



Ensuring the Healthy Future of Our Waters

**2026 PROJECT GRANT APPLICATION FORM**

Please assess your eligibility before you complete this application by filling out a short questionnaire at:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/eligiblequestions> or on our website at <https://freshwaterfuture.org/requirements-for-applicants/>

***Application Information***

This application format is to be used by applicants for the Freshwater Future Project Grants. Complete information regarding this program, including eligibility, types of activities funded, priority program areas, evaluation criteria, and application process and timeline are included on our website [www.freshwaterfuture.org/grant-programs/](http://www.freshwaterfuture.org/grant-programs/). \*You may only receive one Project Grant per calendar year.

***Assistance for Potential Applicants***

You are encouraged to contact us to discuss your grant application at (231) 348-8200 or [Alana@freshwaterfuture.org](mailto:Alana@freshwaterfuture.org)

***Application Instructions***

Type your application in Microsoft Word using the headings, questions, and format outlined below. **Please number the pages.**

***Submitting Your Application***

Applications must be received electronically by midnight on the due date. Please send your application via e-mail in a Word attachment to [laurie@freshwaterfuture.org](mailto:laurie@freshwaterfuture.org). Supporting documents may be sent via email or first-class mail. **Please do not fax your application.**

***Completing the Application - Application Format***

Please provide answers to the questions asked, however don't worry about writing a flawless application. We will contact you if we have any questions.

**A. Applicant Information**

- Organization Name:
- Name of Project Coordinator:
- Mailing Address:
- City, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code:
- Telephone No.:
- Fax No.:
- E-mail Address:
- Website:
- Grant Cycle:      Spring       or Fall

**2026 Project Grant Deadlines:**

Spring 2026  
March 31, 2026

Fall 2026  
September 30, 2026

**All Projects must include an Advocacy component.**

*This means:*

- Encouraging permanent & broad reaching change
- Working at the corporate, community or regulatory level
- Going beyond education or stewardship
- Providing the tools and resources needed to implement change

**All Projects must be grassroots.**

*This means:*

- You have limited funds and rely on volunteers for your work
- Your annual budget is not over \$200,000

**Questions?**

Contact Alana Honaker  
[Alana@freshwaterfuture.org](mailto:Alana@freshwaterfuture.org)  
231-348-8200

**B. Sponsor Information (If Applicable)**

U.S. applicants that are not 501(c)(3) organizations and Ontario applicants that are not registered charities must have a qualified sponsor serve as fiscal agent and have a letter from the sponsor submitted with their application (See “Supporting Materials” below). See [www.freshwaterfuture.org/grant-programs/](http://www.freshwaterfuture.org/grant-programs/) for details. If a sponsor is required, please include the same information for your sponsor that is requested for applicants in “A” above. Religious organizations cannot act as a fiscal sponsor.

**C. Project Title**

Please limit your Project Title to **12 or fewer words**. The Project Title should be descriptive of the goal you are trying to accomplish with your project.

**D. Total Amount of Request:**

**Project Grant:** (up to \$5,000)

**E. Total Project Cost (USD)**

**F. Abstract**

Provide a one-paragraph summary of the project, highlighting the portion of the project to which funds from Freshwater Future would be applied. Make your summary easy for an outside reader to understand and please limit your summary to **200 words or less**.

**G. Organizational Information**

Please answer the following questions about the applicant. This section is just a summary and **should not exceed 500 words in total**.

1. Briefly describe when your group was founded, your organizational mission, and highlights of current programs.
2. What is your current annual budget and primary sources of income by percentage (e.g. grants, donations, events)?
3. Explain why you feel you are a grassroots group and therefore eligible for this grant program.

**H. Capacity Needs** (not related to grant selection, but available to member organizations)

Freshwater Future is not only capable of helping your organization through funding, but we also offer Coaching & Consulting Services. Freshwater Future Coaching & Consulting Services provide assistance to address your organizational needs. Please check the areas in which you would like assistance or to learn more. A Freshwater Future staff member will contact you with further information.

