

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County
AWSMP Stream Management Implementation Program (SMIP) Fund

SMIP Application Instructions

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County in collaboration with the Ulster County Soil and Water Conservation District and the New York City Department of Environmental Protection is soliciting applications for Stream Management Implementation Program (SMIP) projects in the Ashokan Reservoir Watershed.

The SMIP Fund supports projects that implement recommendations included in Ashokan Watershed [stream management plans](#) and the Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program (AWSMP) [Action Plan](#) to:

- Improve water quality and enhance stream stability.
- Protect or improve stream-related infrastructure.*
- Enhance stream access and recreation.
- Plan and analyze for flood hazard mitigation.
- Increase knowledge, skills, and information in watershed communities about stream stewardship.
- Protect and enhance aquatic and riparian habitats and ecosystems.

*See additional guidance on funding for infrastructure projects at: <https://ashokanstreams.org/projects-and-funding/snip-funding-for-infrastructure-improvements/>

Projects to complete or implement a Local Flood Analysis (LFA) in eligible population centers should be submitted on a different application form. LFA application forms can be found at: <https://ashokanstreams.org/projects-and-funding/>

Funding Available: Approximately \$725,000 is available annually to support stream management implementation projects through March 31, 2029. The AWSMP reserves the right to not fund projects that exceed available funds, or that are not compatible with funding program goals or stream stewardship principles for Catskill streams (listed below).

Project End Date: Funded projects generally run from one to two years. Funding will be considered for early phases of a multi-phase project. Please identify clear milestone deliverables and long-term project goals in the application.

Maximum Request: The maximum award for education projects is \$35,000. There is no maximum or minimum award for projects in other categories. Please review information on our administrative



requirements carefully at <https://ashokanstreams.org/projects-and-funding/>. Applicants are encouraged to submit detailed cost estimates when applying for funding.

Eligible Applicants: Local, county, state, or federal government agencies, 501(c)(3) organizations*, secondary school districts, colleges or universities. Projects can only be funded in towns that have adopted stream management plans. For-profit firms or institutions may submit funding applications in the Research, Assessment and Monitoring category only.

*Clarification of non-profit status and eligibility: non-governmental tax-exempt organizations applying for funding must be able to provide proof of federal 501(c)(3) status at the time of application and carry out work in the public interest or for public benefit. To be eligible for SMIP funding, the organization must be organized and operated exclusively for scientific or educational purposes.

Eligible Use of Funds: Requested funds may be used for expenses directly related to the proposed project, including wages and consultant fees. Please note: Replacement or repair of failing infrastructure due to age or decay is not eligible for funding.

Insurance: No contract can be awarded until proof of insurance is provided and a business integrity check for subconsultants is completed. Applicants must be able to meet CCE insurance coverage requirements to receive funds. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the types and amount of required insurance before applying. For more information on insurance requirements, see: <https://ashokanstreams.org/projects-and-funding/smip-project-insurance-requirements/>. Call Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County at (845) 688-3047 if you have questions about insurance.

Evaluation Criteria: All applications are screened for relevance and completeness. Proposals are then evaluated and scored for reasonableness of costs, project justification, appropriateness of methods, project timeline, reasonableness of budget, applicant qualifications, and partnerships and coordination with stakeholders.

Reporting Requirements: The award recipient will provide CCE Ulster County with:

- Documentation of expenditures as required.
- Progress reports submitted with invoices.
- A final report to the Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program before final payment.
- Data and other final deliverables in electronic format.

CCE Ulster County reserves the right to require additional documentation.

Proposal Submission Instructions: For an electronic version of the application go to: <https://ashokanstreams.org/projects-and-funding/>. Submit one electronic copy in Microsoft Word and one signed copy in PDF or hardcopy format to: Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program, Attn: Leslie Zucker, PO Box 667, 3130 Route 28, Shokan, NY 12481, (845) 688-3047, laz5@cornell.edu.

Project Consultation: Applicants submitting infrastructure or stream restoration projects are encouraged to schedule a project review with AWSMP staff before applying. Contact the office at the number below to schedule a meeting or site visit.

AWSMP Contact Person for More Information:

Leslie Zucker, Program Coordinator
Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County
(845) 688-3047, ext. 102
Laz5@cornell.edu

All organizations receiving funds from the AWSMP must be able to certify that they do not discriminate based upon race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, marital status or sexual orientation with respect to employment or programming.

