

APPENDIX F

Lower Meramec Watershed Healthy Watershed Options

A stormwater management program needs two types of funding:

1. **Revenue** is an ongoing stable flow of funding that provides financial support for staff, ongoing services, system repairs, regulatory compliance, etc. Ongoing revenue for a stormwater management program is often provided by general use dollars which compete with many other community priorities – parks, police, fire safety, libraries, streets, etc. Since stormwater is rarely the top of the list for decision makers or community members, stormwater programs are often underfunded, and maintenance and project back-logs accumulate.

Many communities are beginning to develop funding streams that are solely dedicated to the stormwater management program. There are various ways to provide this dedicated funding source that do not compete with other community priorities. Taxes, fees, incentives, etc. can be used as a mechanism to build a stormwater fund that sufficiently provides for the on-going operation, maintenance, regulatory compliance, repairs, staff, equipment, bond repayment, and a reserve fund.

2. **Project Funds** are a one-time targeted funding source that provide financial support for construction, new development system upgrades, new etc. Some stormwater projects are too costly to implement without outside resources. Examples of these types of projects are: construction, new development, system upgrades, new regulatory requirements, etc. Grants, loans and bonds can provide this one-time influx of funding to accomplish specific and targeted projects that enhance the community's stormwater management.

Most communities use a mixture of funding sources to meet stormwater service goals. Grants, loans and bonds are not recommended for the ongoing regular operation of your stormwater management program. Revenue should be sufficient for a stormwater program's ongoing expenses. The project funds are used to help a community reach their desired level of service while the revenue funds maintain that level of performance.

The following provides information about potential sources of funding for healthy watershed projects in the Lower Meramec Watershed. This is a comprehensive listing of funding sources; however, there may be other sources of funding that are not included. By following the hyperlinks, online readers can explore funding options further.

Search for Funding Online!

To learn more about these funding options and to search for others, visit the Wichita State University Environmental Finance Center's Missouri Healthy Watershed Funding Tool. There are multiple filter options to help you find the best options for your project.

[www.wichita.edu/
mowatershedfunding](http://www.wichita.edu/mowatershedfunding)

Consult your community's attorney and financial advisors prior to moving forward with any funding options. Any reference in this document to any person, or organization, or activities, products, or services related to such person or organization, or any linkages to the website of another party, do not constitute or imply the endorsement, recommendation, or favoring of companies or organizations.

Grants

Grants make funding available for a specific purpose. Some grants are available for projects that protect or enhance quality of life for community members. Other grants are available for projects that protect or enhance natural resources.

The most important thing you can do when writing a grant is to do your research. The more you know about the organization you are applying to, the better you will be able to explain how your project will help them fulfill their mission and goals. Reaching out to a staff member to gain insight about the organization will help identify where your project and their mission align. Then be sure to highlight that in the application. The staff member may also be able to speak to new or arising interests the organization may have that could give an additional boost to your application.

Pros

- No repayment required
- Large funding amounts may be available
- Likely grant program and HMP goals align
- Typically, available to state, local governments, nonprofits, and tribes
- Great way to test proof-of-concept
- May help fund planning efforts

Cons

- Highly competitive
- Often have a lengthy application process
- Potential lengthy reporting requirements
- Often strict in scope
- Variable and limited funding amounts
- May or may not be offered on a regular basis
- May require matching funds
- Typically, does not fund operations and maintenance (need to identify an additional funding stream for ongoing expenses)

Federal Grants and Programs

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA)

Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant | \$25,000 - \$10M

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides funding through [Flood Mitigation Assistance \(FMA\) grant](#) to help reduce or eliminate risk of repetitive flood damage to buildings and other structures insured under the National Flood Insurance Program. Funded projects include wetland restoration/creation, floodplain and stream restoration, buyouts for open space preservation, demolition and much more. Local governments are subapplicants and must apply to the state Hazard Mitigation Agency during the open application cycle.

Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Grant | \$150,000 - \$4M

FEMA provides funding through [Pre-Disaster Mitigation \(PDM\) grant](#) for planning, projects or public awareness to reduce future flood risks to the population or structures. Funded projects include, flood mitigation planning, public education, saferooms, generators, sirens, etc. Local, state and tribal governments are eligible to apply, as well as territories. Local governments are subapplicants and must apply to the state Hazard Mitigation Agency during the open application cycle.

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) | formula based funding

[Hazard Mitigation Grant Program \(HMGP\)](#) is funding available to states, local governments, tribes and nonprofits when authorized under a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration, in areas of the state requested by the governor. HMGP's purpose is to help communities reduce future losses and break the cycle of damage from natural hazards. Funding may cover post-disaster projects like: flood prone property acquisition, demolition, relocation, planning, open space preservation, bioretention, green infrastructure. Applications are submitted to the Missouri State Emergency Management Agency.

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD)

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Entitlement Program | \$10,000 - \$750,000

The [CDBG Entitlement Program](#) provides entitled communities (see CDBG website for eligibility) with resources to develop viable urban communities that include decent housing, a suitable living environment, and economic opportunities. Activities must meet national objectives. Funds may be used for property acquisition, construction or improvement of public facilities (water, wastewater, streets, etc.). CDBG projects are encouraged to incorporate green infrastructure into design and construction.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

Urban Waters Small Grants | \$60,000

The EPA [Urban Waters Program](#) helps grow local businesses and enhances educational, recreational, social, and employment opportunities by investing in healthy and accessible urban waters. UW Small Grants fund community engagement, education, restoration projects, studies, planning and citizen science. Grants are awarded every two years. Eligible applicants include states, local governments, tribes, universities, colleges and nonprofits.

Environmental Justice Small Grants | \$30,000

The EPA provides [Environmental Justice Small Grant](#) funding to community organizations and tribes to build partnerships and work on projects that address environmental and/or public health issues using the “Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Model.” Small Justice Grants fund partnership building, public education, demonstration projects, and planning for local environmental or public health issues. Healthy watershed opportunities supported by Environmental Justice Small Grants are projects that engage the community around flood risk or water quality including sampling, stormwater, green infrastructure, emergency preparedness, disaster resiliency, environmental job training and youth development.

Wetland Program Development Grants | \$100,000 - \$300,000

[Wetland Program Development Grants](#) are planning grants. The purpose is to increase the capacity of all levels of government to develop and refine effective, comprehensive programs for wetland protection and management. Including healthy watershed options like floodplain restoration, green infrastructure, green space preservation and others into a wetland program plan may increase future support and implementation funding opportunities.

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE (USFWS)

National Fish Passage Program | average \$70,000

The [National Fish Passage Program](#) provides financial and technical assistance to restore waterway connectivity. Inventories, assessments, research, levee breaches, road crossings, engineering and fish passage training are among the projects covered. After disasters, communities can reach out to USFWS to achieve flood reduction and wildlife benefits.

National Fish Habitat Partnership | variable

Through the [National Fish Habitat Partnership](#), the USFWS, along with federal, state, tribal and privately raised funds, invests to conserve fish habitats. Healthy watersheds lead to healthy fish populations. Partnering with the [Fish Habitat Partnership](#) may lead to co-benefits for fish and the local community.

Transportation Projects: Keeping Watersheds in Mind

Healthy watershed projects are not stand-alone projects, but can and should be incorporated into every construction or reconstruction of housing, commercial buildings, roads, sidewalks, walking path projects, etc. One way to include green infrastructure throughout the community is by including bioretention, permeable pavement and tree trenches into projects funded by the US Department of Transportation (DOT). The DOT provides funding through three programs that encourage the inclusion of green infrastructure components of trails, sidewalk and roadways.

1. Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
2. Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ)
3. Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Program (TIGER)

State Grants & Programs

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Section 319 Nonpoint Source Pollution Grants | \$50,000 - \$300,000

The EPA provides nonpoint source pollution funding to the [Missouri Department of Natural Resources Section 319 Subgrants](#) to assist communities/organizations with approved Nine-Element Watershed Management Plans. Subgrants support the implementation of the Plan's best management practices and associated activities to restore and protect waters that are impaired or threatened by nonpoint source pollution. This grant can fund planning and implementation of the nine-element plan, land management practices, public outreach/education, demonstration projects and much more.

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

Community Conservation Grant | \$50,000

The [Community Conservation Grant Program](#) provides funding for wildlife habitats, partnerships for land stewardship and natural landscape management training. These grants are open to local governments, schools and nonprofits. They fund projects that include stream restoration, prairie reconstruction, forest management, wetland enhancement, wildlife habitat improvement and partner/staff training.

Community Conservation Cost Share | \$15,000, plus more if population is over 100,000

[MDC's Community Conservation Cost Share program](#) promotes sustainable development practices and the establishment of natural resource conservation practices in urban and developing areas. Funding may go toward urban green space planning, engineering, native prairie restorations, forest management, invasive species control, and more. Local governments, schools and nonprofits are eligible.

Conservation Land Acquisition Program Grant | UP TO 75% OF APPRAISED LAND VALUE

The Conservation Land Acquisition Program - Land Conservation Partnership Grant provides funds to local governments or nonprofits for land acquisition that increases public access to nature and outdoor recreation. Land must be managed as a natural habitat (forest, stream, grassland, wetland, etc) and enhance conservation of wildlife, habitats and ecosystem services. Questions? Contact gus.raeker@mcd.mo.gov.

Conservation Easement Assistance Program Grant

The Conservation Easement Assistance Program - Land Conservation Partnership Grant provides funding to local governments or nonprofits for the costs of acquiring donated conservation easements that will be managed as a natural habitat and open to the public. Local governments, land trusts and nonprofits are eligible to apply for funding to cover the costs of surveying, report preparation, easement drafting, title commitment, closing costs, or public access infrastructure like trails or parking lots. Questions? Contact gus.raeker@mcd.mo.gov.

Everything (Land Conservation) but the Kitchen Sink Grant

The Everything but the Kitchen Sink - Land Conservation Partnership Grant is an open-ended call for projects that advance land conservation and outdoor recreation in Missouri. All creative and effective projects are considered. Questions? Contact gus.raeker@mcd.mo.gov.

Tree Resource Improvement and Maintenance (TRIM) Grant | \$1,000 - \$25,000

The [Tree Resource Improvement and Maintenance \(TRIM\) program](#) is designed to help Missouri communities initiate and improve their efforts to care for publicly owned trees. State and local governments, nonprofits and schools are eligible for funding that includes tree projects on publicly owned land - tree planting, care, inventory, plan development, removal or pruning, etc. - volunteer and staff training and outreach.

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) | \$10,000 - \$750,000

HUD provides funds through [The State of Missouri's Community Development Block Grant](#) to help communities with resources to address a wide range of community development needs in unique ways that fit each community. CDBG strives to ensure affordable and safe housing, provide services to the most vulnerable in each community and create jobs. Most CDBG projects present opportunities to incorporate healthy watershed projects like floodplain restoration, open-space preservation, bioretention and other green infrastructure.

MISSOURI NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE

PL-566 Watershed Projects | variable

The [PL-566 Watershed Project](#) provides technical and financial assistance to help watersheds solve natural resource and related economic problems. Funding can cover plan development, flood prevention and damage reduction, erosion and sediment control which could include floodplain restoration and bioretention, fish and wildlife habitat enhancement and much more.

Emergency Watershed Protection Program - Floodplain Easements

The [Emergency Watershed Protection Program](#) can be used when acquiring an easement in lieu of recovery measures and is the most economical and prudent approach to reduce flood risk. Easements are great options for accomplishing floodplain restoration, and may also include demolition of structures and debris removal.

Non-Governmental Organization Grants & Programs

MISSOURI CONSERVATION HERITAGE FOUNDATION (MCHF)

Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation | \$500 - \$5,000

The [Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation](#) provides funding for projects that meet conservation and outdoor recreation goals of the organization. It funds projects that promote conservation, including species and natural community management and restoration, stream quality, good forest management practices, and watershed health.

NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION (NFWF)

Monarch Butterfly and Pollinators Conservation Fund | \$50,000 - \$300,000

The [Monarch Butterfly and Pollinators Conservation Fund](#) supports projects that benefit monarch butterflies and one or more federally listed candidate or proposed native insect pollinator species. Funded projects included floodplain or wetland restoration, removal of invasive species, restoration planning/design/permitting and bioretention.

Five-Star and Urban Waters Restoration Grants | \$20,000 - \$50,000

[Five-Star Grants](#) focus on stewardship and restoration of wetland and riparian ecosystems. Local and state governments, tribal governments, nonprofits and universities/colleges are eligible to apply. Funding priorities include habitat restoration, meaningful education, measurable benefits and partnerships.

WELLS FARGO & NFWF

Resilient Communities Program | \$200,000 - \$500,000

Wells Fargo and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation have partnered to provide [Resilient Communities](#) funding to help communities prepare for the future impacts of sea-level rise, sustain water quality and quantity, and enhance forest conservation. Local governments, nonprofits and tribes are eligible. Funding can cover green infrastructure, bioretention, urban tree canopy, invasive species management, stream buffer enhancements and more.

AMERICAN WATER

Environmental Grant Program | \$10,000

The [American Water Environmental Grant Program](#) provides funding to address watershed or source water protection in local communities in the American Water service area. Local governments, nonprofits and community groups are eligible to apply to fund projects that include floodplain and riparian restoration, reforestation, habitat restoration, watershed clean-up, outreach and education.

THE SCHERMAN FOUNDATION FUND

Rosin Fund Environment Program | \$100,000 - \$250,000

The Scherman Foundation provides grant funds to nonprofit organizations, through the [Rosin Fund Environmental Program](#), for innovative projects that have a transformative impact on a critical environmental issue. Nonprofits are eligible to apply with innovative, short-term and high-impact projects, including green infrastructure and open space, that address critical environmental issues.

PUBLIC – PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

Public-Private Partnership | variety

A Public-Private Partnership allows businesses to fund public projects that help them meet their social or environmental goals to ensure a future that is financially sustainable. Eligible projects include planning, development, construction, acquisition, operation and a full range of healthy watershed activities. There are also “[project banks](#)” that allow communities to advertise projects to potential private partners for funding.

Loans

Federal and state governments provide low- to no-interest, short- and long-term loan opportunities to help local governments install infrastructure that benefit the health, safety, economy and environment in our communities. Healthy watershed projects can be incorporated into larger infrastructure projects seeking loan funding.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not limited in size or scope of project• A few loan programs forgive a portion of the loan amount	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repayment required• May require increasing of fees or rates to cover cost of repayment and interest

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (MDNR)

Clean Water State Revolving Fund | short-term (1-3 year) loan or long-term (20 year) loan

The [Missouri Clean Water State Revolving Fund](#) (CWSRF) provides communities a permanent, independent source of low-cost financing for a wide range of water quality infrastructure projects. Local governments, businesses and nonprofits are eligible to apply. The EPA has identified that the CWSRF is a funding resource for green infrastructure and stormwater projects.

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund | maximum funding is 30% of total available or \$10M

The [Missouri Drinking Water State Revolving Fund](#) (DWSRF) provides communities a permanent, independent source of low-interest financing to construct drinking water projects that protect public health. This includes projects like source intake, wells, treatment plants, consolidation and much more. Incorporate healthy watershed options into project design where appropriate. Set-aside funds may be used to purchase conservation easements and other source water protection (aka: healthy watershed) activities, if made available for these purposes by Missouri Department of Natural Resources. Community public water systems as well as nonprofit and non-community public water systems are eligible to apply.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) \$20M large communities, \$5M small communities (25,000 or less), no more than 49% of project cost

The [Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act's](#) purpose is to accelerate investment in our nation's water and wastewater infrastructure by providing long-term, low-cost supplemental credit assistance under customized terms to creditworthy water and wastewater projects of national and regional significance. Local, state and federal governments as well as nonprofits, corporations, trusts and SRF programs are eligible to apply. Incorporate green infrastructure and healthy watershed opportunities into WIFIA projects through site design, such as green roof, pervious pavement, conservation of land, etc.

