

Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund

2023 Grant Round

Source Water Protection

Subcommittee Funding Recommendation Report



NEW HAMPSHIRE DRINKING WATER & GROUNDWATER TRUST FUND

Prepared by:

The Source Water Protection Subcommittee

and the

New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services



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Overview of the 2023 Source Water Protection Grant Round

The Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund – Source Water Protection grant program offers funding to permanently protect drinking water supply lands through the acquisition of high-priority land and/or conservation easements. The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) received 21 pre-applications for a total requested grant amount of \$4.9 million. NHDES reviewed and determined all projects were eligible to apply for funding. NHDES received 15 funding applications by September 28th, 2023. One applicant withdrew their application because they received full funding from an anonymous donor. The Source Water Protection Subcommittee reviewed 14 applications, totaling \$3.5 million grant request.

The Subcommittee met on October 16, 2023 and November 7, 2023 to review and evaluate the applications using the criteria in Table 1 of the Advisory Commission Source Water Protection Rules. The Subcommittee has proposed the funding recommendation below for the Advisory Commission.

Funding Recommendation

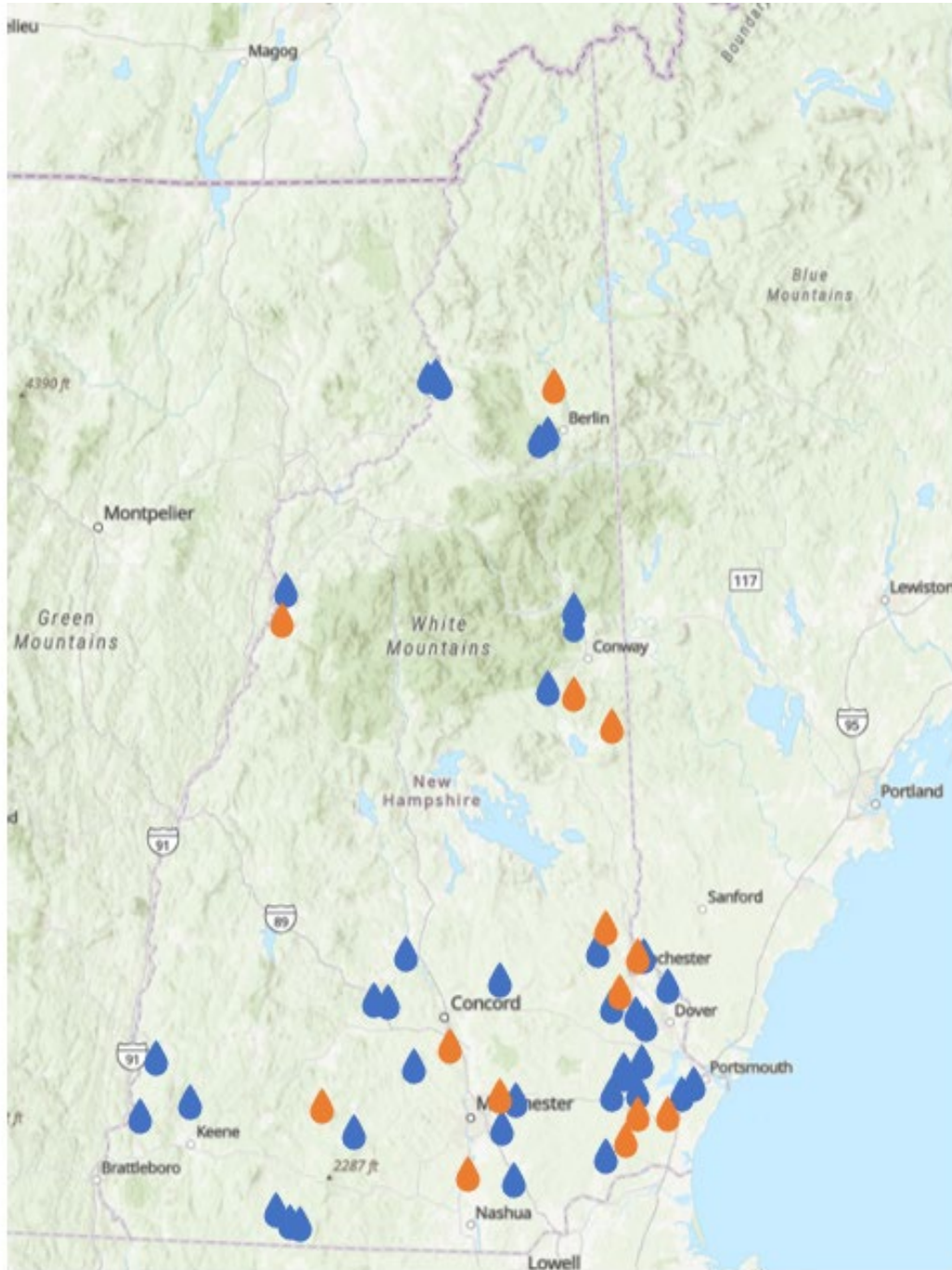
Move to fund the 10 projects identified in the Funded List and conditionally approve the Milan Community Forest project provided they submit a revised application excluding the parking area. Decline the Madison Chain of Ponds, Exeter-Newfields Community Forest, and the Horizon Farm projects for funding.

