects through the Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) grant program administered by the State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). The WQIP grant program supports projects that will directly improve water quality or aquatic habitat, promote flood risk reduction, restoration, and enhanced flood and climate resiliency, or protect a drinking water source. An additional \$2 million is being awarded to 35 projects through the Non-Agricultural Nonpoint Source Planning and Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Mapping Grant (NPG) to fund projects that help pay for the initial planning of non-agricultural nonpoint source water quality improvement projects, such as undersized culvert replacements and green infrastructure technologies, and State permit-required storm sewer mapping in urban areas. These projects will reduce the amount of polluted stormwater runoff entering lakes, rivers, and streams, and improve resiliency against the impacts of climate change.

The State is awarding \$18 million through the Green Innovation Grant Program (GIGP) and Engineering Planning Grants (EPG) administered by the Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC). Of that, \$15 million in GIGP will support projects that help mitigate the effects of climate change in environmental justice communities. An additional \$3 million in EPG will help 61 municipalities develop engineering reports to support their efforts to better leverage state and federal funding and advance fiscally sound and well-designed projects to construction.

EFC also announced today that it is removing the 300,000-population threshold as part of the hardship financing eligibility criteria. Removing the threshold will allow larger municipalities to compete for hardship financing on clean water projects. To be eligible for federal grant, the grant would need to be directed to benefit a specific disadvantaged community within the municipality. This change is proposed for the 2025 Intended Use Plan that will account for how the State Revolving Funds are allocated during the federal fiscal year.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner and EFC Board

Chairman Basil Seggos said, "Governor Hochul's sustained investments in New York's water infrastructure are improving water quality and helping communities across the state adapt to the challenges wrought by our changing climate. When leveraged with federal funding opportunities through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the \$166 million grant awards announced today are advancing critical infrastructure projects and other measures to protect New York's waters."

EFC President and CEO Maureen A. Coleman said, "Clean water is a right, not a privilege. We are steadfast in our commitment to protect and improve water quality in the communities that need it most by providing solutions that make projects affordable, while being well-designed and resilient to benefit generations to come."

The WQIP awards include funding provided by the Long Island Sound Study. More than \$5.8 million in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will support improvements of the Port Washington Water Pollution Control District's treatment plant in Nassau County. The funding will be used to rehabilitate approximately 16,000 linear feet of gravity sewer main within its collection system to reduce sanitary sewer overflows. These improvements will bolster efforts to improve Manhasset Bay's water quality and support ongoing work to restore the Long Island Sound.

Environmental Protection Agency Region 2 Administrator Lisa F. Garcia said, "EPA is proud to have awarded, through our Long Island Sound Estuary Program, \$5.8 million to invest in Water Quality Improvement Projects in the Long Island Sound watersheds. Nationwide we are investing in clean water and providing billions of dollars to improve our nation's water infrastructure while safeguarding people's health and boosting local economies. This is a critical moment in time to upgrade water infrastructure in New York State and we commend the state for making these vital improvements, particularly in underserved communities."

WQIP Project Highlights

WQIP projects include municipal wastewater treatment upgrades, non-agricultural nonpoint source abatement and control, land acquisition projects for source water protection, salt storage construction, vacuum trucks for municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) areas, aquatic connectivity restoration, and marine habitat restoration. New York State continues to prioritize funding for projects that may help decrease the occurrence of harmful algal blooms (HABs). Nearly half of the WQIP and NPG awarded grants, totaling approximately \$56 million, will support projects in watersheds known to have experienced HABs in the past five years and/or help implement a project identified in a [DEC HABs Action Plan](https://dec.ny.gov/get-involved/grant-applications/wqip-program). The full list of awardees can be found at <https://dec.ny.gov/get-involved/grant-applications/wqip-program>. Examples of the 81 projects funded in this round that highlight the breadth and scope of WQIP awards include:

Wastewater Improvement Projects:

- **Buffalo Sewer Authority - \$10 Million for Wastewater Treatment Infrastructure, Combined Sewer Overflow/Sanitary Sewer Overflow Pollution Reduction (Western New York):** Buffalo Sewer Authority (BSA) will construct an underground storage tunnel along East Delavan Avenue to provide a minimum of 1.5 million gallons of offline storage. This project, identified in BSA's Long-Term Control Plan, will reduce the discharge entering Scajaquada Creek from combined sewer overflows during periods of heavy rain and snow melt.
- **Village of Endicott – \$1,781,120 for Wastewater Treatment Infrastructure Phosphorus Reduction (Southern Tier):** Endicott will rehabilitate sewer lines and manholes and remove municipally owned stormwater connections from the system in

identified high priority areas. The project will reduce the amount of phosphorus entering the Susquehanna River and Chesapeake Bay watershed.

