
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

2027 Funding Manual for the Virginia Watershed Educational Programs Project Grant

Developed by the Office of Environmental Education at the Virginia
Department of Conservation and Recreation



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Part I: Introduction and Overview

Purpose of this Manual

The purpose of this manual is to provide guidance regarding the policies, criteria, conditions, and procedures for determining eligibility and awarding grants from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation to recipients.

The manual describes the activities that are eligible to receive funds, the conditions under which they are eligible, the process used to award grants, and how eligible applicants may apply.

A. Virginia Watershed Educational Programs Project Overview and Authority

The Fund was established to provide support for qualified applicants across Virginia who will provide Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) to k-12 learners. The Fund aligns with Virginia's commitment to enhance students' understanding of the watershed through teacher-supported educational experiences.

As one of the signatories to the Chesapeake Bay 2014 Agreement (as amended), Virginia is committed to increasing "students age-appropriate understanding of the watershed through participation in teacher-supported, meaningful watershed educational experiences and rigorous, inquiry-based instruction, with a target of at least one meaningful watershed educational experience in elementary, middle and high school depending on available resources."

B. Definitions

Some terms used in this manual have specific meanings that may vary from other contexts. For the purposes of this manual and the Fund:

"Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences" (MWEEs) are learner-centered experiences that focus on investigations into local environmental issues and lead to informed action and civic engagement. MWEEs provide opportunities for students to apply discipline practices and conceptual understanding of grade level standards to relevant community issues as they complete either group or individually designed action projects. MWEEs are not a one-day learning experience; they are robust multi-day learning experiences that include field investigations aligned to content and action projects that serve as a springboard for developing environmentally literate graduates. Additional, detailed information about MWEEs is available at https://www.chesapeakebay.net/documents/Revised_MWEE_definition_-_FINAL.pdf.

"Activities" as described in a MWEE qualify into four categories, MWEE curricula and training,

Face to Face components, program outreach and communication, and other watershed educational services. Each action in each category is an independent “activity” separate from the project whole.

“Project” means any activity or group of activities with a common goal to provide Watershed education and experiences to Virginia k-12 students.

“Department” means the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation.

“Grantee” is the person or organization receiving grant funds and charged with the responsibility to complete the deliverables.

“Deliverables” are all the activities or programs that are agreed upon between the grantee and the department as actions that will be completed using the funds in the time frame of the grant.

“Demographic information for the school or school division” is the description of the student population within that school or division. Examples of demographics are percentages of students on free or reduced lunch, percentages of students of color or other underrepresented populations and other related information such as title 1 designated schools.

“Underrepresented populations” means populations sharing a characteristic, as well as geographic community, that have been systematically denied the opportunity to be represented in the study of and learning about local watersheds.

Part II: General Department Grant Eligibility Criteria and Application Procedures

A. Department Conditions and Limitations for Making Grants

1. Availability of Funding and Allocation

Grants will be awarded on a competitive scoring basis for eligible activities that meet the general conditions of this section.

The total amount of funds awarded in any round and final award decisions are determined by the Department. For this funding round, \$250,000 is available. Individual applicants may request up to \$45,000.

The award amount per project will be determined based on scoring, amounts requested from eligible activities and projects, available funds and the viability of the projects. It is possible not all projects or applications will receive funding or funding at the amounts requested.

2. Reservation of Rights

The Department reserves the right to provide funding at a level less than requested by the applicant, or to refuse to fund an applicant's request. Reasons for such determinations include, but are not limited to, incomplete applications, low project ranking, the feasibility of the proposal, an anticipated inability to complete the project by the specified completion date, and total available funding.

3. Submission and Scope

Applications will be accepted each fiscal year. Applications will be accepted beginning December 15 and ending March 5.

Each application submitted must be for a discrete activity, project, or educational program. No activity, project, or program identified as already completed is eligible for funding. No submission of identical projects will be accepted in the same fiscal year.

4. Eligible applicants

Eligible applicants include, but are not limited to, school divisions, nonprofit organizations, higher education institutions, state agencies, and soil and water conservation districts. Partnerships between school divisions or between organizations (e.g. a non-profit and a school division) are permitted. Applicants may submit proposals each year, including the year following an award. Eligible applicants must have a demonstrated ability to:

- a. Provide educational programs, services, and outreach to students, teachers, or administrators; resumes should be provided when available.
- b. Assign a Program Manager who will:
 - a. Direct and oversee the MWEEs provided through this contract;
 - b. Provide all required programmatic and financial reporting to DCR; and
3. Ensure adequate numbers of trained staff are available to provide the MWEEs.

