



CONSERVATION AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

Reclamation Development Grant Program - RDG

RDG Project Grant Application Guidelines

Introduction and Overview

The Reclamation and Development Grants Program (RDGP) is a state-funded grant program designed to fund projects that mitigate the effects of mineral development on public resources, and that meet other crucial state needs, serve the public interest, and benefit the total environment of the people of Montana. The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) administers the program.

The RDGP receives funds from the natural resources projects state special revenue account established by MCA 15-38-302. This account is funded by interest income from the Resource Indemnity Trust (RIT) Fund (established by MCA 15-38-201) and certain natural resource taxes.

Program Purposes

The purposes of the RDGP are (1) to repair, reclaim, and mitigate environmental damage to public resources from non-renewable resource extraction and (2) to develop and ensure the quality of public resources for the benefit of all Montana citizens. All projects receiving funds from the RDGP must demonstrate the **need** and **urgency** of the proposed project activities – if funds are not received there would be imminent threats to natural resources.

Eligible Applicants

Grants are available to state and local government entities. Any department, agency, board, commission, or other division of state government, city, county, or other division of local government, or tribal government within the state may apply. Examples of eligible applicants include:

- Cities
- Towns
- Counties
- Rural Improvement Districts
- Conservation Districts
- Water and Sewer Districts
- Universities and School Districts
- Irrigation Districts
- State Agencies
- Tribal Governments

Ineligible Applicants

Private persons or companies, federal agencies, and non-profit entities are not eligible to apply for RDGP funding. Ineligible entities may partner with an eligible entity to apply for a grant.

Sponsored or Partner Grants

An eligible applicant may sponsor a project grant on behalf of an ineligible entity. The local government applying for the grant must act as the grant recipient throughout the grant period and meet the terms and conditions of the DNRC grant agreement. To sponsor a grant for an ineligible entity, the local government (grant recipient) must:

1. Have a material connection to the work being performed.
2. Act as the primary point of contact for the DNRC grant, including all reimbursement requests.

3. Ensure it will not “pass” or transfer any grant funds or responsibilities to the ineligible entity.
4. Act as the legal party for purposes of project representation, negotiations, and communications.
5. Provide DNRC with an executed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that outlines the roles and responsibilities of each party before entering into a grant agreement.

DNRC grant agreements are not “assignable”. Therefore, the grant recipient CANNOT pass through or transfer the terms and conditions of their DNRC grant agreement to a sponsored or partner entity.

Eligible Projects

Proposed projects must provide benefits in one of two categories: (1) mineral development (reclamation of impacts from non-renewable resource extraction, also called reclamation projects) or (2) crucial state need. Mineral development impacts and crucial state need projects will be given equal preference in the ranking process. Projects not fitting into either of these categories will not be eligible for RDGP funding. DNRC will conduct a review and screening of all applications to determine eligibility under these two categories.

Reclamation (Mineral Development)

To be considered a reclamation project, the project goals and objectives must achieve at least one of the following:

1. Reclaim land, water or other resources adversely affected by mineral development.
2. Mitigate damage to public resources caused by mineral development.
3. Research, demonstrate, or provide technical assistance to promote the wise use of Montana minerals, including efforts to make processing more environmentally compatible.
4. Investigate and remediate sites where hazardous wastes or regulated substances threaten public health or the environment.
5. Research to assess existing or potential environmental damage resulting from mineral development.

Crucial State Need

Projects that meet a crucial state need must prevent or eliminate severe and unacceptable damage to natural resources or capture extraordinary public benefit that would otherwise be lost. They must have a regional or statewide importance. Public benefit from implementation of this type of project must directly relate to natural resources. The critical and urgent nature of the proposed project must be clearly demonstrated in the application. Crucial state need projects must fit into one of the following categories:

1. Drought Mitigation

Projects that address drought as the main purpose of the project **and** have been identified in an existing plan such as a drought management plan or watershed management plan that ties the need for the project to a specific watershed or region of the state.

2. High Hazard Dams

High hazard dam (Montana Dam Safety Act, MCA 85-15-106) projects that will mitigate damage to natural resources as a result of failure. All high hazard dam projects must be in compliance with MCA 85-15-213, Periodic Inspections After Construction, to be eligible for funding.

3. Other Crucial State Need

Other projects that meet the criteria of a crucial state need project as described above. Projects must clearly be identified in an existing plan that identifies the need for this project to a specific watershed or region of the state, or include a letter of support from a knowledgeable and authoritative source, preferably a state agency, describing the need for this project for a specific watershed or region of the state.

To be eligible for RDGP funding, a project must:

1. Provide a clear description of the need and urgency for the project.
2. Provide clear, data-supported and verifiable metrics to be able to quantify the benefits to natural resources over the existing condition in the eligible categories.
3. Be technically and financially feasible.
4. Provide documentation of matching funds required to complete the project, and have all other matching funds secured prior to entering into a grant agreement with DNRC.
5. Be the most cost-effective alternative to address a problem or attain an objective and prove this by providing adequate alternatives analysis that compares environmental, economic, and technical impacts, feasibility, and effectiveness of each choice, including the no action alternative. The alternatives analysis will show the method chosen makes sense based on cost, practicality, and compliance with rules and laws.
6. Comply with statutory and regulatory standards protecting environmental quality.
7. Be from an applicant able and willing to enter into an agreement with DNRC for the implementation of the proposed project.

Ineligible Projects

The following projects are not eligible for funding:

1. A project is **not** eligible for funding under the RDGP to the extent that the project is eligible for and can reasonably be expected to receive funding from other state or federal programs, or any program or act that provides funding to accomplish remedial action for environmental damage (MCA 90-2-1112(4)).
2. Projects permitted under Title 82, Chapters 4 or 11 (Reclamation and Oil and Gas Conservation statutes) are not eligible for funding.
3. Projects that relieve a liable party are not eligible for funding (MCA 90-2-1112(5)).
4. Water development and management projects where the primary purpose and benefit is irrigation are ineligible. Those projects may be eligible for grants from the Renewable Resource Grant Program.

The RDGP is not intended to be a continuous funding source for the administration or personnel costs of long-term activities or programs that are more appropriately funded through the State budget process. DNRC may recommend that such ongoing activities or projects not be funded. For short-term projects that are part of long-term projects or programs, DNRC may recommend funding if the project produces discrete, identifiable products or results upon completion of the short-term projects or phases.

Funding for Projects

DNRC will recommend up to **\$500,000** for projects. The Legislature may choose to award a lower or higher amount. An applicant proposing more than one project must submit a separate application for each. There is no minimum match funding requirement.

Leveraging of Other Funds

With limited available funds, applicants should seek out and secure other financial resources to increase the project impact. Projects that leverage funding will receive points proportional to the amount of non-State matching funds. This grant program does not include a statutory match requirement for eligibility. However, the presence and amount of matching funds will be considered in evaluating the project's financial feasibility, may influence the application's ranking, and will be tracked throughout the grant management process. Matching contributions may be in the form of in-kind- services or cash, grants, and loans. All contributions targeted for expenditure on the project must be specifically identified in the application and tracked through the lifetime of the grant. Funds or services expended on the project prior to application are eligible as matching contributions to the extent that they apply directly to the project being applied for and are substantiated by accounting records.

