

# Maine Department of Transportation's Municipal Stream Crossing Program 2023 Request for Application (RFA)

Updated 12/5/23

## Overview of the Grant Opportunity

The Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) is seeking applications for the Municipal Stream Crossing Program to provide competitive grants that help fund the upgrade of municipal culverts at stream crossings with the goal of improving fish and wildlife habitat and community safety. This Request for Application (RFA) document provides instructions for submitting applications, evaluation criteria, and contract provisions. Eligible project sponsors include local and tribal governments, municipal conservation commissions, soil and water conservation districts, and private nonprofit organizations. Eligible projects involve culverts that carry a stream under a local government road, not a state (including state-aid) or private road. The maximum amount of funds an applicant may request is \$200,000 for projects that include design and construction (as long as they result in a completed construction project) and must include a minimum of \$5,000 of local match (cash or in-kind).

Scoring criteria will be centered around the extent to which the project restores habitat for fish (including sea-run fish and native brook trout) and wildlife, as well as the extent to which the proposed project meets 1.2 times the stream's bankfull width and stream crossing size meets MaineDOT's 100-year flood standard. Applicants will be required to provide elements of the proposed structure including stream profile, stream restoration practices in the design and installation, bankfull width measurements with supporting materials, summary of completed field work, appropriate proposed structure size, and proposed stream bottom materials. Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) and Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IFW) will provide input on the fish and wildlife improvement sections of each application; ~~applications must include a general letter of support from DMR and IFW in their applications.~~

Scoring criteria will also consider the extent to which the project allows the community to more effectively prepare for large storm events by requiring project location, structure age/condition, documented historical flooding, description and cost of maintenance history, and safety and impacts to community (including detour length, average annual daily traffic (AADT), and number of homes/businesses cutoff). Applicants will also be evaluated on the project quality by requiring match amount and source, project and permitting status (completed tasks), budget, schedule. Any structure spans proposed greater than 10FT require a design review by MaineDOT's bridge maintenance office prior to construction.

Upon preliminary award, applicants will enter into a Service Contract with MaineDOT. Payment to municipalities receiving the grant funds will be made on a reimbursement basis for direct costs related to the crossing project upon approval of acceptable invoice and documentation. Grant recipients will have 2 years to expend the funds and up to three reimbursement requests coordinated with milestones. Recipients will submit annual progress updates and a final project report. Progress updates will include intended and actual construction dates and total project costs. Prior to construction grant recipients will submit final stamped engineering plans, by Maine Professional Engineer (PE), adequate longitudinal profile, and Army Corps of Engineers permit (as required). Final reimbursement request is dependent on PE verification that project was built to design.

## Applying for the Municipal Stream Crossing Program Funds

### Applications should include:

1. Name of proposed project.
2. Demonstrate eligibility based on program overview.
3. Stream Crossing Location (include municipality or unorganized territory, GPS location, culvert crossing location, stream name)
4. Existing culvert information including structure type, shape, material, streambed material in structure, number of culverts at crossing, length, width, height, and age of structure, clearance (distance between material at bottom of culvert or streambed and top of inside of culvert).
5. Demonstrate improvement to fish and wildlife habitat by including:
  - 5.1 Identification of crossing (Crossing ID#) in [Maine Stream Habitat Viewer](#). If not present in stream habitat viewer, provide closest Crossing ID# to the structure on that stream and description of relative locations, whether crossing is a barrier or potential barrier to fish passage.
  - 5.2 Any documented presence (through DMR, IFW, USFWS, NOAA) of the following fish in the stream (Wild brook trout, Sea-run brook trout, Atlantic Salmon (sea-run or landlocked), sea run alewives, Blueback herring, American eels, Sea-run rainbow smelt, or other diadromous species).
  - 5.3 Use the [Maine Stream Habitat Viewer](#) or [Beginning with Habitat Map Viewer](#) to identify presence of Atlantic Salmon Critical Habitat, Atlantic Salmon DPS, Atlantic salmon modeled habitat, Brook trout habit, within the drainage of a state “heritage” water, within drainage of an alewife pond, significant Vernal pools within 1 mile, state or federal endangered, threatened or special concern aquatic or terrestrial species (within 1 mile), other priority habitats.
  - 5.4 Presence of other resources nearby such as significant wildlife habitats, vernal pools, etc.;
  - ~~5.5 General letters of support for this project from [Maine Department of Marine Resources and Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife](#).~~
6. Photos of the stream crossing showing structure condition, looking at the crossing from downstream and upstream, looking upstream and downstream, inside of the structure, and any safety conditions.
7. Stream Measurements and Field work (measured bankfull width, estimated/modelled bankfull width, bankfull width used for preliminary structure sizing, preliminary crossing width, slope of stream (%) based on stream longitudinal survey. If field work has not been completed, provide date when it will be completed. For fieldwork techniques, refer to [Stream Smart Field Work Video](#) and [Maine Stream Smart Road Crossing Pocket Guide](#).
  - 7.1 Bankfull width estimates and modelling resources:
    - 7.1.1 [Maine Stream Habitat Viewer](#)
    - 7.1.2 [StreamStats](#)
8. Applicant’s preliminary plan or concept for crossing structure design including: intended culvert/crossing shape, material, width, clearance, length, clear span (if bridge). Note in application if this work hasn’t been completed yet.
9. Express the following commitments to performance standards and actions related to the proposed project’s design and installation (check all that apply; failing to complete will result in decreased scores):
  - 9.1 Commit that field work and design will include longitudinal profile survey of stream channel to determine slope, structure size will be determined by field-measured average bankfull width of stream, crossing will be skewed to match stream flow as much as practicable, crossing invert or bottom elevation will be below the potential scour vertical adjustment profile line and will match the stream slope based on recommended