5. Eligible Costs

Awarded funds may be used for all proposed and agreed upon direct costs associated with the planning and completion of an activity. Indirect costs will not be reimbursed. Pre-award or startup costs are not available or allowed.

Minor shifts of the funds among categories by the Grantee, not to exceed 10% of any budget line item are permissible. Shifts in funds exceeding 10% of budget line items must be approved in writing by the Department. Any cost overruns incurred by the Grantee during the time of performance shall be the responsibility of the Grantee. Any unspent funds at the end of the subaward will remain with the Department.

6. Eligible Activities

Activities in any of the following categories or any whole combination of the following activities are eligible for funding consideration.

A. MWEE curricula and Training:

1. Develop all classroom and outdoor program curricula for proposed MWEE activity. The curricula must align to the Virginia Standards of Learning related to the environment and, if applicable, the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, and should reflect best practices in MWEE educational pedagogy.
2. Ensure that all educators (administrators and teachers) are adequately trained on the use of the curricula and in implementing field experiences prior to beginning the activity.
3. Provide both face-to-face and virtual support to educators throughout the implementation of the curricula and MWEE in their classes.

B. Provide primarily face to face components of the proposed MWEE program to an identified school division.

1. The program must meet the definition of and demonstrate all essential elements of a MWEE; various field activities, action projects, and related educational services must be included.
2. This program should include content aligned to grade level standards and field experiences that are conducted either on school or community sites.
3. There should be collaboration between students, teachers, and administrators in developing and implementing action projects.

C. Program outreach and communication: Present MWEE program curricula and outcomes at one or more Virginia state- sponsored professional development or other collaborative programs.

D. Other Watershed Educational Services that include educational efforts that contribute to building capacity across Virginia for MWEEs and should include:

1. Training for community-based education partners related to teaching watershed concepts and trainings on being an education-service provider who can plan and conduct high quality MWEE field experiences for schools.
2. Programs and mentoring strategies that enable highly experienced classroom teachers to mentor new teachers and to work with local community partners.

7. Disbursement

Grant funds will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis and can be drawn down quarterly or after the completion of the approved project. Frequency of drawdowns may be more often than once a quarter with prior department approval.

Grant funds will be disbursed only to the name designated on the w9 form and only when accompanied by an updated budget and proof of purchase in the form of receipt, invoice, purchase order, or other agreed upon formats.

8. General Conditions

For a grant to be authorized, the following general conditions must be satisfied:

- a. A complete application meeting the requirements set forth in this manual has been submitted to the Department within the specified application period.
- b. Where project completion is dependent on a variety of funding sources, including from the Fund, the applicant has provided satisfactory assurances of all necessary funds to fully finance the project.
- c. For projects that will require schools or school divisions involvement, written assurances have been provided demonstrating the school or school divisions willingness and ability to participate.

B. Application Submittal, Format and Selection Process

1. General Submittal Information and Deadline

A complete electronic file with all required attachments **is the required method of submission**. All electronic applications should be submitted to the Office of Environmental Education at environmentaleducation@dcr.virginia.gov. Word documents are preferred.

Applications will be accepted beginning on December 15 and ending March 5 each fiscal year. **Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.**

Applications will not be posted on the Department's website.

With Department approval, hard-copy applications may be mailed to:
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Attention: Office of Environmental Education
600 East Main Street, 4th floor
Richmond, VA 23219

For proposals that can only be submitted in paper format, applications must be legible, typed, and printed on one-sided pages. All pages must be sized to 8.5 x 11 inches. The deadline for Department approval of hard-copy submission is the same as the electronic submission and must be received by DCR no later than March 5th.

General Application Inquiries: For any questions regarding the application process, please contact the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Office of Environmental Education at (804) 922-3169 or via email at Environmentaleducation@dcr.virginia.gov. The office may answer general application questions, but may not provide advice toward specificity of activities or assist in the creation of the grant proposal.

2. Application Format

All applications must be made using the format provided by the Department in this manual. Information must be provided for all categories below. Applicants may choose to add additional narrative.