Funding for Approved Projects

Funds for projects approved by the Legislature are awarded according to the funding priority list set by the Legislature. Program funding becomes available throughout the two-year funding cycle beginning July 1 of every odd-numbered year. Applicants are notified when grant funds are available for their project which may not occur until later in the biennium. Grant funds are available until funds are exhausted. Not all approved projects will be funded if the total amount requested exceeds available funds. If applicants are unsuccessful in obtaining funds, they can apply during the following grant cycle.

Submittal Instructions – Online Applications

DNRC will no longer be requiring printed documents to be submitted and will solely be using the Submittable online application system. Application forms must be submitted online at <https://grants.dnrc.mt.gov> no later than 5:00 PM May 15, 2025. Late applications will not be considered, and incomplete applications may be disqualified.

Applications must be submitted by the applicant. Consultants, engineers, and others hired by the applicant may be collaborators but cannot submit the application to DNRC. The online application includes a video that demonstrates how to add a collaborator to the online application.

Application Review and Evaluation

DNRC will review and screen applications for basic eligibility and completeness. Once an application is determined to be eligible, the project will be reviewed and scored using a ranking system developed for the objective evaluation of proposed projects based on RDGP statute (MCA 90-2-1113). If an application is not deemed eligible for funding, it will not be evaluated or considered for funding and will result in the application being denied.

After reviewing each eligible application, a ranking team including DNRC staff, state and federal workers, subject matter experts, and contracted reviewers will assess the degree to which proposed projects address the evaluation criteria. Scores will be assigned to each project on the basis of how well it meets each criterion. Inadequate documentation of how the evaluation criteria are met throughout the application may result in a lower score.

Evaluation Criteria

RDGP applications that meet review and screening requirements will be evaluated according to the criteria listed and described below:

Ranking Categories	Total Points Available
Natural Resource Benefits	90
Public Benefits	35
Need and Urgency	40
Technical Feasibility	55
Financial Feasibility	50
Project Management/Organization	30

Natural Resource and Public Benefits (125 Points)

- The degree to which the project
 - *Reclamation*: repairs, reclaims, or mitigates environmental damage to natural resources from mineral development
 - *Drought*: mitigates damage to natural resources from drought to a watershed or region of the state.
 - *High Hazard Dams*: prevents damage to natural resources from the failure of a high hazard dam.

- *Other Crucial State Need Projects:* prevents or eliminates severe and unacceptable damage to public resources or captures extraordinary public benefits that would otherwise be lost. These projects must have a regional or statewide importance.
- The degree to which the project conserves natural resources
- The degree to which the project natural resource benefits are certain and long term
- The degree to which the project protects public health, safety, and welfare
- The degree of benefit to the public resources and the economy
- The degree to which all Montanans benefit from the project, directly and indirectly
- The degree to which jobs are created for persons who need job training, receive public assistance, or are chronically unemployed

Need and Urgency (40 Points)

- The degree to which the project identifies an immediate need
- The impact of no action
- The severity of the problem and the extent of the problem area
- The number and type of natural resources affected
- The level of technical documentation supporting the problem or need

Technical Feasibility (55 Points)

- The degree to which the applicant has developed a well-reasoned, achievable strategy for dealing with the identified need or problem
- The degree to which the project results are attainable and effective
- The level of support for the project from the grant recipient, stakeholders, and others

Financial Feasibility (50 Points)

- The reasonableness, clarity, and completeness of the project budget
- The cost-effectiveness of the project
- The combined percent of non-state match contributions and applicants match (relative to total project costs)

Project Management/Organization (30 Points)

- The degree to which the applicant evidences the ability to implement approaches resulting in effective and efficient work performance
- The degree to which the applicant has developed a clear work product and plan to show successful outcomes
- Applicant's past record of performance
- The skills, qualifications, and experience of the project manager, key personnel, sponsors, and contractors in the appropriate field
- The applicant has allocated sufficient time and budget to meet DNRC reporting requirements

Awarding of Grant Funds

DNRC solicits, evaluates, and ranks each application submitted to the RDGP and forwards its recommendations for funding to the Governor's Office before each regular legislative session. With the Governor's approval, these recommendations are submitted to the Legislature. DNRC will prepare a report and submit it to the Legislature to document the approved ranking and recommendations. The Legislature makes the final decision on which projects will be funded. DNRC will provide updates to the applicant throughout this process. Contracting of projects cannot begin until the bill authorizing funding for the projects becomes effective and funding becomes available for the project.

Eligible Expenses

RDGP grant funds can reimburse most costs directly associated with an eligible project. These direct costs can include project expenses, grant administration expenses, and personnel expenses. DNRC can reimburse only actual costs, not budget estimates. DNRC grants require compliance with the Montana Procurement Act and/or local procurement rules and regulations. See the [DNRC Procurement Plan and Guide](#) for more information.

Ineligible Expenses

RDGP grant funds can not reimburse indirect costs, expenses that are not grant-specific, or those not included in the DNRC-approved budget and scope of work for the project. See the [DNRC Procurement Plan and Guide](#) for more information about ineligible expenses.

Grant Recipient Responsibilities

If a project is approved for funding, the applicant must enter into a grant agreement with DNRC before expenditures begin. The grant agreement will be prepared when funding is available, and the grant recipient is ready. A detailed scope of work and budget are required in all agreements and must be approved by DNRC before work begins on the project. **Expenses incurred before the grant agreement is signed will not be reimbursed.**

RDGP start-up conditions are further described DNRC Resource Development Bureau Resources and Training page (<https://dnrc.mt.gov/Conservation/Training-and-Education/>).

All successfully awarded applicants are required to follow applicable state, federal, and local laws and ordinances.

Applicable laws governing contracting and procurement must be followed, and grant recipients must keep accurate financial records and documentation for audits. Grant recipients must permit DNRC to monitor work performance and visit the project sites as requested.

Projects that are completed or initiated that are later determined to be contrary to state, federal, or local laws or ordinances in whole or in part may not receive reimbursement and may subject the applicant to agency enforcement actions under MCA 85-2-114, or other enforcement authority depending on the source of the violation.

Permits

It is an applicant's responsibility to ensure any permit or authorization required by law is obtained at the appropriate time, including before a project begins. Applicants should also be aware that projects involving disturbing the bed or banks of perennial streams may require a 310 permit. The local Conservation District may be able to assist you in determining if such a permit may be required.

If you have questions regarding 310 permitting requirements, contact your local conservation district with questions and be prepared to provide your conceptual and technical information to the district if your project is in proximity to a perennial stream bed or banks. Conservation District contact information is on the following website: <https://dnrc.mt.gov/Licenses-and-Permits/Stream-Permitting/>.

Activities in Sage Grouse Habitat

Activities that occur in designated sage grouse habitat are subject to Executive Order 12-2015. Consult with the Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program prior to submitting a grant application. See program webpage for more information <https://sagegrouse.mt.gov/>.