Checklist for Complete Application:

ONLY COMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED:

- Cover Letter - indicating municipal or institutional support for the project
- Other Letters of Support (if applicable)
- Section 1: Project Information
- Section 2: Applicant Information and Signature
- Section 3: Project Description should include:
 - Project summary.
 - Project location – attach map or site sketch/photos, if needed.
 - Relevance to flood mitigation and stream management priorities – see SMIP funding priorities listed above. Also reference the AWSMP Action Plan, stream management plans, flood mitigation plans, other municipal plans, the Ashokan Watershed Research Strategy (see <https://ashokanstreams.org/publications-resources/> and <https://ashokanstreams.org/publications-resources/technical-data-resources/> for documents) – describe how and why you determined this project is a need/priority.
 - Project team and qualifications.
 - The specific planned use of AWSMP funds and how the AWSMP funding will relate to other funding for the project.
 - Specific planned outcomes and deliverables.
 - Project timeline.
- Section 4: Project Budget
- Section 5: AWSMP Budget Narrative
- IRS Exemption Determination Letter (if applicable)

PRINCIPLES OF STREAM STEWARDSHIP FOR CATSKILL STREAMS

1. We celebrate the role streams play in the natural heritage of our communities.

The creeks, streams and rivers that run through our neighborhoods play a subtle but profound role in the identity of our communities, and also in the larger landscape: they are the “kills” in “Catskills.” Our streams are intimately tied to our culture and history.

2. We will work to protect and restore the environmental services provided by our streams and floodplains.

Streams and their floodplains provide many essential environmental services: they are the major conduits of our stormwater system, convey sediment eroded from upland areas, process a large portion of the human waste stream --both in the stream and through the floodplain “filter”-- and for many anglers, provide significant food resources. Streams and floodplains also provide highly valued recreational and economic benefits, and their natural beauty is an invaluable collective asset of the community.

3. We will work to protect and restore the health of our stream and floodplain ecosystems.

Stream and floodplain ecosystems are complex. They are key components of the larger ecosystem, interconnected with upland biological diversity and integrity. The health of our ecosystem is dependent on the health of our streams, and vice versa. The health of the environment is likewise connected to human health — both individuals and communities.

4. Wherever possible, we will manage streams so as to maintain their naturally effective channel form and function.

The shape of the stream –its characteristic plan form, cross-section and profile— are matched to the landscape forms through which they flow, the hydrologic regime, the geology, and the vegetation on the banks and floodplain. Streams must move sediment as well as water, and the shape of the stream determines how effectively it can perform that function. When we disturb the shape of the stream --widening, narrowing, deepening, straightening, removing gravel bars, or berming-- we alter its effectiveness. Streams evolve over time, and need to be able to shift somewhat within the constraints of their floodplain. Generally speaking, however, in the Catskills, healthy streams are more stable and resilient than disturbed streams, and maintain their characteristic form after even large flood events. Management of natural stream systems often results in the perception of competing or inconsistent goals and objectives. Using sound, science-based principles, stream managers will find it easier to guide their work, and achieve a common ground between landowners, municipalities, regulatory agencies and others that play an important role in the health of our Catskill stream systems. These guiding principles set a common framework upon which stream managers may carry out their important activities.

5. Wherever possible, we will manage floodplains as part of the natural stream system.

Floodplains play a critical role in the stream system, and in the environmental services streams provide: floodplains should be considered part of the stream. When streams and their natural floodplains are well connected, the risk of flood hazards downstream are reduced and water quality is improved. The most appropriate land use for floodplains will allow natural stream processes to occur.

6. Wherever possible, we will protect and restore mature forest in the riparian buffer.

If we want to prevent bank erosion, the most critical concern should be maintaining a healthy buffer of mature, native vegetation along the stream bank. Ideally, the wider the buffer, the better. The root system of natural, dense vegetation in the streamside, or riparian, buffer holds the soil together, and makes it more resistant to the erosive force of fast moving floodwaters. Mowing down to the edge of the streambank puts the bank at higher risk of erosion. Natural streamside vegetation also supports healthy communities of organisms in the stream and floodplains and moderates water and soil temperatures, protecting fish and amphibians.

7. As we manage streams to protect public safety and investments in infrastructure, our actions in one location shouldn't compromise the health of the stream upstream or downstream, or threaten the adjacent upland ecosystem through which the stream runs.

Even small disturbances at one location on a stream can propagate upstream or downstream, or laterally into floodplains and upland areas. When we engage in management practices in response to flooding or bank erosion, we need to anticipate these off-site impacts, and apply the principle of "do no harm."

8. We will strive to keep abreast of the state-of-the-science and best management practices related to streams and floodplains.

Our understanding of how healthy streams function is still growing. As the science of stream ecosystems and the best management practices to protect and restore them continue to evolve, this improved understanding needs to be incorporated into our day-to-day management activities.