- Financial management, such as trainings on developing budgets, state and federal reporting, and accounting systems with proper checks and balances
- Board development
- Planning (Strategic, Transition, Succession)
- Fundraising planning
- Membership program planning
- Strategy assistance for your organization's key program issues
- Media and communications, including social media
- Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

**I. Description of Project**

1. Please provide a Project Description in 300 words or less that includes 1) problem being addressed. 2) how you will solve the problem and 3) how the project fits with Freshwater Future funding priorities for Project Grants.
2. Is the project located in the watershed of the Great Lakes? If not, how will this project protect or restore water habitats in the Great Lakes Basin or build your capacity to do so?
3. In what Great Lakes basin(s) will the project be conducted?
4. What are the goals of your project?
5. How will you meet those goals (objectives and activities)?
6. Where will the project take place?
7. What will define success for this project?
8. Do you plan to promote or disseminate the results of your project? If so, how?
9. Have you sought other funds for this project? If so, describe sources and results. If not, do you intend to?

**J. How did you hear about Freshwater Future Grants?**

- Online
- Through another organization
- From a friend
- Event (Conference, Workshop)
- Newsletter
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**K. Proposed Budget**

- Present the project budget using a table and descriptive summary categories, such as personnel, consultants, materials, phone, printing, postage, training, workshops, travel, professional consultant fees, legal fees, etc.
- Although match contributions are not required for funding, if there are matching funds for this project, include the amounts in your budget and identify sources in the notes.

Below is a sample budget; using this example please fill in the blank table provided with your project budget information.

**SAMPLE:**

Budget Line-Item	Freshwater Future Request	Amount of Match	Pending or Secured	Total
<b>Printing</b>	<b>500.00</b>	<b>250.00</b>	<b>Secured</b>	<b>750.00</b>
<b>Postage</b>	<b>250.00</b>	_____	_____	<b>250.00</b>
<b>Contractor</b>	<b>1000.00</b>	<b>500.00</b>	<b>Secured</b>	<b>1500.00</b>
<b>Travel</b>	<b>800.00</b>	<b>200.00</b>	<b>Pending</b>	<b>1000.00</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2550.00</b>	<b>950.00</b>		<b>3500.00</b>

**BUDGET FOR PROJECT:**

Budget Line-Item	Freshwater Future Request	Amount of Match	Pending or Secured	Total

**L. Supporting Materials**

Submit the following supporting materials **with** your application:

1. **501(c)(3) confirmation letter from the IRS or Registered Charity confirmation letter from the Canada Revenue Agency.** If the applicant is not a 501(c)(3) organization or is not a registered charity, then submit the required charitable status documentation for the sponsor organization and a letter from the sponsor on their letterhead expressing support of your project and a willingness to serve as the applicant’s fiscal sponsor.
2. Limit other optional support materials (letters of support, newspaper articles, etc.) to **two items** that you feel are essential to evaluate your proposal. These are not a requirement.

Note: Grant recipients may be required to provide Freshwater Future with additional information.

**M. Sending Your Application**

Proposals must be prepared based on the guidelines of the 2026 Grants Request for Proposals found at [www.freshwaterfuture.org](http://www.freshwaterfuture.org). Applications should be sent electronically by midnight of the deadlines listed above. Please send your application and supporting materials via e-mail in a Word attachment to [laurie@freshwaterfuture.org](mailto:laurie@freshwaterfuture.org). If you are unable to send your application electronically or do not receive an electronic confirmation within 24 hours, please contact us at (231) 348-8200 to make other arrangements. Supporting documents may be sent via first class mail to the address below if unable to send electronically. **Please do not fax materials.**

Freshwater Future  
 P.O. Box 2479  
 Petoskey, MI 49770  
 PH (231) 348-8200