Project Reporting Requirements

The grant agreement will outline project progress reporting requirements and will include both narrative and financial reports. The grant recipient is responsible for submitting progress reports throughout the duration of the project, at least quarterly, and with every reimbursement request. Additional information about grant recipient

responsibilities on reporting, invoicing, and contract management can be found on the DNRC Resource Development Bureau Resources and Training page (<https://dnrc.mt.gov/Conservation/Training-and-Education/>).

When the project is completed, the grant recipient must prepare and submit a clear, comprehensive final report containing a description of tasks completed, all data gathered, natural resources and public benefits of the project, a final budget including match contributions and conclusions or recommendations.

RDGP GRANT APPLICATION

Application Instructions

The application consists of an online form and uploaded documents. Each of these are described in the sections below. The application has been organized to facilitate project review and ranking, reporting to the Legislature, and the contracting of projects that have been selected for funding. The abstract will be used in the report to the Legislature. All sections of the grant application will be used in project evaluation and ranking.

Someone from the applying entity **must be the submitter** in Submittable (grants.dnrc.mt.gov), or the application may be denied. For example, the town clerk can submit the application for the town, but *not* the consultant hired to complete the project. The applicant can enable the consultant or someone outside the applying entity to fill out the application by inviting them as a collaborator. The clerk, or someone from the applying entity, will still have to click submit once the application is complete. The online application contains a video demonstrating how to add a collaborator to the application.

Applications must be submitted online at grants.dnrc.mt.gov no later than 5:00 PM, May 15, 2024.

Tips for Preparing Applications

Look for grey boxes throughout the application with tips and examples on how to prepare your application.

- ✓ Make sure both you as an applicant and the project are eligible for funding.
- ✓ Start early. Give yourself plenty of time to write the application.
- ✓ Develop a clear idea and approach for the project and clearly identify the final product.
- ✓ Make sure the bulk of the grant addresses the ranking criteria.
- ✓ **All basic information requested in the grant application should be provided in the main application text, not in the attachments.** Attachments should provide supporting information but not serve as the primary source of that information. If critical information is buried in the attachments, it might not receive due consideration in the grant evaluation.
- ✓ The project's scope of work is legislatively approved, and the intent of the project must remain intact. A substantial change in the proposed scope of work may result in a change in grant funding for the project.
- ✓ Make sure the budget is clearly tied to the activities/tasks and objectives outlined in the application.
- ✓ Show how amounts in each of the budget line items were calculated.
- ✓ Explore more than one alternative in the [Project Need and Alternatives Analysis](#) section of the application.
- ✓ Make sure to include sufficient time and money for project reporting to DNRC.
- ✓ Talk to staff in the Reclamation and Development Grants Program and experts in the project field.
- ✓ Develop and document support from agencies or groups that will benefit from your project or provide access to the project site.
- ✓ Make sure that the project is coordinated with appropriate regulatory jurisdictions before application submittal.
- ✓ Additional resources are available on the DNRC Resource Development Bureau Resources and Training Webpage: <https://dnrc.mt.gov/Conservation/Training-and-Education/>

Grant Application Summary and Authorization Forms

Grant Application Summary

Project Information

Applicant Name _____
(city, county, tribal government, district, other local or state government entity)

Project Title _____
(Describe the specific project. Example: Tramway Creek Mine Reclamation)

Is the applicant partnering with or sponsoring another organization on the grant application? If so, list the partner or sponsored entity name _____

What is the applicant's connection to the project? _____

Brief Project Description _____

(For example: reclamation, brownfields, VCRA project, oil and gas well plugging, hazardous substances cleanup, etc. Provide 3-4 complete sentences that summarize the project, primary goal and benefit goals of the project)

Project Type

Projects are evaluated either as a reclamation (mineral development) project **or** a crucial state need project. Please indicate which category this project falls into below and select all applicable subcategories:

Reclamation (Mineral Development) Project	OR	Crucial State Need Project
<input type="checkbox"/> This project repairs, reclaims or mitigates environmental damage to natural resources from non-renewable resource extraction or hazardous materials (check all applicable boxes). <input type="checkbox"/> Mining reclamation <input type="checkbox"/> Oil and gas well plugging and reclamation <input type="checkbox"/> Brownfields <input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous substances cleanup <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary Cleanup and Redevelopment Act project <input type="checkbox"/> Superfund area (CECRA/CERCLA)		<input type="checkbox"/> This project meets a crucial state need (Identify project type below). <input type="checkbox"/> Drought Mitigation <input type="checkbox"/> High Hazard Dam <input type="checkbox"/> Other Crucial State Need

Project Location

Latitude (decimal degrees) _____ Longitude (decimal degrees) _____
County(s) _____

Project Schedule

Estimated project start date: _____ Estimated project end date: _____

Project Budget

DNRC RDG Request _____

Total Other Funding Sources _____

Total Project Cost _____

Applicant Contact Information

1. Authorized Representative _____
(Person authorized to enter into a grant agreement with DNRC.)
Title _____
Mailing Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Telephone _____ Email _____
2. Primary Contact Person _____
(Person to contact about the proposed project. Must be knowledgeable about the project and a local government entity.)
Title _____
Mailing Address (if different from applicant) _____
City, State, Zip _____
Telephone _____ Email _____
3. Project Engineer/Consultant _____
(Person to contact with questions about the proposed project)
Company Name _____
Mailing Address (if different from applicant) _____
City, State, Zip _____
Telephone _____ Email _____
4. Additional Contact _____
(Person authorized to enter into a grant agreement with DNRC.)
Title _____
Mailing Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Telephone _____ Email _____

Project Abstract

Question: Submit a short narrative that describes the project, its merits and purpose. This abstract will be incorporated into the RDG Program report to the Montana Legislature and should provide accurate information that best describes the project's natural resource benefits and other merits. Legislative assessment of the benefits of each project will be based primarily on ranking recommendations and this summary.

The abstract is a 1-2 paragraph summary of the project that includes:

- Applicant name and name of project.
- Project goals and objectives.
- Brief discussion of the problem or need that the project addresses.
- Natural resource benefits of the project.
- Description of the project area or site. Identify whether the project is statewide. For regional projects, describe the region. For site-specific projects, describe the general location.

Your abstract should contain **no more than 350 words**. It may be helpful to write your abstract after you complete the application.

Example from the Governor's Executive Budget Fiscal Years 2020-2021:

This project is part of a cooperative effort by Trout Unlimited, the Lolo National Forest, Montana DEQ, and Missoula County to clean up abandoned mine sites in the Ninemile Creek watershed. The project will restore stream and floodplain functions to 4,500 feet of Ninemile Creek, a tributary to the Clark Fork River, near Huson, Montana. The primary goals of the project are to reclaim mining impacts, improve water quality, and reconnect previously damaged tributaries. Extensive placer piles will be regraded and used to fill settling ponds to create a more uniform floodplain surface. The floodplain will be shaped to incorporate microtopography and woody debris, then revegetated with native plants. The stream channel will be reconstructed through the reclaimed floodplain and will include diverse habitat for fish and wildlife.

