

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Regional Director, Region 5

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NYSDEC's Updates for the LCBP Executive Committee January 18, 2023

- The Champlain Hudson Power Express (CHPE) Environmental Trust Fund has selected projects for the first round of funding. CHPE will provide \$117 million over 35 years to finance environmental protection programs through a new dedicated fund called the Hudson River and Lake Champlain Habitat Enhancement, Restoration, and Research/Habitat Improvement Trust Fund. The priority projects that will be funded for the first 5-year cycle within the Lake Champlain basin:
 - Lake Champlain Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention and Management (\$2M) – This project will implement the Lake Champlain AIS early detection and monitoring program, assess economic impacts of AIS in Lake Champlain, and address AIS in the Champlain/Chambly Canals.
 - Lake Champlain Fish Population Assessments (\$552,000) – This project includes the design and implementation of an annual fisheries assessment covering the three-year period immediately before, during, and after electrification of the CHPE transmission line.
 - Lake Champlain Fish Habitat Assessments (\$950,000) – This project will identify current physical habitat using existing data sources, assess habitat usage by data-deficient and priority fish species using acoustic telemetry, and characterized and monitor water quality as it pertains to fish habitat on multiple spatial and temporal scales.

For more information on the CHPE Environmental Trust Fund visit this [website](#), or contact the NYSDEC representative on the Governance Committee, Nicole Balk (nicole.balk@dec.ny.gov).

- DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos has released [new water quality guidance](#) that will advance the State's regulation of the emerging contaminants Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), and 1,4-Dioxane. The draft guidance for Publicly Owned Treatment Plants (POTWs) builds upon [guidance released last year for industrial discharges](#) and supports the State's ongoing efforts to protect public health and the environment and prevent exposure to emerging contaminants through the protection of drinking water sources.

[Find the draft guidance on DEC's website](#). DEC is holding a 30-day public comment period, which ends **February 9, 2024**. Comments can be emailed to EmergingContaminantsDOW@dec.ny.gov, or sent to New York State DEC, 625 Broadway, Albany NY 12233-3500, ATTN: Sara Latessa.

- DEC has released for public comment, "[Guidance for the Review of Bridge and Culvert Projects in Nontidal Waters Requiring a Protection of Waters Permit and a Water Quality Certificate](#)." This guidance describes minimum design requirements and other considerations of DEC's Division of Fish and Wildlife during review of bridge and culvert projects requiring Protection of Waters permits. This new guidance includes clarifying detail on established guidelines for maintaining stream continuity, fish and wildlife passage, and also incorporates flood resiliency and climate change considerations into permit issuance decisions as required by recent state legislation and policy.

The public comment period ends **February 9, 2024**. Find more information on [DEC's Stream Crossings webpage](#) and in the [January 10th Environmental Notice Bulletin](#).

- New York State (NYS) is transitioning grants management activities that are currently performed in the Grants Gateway to the Statewide Financial System (SFS). SFS is NYS government's accounting and financial management system used to manage contracts and payments.

Beginning January 16, entities with grant agreements or pending grant agreements with DEC must use the SFS Vendor Portal to perform business functions for grant programs. Grantees doing business with NYS will access SFS through the SFS Vendor Portal, which is available from the [SFS Public Website](#).

Training materials, including videos and step-by-step instructions for various topics on grants management-related tasks in SFS, are available within the SFS Vendor Portal. For questions or assistance using SFS, contact the SFS Help Desk at helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov.

- Governor Hochul identified plans and goals to protect New York's waters and adapt to the impacts of climate change. View her press releases for more information:
 - [Comprehensive Resiliency Plan to Protect New Yorkers From Extreme Weather](#)
 - [Actions to Plant 25 Million Trees, Safeguard Clean Water and Protect Our Lakes](#)
- [DEC has announced](#) the issuance of the final State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s), GP-0-24-001. The permit incorporates changes made in response to extensive stakeholder input and became effective **January 3, 2024**.

Find the general permit, the Fact Sheet, and Responsiveness Summary on [DEC's Stormwater MS4 Permit and Forms webpage](#). More information about the renewal is in the [December 13, 2023, Environmental Notice Bulletin](#).

Urban stormwater runoff is a significant source of pollution across the state. Since 2003, the MS4 general permit has required MS4 Operators to develop and implement stormwater management programs that help reduce polluted runoff entering New York's waters.

- Governor Kathy Hochul has [announced \\$479 million in grants](#) for critical water infrastructure projects, including the first funding awarded through the Clean Water, Clean Air, and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act of 2022 (Bond Act). The New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) awarded the grants in coordination with DEC and the Department of Health.

The grants include nearly \$450 million awarded through the State's Water Infrastructure Improvement Act (WIIA) and Intermunicipal Grant (IMG) programs, with \$200 million made possible from the Bond Act. The complete list of WIIA and IMG awardees is available on [EFC's website](#).

Awards within the Lake Champlain Basin:

- City of Plattsburgh in Clinton County is being awarded \$5 million in Bond Act funding for the third phase of multi-year drinking water system improvements.
- Town of Chazy in Clinton County is being awarded \$972K in WIIA funding for unit process and tertiary treatment upgrades.
- Village of Fort Ann in Washington County is being awarded \$1.1M in WIIA funding for wastewater treatment plant upgrades.
- Village of Lake Placid in Essex County is being awarded \$1.5M in WIIA funding for wastewater treatment plant upgrades.
- Village of Rouses Point in Clinton County is being awarded \$5M in WIIA funding for water treatment plant improvements.
- Town of Ticonderoga in Essex County is being awarded \$7.7M in WIIA funding for WPCP and collection system upgrades.
- Washington County is being awarded \$1.4M in WIIA funding for collection system improvements – Phase HF-1A.

- An additional \$30 million is being made available through DEC and EFC to targeted counties through the State's Septic System Replacement Program. These grants support home and small business owners with funding for more environmentally effective systems. Eligibility will be finalized and shared once available on [EFC's Septic System Replacement Fund webpage](#).
- DEC is extending the public comment period for its draft program policy--Permitting and Disadvantaged Communities Under the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act--to **January 29, 2024**. View the full text and pdf printable version of this policy on [DEC's Draft Program Policy webpage](#). Learn more about how and where to send comments in the [December 13th Environmental Notice Bulletin](#).