1. Applicant Information

- a. Name of Organization (The name of the applicant cannot change after acceptance of an award)
- b. Mailing Address (same address that will be used on W9)
- c. City, State, Zip
- d. Federal ID # or DUNS #
- e. Grant Manager
 - a.. E-mail
 - b. Phone Number
- f. Project Manager
 - a. E-mail
 - b. Phone Number
- g. Type of Organization: school districts, nonprofit organizations, higher education institutions, and soil and water conservation districts, etc.
- h. Partner school division or organization, if applicable

2. Project Information

The Project Information section needs to provide a detailed explanation of the proposed activities for the grant project. This section will become the grant Scope of Work. The Project information section should include the following:

- a. Organization or situation narrative - Provide a brief narrative of organizational history as it relates to the importance and ability to complete the proposed project. And/or provide a brief narrative of the need or situation requiring the proposed project.
- b. Purpose – Provide a brief summary of the intent of the project. Include the Virginia Standards of Learning that will be addressed through the completion of the project.
- c. Methodology (scope of work) – Describe the processes to accomplish the goals and deliverables of the work. Activities from section C (Eligible Activities) should be listed as deliverables with processes described for each.
- d. Include a description of the partner school division(s); grade levels addressed; anticipated number of participants (students, teachers, educators) and demographic information such as the number of students that receive free or reduced lunch; whether the school is designated as a “Title 1” school; or whether the school or school districts serve underrepresented populations. **If applicable, letters of support must be provided from the partner school division(s).** This is proof that the school or districts intended to collaborate are aware and in support of this project.
- e. Resumes and curriculum vitae of staff that will be working on the MWEE as well as documentation of any past or ongoing funding agreements administered by the applicant are not required but can strengthen the application.

3. Budget Detail

There is no minimum funding request required for this grant round; however, the maximum request allowed is \$45,000. Budget detail should be categorized and detailed. Indirect expenses are not reimbursable. Specific values should be given rather than estimates. An example budget follows. Budget format may be chosen by the applicant but must use the following categories.

Budget categories are:

- a. Personnel;
- b. Fringe;
- b. Travel;
- c. Supplies;
- d. Equipment;
- e. Contractual; and
- f. Other direct expenses.

Examples of use for each budget category are listed below but not limited to these suggestions:

- a. Personnel: Hourly wages, stipends, salaries for personnel, teacher stipends
- b. Fringe: Benefits to personnel other than wages
- c. Travel: mileage reimbursement, bus fees for field trips, lodging fees
- d. Supplies: expendable materials such as craft supplies, food, books, water testing cartridges or live plants

- e. Equipment: reusable items such as microscopes, models, kits, nets or kayaks
- f. Contractual: Land or meeting space rental, guide services, hired instructors or companies or substitute teacher payments
- g. Other: licensure for use or materials, conference registration

Example Budget

Applicant Name: Outdoors Learning Company

Budget Category	Description	Total
Personnel	2 part time employees to lead MWEE events with 6 th graders at \$22 per hour.	1560
Fringe	none	0
Travel	Mileage for 4 employees to stream location at .36\$ a mile = \$246 School bus fees for 8 drivers = \$894 Lodging for speakers at educator professional development = \$445	1585
Supplies	Food for educator professional development day 1 = \$335 Food for educator professional development day 2 = \$420 40 Nitrogen measurement cartridges = \$165 30 Educator books, Clean Waters = \$412 10 rain barrels = \$620	1952
Equipment	5 kick nets = \$380 6 two-gallon buckets = \$80 5 kayaks with paddles and life vest = \$4300 12 Macroinvertebrate Dichotomous keys = \$82	9451

	10 small fish nets = \$44 1 enviroscape model and case = \$1565	
Contractual	Land and pavilion rental for 4 days = \$850 Good time paddling company, 4 trips, total of 87 students and 5 educators = \$10,800	11650
Other	VAEE Conference registration for 4 educators = \$580	580
Total requested grant funds from DCR		\$26,778

Optional

Total DCR grant Funds requested	26,778
Total matching Funds	10,000
Total Project Funds	\$36,778

3. Application Selection Process

Qualifying activities in each category are selected for funding on a competitive scoring basis. The Department will use the following review procedure:

Initial Department Review

The Department will provide an initial review of grant applications for completeness in accordance with the eligible grant and submission requirements. The Department will then provide applications to the established Review Committee.