Representative Picture or Map of the Project

Upload: DNRC Reclamation and Development Project grants are submitted to the Governor and the Legislature for approval. To help us prepare for this process, please submit 1-2 pictures or maps that showcase the need for the project.

Problem History Instructions

Information within this section will be used to evaluate the need and urgency of the project and may be used to determine the natural resource and public benefits and financial feasibility. It will be helpful to review the evaluation criteria on page 4 of the program guidelines when writing this section of your application.

The following criteria are strongly considered when evaluating this step of the application:

- Clear explanation of the need and urgency of the project
- Clear documentation demonstrating the problem or need
- Clear explanation of project goals and objectives
- The natural resource benefits and cost-effectiveness of the sectioned alternative

Project Need

Problem History

Provide a technical description of the project including the problem, history, and alternatives to meet project goals. The goal of this section of the grant application is to help the reviewers understand the current state of the project site and the issues that need to be addressed. The description must demonstrate the need for the project and that it is the best alternative to provide the project benefits. All sections must be completed in order and in their entirety.

Question

(Reclamation, Drought, Other Crucial State Need): Describe the impacted area where the problem exists and for which this project will address the problem. Explain how large an area is impacted and describe the area to be addressed by this project. Provide appropriate data concerning the natural features of the project area, such as soils, vegetation, geology, and hydrology.

(High Hazard Dams ONLY): Describe the impacted area where the problem exists and for which this project will address the problem. Explain how large an area could be impacted by dam failure and describe the area to be addressed by this project. Provide appropriate data concerning the natural features of the project area, such as soils, vegetation, geology, and hydrology.

Upload: Provide a project map that shows the impacted area and the area to be addressed by the project.

Question: Give a history of the problem that will be resolved by the project and all previous work that has been done to address this problem. Describe the cause of the problem and how long it has existed. Explain the need that prompted this grant application. List all technical reports and studies that relate to the project.

Upload: Provide all technical reports or studies that were listed in the question above.

Need and Urgency

Describe the need and urgency of the problem within the project area. Need should describe the current condition of the resource and the impact that the problem is having on that public resource. Urgency is determined from how the condition of the natural resource is changing or could change through time.

Question: Describe the impact of no action to natural resources. Identify which of the natural resources are impacted or that could be impacted by the problem within the project area. Describe the current impact of the problem to natural resources and how it may change through time.

Question: Explain why this project is a priority and how the project fits into the overall need for the area.

Question: Does the project prevent a potential threat to public health or safety? Explain.

Crucial State Need Documentation

Crucial state need projects must be identified in a document(s) that addresses natural resource needs for a watershed or region of the state or provide documentation of the need for the project from an authoritative source, preferably a state agency. Find your project type below and provide the information requested.

Question:

(Drought ONLY): Drought mitigation projects must address drought as the main purpose of the project **and** be identified in a document(s) that addresses natural resource needs for a watershed or region of the state. Identify which document(s) the project is listed in, and the page(s) the project is listed on. Use the document(s) to show the need and urgency of the project. Explain how the project fits into the overall needs for the watershed or region of the state. Applications for drought mitigation projects need to clearly identify the watershed and/or region of the state that will be addressed by the project.

Upload The planning document(s). The document must show the date in which it was approved and who it was approved by. If this information is not included in the document, include it in the information provided above.

(High Hazard Dam ONLY): High hazard dam (Montana Dam Safety Act, MCA 85-15-106) projects must mitigate damage to natural resources as a result of failure. Describe the potential for dam failure.

Upload High hazard dam certification/classification documentation.

Upload Periodic inspection and maintenance records for the high hazard dam (MCA 85-15-213).

(Other Crucial State Need ONLY): Crucial state need projects must be identified in a document(s) that addresses natural resource needs for a watershed or region of the state or provide documentation of the need for the project to a watershed or region of the state from an authoritative source, preferably a state agency. Identify which document(s) the project is listed in, and the page(s) the project is listed on. Use the document(s) and/or letter of support to show the need and urgency of the project. Explain how the project fits into the overall needs for the watershed or region of the state.

Upload The planning document(s) or letter from an authoritative source (see options below).

Option 1: The planning document must show the date in which it was approved and who it was approved by. If this information is not included in the document, include it in the information provided above.

Option 2: If the project is not identified in a planning document, the applicant will need to provide evidence of a regional or statewide need for this project and agency and public support for the project. Supporting documentation must include:

- Analysis and opinion that your project is a crucial state need by a knowledgeable and authoritative source, preferably a State agency, relative to the following:
 - The potential threat to public health and safety
 - The validity of the problem or need
 - The consequences of no action or delayed action
 - The severity of the problem or need
 - The estimated number of people affected, directly and indirectly
 - The level of support for the project
 - Whether the stated objectives will meet the need
 - Whether the source supports the project
- Documentation of circumstances or conditions that require action to prevent or eliminate severe and unacceptable damage to natural resources or documentation of how the project captures extraordinary public benefits that would otherwise be lost.

Project Goals and Objectives

Question: List project goals and objectives and provide a bulleted list of the construction tasks these grant funds will support. Project goals should be broad and provide a general statement of the project purpose. Each goal should have at least one measurable objective. The objective should describe a specific outcome of the project and when this outcome will be achieved.

Avoid acronyms unless they are well-known terms.

Example: The goal for a reclamation project may be to reduce water pollution on a particular stream. The objective would be to remove mine tailings from the stream channel by July 2028.

Project Alternatives

In this section describe the technical reasoning behind the alternatives evaluated for this project as well as a cost analysis of the alternatives. Please describe each alternative, including the preferred or selected alternative. The selected alternative will be discussed in greater detail in the Scope of Work section of the application. See the [DNRC Alternatives Analysis Guidance](#). Alternatives are different ways to accomplish the same goal as the proposed project. A reasonable alternative is one that is practical, technically feasible, and financially feasible. A reasonable alternative should meet the goals of the proposed project. **Applications must discuss at least one reasonable alternative in addition to the preferred alternative and the “no action” alternative.**

Question: Provide a summary of the costs and benefits of each project alternative. Present the cost estimates calculated for each project alternative. Explain how the costs were calculated and what information was used to develop the costs. Provide a narrative discussion of the costs and benefits of each alternative. Describe and, if possible, quantify both the direct and indirect or secondary costs and benefits of the project.

Direct benefits are caused by the project and occur in the same time and place. Indirect benefits are secondary and occur at a different time or place. Consider who will benefit, the number of people who will benefit and the nature of the direct and indirect benefits.

For example, a mine contamination project that removes contaminated tailings from a stream will have direct benefits to the stream, soil, and habitat in that location. Indirect benefits include the downstream water quality and fisheries improvement.

Upload: The alternatives analysis that demonstrates the cost-benefit analysis of all possible remedies, reviews the no-action alternative, and why the preferred alternative was selected. The alternatives analysis must evaluate all reasonable alternatives to the accomplish the project goals, not just compare costs of materials.

Describe the Solution

Scope of Work

In order to be eligible for funding, the proposed project must be technically feasible and comply with statutory and regulatory standards protecting environmental quality. Describe in detail the work that needs to be done to complete a successful project. If the project receives RDGP funding, this scope of work will be the basis for the grant agreement between the applicant and DNRC.