- **Town of Oswego – \$1,000,000 for Wastewater Treatment Facility Improvements (Central New York):** The Town of Oswego will achieve disinfection of its wastewater for the Sleepy Hollow Sewer District by decommissioning their current facility and building a pump station and force main to send their flow to the City of Oswego's West Side wastewater treatment facility.
- **Village of Speculator – \$226,500 for Wastewater Treatment Facility Improvements (North Country):** Speculator will upgrade the wastewater treatment facility by adding a disinfection system, improving the Sacandaga River's water quality.

Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Projects:

- **Village of Lakewood - \$244,876 for Constructing a Wetland (Western New York):** Lakewood will replace a stormwater basin with a shallow wetland pond system to capture and treat stormwater from a 109-acre area. The project will use native seed mixes, live stakes, shrubs, and trees to increase flood resiliency while reducing nutrient runoff to Chautauqua Lake.
- **Essex County Soil and Water Conservation District - \$150,000 for a Road Ditch Stabilization Program (North Country):** Essex and Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation Districts will work with local municipalities to stabilize roadside ditches across the two counties using hydroseeding, check dams, erosion fabric, and sediment basins. The program will reduce roadside erosion and improve water quality in portions of the St. Lawrence, Upper Hudson, and Lake Champlain basins.
- **Seneca County Soil and Water Conservation District - \$60,000 for Streambank Stabilization (Finger Lakes):** The district will stabilize a highly eroded streambank on Burroughs Creek that has been experiencing soil erosion leading to destabilization of vegetation and water quality impacts. This project will reduce nutrient runoff in the Cayuga Lake watershed.

Land Acquisition Projects to Protect Drinking Water Sources:

- **The Fingers Lakes Land Trust, Inc. (FLLT) - \$1,240,000 for Land Acquisition to Protect Owasco Lake (Finger Lakes):** FLLT will work with landowners and partners in the Owasco Lake watershed to permanently protect approximately 500 acres through direct acquisition and the use of perpetual conservation easements. The program will focus on conservation and stewardship efforts to protect Owasco Lake, a drinking water source.

Salt Storage:

- **City of Watertown - \$406,028 for New Salt Storage Facility (North Country):** The city will construct a salt storage facility to cover an exposed salt storage pile. This project will help protect the Black River and groundwater within a principal aquifer from road salt contamination.

Aquatic Connectivity Restoration:

- **Trout Unlimited, Inc. - \$249,146 to Reconnect Fish Passage (North Country):** Trout Unlimited will replace two priority stream culverts on the Saranac River in Franklin County. The project will reconnect 3.6 miles for native brook trout.

Marine Habitat Restoration:

- **North Shore Land Alliance - \$192,969 for Natural Habitat Restoration (Long Island):** The alliance will restore natural habitat and reduce stormwater impacts on a 40-acre parcel in Cold Spring Harbor. The project will improve water quality and marine habitat for Long Island Sound.

NPG Highlights

The full list of NPG awardees can be found at <https://dec.ny.gov/get-involved/grant-applications/non-agricultural-nonpoint-source-planning-ms4-mapping-grant>. Examples of the 35 projects funded in this round that highlight the breadth and scope of NPG awards include:

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Mapping:

- **Dutchess County Soil and Water Conservation District - \$180,000 for Three Towns MS4 Mapping (Hudson Valley):** The Dutchess County Soil and Water Conservation District will work with the towns of LaGrange, Pleasant Valley, and Hyde Park to complete basic MS4 mapping elements. The district will complete field work to locate and inventory the storm sewer conveyance systems and structures which will include pipes, ditches, catch basins, and outfalls. The project will assist the towns in further tracking, inspection, and maintenance of their stormwater conveyance systems.

Nonpoint Source Planning Reports:

- **Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District - \$50,000 for Hamilton County Courthouse Complex Green Infrastructure Feasibility Study (Mohawk Valley):** The Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District will complete an engineering feasibility study to evaluate and design green stormwater infrastructure at the Hamilton County Courthouse Complex in the town of Lake Pleasant. The study will design green infrastructure mitigation strategies to treat stormwater runoff for 5.65 acres of impervious area. The plan will lead to reduction of stormwater runoff and chloride, phosphorus, and nitrogen pollution in Lake Pleasant.