Review Committee

The Department shall convene a Review Committee (the Committee) to assist in the distribution of grants from the Fund. The Committee shall review applications to the Fund and make recommendations on the disbursement of monies from the Fund. The Committee shall include representatives from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, The Virginia Department of Education, the Virginia Museum of Science, and other education leaders.

The Committee will review and rank each complete application to determine its merits in accordance with the criteria set out in this manual and pursuant to the scoring categories listed below. The Committee will provide scoring, ranking and award recommendations to the Department. The Director of Conservation and Recreation, in consultation with the Office of Environmental Education, will consider recommendations provided by the Review Committee to finalize awards.

Application will not be scored by the committee unless the applicant is complete and meets all

eligibility requirements.

Scoring Rubric Categories:

Category 1: Does the proposed project meet the description of a meaningful watershed educational experience as defined in section A of the grant application? (MWEEs are learner-centered experiences that focus on investigations into local environmental issues and lead to informed action and civic engagement. MWEEs provide opportunities for students to apply discipline practices and conceptual understanding of grade level standards to relevant community issues as they complete either group or individually designed action projects. MWEEs are not a one-day learning experience; they are robust multi-day learning experiences that include field investigations aligned to content and action projects...)

Scoring ranges from 0 – 4 points with 0 points awarded if no evidence is shown and 4 points awarded to applicants who's proposed deliverables meet all 4 categories of a MWEE.

Category 2: Does the funding request effectively maximize the impact by serving an appropriate number of students, staff, and/or administrators?

Scoring ranges from 0-8 points. Points are assigned based on comparison to other applicants' requests amounts as compared to number of students / educators impacted.

Category 3: Does the proposed project address specific VA standards of learning?

Scoring ranges from 0 to 4 points with 0 points awarded if no Virginia Standards of Learning are identified in the project proposal.

Category 4: Demographic information was provided. The applicant indicates a need for funding.

Scoring ranges from 0 to 4 points with 0 points awarded if demographic information is not given.

Category 5: Does the proposed project have a clearly defined purpose and methodology with supporting strategies to address the proposed goal/s.

Scoring ranges from 0 to 8 with 0 points given if no purpose or methodology is given or the given explanation is not aligned with the proposed deliverables.

Category 6: Is this a sustainable project? Consider the future of this project. Will this project be able to continue successfully without continued DCR fundings? Will the knowledge or actions continue beyond the time frame of the grant?

Scoring ranges from 0 to 8 with 0 points given when no mention of efforts towards sustaining this project or the knowledge the project generates beyond the funding year.

Part III: Award Administration

A. Notice and Agreements

After application approval, a preliminary award letter will be sent via email from the Department to the applicants. If no email address is available, the applicants will be alerted via U.S. mail. Recipients shall return the signed grant agreement within 90 days of receipts either via email or by U.S. Mail to:

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Attention Office of Environmental Education
600 East Main Street, 24th floor
Richmond, VA 23219

Grant agreements not signed and returned within 90 days as required may be rescinded.

B. Required Commencement and Completion Schedule

Agreed upon activities must take place between July 1st of the awarded year and May 31st of the following year. For example, an award made for the 2027 Virginia Watershed Educational Programs Grant would be eligible for reimbursement of agreed upon activities taking place between July 1, 2026 and May 31, 2027.

Extensions of the total performance period may be granted at the discretion of the Department; however, all extension requests (Appendix E) must be received *no later than April 5th of the awarded fiscal year*. **The Department will approve no more than one, one-month extension per applicant. The Department has the right to deny an extension if monies are not available following the agreed upon end date, if the extension request is not for activities agreed upon, or if the grantee fails to request by the April 5th deadline.**

C. Reimbursement and Close-out Expectations and Procedures

Requests for reimbursements may be made quarterly. All requests must be made using the budget page provided with the initial grant award agreement and must be accompanied by invoices, receipts or proof of payment. Requests should include a brief budget justification narrative. Final reimbursement request must be made no later than May 31st of the awarded fiscal year. All requests for reimbursement should be sent to environmentaleducation@dcr.virginia.gov.

D. Reporting and Close-Out Guidelines

A mid-year and end of year report are required.

A mid-year report should be sent to Environmentaleducation@dcr.virginia.gov no later than December 15th of the fiscal award year. The mid year report should include an up to date budget and a description of deliverables already completed and a projection or timeline of remaining deliverables. An example is given in Appendix D.