longitudinal profile survey. For more information on the vertical adjustment profile refer to [Stream Smart Field Work Video](#).

- 9.2 Commit that project engineering will meet [MaineDOT's 100-year flood standard](#), engineer has or will be retained to assist with project design, note whether existing plans for available, final plans will be stamped by Maine Licensed Engineer prior to construction.
- 9.3 Commit that new crossing will contain stream materials closely matching native stream bed and crossing will include constructed stream banks through the structure connecting to natural stream banks for terrestrial wildlife passage.
- 9.4 Commit that structure will be sized at least 1.2 times bankfull width.
- 9.5 Commit that applicant has or will obtain necessary [Army Corps of Engineers](#) and [DEP Natural Resources Protection Act](#) permits for this project.
- 9.6 Commit that structure design will be shared with and reviewed by MaineDOT's bridge maintenance office during the design process for any structure spans proposed greater than 10FT. This is to provide any additional advice that should be considered during design. Maine DOT's Bridge Maintenance Division ([ben.foster@maine.gov](mailto:ben.foster@maine.gov) or [Ron.Taylor@maine.gov](mailto:Ron.Taylor@maine.gov) ). For more information, refer to [MaineDOT's Bridge Design Guide](#) and [MaineDOT's Policies and Laws related to Bridges in Maine](#).
10. Documentation and description of flooding or overtopping and associated damage.
11. Description of safety and impact to community including detour lengths, identify any critical infrastructure cut-off from access if this crossing were to fail, number of businesses and homes cut-off, [average annual daily traffic \(AADT\)](#) using [MaineDOT's Public Map Viewer](#).
12. Amount of money spent on maintenance or failures of the crossing and description and documentation of maintenance history.
13. Project schedule including any design activities, anticipated construction duration, start and completion date. All projects must at least provide approximate start and completion date.
14. Cost and budget information (provide approximate cost and budget totals if project has not been designed) including applicant organization, total amount of funds being requested, estimated matching funds committed to project (types/in-kind services). If your local funding share is dependent on town meeting approval, provide date of annual town meeting. A grant agreement will not be signed until the town has approved the local match. If available, include source of project cost estimate, total estimated engineering/survey costs, permitting and bidding costs, construction (materials, mobilization, installation) costs.
15. Describe whether a new design will eliminate or greatly reduce current maintenance costs.

## Scoring

Application scoring will be based on a 100-point scale using the group consensus scoring method and will measure the degree to which each application meets the evaluation criteria and considerations in each section below:

### 1. Scoring information for benefits to fish & wildlife

**50 points** - "To improve habitat for fish, including sea-run fish and native brook trout, and wildlife"

<i>Scoring Criteria</i>	<i>Scoring Metric</i>
<b>The degree to which there is a stated benefit to fish, including sea run fish, native brook trout, and wildlife</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presence of other resources nearby such as significant wildlife habitats, vernal pools, etc.;</li> <li>• Does the crossing include design for terrestrial animal passage?</li> <li>• Fish species present, preference to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Known presence of state &amp; federal endangered or threatened species (aquatic &amp; terrestrial);</li> <li>• Presence of species affected on IFW's list of species of greatest conservation need (SGCN)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Presence of invasive fish (IFW, DMR) (inverse points)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wildlife &amp; Fisheries</li> <li>• Invasives (inverse points)</li> <li>• Connectivity</li> </ul>
<b>Prioritization: Statewide prioritization for aquatic connectivity and presence of Atlantic salmon, alewives, or other diadromous fish species, native brook trout</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impeded passage-Stream Habitat Viewer</li> <li>• Amount of habitat (stream miles reconnected, or fragmented population reconnections)</li> <li>• Determined important barrier or watershed by IFW/DMR</li> <li>• Potential outcomes, results, or products that contribute to species conservation and management goals</li> <li>• Presence of Atlantic salmon, brook trout, alewives, diadromous fish species</li> </ul>	Points awarded on a sliding scale taking into account the <i>Scoring Criteria</i>
<b>Design criteria for resiliency and habitat improvement</b>	