Acronyms and Abbreviations used in Report:

Ac. = acre
ACT = Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust
GA2 = High-Yield Stratified Drift Aquifer
GMCG = Green Mountain Conservation Group
HAC = Hydrologic Area of Concern
MMRG = Moose Mountains Regional Greenways
MWW = Manchester Water Works
PEU = Pennichuck East Utilities
SELT = Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire
SWVWD = Swains Lake Village Water District
UNH = University of New Hampshire
WHPA = Wellhead Protection Area


Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund Source Water Protection Program

2023 Grant Round



Legend

 = Previously Awarded Projects

 = Proposed 2023 Projects

Source Water Protection Projects Recommended for Funding

Applicant	Location	Project Name	Recommended Funding
Manchester Water Works	Auburn	Lake Massabesic Watershed Protection	\$500,000
Swains Lake Village Water District	Barrington	Dudzik – Swains Lake Village Water District	\$189,760
Bow Open Spaces, Inc.	Bow	Houghton – PEU/Stone Sled WHPA	\$44,350
Green Mountain Conservation Group	Effingham	GMCG Natural Area Expansion	\$29,650
Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire	Exeter, Kensington & East Kingston	Rider Property – Exeter River Water Supply	\$500,000
Moose Mountain Regional Greenways	Farmington & Strafford	Shillaber Conservation Easement Project	\$120,371
Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust	Haverhill	Moulton Generations Farm	\$64,850
Litchfield Conservation Commission	Litchfield	Durocher Property Acquisition	\$360,000
Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire	Rochester	Griewank Property – Salmon Falls Water Supply	\$225,000
Town of Stratham	Stratham	Ross – Stratham Memorial School WHPA	\$91,950
Funding Recommended Total			\$2,125,931
Town of Milan	Milan	Milan Community Forest Expansion*	\$250,000
Funding Recommended Grand Total with Conditionally Approved			\$2,375,931

*Conditionally Recommended for Funding

Table 1. Source Water Protection Program – Recommended Funded

Project Descriptions Recommended for Funding

Listed alphabetically by Town

Lake Massabesic Watershed Protection

Auburn

Source Protected: Manchester Water Works

Population Served: 123,500

Total Land Protected: 193 acres

High-Priority Water Supply: 193 ac. of HAC; 3 ac. of GA2

Manchester Water Works (MWW) is partnering with the Southeast Land Trust of NH (SELT) and the Town of Auburn to purchase 73 acres from the Eaton family, and also place a conservation easement on 120 acres already owned by MWW. The three parcels are contiguous, within the Little Massabesic Lake watershed and Lake Massabesic reservoir system that provides drinking water to 12 communities: Atkinson, Auburn, Bedford, Derry, Goffstown, Hampstead, Hooksett, Litchfield, Londonderry, Plaistow, Salem and Windham. MWW will own the property, the Town of Auburn will hold an Executory Interest, and SELT will hold the conservation easement. The property will be managed for water quality protection, forestry, and non-motorized recreation.