A final report should be sent to Environmentaleducation@dcr.virginia.gov no later than May 31st of the fiscal award year. The final report should include a final budget report and a final report of achieved deliverables. Not required, but appreciated, are highlights of grant successes and images of projects. If faces are shown in images, please use the DCR Photo and Video Waiver to obtain permission. The Office of Environmental Education intends to use information and images from the final report on the DCR website to offer congratulations to each applicant on their successes. If an applicant does not wish for highlights from their grant to be shared, please share that preference when submitting the final report. An example final report is provided in Appendix E.

- a. All documents must be provided in PDF and/or a Microsoft Word compatible format.
- b. If digital submittal is not possible, printed materials, together with all attachments and supporting documentation, may be submitted to the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation at the address below:

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Attention Office of Environmental Education
600 East Main Street, 24th Floor
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Part V: Required Application Components

A. Application Form

See Appendix A for the Application Form, which includes

1. Basic organizational information,
2. Project information,
3. and budget.

B. Supporting Documents

If a school or school division is participating in activities provided by another applicant and not the primary applicant, acknowledgement of awareness should be given stating the school or school division is both aware of the grant application and committed to participating if funding is awarded.

Resumes of those individuals organizing and/or delivering MWEE instruction.

Appendix A: Application Form for Virginia Watershed Educational Programs Grant

2026-2027 Virginia Watershed Educational Programs Project

Request for Applications

Source of Funding: Virginia General Fund

Issued By:

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Division of Soil and Water Conservation

600 E. Main Street, 24th Floor

Richmond, VA 23219

RFA# VA_WTR_Educ_001

RFA and GRANT PROJECT AWARDS TIMELINE

March 5, 2026:	Deadline for application submission
June 1, 2026:	Anticipated notification of award
July 1, 2026:	Beginning of grant project funding
December 15, 2026:	Submission of mid year report
May 31, 2027:	Request for final funding and submission of final report

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A. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

Through this Request for Applications, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) seeks qualified applicants to provide exemplary “meaningful watershed educational experiences” (MWEE) within Virginia’s Chesapeake Bay watershed. Applications received in response to this request will be considered for funding for project work beginning July 1, 2026. These funds are intended to be utilized during the 2026-2027 school year. The anticipated state funding available is \$250,000. There is no minimum funding request required. The maximum request allowed is \$45,000.

As one of the signatories to the Chesapeake Bay 2014 Agreement (as amended), Virginia is committed to increasing “students’ age-appropriate understanding of the watershed through participation in teacher-supported, meaningful watershed educational experiences and rigorous, inquiry-based instruction, with a target of at least one meaningful watershed educational

experience in elementary, middle and high school depending on available resources.”

MWEEs are learner-centered experiences that focus on investigations into local environmental issues and lead to informed action and civic engagement. MWEEs provide opportunities for students to apply discipline practices and conceptual understanding of grade level standards to relevant community issues as they complete either group or individually designed action projects. *MWEEs are not a one-day learning experience; they are robust multi-day learning experiences that include field investigations aligned to content and action projects that serve as a springboard for developing environmentally literate graduates.* Additional, detailed information about MWEEs is available at https://www.chesapeakebay.net/documents/Revised_MWEE_definition_-_FINAL.pdf.

Successful applications will include programs that emphasize the use of field experiences, action projects, and other watershed educational services that contribute in measurable ways toward meeting Virginia’s goal to provide all students with this experience. Applications should demonstrate the need for resources to establish or support the successful implementation of MWEEs aligned to the Virginia Standards of Learning. Schools or school districts that do not currently have MWEEs being implemented or that lack dedicated personnel to develop and provide MWEEs are strongly encouraged to apply. Demographic information for the school or school district such as the number of students that receive free or reduced lunch; whether the school is designated as a “Title 1” school; whether the school or school districts serves students of color or other underrepresented populations; and other related information may also demonstrate the need for resources.

B. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants include, but are not limited to, school divisions, nonprofit organizations, higher education institutions, state agencies, and soil and water conservation districts. Partnerships between school divisions or between organizations (e.g. a non-profit and a school division) are permitted.

