



Pesticide Stewardship Partnership Program

Flathead Lake Biological Station University of Montana

Competitive Contract Guidelines

Mission, Vision, and Values
Brief History
Program Interests
Geographic Focus
Contract Requirements
Contract Type
Eligible Applicants
Contract Size
How to Apply
Contact Person
Evaluation
Additional Funding

Implementing action to
reduce pesticide pollution
in our waters.



FLATHEAD LAKE
BIO STATION
UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA



Janelle Groff
Research Coordinator
janelle.groff@flbs.umt.edu
406-872-4508

Mission, Vision, and Values

The Montana Pesticide Stewardship Partnership Program (PSPP) aims to measure, document, and reduce pesticide pollutants in surface waters and groundwater in the Upper Columbia River Basin of Montana and parts of Northern Idaho. The PSPP was funded by an award from the EPA's Columbia River Basin Restoration Program in October 2023 and is currently funded through 2028. We are collaborating with partners to implement various projects throughout the basin. Efforts support green stormwater infrastructure, agricultural best management practices, community education and outreach, research on human health impacts, environmental monitoring and analysis, science communication, and more. Working together, we can better understand the impact of pesticides on our freshwaters and implement actions to help protect our waters. Our efforts, partnerships, and engagement with stakeholders aim to promote voluntary change to improve and protect our waters.

The PSPP is awarding Competitive Contracts to support organizations or individuals to implement projects that, either directly or indirectly, reduce pesticide pollution in surface waters.

Brief History

The PSPP operates at the Flathead Lake Biological Station, part of the University of Montana, situated along Flathead Lake, Montana. Northwest Montana is at the headwaters of the Columbia River Basin, one of the largest watersheds in North America. The watershed is important for many environmental, economic, cultural, and social values, but is also threatened by human activity and a changing climate. The primary goal of the PSPP is to protect and improve the water quality of the upper Columbia River Basin, understanding that protecting water quality in the headwaters will have positive downstream effects. The PSPP is collecting baseline surface and groundwater data to quantify pesticide pollution, engaging and educating communities, implementing long-term solutions, and more. Supporting our efforts, we have built and continue to build a network of partners dedicated to protecting our waters. Members of the network will work together to enhance coordination among all parties to maximize our impact on water protection.

We are collaborating with several subaward recipients, including the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, Montana Department of Environmental Quality, City of Missoula, Montana Department of Agriculture, Montana State University Extension, and Montana Watershed Coordination Council. Each of these organizations is implementing actions to support the goals of the PSPP including fish monitoring, supporting the use of native plants, education and outreach, green stormwater infrastructure, pesticide disposal, pesticide container recycling, and more.

Program Interests

Our interests align with, but are not limited to, the following EPA priorities:



Green Infrastructure

Addresses multiple contaminants in stormwater, including pesticides, and provides many environmental and community benefits.



Agricultural Best Management Practices

Inform and encourage voluntary changes in pesticide use practices that can reduce pesticide use and/or pesticide pollution through technical assistance, education and outreach, equipment upgrades, buffers, training, application methods, etc.



Community Education & Outreach

Targets all ages and pesticide users, including urban, suburban, rural, agricultural, nurseries, producers, homeowners, gardeners, landscapers, foresters, pest management professionals, etc. Education and outreach increase community engagement and can encourage voluntary changes that reduce pesticide use and/or pesticide pollution.



Human Health Impacts

Protect human health, which could be at risk from bioaccumulated pesticides in fish and other wildlife; ensure protection for high fish consumers, such as Tribal members, in accordance with guidelines; and conserve fish and wildlife.

Other interests include, but are not limited to:



Pesticide Disposal

Hazardous waste collection prevents improper disposal of pesticides. Provide education and opportunity for proper disposal.



Native Plants/Buffer Strips

Among other benefits, it provides natural pest resistance and attracts beneficial insects resulting in less pesticide use. Native plants can also reduce pesticide pollution when used as a buffer for water, wind breaks, and erosion control.



Integrated Pest Management

Uses pesticide alternatives and nonchemical strategies to manage pests before using pesticides.

Geographic Focus

The Columbia River Basin portion of Montana consists of 12 counties: Lincoln, Flathead, Sanders, Lake, Mineral, Missoula, Powell, Granite, Ravalli, Lewis & Clark, Deer Lodge, and Silver Bow. The latter three are only partially in the basin. The PSPP and supported work must be implemented in this geographic range. Please see the map below.