US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)

Water & Waste Disposal Loan & Grant Program | variable, 40-year payback period

The [Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant](#) program helps very small, financially distressed rural communities extend and improve, among other priorities, stormwater collection, transmission and drainage that serves local households and businesses. Local and state governments as well as nonprofits and tribes are eligible to apply.

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD)

The Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program | typically \$500,000 - \$140M

The [Section 108](#) program allows communities to transform a small portion of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds into federally guaranteed loans large enough to pursue physical and economic revitalization projects capable of revitalizing entire neighborhoods.

Bonds

Bonds provide local governments the ability to borrow money to fund infrastructure projects, typically for a low-cost, tax-exempt rate of interest. Some types of bonds require voter approval, some do not. Consult your municipal attorney prior to moving forward with bond opportunities.

Pros

- Not limited in size or scope of project

Cons

- Repayment required
- May require increasing of fees or rates to cover cost of repayment and interest

GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND

Provides local governments the ability to borrow money to fund infrastructure projects, typically for a low-cost, tax-exempt rate of interest. Repayment and voter approval is required.

REVENUE BONDS

Revenue Bonds are backed by the revenue generated by the project for which the bond is issued. The infrastructure projects these municipal bonds pay for must generate revenue that then goes to pay back the interest and principal to the investors. Even though healthy watershed projects do not typically generate income, any revenue bond project can include healthy watershed practices. Voter approval may be required.

GREEN BONDS, GREEN-MUNI BONDS, CLIMATE BONDS OR ENVIRONMENTAL BONDS

Provides local governments with the ability to borrow money to fund environmental, sustainable infrastructure projects, typically for a low-cost, tax-exempt rate of interest. These projects are not limited in size or scope, and they are tax-exempt and low-interest. Voter approval may be required.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT BONDS

Also known as Pay-For-Success Bonds, Environmental Impact Bonds are a performance-based financing mechanism. Private funders provide upfront capital to fund the healthy watershed project and the local government only pays for the project if it meets pre-established, measurable goals. Environmental Impact Bonds allow communities to share the risks and rewards of financing large projects based on outcomes. Benefits include low interest rate, no limit in size or scope of project and the sharing of performance risk. Performance metrics are developed upfront, and performance data is collected during and after the project is completed to determine repayment.

Revenue that Builds a Dedicated Funding Source

The development of a dedicated stormwater fund provides a secure funding source for planned projects, operations, maintenance and could be a useful source to leverage local matching funds. There are several methods that can be used to develop the capital for a dedicated stormwater fund.

Pros

- Not limited on project size
- Not limited on project scope
- Funds do not compete with other community priorities
- Funds ongoing, available and flexible
- Funds can go towards operations and maintenance
- Funds can be set aside in reserve for future projects or priorities

Cons

- Decision-makers or public may be resistant to use political capital to implement a tax, fee, incentive program, etc.
- Potential for increased burden on low-income residents

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP)

Capital Improvement Plans are non-binding, long-term planning documents that schedule major infrastructure improvements and spread the capital costs over many years to avoid large rate increases. Healthy watershed practices, like bioretention, green space preservation and floodplain restoration are typically large undertakings and require significant time to develop, coordinate and fund. Incorporating healthy watershed practices into the CIP allows local governments to better understand and plan for long-term project and funding needs and may help coordinate efforts to save time and money.

TAXES

Taxes are often a go-to source for funding. In Missouri, sales and property tax increases require voter approval. There are two key questions to ask before pursuing taxes as a stormwater funding source:

- 1) Are your decision makers willing to go to the voters to ask them to vote “yes” on a tax for this purpose?
- 2) Are the voters willing to say “yes” to a tax for this purpose?