Eligible applicants must have a demonstrated ability to:

1. Provide educational programs, services, and outreach to students, teachers, or administrators; resumes are not required, but may provide evidence of ability.
2. Assign a Program Manager who will:
 - a. Direct and oversee the MWEEs provided through this contract;
 - b. Provide all required programmatic and financial reporting to DCR; and
3. Ensure adequate numbers of trained staff are available to provide the MWEEs.

C. ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

1. MWEE curricula and Training:

- a. Develop all classroom and outdoor program curricula for proposed MWEE activity.
The curricula must align to the Virginia Standards of Learning related to the environment and, if applicable, the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, and should reflect best practices in MWEE educational pedagogy.
 - b. Ensure that all educators (administrators and teachers) are adequately trained in the use of the curricula and in implementing field experiences prior to beginning the activity.
 - c. Provide both face-to-face and virtual support to educators throughout the implementation of the curricula and MWEE in their classes.
2. Provide primarily face to face components of the proposed MWEE program to an identified school division:
- a. The program must meet the definition of and demonstrate all essential elements of a MWEE; various field activities, action projects, and related educational services must be included.
 - b. This program should include content aligned to grade level standards and field experiences that are conducted either on school or community sites.
 - c. There should be collaboration between students, teachers, and administrators in developing and implementing action projects.
3. Program outreach and communication:
Present MWEE program curricula and outcomes at one or more Virginia state-sponsored professional development or other collaborative programs.
4. Other Watershed Educational Services that include educational efforts that contribute to building capacity across Virginia for MWEEs and should include:
- a. Training for community-based education partners related to teaching watershed concepts and trainings on being an education-service provider who can plan and conduct high quality MWEE field experiences for schools.
 - b. Programs and mentoring strategies that enable highly experienced classroom teachers to mentor new teachers and to work with local community partners.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

The application for the 2026-2027 Virginia Watershed Educational Programs project should include required components as described in Section E. All required components must be submitted in order for the application to be considered for review.

All application components **must be in an electronic** format. Microsoft Word is the preferred format. If a grant award is offered and the proposal is not in “Word”, a revised format in Word will be required.

In order to be considered for selection for this 2026-2027 Virginia Watershed Educational Programs Project, applicants are required to submit a completed 2026-2027 Virginia Watershed Educational Programs Project Application to the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation **by end of day March 5, 2026**. Incomplete applications and those that are not submitted as specified will be disqualified. Email application packages to:
Lori.Schoenwiesner@DCR.Virginia.gov.

E. APPLICATION INFORMATION GUIDELINES AND TEMPLATE

Below is an outline that serves as the proposal narrative guidelines. Proposals submitted that do not follow the exact outline will still be considered but must address the same content as below.

1. Applicant Information

- a. Name of Organization (Once awarded, this identity cannot change)
- b. Mailing Address (same address that will be used on W9)
- c. City, State, Zip
- d. Federal ID # or DUNS #
- e. Grant Manager
 - a. E-mail
 - b. Phone Number
- f. Project Manager
 - a. E-mail
 - b. Phone Number
- g. Type of Organization: school districts, nonprofit organizations, higher education institutions, and soil and water conservation districts, etc.
- h. Partner school division or organization, if applicable

2. Project Information

The Project Information section needs to provide a detailed explanation of the proposed activities for the grant project. This section will become the grant Scope of Work. The Project information section should include the following:

- a. Organization or situation narrative - Provide a brief narrative of organizational history as it relates to the importance and ability to complete the proposed project. And/or provide a brief narrative of the need or situation requiring the proposed project.
- b. Purpose – Provide a brief summary of the intent of the project. Include the Virginia Standards of Learning that will be addressed through the completion of the project.
- c. Methodology (scope of work) – Describe the processes to accomplish the goals and deliverables of the work. Activities from section C (Eligible Activities) should be listed as deliverables with processes described for each.
- d. Include a description of the partner school division(s); grade levels addressed; anticipated number of participants (students, teachers, educators) and demographic information such as the number of students that receive free or reduced lunch; whether the school is designated as a “Title 1” school; or whether the school or school districts serve underrepresented populations. **If applicable, letters of support must be provided from the partner school division(s).** This is proof that the school or districts intended to collaborate are aware and in support of this project.
- e. Resumes and curriculum vitae of staff that will be working on the MWEE as well as documentation of any past or ongoing funding agreements administered by the applicant are not required but can strengthen the application.