Information within this section will be used to evaluate the technical feasibility of the project and may be used to determine the natural resource and public benefits, need and urgency, and financial feasibility. It will be helpful to review the evaluation criteria on page 4 of the program guidance when you are writing this section of your application.

The following criteria are strongly considered when evaluating this step of the application:

- Clear explanation of how the scope of work will meet the project goals and objectives
- The stated strategy for dealing with the identified need or problem
- The degree to which the project results are achievable, attainable, and effective

Tasks or Activities

Name and describe each task or activity necessary to accomplish the project and identify any deliverables produced by the task. Separate planning and design activities from construction activities. Each task will be required to have a budget line in the financial documentation section.

For example:

Task 1: Final Engineering Designs

An engineer will prepare final engineering design plans and technical specification for the bid package for review by the project team and stakeholders. The preparation of the final engineering designs includes a site visit and a final design plan with drawings and a draft bid project.

Deliverables:

- Copy of final design plans
- Copy of draft bid package

Task 2: Stream Restoration

This task includes contractor time and materials to excavate, load, haul, and place placer/dredge mine tailings in adjacent dredge cuts, finish rough grading of floodplain, salvage native vegetation and stockpile on site before haul activities, rough grading and shaping of stream channel alignment, enhance existing historic floodplain and low terrace microtopography, construct 3,100 linear feet of graded channel and constructed riffle using on-site screened alluvium, construct large woody debris

jams, and/or log and rock steps, incorporating imported 18"-24" boulders and on-site screened alluvium and construct 2,200 linear feet of vegetated wood and brush fascine along riffle margins.

Question: Describe the individual tasks or activities necessary to accomplish the work under each objective and identify any deliverables of the project. This description must provide sufficient detail to show that the project is technically feasible and will accomplish the project goals and objectives. The description also should provide detail concerning the specific results of each task or activity (deliverable) and when these results should be expected (schedule). Please include a specific task for grant administration and reporting.

Project Schedule

Upload: Provide a project schedule. The schedule should provide DNRC with a time frame for the project from the starting date through completion. The first item on the schedule should be the expected status of the project at the beginning of the contract period. Tasks or activities should be listed in the expected implementation sequence (that is, tasks that will be implemented earliest should be listed first). If some tasks must be completed before others, please indicate. **REQUIRED: Use the [DNRC Project Schedule Template](#).**

Project Outcomes and Monitoring

Question: How much of the impacted area will be addressed by the solution as described above? Will the project need to be phased to address the full problem described in the Describe the Problem section of the application?

Question: How will you show that the project was successful? Explain how the project outcomes will be measured. Identify any deliverables from the project. Discuss what information will be collected and how this information will be used to ensure the quality of work. Additionally, identify who is responsible for monitoring the project and compiling this information.

Financial Documentation

Instructions on Preparing the Budget

Explain how the proposed project will be financed. Applications must submit the [Project Funding Package](#) with all tables and tabs completed and in their entirety to be eligible for funding consideration.

Information within this section will be used to evaluate the financial feasibility of the project and may be considered when scoring the technical feasibility and natural resource and public benefits of the project. The financial feasibility score is based, in part, on the amount of matching funds. It will be helpful to review the [evaluation criteria](#) on page 5 of the application when you are writing this section of your application.

The following criteria are strongly considered when evaluating this step of the application:

- Reasonableness, clarity, and completeness of the project budget
- Degree of non-state matching contributions and magnitude of the applicant's contributions
- Cost-effectiveness of the project
- Demonstration that adequate funds will be available to complete the project

Tips for Preparing a Budget

- ✓ All grant recipients must comply with the Montana Procurement Act (MCA 18-4-121) applicable to state agencies, counties, conservation districts, and municipalities.
- ✓ Applicants may request project-specific administration funds, this can include costs for professional services, legal, accounting, audit, and staffing to comply with grant administration and reporting. Costs must be reasonable and allocable to the project. Administrative costs must be supported with documentation of

actual expenses. The total for administrative costs cannot be greater than 8% of the total project cost. See [Budget Category Explanation](#) and [Administrative Costs vs. Project Management Costs](#) below.

- ✓ Identify each employee who is needed to complete the project. Specify the expected hours, the loaded hourly wage rate, and the activity to be performed.
- ✓ Identify any services to be provided by others hired under contract. Specify the activity to be performed by contracted services.
- ✓ Identify the procurement policy to be used.
- ✓ Provide the unit costs for professional staff and contracted personnel, contracted services for engineering design, or legal advice.
- ✓ Travel rates may not exceed the current state employee rates for meals, lodging, and travel. Detail the expected travel destination, the purpose of the travel, the number of people traveling, and the number of trips to be made.
- ✓ Construction service contracts may include up to a 10 percent contingency to cover unexpected expenses. An inflation contingency may be included as a project cost and must be identified as such on the budget forms. Account for any time lapses between project approval and funding so that an inflation contingency may ensure that funds are sufficient to complete the project activity.
- ✓ DNRC will not pay interest on loans taken out to cover grant expenses.

[Budget Category Explanation: Administration and Activity Costs](#)

The budget is generally divided into two categories: administrative costs and activity costs.

Administrative Costs

Administrative Costs are those directly related to the administration of the grant and include accounting, budgeting, and financial management, procurement and purchasing, payroll functions (directly related to the project), audit functions, and grant reporting required by DNRC. Administrative costs must be supported with documentation of actual expenses. The total for administrative costs cannot be greater than 8% of the total project cost.

Provide a cost estimate for salary or contracted services for coordination activities, project reporting, accounting, payroll expenses, audit and preparation of the Final Report. Professional and technical costs associated with grant administration need to be included in the Administration budget category. The [Budget Justification Narrative](#) must identify which costs for Administration are contracted professional and technical costs and which ones are incurred by the applicant.

Activity Costs

Activity cost are the costs incurred to complete the work described in [4.1 Scope of Work](#). Identify the cost of personnel or contracted services for professional/technical services. These costs must be project specific. Professional and technical costs associated with grant administration need to be included in the administrative costs portion of the budget.

Estimating the Value of Volunteer Labor

Eligible in-kind contributions are those project-specific contributions associated directly with project implementation.

If your budget includes in-kind labor always reference the source for your labor value estimate. It may be helpful to use the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics website to estimate labor values for Montana: https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_mt.htm

Administrative Costs vs. Project Management Costs

Administrative costs are related to the salaries and contracted services for coordination with the DNRC on submittal of requests to reimburse funds, writing and submitting progress reports and the Final Report as well as project related accounting or payroll preparation expenses and audits. Administrative costs must be supported with documentation of actual expenses. Identify which grant administrative tasks are being completed by the recipient and what activities are being completed by a contracted person in the budget justification narrative. Administrative costs should be included in the administrative cost section of the budget.