Do not assume the answer will be “no.” If flooding in your community is a major issue, a majority of residents may be proactive about solving the flooding issue and their answer to the tax question may be a strong “yes.” If you are unsure of the community’s interest, make some informal or formal inquiries at various local meetings or groups. As you reach out to educate the community, find out their willingness to pay. Conduct a social media survey.

If the community is not interested in paying for stormwater with their tax dollars, move on to other funding sources. If it is determined that the community would be supportive of a tax to fund stormwater efforts to reduce flood risks, the next step is to start a conversation with your city/county attorney. There are a wide variety of taxing options and each community is different. It is important that each community assess their own tax payers' willingness to pay and implement a tax that is equitable and appropriate. Do not assume that your community will think and vote exactly like neighboring communities.

SALES TAX

Sales tax is levied at the point of sale. It can become a dedicated funding source, but requires voter approval and may be viewed as a burden.

WATERSHED IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

A Watershed Improvement District is a special taxing district, governed by an appointed board of trustees, that implements projects that protect the watershed and prevent flood damage. Funds collected can be used on a wide range of public purposes, including stormwater infrastructure.

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

A [Community Improvement District](#) is a special purpose district where property owners voluntarily tax themselves to fund public improvements or services to support the community and promote economic development. This allows local residents to obtain the expanded services they want at a price they are willing to pay.

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

A [Neighborhood Improvement District](#) is a special taxing district where property owners voluntarily tax themselves to fund public improvements or services to support the community. Eligible improvements include stormwater projects, engineering, gutters, parks, property acquisition, sidewalks, signage and more.

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF)

[Tax Increment Financing](#) is a local economic development tool that leverages new property taxes generated by public projects in a specified district. The purpose is to fund public infrastructure or facilities to stimulate economic development. TIFs can be used to service bond payments for large-sale healthy watershed projects. Or, the TIF revenue can be used as a stable funding source for small project implementation as well as operations and maintenance of previously built healthy watershed projects.

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SUBDISTRICT

A [Soil and Water Conservation Subdistrict](#) may be formed to carry out watershed protection and flood prevention programs. This allows landowners to develop and implement a plan for the properties in their watershed to reduce flooding and increase watershed protection.

Fees

Fees are another way to build a dedicated fund for stormwater management. Since stormwater management service is similar to drinking water and wastewater service, the fee for service model is growing in popularity. Utility fees may not require voter approval, but can cost decision makers political capital, so providing decision makers with solid rationale and return on investment information is crucial to support and implementation.

STORMWATER FEE

Stormwater fees are fees-for-service of providing conveyance of stormwater away from a property's impervious surfaces into collection systems, natural drainage or waterways. These fees are based on the contribution of stormwater to the city's stormwater management system and implemented by the stormwater utility or local government. Stormwater fees cover the costs of stormwater infrastructure's operation and maintenance. Stormwater fees represent the most equitable way for the community to share the cost of the public service of stormwater management and provides dedicated funds for stormwater projects. In Missouri developing and implementing the fee structure can be a major undertaking and may require a public vote.

DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEE

A Development Impact Fee is a one-time fee assessed by a local government on new development to pay for all or a portion of the costs of providing public services to the new development. Development impact fees help to create dedicated funds for expanding utilities, including water, wastewater, stormwater and more.

FEE IN-LIEU OF STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

In-Lieu Fees allow developers to opt-out of stormwater management by paying a sponsor (nonprofit, local government, etc) a fee. Those fees become dedicated funds for stormwater projects.

ON-BILL DONATIONS

On-Bill Donations are voluntary payments from utility customers to a dedicated fund, foundation or trust that uses funds for specified healthy watershed projects. When implementing this type of program, be sure to show your community how these donations help to meet your community or utility's mission. Basic level-of-service should be funded by rates, fees and taxes – not donations.