3. Budget Detail

There is no minimum funding request required for this grant round; the maximum request allowed is \$45,000. Budget detail should be categorized and detailed. Indirect expenses are not reimbursable. Specific values should be given rather than estimates.

Budget categories are:

- a. Personnel;
- b. Fringe;
- b. Travel;
- c. Supplies;
- d. Equipment;
- e. Contractual; and
- f. Other direct expenses.

F. REIMBURABLE EXPENSES AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

The following are examples of expenses that would typically be reimbursed by this grant:

- 1. Providing all program activity and instructional personnel, equipment, facilities, materials, supplies, transportation, and incidentals, etc.
- 2. Maintaining all necessary equipment and deploying all supplies needed to the MWEE participants.
- 3. Identifying and securing access to all MWEE activity and instruction sites.
- 4. Scheduling all MWEE activities and instruction.
- 5. Ensuring adequate safety and security of all MWEE participants.

Expense reimbursements will be based upon successful progress reported. A midyear progress report is due by December 15, 2026 and should include a summary of project progress to that date and an updated budget with narrative. A complete, final program report, due by May 31, 2027 should summarize all the program activities and include, at a minimum:

- 1. The names of the participating schools, classes, or divisions;
- 2. number of participants (students, teachers, administrators);
- 3. grade levels addressed;
- 4. a brief description of accomplished activities; and
- 5. an updated budget with narrative.
- 6. pictures are optional but appreciated as part of your report and may be used to feature your organization and their accomplishments on the DCR website. Please use the DCR permission for photo application for individuals whose faces are identifiable in shared images. We cannot use images that include faces unless the DCR specific photo permission form has been signed.

G. DCR CONTACTS & REFERENCES

General questions regarding this request for applications and the grant awarding process can be directed to EnvironmentalEducation@dcr.virginia.gov.

H. EVALUATION AND AWARD CRITERIA

Project applications will be evaluated based on the criteria listed below. A team of DCR staff and subject matter experts will evaluate and rank applications. Final decisions for project selection are the discretion of the DCR Director.

The application will not be considered unless the applicant meets all eligibility requirements and has submitted a complete application.

1. The proposed project meets the description of a meaningful watershed educational experience as defined in section A.
2. The funding request effectively maximizes the impact by serving a significant number of students, staff, and/or administrators.
3. The proposed project addresses specific VA standards of learning, using strong strategies and adaptations needed by participants.
4. The applicant indicates a need for funding. Demographic information was provided.
5. The proposed project has a clearly defined purpose and methodology that accurately addresses the project goals.
6. Information was given showing efforts towards project sustainability beyond the time of funding.

Appendix B: Blank Sample Budget Format

Applicant Name:

Budget Category	Description	Total
Personnel		
Fringe		
Travel		
Supplies		
Equipment		
Contractual		
Other		

Total requested grant funds from DCR		
--------------------------------------	--	--

Optional

Total DCR grant Funds requested	
Total matching Funds	
Total Project Funds	

Appendix C: Extension Request Form

Request to Amend Contract between Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and Grant Recipient of the Virginia Watershed Educational Programs Grant

Extensions of the total performance period may be granted at the discretion of the Department. Requests must be received *no later than March 5th*. **The Department will approve no more than one, one-month extension per project. The Department has the right to deny extensions if monies are not available following the initial end date, if the extension request is not for activities agreed upon, and if the grantee fails to request by March 5th.**

Email requests to Environmentaleducation@dcr.virginia.gov or mail via U.S. Mail to

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation Attention: Attention Office of Environmental education
600 East Main Street, 24th Floor
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Grant Recipient: _____

Contact Name: _____ Grant Number _____

Requested New End Date: _____

Please provide a detailed explanation for the extension request including the reason work will not be completed during the initial grant period and a timeline for completion if approved. Please attach additional documentation as needed.

Justification for Extension	

Grant Recipient Signature

Date Requested

DEPARTMENT Use Only

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Date Approved

Date Denied

Printed Name

Title

Reason for Denial

Appendix D: Example Midyear Report

All awarded applicants must submit a midyear report no later than December 15th of the awarded year. Reports should include at a minimum a narrative of completed activities, timeline for activities still to be completed, and an updated budget with budget narrative. Also welcome are images of activities, celebrations of accomplishments, and insight to future challenges.

