

Wild & Scenic Community Grants

Frequently Asked Questions



**WILD & SCENIC
WESTFIELD RIVER
COMMITTEE**

The Wild & Scenic Westfield River Committee announces the availability of Wild & Scenic River Community Grants. The grants are intended to advance projects supporting and enhancing the protection and enjoyment of the Wild & Scenic Westfield River and its outstanding resources. Eligible projects include, but are not limited to:

- Riverfront road and bridge repairs, culvert replacement to enhance fish passage, and bank stabilization projects (e.g. to assist in design and/or to enhance outcomes of existing projects);
- Improvements to drainage, vegetated buffers, cleanup of storage materials in river corridor, or replacement of certain facilities outside the river corridor;
- Fish and aquatic habitat improvements (e.g. fish passage, woody habitat, shade cover, dam removal, etc.)
- Monitoring or assessment of water quality;
- Inventories of resources in riparian corridor (e.g. fish and wildlife habitat assessments, bird surveys, tracking studies, native and invasive plant inventories, etc.);
- Removal and/or control of invasive species within river corridor.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Any municipal entity, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, schools and other educational institutions, who serve the towns of Becket, Chester, Chesterfield, Cummington, Huntington, Middlefield, Savoy, Washington, Windsor or Worthington can apply. Individuals interested in applying should partner with either a town or nonprofit organization(s).

WHAT SIZE GRANTS ARE MADE?

Community Grants have ranged from as little as \$300 and up to \$50,000 with most grants averaging \$5,000-\$10,000. Multi-year grants are considered.

WHAT IS THE APPLICATION PROCESS?

Eligible applicants are highly encouraged to contact Carrie Banks, Wild & Scenic Westfield River Coordinator, at coordinator@wildscenicwestfieldriver.org or (413) 579-3015 to discuss your project proposal and current availability of funds in the grant program. Once determined to be eligible, then the proponent will submit a 2-4 page application describing the project, budget and how it meets the grant guidelines.

Community grants applications in excess of \$1,000 should be submitted by Monday April 17th, 2017.

Applications for funds less than \$1,000 may be submitted on a rolling-basis.

Projects are funded based on the availability of funds and contingent on annual funding allocations. Another grant round is anticipated in September 2017. Grant funds would be available 4-6 weeks after the applications are submitted.

HOW ARE PROJECTS EVALUATED?

The Committee considers the following when reviewing eligible projects:

- Does the proposal directly enhance, protect or preserve river resources (especially those which occur in-stream, on the river bank and/or in the riparian corridor)?
- Does the proposal address the protection of outstanding remarkable values (ecological, scenic, geological, historical, recreational, and agricultural features)?
- Does the proposal strengthen relationships in order to best protect river resources?
- Does the project build on ongoing efforts of the Committee? Ongoing efforts of the town?
- Is the project feasible with funding available?
- Does the project engage partners and raise awareness about the river?
- Will future activities/decisions etc. build on the results of this project?
- Are results of the project sustainable after completion of the grant?
- Are there matching funds or in-kind contributions to the project?
- Is there an appropriate entity to implement the project?
- Does the project occur in and/or support the Wild & Scenic Towns?

Recently Funded Community Projects:

Town of Becket Hazard Mitigation Grant Sub-Application (\$4,900)

With support from a Wild & Scenic Community Grant, the Town of Becket prepared and submitted a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Sub-Application for a proposed culvert replacement where there was a history of repetitive flooding. The new culvert is designed to be flood resilient and fish friendly. Funds were used to develop a detailed scope of work, alternative analysis, cost estimate, existing and proposed conditions plans, and additional supporting documentation required in the application. **As a result of the application, the Town of Becket received \$399,000 in Hazard Mitigation Grant Funds.**



Becket-Washington Stream Explorer's (\$300-\$475 per grant cycle)

The Committee sponsored a five week after-school **Stream Explorer's Program** for fourth and fifth graders. **The hands on and playful sessions insure a lifelong love of stream exploring.**

"We are a small school of about 100 children and a very small PTO with limited funds. Thank you for supporting of our Stream Explorers! The program is offered to the delight of our students, increasing their awareness and appreciation for their local watershed." – Renee Adams, Becket-Washington PTO Co-President

New England Wildflower Society's Rare Plants and Invasives Survey (\$8,000)

With funding support from the Committee, the **New England Wild Flower Society surveyed 64 rare plant populations, collected seed from 9 for conservation and restoration purposes, and managed invasives at two sites in the Westfield River Watershed.** NEWFS surveyed occurrences of rare plant species that have not been found in over 15 years, verified the existence of others, and documented a few that were not located in previously recorded areas. Information on the threat of invasive species and the current status of rare plant populations will help determine invasive management priorities.



Keystone Arch Bridge National Historic Landmark Designation Proposal (\$35,000)

With funding from the Westfield River Wild & Scenic Committee, **the Chester Railway Foundation and Friends of the Keystone Arches hired the Public Archeology Laboratory (PAL) to research and nominate the 2 state-owned Arches for National Historic landmark status, the highest recognition available.** The bridges are located on Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife's Walnut Hill Wildlife Management Area. Constructed in the 1840s, the railroad was built in the most remote and unwelcoming territory ever traversed by a railroad at that time. The Westfield News-Letter wrote: "It is the last route in the world where we should ever dream of making a railroad."

Trout Unlimited's Kinne Brook Restoration Project (\$50,000 over two grant cycles)

Trout Unlimited received two community grants for design, engineering and permitting to support different phases of the Kinne Brook Restoration Project. **The project will remove 3 fish passage barriers (a dam and two culverts) to restore habitat connectivity to over 10 miles of upstream spawning and rearing habitat for Eastern Brook Trout (EBT), slimy sculpin and other related coldwater fish species.** To date, the project has leveraged more than \$350,000 in additional grants and in-kind services.