GIGP Project Highlights

GIGP supports projects across the state that utilize green stormwater infrastructure design and green technologies. The full list of 10 projects is available at <https://efc.ny.gov/gigp-2024>. Examples of awarded projects include:

- **Erie County (Western New York) - \$3 million** to install more than an acre of green roof on their central library located in the heart of the city of Buffalo. The County will modify the Central Library to incorporate a green roof and installation of solar panels to further promote sustainability. The project will reduce combined sewer overflows and improve the water quality of the Buffalo River and Lake Erie.
- **City of Mount Vernon (Hudson Valley) - \$3 million** to revitalize the Fourth Street Park with green infrastructure practices including bioretention, rain gardens and porous pavement. This project will alleviate flooding at the Fourth Street Park and help improve the water quality of the Hutchinson River. The award complements New York State's \$150 million commitment to modernize Mount Vernon's aging infrastructure and reverse the effects of decades of disinvestment for this environmental justice community.
- **New York City Department of Environmental Protection (New York City) - \$3 million** to transform multiple streets into green streets in Brooklyn and the Bronx. The city will retrofit the medians with bioretention and stormwater street trees to help reduce runoff and combined sewer overflows to the East River and Jamaica Bay.
- **Town of Ticonderoga (North Country) - \$1.8 million** to install 1,700 water meters in the currently unmetered town. This project will help the town comply with water withdrawal permitting regulations and improve the water quality of the LaChute River.

EPG Project Highlights

This round of EPG awards will fund engineering costs to help jumpstart planning for 61 sewer projects. The planning grants help communities prepare to apply for grants and financing through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) administered by EFC. Planning grants help fund the development of an engineering report, which is required in the EFC financing application process. EPGs help municipalities advance fiscally sound and well-designed projects to construction. The full list of awardees is available at <https://efc.ny.gov/epg-2024>. Examples of awarded projects include:

- **City of Schenectady (Capital District) - \$50,000** to study the Downtown District Pump Station modernization project.

- **Livingston County Water and Sewer Authority (Finger Lakes) - \$100,000** to study options for sewer overflow improvements at Camp Run.
- **City of Jamestown (Western New York) - \$100,000** to study options for inflow and infiltration.

Sources of Funding

WQIP is primarily supported by the state's Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) and Clean Water Infrastructure Improvement Act (CWIA); NPG is supported by the EPF; GIGP is supported by the CWSRF and EPG is supported by EFC administrative funding. Governor Hochul's 2024-25 Executive Budget sustains the EPF at a historic \$400 million. The EPF provides funding for critical environmental programs such as land acquisition, farmland protection, invasive species prevention and eradication, enhanced recreational access, water quality improvement, and an aggressive environmental justice agenda.

New York's Commitment to Clean Water

New York State continues to increase its nation-leading investments in water infrastructure, [including \\$325 million in grant opportunities available now](#). With Governor Hochul's Executive Budget's proposed \$500 million over two years, New York will have invested a total of \$5.5 billion in water infrastructure since 2017. In the past two years alone, more than \$5 billion in state and federal funding and financing has been awarded to communities statewide. In addition, an initiative in Governor Hochul's 2024 State of the State Address increases water infrastructure grants for small, rural, and disadvantaged communities from 25 to 50 percent of net eligible project costs to help support smaller communities.

The funding is also in addition to other substantial water quality investments, including the voter-approved \$4.2 billion [Clean Water, Clean Air and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act](#) of 2022, which is advancing historic levels of funding to update aging water infrastructure and protect water quality, strengthen communities' ability to withstand severe storms and flooding, reduce air pollution and lower climate-altering emissions, restore habitats, and preserve outdoor spaces and local farms. The first round of funding under the Environmental Bond Act was awarded through the WIIA/IMG programs in December, when [Governor Hochul announced \\$479 million in grants to 156 projects](#) across New York State. Disadvantaged Communities will receive at least 35 percent of the benefits of Bond Act funding, with a goal of 40 percent.

About the Consolidated Funding Application

The grants announced today were issued following completion through the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process. The CFA was created to streamline and expedite grant applications and marks a fundamental shift in the way state resources are allocated, ensuring less bureaucracy and greater efficiency to fulfill local economic development needs. The CFA serves as the single-entry point for access to economic development funding, ensuring applicants no longer have to slowly navigate multiple agencies and sources without any mechanism for coordination. Now, economic development projects use the CFA as a support mechanism to access multiple state funding sources through one application, making the process quicker, easier, and more productive. Learn more about the CFA at <https://apps.cio.ny.gov/apps/cfa/>.

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