Project management costs are the costs of oversight of a project from design to completion and may include managing the project and include coordination of personnel directly related to the project, monitoring the progress of the project, oversight, review and approval of project design, and construction inspection. Identify which project management tasks are being completed by the recipient and what activities are being completed by a contracted person in the [budget justification narrative](#). Project management costs should be included in the activity cost section of the budget.

Project (Direct) Costs vs. Program (Indirect) Costs

DNRC reimburses project-specific costs only. Reimbursable costs are costs that will be incurred only by implementing the project as described in the grant agreement.

Project (direct) costs are costs that will be incurred by implementing a particular project and should be directly assigned to activities related to the tasks outlined in your scope of work within your application and, subsequently, grant agreement.

Program (indirect) costs are costs of an organization that are not readily assignable to a particular project but are necessary to the operation of the organization. Program costs include, but are not limited to, office rent that will be incurred whether or not the project is implemented, salaries of existing fully funded staff positions unless the workhours associated with the project are accounted for, or any other costs that pay for ongoing or general services of the applicant. These costs are incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting the organization and are not readily assignable to the project objectives. These costs tend to be necessary for the operation of an organization as a whole and benefits are shared across all programs. **Program (indirect) costs cannot be reimbursed by DNRC.** See [Ineligible Costs](#) below for additional information on non-reimbursable costs.

Ineligible Costs

Projects that will relieve a liable party or include work on an actively permitted site are not eligible. The RDG program cannot pay for any indirect costs or any portion of a salary of a state employee. A project is not eligible for funding if it can reasonably be expected to receive full funding from another source.

Ineligible or non-reimbursable program costs are costs not directly related to the project. The following tasks are ineligible:

- Activities outside of the scope of work, including advertising, salaries and benefits, travel, conferences, professional licenses or memberships, and other expenses not directly related to the project.
- Routine costs incurred by the applicant for maintenance and operation, including advertising, office rent and utilities, salaries and benefits, routine project monitoring or maintenance and routine repair and

maintenance of vehicles and equipment, as well as tasks that are programmatic in nature (see [project costs vs. program cost explanation](#) above).

- Repayment of debt.
- Legal fees not associated with the project.
- Land or property acquisition.
- Food and beverages for meetings.
- Indirect costs (for example, facilities and administration or overhead). Indirect costs may be listed as matching funds.
- Administrative costs not allocatable to the project, unsupported by actual expenses, or greater than 8% of the total project cost.
- Costs incurred outside of the contract term.

Budget Tables

The following item will be uploaded to the online application form.

Upload: Project Funding Package Spreadsheet

Download [Project Funding Package](#) using the link below, fill it out, and upload it to this online application form.

Table 1: Please enter the total estimated project cost and the sources and amounts of ALL funding that may be used to complete the proposed activity. Include funding sources even if you have not yet applied for or have not received a commitment from the source. Indicate the type of funding from all sources, such as in-kind services, grants, cash, etc. Describe the status of those funding commitments. Committed funds must have a written letter committing funds submitted to DNRC with the application (see Supporting Documentation below.)

Table 2: This form should detail the total estimated project cost using the tasks described in the [Scope of Work](#) and be supported in the budget justification narrative tab. Use one column for each funding source and for each type of funding (grant, loan, cash, in-kind, etc.). Place the name of the funding source in the “source” columns. The sum of the totals of each column must add up to the total estimated project cost. Add or delete columns or lines as needed.

Table 3: Explain how the costs for Budget Table 2. Project Budget Summary Form were determined. The costs should be designated either as Administrative Costs or Activity Costs as in Budget Table 2. Project Budget Summary Form (see Budget Category Explanation above). Activity costs must be divided into the same tasks as outlined in 4.1 Scope of Work. Identify the costs of professional contracted services, construction activities, travel, and other personnel for each task. All costs, including those covered by matching funds, should be clearly identified in the budget justification narrative.

Download [Project Funding Package](#) here.

Financial Feasibility

In this section, describe the funding structure that ensures the project is financially feasible. Demonstrate that adequate sources of funds are available to complete the proposed project. Committed funds must have a written letter committing funds submitted to DNRC with the application. Documentation must be provided that other project funds are secure before DNRC can enter into a contract.

Upload: Supporting documentation to provide evidence of the financial feasibility of the proposed project.

Follow this guidance: [DNRC Firm Commitment of Matching Funds Guide](#)

You must provide adequate documentation, as described in the link above, for DNRC to consider matching funds "Committed".

- Upload copies of estimates used to generate the project budget.
- If funding has been secured, upload commitment or award letters from other funding sources and any information that would help DNRC assess your financial commitment to project completion.
- Upload commitment letters or budget documents that show any local funds committed to the proposed project. Provide a letter that lists the cash dollars you will provide for the project and describe in-kind contributions.

UNCOMMITTED FUNDS

Question: Indicate any costs which remain undetermined at the time of application. If you will or have applied for other funding or if other agencies, associations, or individuals will provide in-kind or match funding, provide the following information:

- Indicate the expected date a funding decision will be made if you requested a grant or a loan.
- If local community funds are from the private sector, fully describe borrowing plans.

Question: For all uncommitted funds, please provide an explanation of how the project could proceed if the uncommitted funds were not realized, such as phasing the project.

EQUIPMENT

Question: Identify and describe any equipment that would be purchased for the project. Provide specific justification for all acquisitions.

Equipment is generally of a non-consumable nature, has an estimated life of more than one year, and costs more than \$250.

IDENTIFY OTHER POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING

Question

(Reclamation only): Identify if the project has received in the past or could receive funding in the future from any State or Federal reclamation programs:

- Brownfields funding
- LUST TRUST funding
- Petrofund
- Board of Oil and Gas Orphan Well funding
- Surface Mine Control Reclamation Act Funding
- Other Reclamation Funding Source (identify)

(Reclamation only): Describe all past and potential future funding from any State or Federal reclamation programs for the project and reasonable expectations for receiving the funds.

(Drought, High Hazard Dams, Other Crucial State Need): List any other program or act that *may* provide funds for the project and reasonable expectations for receiving the funds.

PROJECTS WITH FUNDING FROM SETTLEMENT OR BONDS

Projects with financial responsibility from a settlement or reclamation bond must describe the amount of remaining settlement or bond funding for the project and explain why that funding is insufficient to cover the costs of the project. *Failure to provide this information will result in the application being rejected.* RDGP Statute states that:

“A project is not eligible for funding under the reclamation and development grants program to the extent that the project is eligible for and can reasonably be expected to receive funding from other state or federal reclamation programs or any other program or act that provides funding to accomplish remedial action for environmental damage or if the project is permitted under Title 82, chapter 4 or 11. A proposed project is not eligible for funding under the reclamation and development grants program if there is a liable party who would be relieved of financial or legal responsibility and who can reasonably be expected to be held responsible.” (MCA 90-2-1112)

Question: Has there been a settlement or bond issued for the site? If so, provide a detailed accounting of the remaining funds and explain why the project cannot be completed with these funds.