Incentive Programs

Incentives are typically one-time payments or other “perks” that encourage the implementation of a management best practice or other behavior or project that helps a community meet their flood reduction or stormwater goals. Incentives could include, but are not limited to, reduced permit fees, reduced permitting time, tax credits, zoning exceptions, recognition, or rebates. Get creative and make the incentives specific to your community.

ENVIRONMENTAL INCENTIVES OR PAY-OR-PERFORMANCE

Environmental incentives, also known as pay-for-performance, are financial incentives for private companies, property owners or government agencies to implement environmental or healthy watershed projects. This economic incentive program links payment to measurable outcomes while increasing public trust. Environmental incentives focus on project effectiveness, not the lowest-cost. For example, California’s Mokelumne Watershed Environmental Benefits Program provides land manager incentives to implement best practices like forest, meadow and streamside restoration, that ensure watershed sustainability. Environmental benefits are tracked, incentives are provided accordingly, and credits/incentives can be traded.

STORMWATER CREDITS

Stormwater credits are financial incentives given to property owners (homeowners and/or businesses) who reduce their property’s stormwater runoff by installing green infrastructure (bioretention, rain gardens, permeable pavement, green roofs, etc.). Some programs allow credits to be sold or traded to other property owners. Stormwater credit programs enhance the perception of “user fees” because they recognize stormwater reduction actions and give homeowners and businesses voluntary control over their fees.

STORMWATER AND DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

A stormwater or development incentive program gives one-time incentives to property owners or developers to implement healthy watershed practices onsite. Incentives could include, but are not limited to, reduced permit fees, reduced permitting time, tax credits, zoning exceptions, recognition, or rebates. Get creative and make the incentives specific to your community. There is great potential for stormwater benefits to outweigh the cost of program implementation.

Materials and Services Resources

Communities can also access technical assistance, materials and other services that could help implement healthy watershed projects more cost effectively and with more input from experts. These resources could also help leverage other types of funding and act as match.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Greening America's Communities – technical assistance

Each year, through the [Greening America's Communities](#) program, the EPA helps 3-4 cities and towns develop an implementable vision of environmentally friendly neighborhoods that incorporate innovative green infrastructure and other sustainable design strategies. Local governments, cities, counties and nonprofits partnering with a city or county are eligible to apply.

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program – technical assistance

The National Parks Service's [River, Trails and Conservation Assistance](#) program supports community-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation projects across the nation by providing a wide range of services and skills. Projects that may align with healthy watershed opportunities are, improved access to outdoor recreation and parks, conservation and stewardship of public lands, waterways and wildlife habitat, connecting young people to the outdoors and strengthening community partnerships.

Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities – technical assistance

Each year, through the [Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities](#) program, the EPA provides technical assistance, delivered by a team of experts, to a few communities in need to help address the threats of natural disasters. The experts provide tools and guidance to the community to protect the people, economy and quality of life in the community.

MATERIALS

Forest ReLeaf of Missouri Grants

[Forest ReLeaf of Missouri](#) provides trees to communities in order to restore and sustain urban forests. The Priority ReLeaf program can fund up to 300 trees per season (spring and fall) and provides trees post-disaster. With the help of thousands of volunteers, Forest ReLeaf has planted over 200,000 trees throughout Missouri and Illinois, improving thousands of communities.

OTHER

404 Mitigation Credits, In-Lieu Fees – Land Learning Foundation

Developers can pay in-lieu fees to a sponsor, like the Land Learning Foundation through their [404 Mitigation Credits](#) program, for damages to wetlands and streams. The fee represents the expected cost of replacing lost stream or wetland functions due to development. At no cost to local jurisdictions, the Land Learning Institute or other in-lieu sponsors, may be potential partners in providing targeted floodplain restoration or other healthy watershed projects.

Campus RainWorks Challenge – outreach, education, demonstration

The [Campus RainWorks Challenge](#) is a green infrastructure design competition, through the EPA, for colleges and universities. Student groups can develop a plan for a green infrastructure project or implement a demonstration project. Working with a local college or university is a positive and fun way to educate and engage the community in the stormwater conversation.