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meets design standard of 1.2 x bankfull width of stream <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How BFW was determined?</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Meets or exceeds MaineDOT 100-year flood standard</li> <li>3. Will be aligned (skewed) to match the stream channel</li> <li>4. Structure contains stream materials closely matching native stream bed</li> <li>5. Structure contains banks for terrestrial passage</li> <li>6. Has invert or bottom structure elevation below the potential scour vertical adjustment profile line (preferred)</li> <li>7. Matches the stream slope based on the recommended longitudinal profile survey</li> <li>8. Has design criteria that additionally benefits fish &amp; wildlife <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether performance measures for evaluating effectiveness of the completed project were clearly identified</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	Points awarded on a sliding scale
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## 2. Public Infrastructure Information

**25 Points** - Safety, flooding mitigation & preparation

<i>Scoring Criteria</i>	<i>Scoring Metric</i>
<b>High Risk of Failure due to age/condition</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Condition</li> <li>• Past failures</li> </ul>	Points awarded on a sliding scale taking into account the <i>Scoring Criteria</i>
<b>Location in a watershed or reach with high flood risk</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation of risk</li> <li>• Documentation of flooding history</li> </ul>	Points awarded on a sliding scale taking into account the <i>Scoring Criteria</i>
<b>Safety and impact to community</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detour lengths</li> <li>• Cut-offs for high-risk locations</li> <li>• Number of businesses and homes cut-off</li> <li>• Average cars per day?</li> </ul>	Points awarded on a sliding scale taking into account the <i>Scoring Criteria</i>

## 3. Scoring Criteria for Cost effectiveness of the proposed Culvert/Crossing

**25 Points** -Degree to which the project represents and efficient and cost-effective investment, including:

<i>Scoring Criteria</i>	<i>Scoring Metric</i>
<b>Total proportion of funding from other sources</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Match type and %</li> </ul>	Points awarded if match % is equivalent to or exceeds \$5,000
<b>Avoided costs associated with the project</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amount of money spent on maintenance or failures of the crossing</li> <li>• Maintenance history &amp; documentation</li> </ul>	Points awarded on a sliding scale taking into account the <i>Scoring Criteria</i>
<b>Project efficiency demonstrated by engineering design communities</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total engineering costs vs. total structure costs</li> <li>• Structure design life</li> <li>• Costs are within reasonable range for application</li> <li>• Maintenance needs over lifespan</li> </ul>	Points awarded on a sliding scale taking into account the <i>Scoring Criteria</i>

## **Application Process**

MaineDOT issues the RFA for the Municipal Stream Crossing Program. Applicants must submit a completed PDF application that incorporates the details request in the above section (Applying for Municipal Stream Crossing Program Funds). The applications will be scored by the Grant Review Team who will judge the merits of the application(s) received in accordance with the scoring criteria defined in the RFA.

Applications must be received by **January 19, 2024, at 11:59 p.m.** local time. Applications received after the deadline will be ineligible for award consideration.

Applications are to be submitted to MaineDOT via [MunicipalStreamCrossing.MDOT@maine.gov](mailto:MunicipalStreamCrossing.MDOT@maine.gov). Only applications received by email will be considered. Applicants are to insert the following into the subject line of their email "RFA Submission – Applicant's Name". Applicants must submit a separate application for each project. Applicants should submit a PDF file with the file name: "TOWN NAME\_ ROAD NAME\_ APPLICATION#.pdf".

Information will be available on MaineDOT's grant page:

<https://www.maine.gov/mdot/grants>

### **Contact Information**

Taylor LaBrecque  
Environmental Office  
Maine Department of Transportation  
16 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

## **Scoring Process**

The funds for this program will be administered by the MaineDOT and will be awarded through a competitive process by Grant Review Team, comprised of qualified reviewers. The Grant Review Team will use a consensus approach to evaluate and score all sections listed in the RFA. Members of the review team will not score those sections individually, but, instead, will arrive at a consensus as to assignment of points for each of the sections. The MaineDOT reserves the right to communicate and/or schedule interviews/presentations with applicants if needed to obtain clarification of information contained in the applications and the MaineDOT may revise the scores assigned in the initial evaluation to reflect those communications.

## **Contract Requirements**

Successful applicants will enter into a contract with MaineDOT prior to receiving funds. Contracts will be similar to the Municipal Partnership Initiative (MPI) administered by MaineDOT. A contract template can be provided upon request. Decisions by the Grant Review Team are final.