PLAN FOR FUTURE FUNDING

Question: If the project will require future phases and funding beyond the period for which funds are requested, include a plan describing how the project will be phased and how subsequent funds will be obtained.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Question: Identify any operation and maintenance costs necessary to support the project in the future. Identify the source of funds you will use to cover these expenses. Discuss how you plan to fund the ongoing operation and maintenance of facilities and infrastructure constructed with grant funding. Operations and maintenance costs are ineligible for RDGP funding (MCA 90-2-1112).

Project Management and Organization Capability

Demonstrate your ability to implement the project. Briefly discuss how you will implement this project from funding through project completion.

Information within this section will be used to evaluate the project management and organization of the project and may be considered when scoring the technical feasibility. It will be helpful to review the evaluation criteria on page 4 of the program guidelines when you are writing this section of your application.

Question: Provide a brief narrative that details staff requirements needed for successful project management. Discuss how you plan to meet those requirements.

Upload: Grant management plan. **You must use the [DNRC Grant Management Plan Instructions and Template](#)** to list the skills, qualifications, and experience of the project manager, key personnel, sponsors, and currently properly procured consultants who will provide project management or engineering services.

Question: List other grants that you have successfully managed. Describe your organization capacity to manage grants.

Question: Have you received other grants for this project? If so, list the grant program name, project name, grant number, and year of award.

Question: Summarize the procurement procedures and requirements related to your project.

Upload: Procurement Plan. You must use the [DNRC Procurement Guidance and Procurement Plan](#) template.

Question: Have contracted project activities already occurred for this project? Yes/No.

Upload: Procurement Documents. If you answered yes to the question above, upload procurement documents such as the local government's procurement procedure/policy, limited or competitive solicitation documents (request for proposal, list of bids/quotes, etc.), and executed contracts and applicable task orders.

Question: Describe how you will meet DNRC reporting requirements. See [Grantee Responsibilities](#).

Question: Discuss coordination activities with other local, state, or federal agencies needed to implement the project and if the plan is part of another on-going or planned action.

Question: Discuss your public involvement plans during the planning and implementation of your project through completion and closeout.

Natural Resource and Public Benefits

The purpose of the RDG Program is to fund projects that benefit natural and public resources. The degree to which the proposed project provides natural resources and public benefits constitutes the largest percentage of points upon which the project will be ranked. This step of the application gives you an opportunity to highlight these benefits for the reviewers. Provide a short narrative describing the natural resource and public benefits of this project to the citizens of Montana and the environment. **Benefits must be quantified.**

Information within this section will be used to evaluate natural resource and public benefits of the project and may be considered when evaluating the need and urgency of the project. It will be helpful to review the [evaluation criteria](#) on page 5 of the application when you are writing this section of your application.

Natural Resource Benefits

All RDG projects must repair, reclaim, and mitigate environmental damage to natural resources from nonrenewable resource extractions; and develop and ensure the quality of natural resources for the benefit of all Montanans. Natural resources include surface water, groundwater, soils, vegetation, air, fish and wildlife, and minerals.

Question

(Reclamation only): Describe how the project repairs, reclaims, or mitigates environmental damage to natural resources from mining, oil and gas, or hazardous waste. Discuss how the project protects public health or the environment.

(Drought only): Describe how the project mitigates the impact of drought to a watershed and region of the state. Discuss why this project is a priority for watershed and region of the state and the magnitude of benefit.

(High Hazard Dam only): Describe how the project prevents or eliminates severe and unacceptable damage to natural resources or captures extraordinary public benefit that would otherwise be lost.

Describe how the project protects public health or the environment.

(Other Crucial State Need only): Describe how the project prevents or eliminates severe and unacceptable damage to natural resources or captures extraordinary public benefit that would otherwise be lost. Describe how the project protects public health or the environment.

Question: Identify which natural resources this project will measurably benefit:

- Air
- Surface Water
- Groundwater
- Soil Resources
- Minerals or Other Natural Resources
- Vegetation and Ecological Function
- Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Question

(Air only): Identify the significance of the benefit to air resources. Describe how the project will measurably benefit air quality. Describe the baseline and expected conditions of air quality after the project. Provide clear, quantifiable, and verifiable metrics, including any modeling used.

(Air only): Cite your sources for air quality information. Be specific and provide section or page numbers of cited documents.

(Surface Water only): Identify the significance of the benefit to surface water resources. Describe how the project will benefit surface water resources. Describe the baseline and expected conditions of surface water quality and/or quantity after the project. What will the project improve and how? Provide clear, quantifiable, and verifiable metrics.

(Surface Water only): Cite your sources for surface water information. Be specific and provide section or page numbers of cited documents.

(Surface Water only): Will this project measurably reduce pollutant loads (such as nitrogen or other nutrients) to one or more specific waterbody listed as an impairment of Montana's 303(d) list, and contribute to progress toward meeting applicable TMDLs and water quality standards? If so, identify the impaired waterbody(s) and the source(s) of the impairment. Indicate how this project will specifically address the impairment. Provide clear, quantifiable, and verifiable metrics.

(Groundwater only): Identify the significance of the benefit to groundwater resources. Describe how the project will benefit groundwater resources. Describe the baseline and expected conditions of groundwater quality and/or quantity after the project. What will the project improve and how? Provide clear, quantifiable, and verifiable metrics.

(Groundwater only): Will this project occur within a Montana Basin Closure or Controlled Groundwater Area? If so, identify the Close Basin or Controlled Groundwater Area.

(Groundwater only): Cite your sources for groundwater information. Be specific and provide section or page numbers of cited documents.

(Soil Resources only): Identify the significance of the benefit to soil resources. Describe how the project will benefit soil health and conservation. Describe the baseline and expected condition of soil health and/or conservation after the project. What will the project improve and how? Provide clear, quantifiable, and verifiable metrics.

(Soil Resources only): Cite your sources for soils information. Be specific and provide section or page numbers of cited documents.

(Minerals and other natural resources only): Identify the significance of the benefit to minerals and other natural resources. Describe how the project will benefit minerals or other natural resources. Describe the baseline and expected condition of minerals or other natural resources after the project. What will the project improve and how? Provide clear, quantifiable, and verifiable metrics.

(Minerals and other natural resources only): Cite your sources for minerals or other natural resources information. Be specific and provide section or page numbers of cited documents.

(Vegetation and Ecological Function only): Identify the significance of the benefit to vegetation resources and/or ecological function. Describe how the project will benefit vegetation resources and/or ecological function. Describe the baseline and expected conditions of vegetation and/or ecological function after the project. What will the project improve and how? Provide clear, quantifiable, and verifiable metrics.

(Vegetation and Ecological Function only): Cite your sources for vegetation and/or ecological function information. Be specific and provide section or page numbers of cited documents.

(Fish and Wildlife Habitat only): Identify the significance of the benefit to fish and wildlife habitat. Describe how the project will benefit fish and wildlife habitat. Describe the baseline and expected conditions of fish and wildlife populations and/or habitat after the project. What will the project improve and how? Provide clear, quantifiable, and verifiable metrics.

(Fish and Wildlife Habitat only): Cite your sources for fish and wildlife information. Be specific and provide section or page numbers of cited documents.

Question: Discuss if the project's benefits are certain and long term. How long will the proposed solution last? Will additional steps be required to ensure project success after completion? Discuss any risks of project failure.