Contract Requirements

A contract agreement will be provided by the University of Montana and will require review and signature by the Person of Contact or Contract Agreement Signee, Janelle Groff or Rachel Malison, and the University Procurement Officer.

Contract recipients will initially cover all costs, then submit an invoice for reimbursement. The PSPP cannot provide reimbursement payments to a third party; therefore, contract recipients must be named on the invoice. Invoice categories must align with budget categories for reimbursement purposes.

Reimbursement, via the University of Montana, operates through PaymentWorks. Contract recipients will be emailed an invitation to create a vendor account with PaymentWorks after the contract agreement is finalized. This must be completed promptly, as no payments will be made until all the paperwork is completed.

Cost match is required at 25% of total project cost and cannot be federally sourced. For example, if you are requesting \$7,500, your required cost match would be \$2,500 (functionally, 1/3 of your requested funding). See example below:

Requested Funding	+	Cost Match	= Total Project Cost
\$7,500	+	\$2,500	= \$10,000
75%	+	25%	= 100%

Additional cost match (greater than 25% of the project cost) is welcomed if available, as it will greatly help the PSPP. Cost match will be reported with each invoice submitted for reimbursement. Supporting documentation for cost match is required to be submitted for auditing purposes. Previous applicants have had multiple sources of in-kind match available to meet cost-match requirements. Please contact Janelle with questions.

Quarterly progress reports will be required and are to be submitted by communicated deadlines associated with the following PSPP quarterly periods: January 30, April 30, July 30, and October 30. A final progress report will be required 60 days after the end of the contract period. Templates will be provided.

Contract Type

These contracts will support implementation projects aimed at reducing pesticide use and/or reducing pesticide pollution in surface waters. While this funding specifically supports implementation, it can also cover planning and development activities necessary to achieve your proposed outcome. Implementation outcomes may include equipment upgrades, riparian improvements, training events, pilot projects, education and outreach activities/materials, and more. Be sure to revisit our program interests.

Eligible Applicants

This opportunity is open to academic institutions, non-profit organizations, water quality monitoring groups, private companies, government agencies, public health organizations, etc. If you are uncertain if you qualify, please contact us.

- This can include but may not be limited to researchers, scientists, agricultural producers, farmers, nurseries, landscapers, pest management professionals, community groups, educators, water resource managers, foresters, land managers, urban planners, etc.

Contract Size

Below are the suggested minimum and maximum contract sizes. If more or less is required to meet your project needs, these amounts are open for discussion.

Minimum - \$5,000

Maximum - \$25,000

How to Apply

1. Connect with PSPP personnel to express your interest and share your ideas. Receive feedback before beginning your application (optional).
2. Use our application template to provide the following information:
 1. Introduce your organization and past work
 2. Provide a summary of your project including goals, objectives, activities, and planned outcomes.
 3. Describe your project including the problem it addresses, its anticipated impacts, and how it aligns with the Montana Pesticide Stewardship Partnership Program.
 4. Explain how you plan to measure the success of your project.
 5. Develop a budget that outlines necessary expenditures using budget categories that directly align with invoices as noted above. Include required amount and categories for cost match as noted above.
 6. Provide a budget justification explaining how funds will be used.
3. Submit your application via email to Janelle.Groff@flbs.umt.edu

Competitive Contract Guidelines

Contact Person

If you have questions, need feedback, or want to learn more about the PSPP, please don't hesitate to connect with the PSPP Research Coordinator:

Janelle Groff
Janelle.Groff@flbs.umt.edu
406-872-4508

Evaluation

The following rubric will be used to evaluate applications out of 100 available points.