Dudzik - Swains Lake Village Water District

Barrington

Source Protected: Swains Lake and UNH/Durham

Population Served: 16,227

Total Land Protected: 74.4 acres

High-Priority Water Supply: 74.4 ac. WHPA; 69 ac. HAC

The Swains Lake Village Water District (SLVWD) will purchase 74.4 acres; the largest remaining privately held property within their WHPA, with 64 acres also falling within UNH/Durham's HAC. SLVWD operates the only small community water system in Barrington and has faced significant challenges due to improper disposal of hazardous waste by a Ford Motor Company plant employee. The property contains approximately 443 feet of the headwater stream of the Oyster River, which is the primary drinking water source for the Durham/UNH water system. SLVWD will own the property in-fee with deed restrictions with SLVWD being responsible for long-term stewardship and monitoring. The property will be managed for drinking water supply protection.

Houghton-PEU/Stone Sled WHPA

Bow

Source Protected: PEU/Stone Sled WHPA

Population Served: 105

Total Land Protected: 11.2 acres

High-Priority Water Supply: 11.2 acres of WHPA

Bow Open Spaces, Inc. plans to acquire 11.2 acres, all of which fall within the Pennichuck East Utility/Stone Sled Farm WHPA. The property is a full donation by Kathy L. Houghton, the landowner. The project is located within a Conservation Focus area as identified in the Town of Bow's Conservation Commission's Natural Resources Inventory completed in 2021. Letters of support were received from the Town of Bow - Drinking Water Protection Committee, Pennichuck East Utility, Inc., and the Town of Bow - Conservation Commission. Bow Open Spaces, Inc. will own the property in-fee with deed restrictions and will be responsible for long-term stewardship and monitoring. The property will be managed for drinking water protection.

Green Mtn. Conservation Group Natural Area

Effingham

Source(s) Protected: Effingham Elementary School

Population Served: 128

Total Land Protected: 34 acres

High-Priority Water Supply: 1.74 ac. of WHPA

Green Mountain Conservation Group (GMCG) plans to purchase 34-acres from the Thurston Estate, 1.7 acres of which fall within the Effingham Elementary School's WHPA. The property is adjacent to an existing 41-acres of conservation land held by GMCG immediately to the west. The project is located approximately 1,200 feet from the only well that serves the Effingham Elementary School. GMCG will own the property in-fee with deed restrictions and the Lakes Region Conservation Trust will hold the conservation easement and be responsible for long-term stewardship and monitoring. The property will be managed for source water protection and non-motorized recreation.

Rider – Exeter River Water Supply

Exeter, Kensington & E. Kingston

Source(s) Protected: Exeter River & River Run WHPA

Population Served: 12,716

Total Land Protected: 156 acres

High-Priority Water Supply: 156 ac. HAC; 8 ac. WHPA

The Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire (SELT) is working with the Towns of Exeter, Kensington and East Kingston to conserve the Rider property, which spans three towns along Great Brook, a primary tributary to the Exeter River. The entire 156-acres fall within the Exeter Water Department's HAC, and 8 acres fall within River Run's WHPA. The project contains approximately 2,625 feet of frontage along three unnamed tributaries to Great Brook, Brickyard Brook, and Great Brook itself, all tributaries to the Exeter River, the primary drinking water source for the Town of Exeter. All three towns will hold Executory Interests, with SELT holding the conservation easement and being responsible for long-term stewardship and monitoring. The property will be managed for source water protection, forestry, agriculture, and passive recreation.

Shillaber Conservation Easement

Farmington and Strafford

Source(s) Protected: Rochester Water Department

Population Served: 25,000

Total Land Protected: 200 acres

High-Priority Water Supply: 200 acres of HAC

Moose Mountains Regional Greenways (MMRG) plans to permanently protect 200 acres of land through the purchase of a conservation easement on the contiguous Shillaber parcels, located in Farmington and Strafford. The entire project falls within the City of Rochester's HAC and contains approximately 5,442 feet of frontage on the Barry River that feeds all three major water reservoirs for the City of Rochester. Greater than one-third of the property consists of freshwater wetlands connected to the Barry River, and 64 acres are underlain with hydric soils. Conservation of this property will ensure protection of valuable drinking water for the City of Rochester. MMRG will be responsible for long-term stewardship and monitoring. The property will be managed for drinking water source protection.