Public Benefits

All RDG projects must measurably benefit public resources. Public resources include the local, regional, or statewide economy; public health and safety; and recreation.

Question: Identify which natural resources this project will measurably benefit:

- Local, Regional, or Statewide Economy
- Public Health
- Recreation

Question

(Economy only): Describe the economic benefit of the project. Consider both direct and indirect benefits.

Describe the condition of the local, regional, or statewide economy before the project. Describe the expected condition of the local, regional, or statewide economy after the project. What will the project change and how? **Provide clear, quantifiable, and verifiable metrics.**

Consider the direct and indirect benefits to each of the following:

1. Applicant
2. Local economy
3. Regional economy
4. State-wide economy

(Economy only): Cite your sources for economic information. Be specific and provide section or page numbers of cited documents.

(Economy only): Does the project create any new jobs? Identify below and explain. Consider both direct and indirect benefits. Provide clear, quantifiable, and verifiable metrics.

Consider if those jobs are:

- New, permanent positions (for more than one year after project completions)
- New, short-term positions (for the duration of the project)
- Sustains current jobs (example – provides work for contractors)

(Economy only): Does the project create jobs for people who need job training, receive public assistance, or are chronically unemployed? If yes, explain how the project creates jobs for people who need job training, receive public assistance, or are chronically unemployed.

(Economy only): Cite your sources for job information. Be specific and provide section or page numbers of cited documents.

(Public Health only): Are there documented public health and safety threats associated with the project? If yes, identify the documented public health or safety threats and specifically address how this project will address those threats. Consider both direct and indirect benefits.

Describe the condition of public health and safety before the project. Describe the expected condition of public health and safety after the project. What will the project change and how? **Provide clear, quantifiable, and verifiable metrics.**

Consider the direct and indirect benefits to each of the following:

- Applicant
- Local public health
- Regional public health
- State-wide public health

(Public Health only): Cite your sources for public health and safety information. Be specific and provide section or page numbers of cited documents.

(Upload): Provide documentation of public health and safety threats.

(Public Health only): Is this project designed to resolve an administrative order or enforcement action or avoid violations of state or federal laws? Example: Clean Water Act, Clear Air Act, Montana Hazardous Water Act, Comprehensive Cleanup & Responsibility Act, Montana Underground Storage Tank Act, etc.?

(Recreation only): Will the project increase recreation opportunities or public access? If yes, explain how the project will increase recreation or public access.

(Recreation only): Cite your sources for recreation and public access information. Be specific and provide section or page numbers of cited documents.

Question: Describe any other public benefits of the project not already discussed in your application.

Additional Information

Supporting Information and Documents

Project Maps and Photos

Upload: Upload a clearly legible map that locates the project or activity on an aerial photo or topographic base and shows latitude and longitude or sections, townships, and ranges. Title all maps and include a scale and a north arrow. For construction projects, photographic documentation must be provided to depict site conditions before construction.

Plans and Specifications

Upload: Provide copies of conceptual or preliminary design plans. For construction projects, submit copies of conceptual plans and specifications prepared for the project. The plans should be prepared by a professional engineer.

Statutory and Regulatory Requirements

Question: Identify applicable statutory and regulatory requirements of the project. Explain how the project will meet applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

Access Agreements, Deeds, Easements, Rights-of-Way

Question: Submit a list of deeds, easements, right-of-way agreements or property agreements that will be needed before the project can begin.

Upload: Provide copies of access agreements, deeds, easements, and rights of way.

Permits

Question: Most construction projects or activities will require permits. List of any permits that have been obtained and those that must be obtained to complete the project and include pertinent dates.

Upload any completed permits or permit applications. Document that the project will comply with statutory and regulatory standards.

Additional Supporting Documents

Upload: Please submit copies of or electronic links to all supporting documents. This could include court orders; administrative orders from government agencies such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; letters of support from federal, state, and local officials, interest groups, or affected parties; responsible party determination; and other reports or documents that support the need for and benefits of the project.

Liable Party Determination

Existence of liability does not automatically rule a project ineligible for RDGP funding, but may affect the amount awarded. Applicants **must** furnish the following information at the time of application submittal. Failure to provide this information may result in the application being denied. Download the following form and upload it to the online application. Please include, in addition to the form below, any other documentation of liable party determination.

Download Liable Party Determination: https://dnrc.mt.gov/_docs/conservation/RD-Bureau/RDG/RDG_Liable_Party_Determination.docx

1. What is the legal description of the site?
2. What is the name of the current owner?
3. When did the damage occur? Who was the owner/operator at that time? Provide as much identifying information as possible.
4. Have there been subsequent owners/operators? Provide as much identifying information as possible.
5. Who has been paying the property taxes the past 10 years?
6. Is a nuisance action currently pending? If yes, please describe.
7. Is the project now, or has it ever been, permitted, licensed or regulated by federal, state, or local rules, regulations or statutes? If yes, please list them.
8. If a principle responsible party search or other liability investigation has been conducted, please describe.
9. Is the applicant liable for the contamination at the site? If no, is the present owner liable for contamination?
10. Is the project being conducted under Montana's Voluntary Cleanup Program? If yes, please describe the work completed under Montana's Voluntary Cleanup Program.

Environmental Checklist

All applicants must consider the potential environmental impacts of their projects. Preparation of this document can alert applicants to consideration of location, design, or construction actions that will help to avoid potential adverse environmental impacts or expensive mitigation or construction costs. A project will not be eligible for funding if it would result in significant adverse impact after mitigation. If an Environmental Assessment has already been completed for the proposed project, please attach it to the application in place of this evaluation.

Upload: Please complete and upload the environmental checklist found here:
https://dnrc.mt.gov/_docs/conservation/CARDD-Training/MEPA/Fillable-MEPA-Checklist-and-Instructions.docx

Examples and training videos can be found here: <https://dnrc.mt.gov/Conservation/Training-and-Education/>

Authorizing Statement

Upload: The authorizing statement must be filled out and signed by an authorized representative for the applying entity. The authorized representative is the person legally authorized to enter into an agreement with DNRC. This is typically an elected official such as a county commissioner for a county, a mayor for a town, or a district chair for a district. Download the Authorizing Statement from the link below:

Authorizing Statement: https://dnrc.mt.gov/_docs/conservation/CARDD-Training/DNRC-Authorizing-Statement.pdf

RDG Project Grant Application Guidelines

Application Deadline May 15, 2026



**Montana Department of Natural Resources
and Conservation
Resource Development Bureau**
PO Box 201601
1539 Eleventh Avenue
Helena, MT 59620
Telephone: (406) 444-6668

PROGRAM CONTACT

Samantha Treu
RDG Program Manager
Phone: 405-422-3369
Email: samantha.treu@mt.gov

LEGAL AUTHORITY

Montana Code Annotated:
MCA Title 90, Chapter 2, Part 11
Administrative Rules of Montana:
ARM 36.19.1 – 36.19.2

This application is also available on the DNRC web site:

<http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cardd/resource-development/reclamation-and-development-grants-program>