Component	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Alignments with Objectives 25 pts	Weak/no alignment with objectives and priorities 0-6	Moderate alignment with a few objectives and priorities 7-12	Good alignment with some objectives and priorities 13-19	Strong alignment with many objectives and priorities 20-25
Potential Impact 10 pts	Minimal or no potential impact 0-2	Limited potential impact with few benefits 3-4	Moderate potential impact with some benefits 5-7	High potential impact with clear benefits 8-10
Feasibility 10 pts	Significant feasibility concerns or unrealistic 0-2	Some feasibility concerns but possible with changes 3-4	Generally feasible with a few minor concerns 5-7	Highly feasible with a clear and realistic plan 8-10
Qualifications 10 pts	Limited qualifications and relevant experience 0-2	Moderately qualified with some relevant experience 3-4	Qualified with good relevant experience 5-7	Highly qualified with relevant experience 8-10
Past Performance 5 pts	Limited or no record of success 0-1	Moderate record with a few successful projects 2-3	Good record with some successful projects 4	Strong record of success in similar projects 5
Stakeholder Engagement 5 pts	No engagement plan or strategies 0-1	Limited engagement plan with few strategies 2-3	Good engagement plan with some strategies 4	Complete engagement plan with clear strategies 5
Budget Justification 10 pts	Poorly justified or unclear budget 0-2	Some justification but with significant gaps 2-3	Generally well-justified budget with minor gaps 5-7	Detailed and well-justified budget 8-10
Cost Effectiveness 5 pts	Poor cost-effectiveness with minimal value 0-1	Limited cost-effectiveness with moderate value 2-3	Generally cost-effective with some value 4	Highly cost-effective with clear value 5
Measuring Success 10 pts	No metrics or evaluation plan 0-2	Limited metrics and evaluation plan 2-3	Strong metrics and plan with minor gaps 5-7	Comprehensive metrics and evaluation plan 8-10
Long-Term Impact and Scalability 10 pts	No plan for long-term impact and no potential for scalability 0-2	Limited plan for long-term impact and little potential for scalability 2-3	Good plan with some long-term impact and potential for scalability 5-7	Strong plan for long-term impact and potential for scalability 8-10

Competitive Contract Guidelines

The following evaluation considerations may help guide applicants through the rubric.

Component	Details
Alignment with Objectives	The proposal clearly aligns with PSPP program interests, mission, and values.
Potential Impact	The project has significant potential benefits for water quality, aquatic ecosystems, and/or human health.
Feasibility	The proposed work is practical and achievable within the timeline and budget, with well-defined methods, activities, and a detailed implementation plan.
Qualifications	The project team possesses the necessary expertise, experience, and qualifications to successfully complete the project.
Past Performance	The applicant has demonstrated success in similar projects or relevant fields, with provided examples.
Stakeholder Engagement	The project plans to engage and involve stakeholders, emphasizing the importance of education and outreach for promoting voluntary change.
Budget Justification	The budget is well-justified and aligned with the project's objectives and activities.
Cost Effectiveness	The project provides good value for the funding requested, including the required cost match, with a balanced approach to cost and expected outcomes.
Measuring Success	The proposal includes clear and measurable metrics for evaluating the project's success, including specific outcomes and quantifiable indicators.
Long-Term Impact and Scalability	The project has a plan for sustaining its outcomes beyond the funding period, with potential for scalability, replicability, or broader applications.

Additional Funding

There are additional funding opportunities if your proposed project does not meet our contract requirements.

Montana Watershed Coordination Council has a great [Funding Tool](#) for viewing available funding opportunities. They also have [Watershed Fund grants](#) available to watershed conservation organizations supporting Montana communities to advance community-based, locally led conservation using the [Watershed Approach](#). This includes watershed groups; conservation, irrigation, and water quality districts; non-profits; forest

Competitive Contract Guidelines

collaboratives; Tribally led nonprofits; and Tribal government agencies. The following are not eligible: Federal agencies, state agencies, individuals, and for-profit entities.

Montana Department of Environmental Protection has awarded umbrella grants to Montana Association of Conservation Districts to support the [Ranching for Rivers Program](#) and [Education & Outreach Water Quality Mini Grants](#). Learn more about DEQ here- <https://deq.mt.gov/Water/Programs/nonpoint>

The US Department of Agriculture has [Value-Added Producer Grants](#) available to support the generation of new products, creating and expanding marketing opportunities, and increasing producer income.

Montana Department of Commerce has [Agrotourism Grants](#) available to assist Montana's Rural and Tribal agricultural businesses and communities and to promote innovation and support in Montana.

Western Montana Conservation Commission has funding available via the new [Stormwater and Septic Leachate Toxics Reduction Grant Program](#). This program supports the following: Residential Septic System Education & Maintenance Programs, Septic System Replacement & Sewer Connectivity, Showcase Green Stormwater Infrastructure Projects, and Residential & Community Green Stormwater Infrastructure Programs.