Moulton Generations Farm

Haverhill

Source(s) Protected: Woodsville Water & Light
Total Land Protected: 75 acres

Population Served: 2,075
High-Priority Water Supply: 45.6 acres of HAC

The Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust (ACT) plans to protect 75 acres, 45.6 acres of which fall within Woodsville Water and Light’s HAC. Richard D. Moulton will retain ownership of his property with ACT holding the conservation easement. The adjacent property, also owned by Richard D. Moulton, is concurrently being protected under a separate Natural Resources Conservation Service – Agricultural Land Easement to be held by ACT, which is not part of this project. The project is supported by the Grafton County Conservation District, the Haverhill Conservation Commission, and the Woodsville Water and Light Department. ACT will be responsible for long-term stewardship and monitoring. The property will be managed for drinking water protection and forestry.

Durocher Farm

Litchfield

Source(s) Protected: Pennichuck Water Works
Total Land Protected: 64 acres

Population Served: 87,932
High-Priority Water Supply: 39 acres of HAC

The Town of Litchfield plans to purchase 64 acres, 39 acres of which fall within Pennichuck Water Work’s HAC. The Town of Litchfield will own the property in-fee with deed restrictions with the Litchfield Conservation Commission holding the conservation easement. The property also contains approximately 780 feet of frontage on the Merrimack River and approximately 1,500 feet of tributaries that flow directly into the Merrimack River. The Town of Litchfield developed a Land Preservation Strategy in 2022, which outlines criteria for land preservation and this project “checks every box”, regarding Town priorities. The Litchfield Conservation Commission will be responsible for long-term stewardship and monitoring. The property will be managed for drinking water protection, agriculture, forestry, and non-motorized recreation.

Griewank Property – Salmon Falls Water Supply

Rochester

Source(s) Protected: Somersworth Water Works
Total Land Protected: 69 acres

Population Served: 12,000
High-Priority Water Supply: 69 acres of HAC

The Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire (SELT) is working with the City of Rochester to conserve the Griewank property, all 69 acres of which fall within Somersworth Water Work’s HAC. The owners will retain ownership of the property, the City of Rochester will hold an Executory Interest, with SELT holding the conservation easement. The property contains more than 715 feet of frontage along the Salmon Falls River, which is used as a primary drinking water supply for the Cities of Somersworth, NH and Berwick, ME. The project is supported by the Somersworth Water Works, City of Somersworth, and the City of Rochester. Conserving this property will help protect the high quality of drinking water that flows down the Salmon Falls River. SELT will be responsible for long-term stewardship and monitoring. The property will be managed for water supply protection and agriculture.

Ross – Stratham Memorial School WHPA

Stratham

Source(s) Protected: Stratham Memorial School
Total Land Protected: 17.6 acres

Population Served: 691
High-Priority Water Supply: 14.8 ac. of WHPA

The Town of Stratham plans to purchase 17.6 acres from the Ross family, which is the largest remaining undeveloped, privately held parcel within the Stratham Memorial School WHPA. In 2021, the Town completed a Source Water Protection Plan, which recommends prioritization of “land conservation near drinking water supplies to ensure long-term protection” via land purchases or conservation easements. The Town of Stratham will own the land in-fee with deed restrictions and the Town Conservation Commission, in conjunction with the Parks and Recreation Department, will be responsible for long-term stewardship and monitoring. The protection of this property will increase the amount of land that is publicly owned or protected within the wellhead protection area to approximately 65 percent. The property will be managed for drinking water protection and non-motorized recreation.

Project Descriptions Recommended for Conditional Funding

Listed alphabetically by Town

Milan Community Forest Expansion

Milan

Source(s) Protected: Berlin Water Works
Total Land Protected: 905.6 acres

Population Served: 9,575
High-Priority Water Supply: 64.9 acres of GA2

The Town of Milan is working with The Conservation Fund to purchase over 900 acres, five lots from four different owners, to add to the existing 2,127-acre Milan Community Forest. The project contains 64.9 acres of high-yield stratified drift aquifers (GA2), and approximately 21,439 feet of streams, which will ensure high quality water protections for Berlin Water Works. The Town of Milan will own the properties in-fee with NH Fish and Game holding the conservation easement. This project contributes not only to water quality protection, but supports landscape connectivity for important wetland complexes, cold water fisheries, and floodplain forests for stormwater management across the Town of Milan. NH Fish & Game will be responsible for long-term stewardship and monitoring. The property will be managed for water quality protection, climate resiliency, wildlife habitat, cold water fisheries, forestry and recreation.