Example midyear report:

Outdoor Education Company, Midyear Report

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation 2006-2027 Virginia Watershed Educational Programs Project

December 15, 2026



In July 2026, 17 educators joined the Outdoor Education Company for a 3 day training. The training allowed educators to experience what students experience in a hands on MWEE and gave them time to work with fellow educators to plan for their own future classroom MWEE. Each educator has been assigned a mentor from the Outdoor Education Company that will assist them this coming school year as they plan and lead a MWEE for their students.

All educators will come together again in February to give updates on their plans for spring MWEEs. The Outdoor Education Company will assist in scheduling these experiences and providing additional support for pre instruction in the classroom and post action projects. All MWEEs will be completed no later than May 15, 2027.

Budget Update:

Personnel have been paid for their hours used this fall and will receive their remaining pay as they continue to work with educators this spring. No travel cost have been used because this is specifically designated for bus fees and we anticipate paying for school bus fees during the actual MWEE events in the spring. The remaining supply money will be used to purchase meals and notebooks for educators during their February meeting. All remaining equipment money will be used to purchase materials for educators conducting MWEEs. Equipment purchased is based on educator plans and needs that are not due until March. \$230 has already been used to purchase general equipment we knew all educators needed to get their planning started. The \$450 in other will be used for VAEE conference registration in April.

Category	Budget	Used	Remaining
Personnel	\$12,000	\$5578	\$6422
Travel	\$200	\$0	\$200
Supplies	\$870	\$525	\$345
Equipment	\$1200	\$230	\$970
Contractual	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other	\$450	\$0	\$450
Total	\$14,750	6,333	8,387

We're excited to continue our project. Thank you to VA DCR for funding this project. We anticipate over 850 students will benefit this year. We're even more excited to think about the future possibilities as these 17 educators continue their work with future students in future years. While our grant will only fund us through May 2027 to work with these educators, we are already seeing professional relationships that will last beyond the designated timeframe of the project.



Appendix E: Example End of Year Report

All awarded applicants must submit an end of year report no later than May 31st of the awarded fiscal year. Reports should include at a minimum a narrative describing completed activities as well as including the number of students and educators who benefited from the project and the names of schools and/or school divisions benefiting from the project. Also included in the report should be an

updated budget with narrative. Also welcome are images of activities, celebrations of accomplishments, and insight into future impacts.

Example End of year report:

Outdoor Education Company, End of year Report Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation 2006-2027 Virginia Watershed Educational Programs Project May 31, 2027

The Outdoor Education Company is excited to report that all agreed upon deliverables were accomplished.

Accomplishments:

1. 17 educators experiences a 3-day training involving a hands-on MWEE at the river
 2. Educators each planned and executed their own MWEE experiences for their students with the support of the mentor.
 3. Mentors attended the VAEE conference to report their experience and share with other environmental educators in Virginia.
 4. 882 students from James County Public Schools experienced a MWEE led by their teacher.

Grade served	Number of students	Schools
2nd	215	A Elementary School
3rd	48	B Elementary School
5th	24	C Elementary School
Environmental science	362	D Middle School, and E High School
Biology	233	E High School

5. Community projects were completed as action projects following the MWEEs including, storm drain label/painting, planting of 100 feet of Riparian buffer along the river, litter pick up over 8 acres, the installation of a recycling program at 1 school, the addition of rain barrels to 2 schools, and an art exhibit at the annual county art show dedicated completely to brining awareness to causes of river pollution and possible solutions.

Budget Update:

All funding was used in the categories of personnel, equipment, and other. We were lucky that a bus driver donated their time for travel expenses during field trips and we were able to save \$30 in that category which we transferred to the equipment category. The additional \$30 in supplies was used to purchase dip nets for an educator's project.

Category	Budget	Used	Remaining
Personnel	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$0
Travel	\$200	\$170	\$30
Supplies	\$870	\$870	\$0
Equipment	\$1200	\$1230	-\$30
Contractual	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other	\$450	\$450	\$0
Total	\$14,720	\$14,720	\$0

All 17 teachers were surveyed at the end of the project. All 17 report an increase in their awareness of actions that might contribute to river pollution and all 17 feel they are better prepared to lead MWEs for their students. Many thanks to VA DCR for the funding to make this possible. We're excited that not only did our educators learn and lead their students, but they are already talking about possibilities for next year.

