



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

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Boston, MA 02114

Mitt Romney
GOVERNOR

Kerry Healey
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Ellen Roy Herzfelder
SECRETARY

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April 2005

Re: FY2006 DCS Annual Grant Round

Dear Prospective Applicant:

I am pleased to announce that my office, through the Division of Conservation Services (DCS), **in anticipation of, and contingent upon, the availability of funds,** will conduct the annual Fiscal Year 2006 grant round for the Self-Help, Urban Self-Help and federal Land and Water Conservation programs. The filing deadline is 3p.m. on Monday, August 1, 2005.

Self-Help Program

The Self-Help Program provides funds to municipal conservation commissions for the purchase of conservation land. The priority for this year's Self-Help grant round will be for the protection of coastal and estuarine property; sensitive stream, river, lake and pond watersheds; and biological conservation (especially rare species habitats). Projects which fall under lands mapped in the Statewide Land Conservation Plan, and those that augment or connect to existing conservation lands, and thereby help to preserve the integrity and health of the local or regional ecosystems, will receive greater consideration for funding.

Urban Self-Help Program

The Urban Self-Help Program assists cities and urban towns with the acquisition, construction and/or renovation of parks. The priorities for this year's Urban Self-Help grants will be the innovative re-use of brownfield sites and projects that provide recreational opportunities to urban populations. Projects that serve to stabilize neighborhoods or are part of urban center revitalization efforts will be given special consideration as will those that demonstrate innovative water control systems. Small towns may qualify for these grants where projects are designed to provide statewide or regional recreational facilities or up to a maximum grant of \$50,000 for smaller recreational projects.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

These federal grant monies can be used for either state or local agency conservation or park projects as long as outdoor recreation is the primary use. The focus for conservation projects is identical to the Self-Help Program, and applicants should use the Conservation Application Form for such projects. Park projects should reflect the same project focus as the Urban Self-Help program, and applicants should therefore use the Recreation Application Form. The federal funds are being announced in anticipation of a congressional appropriation for fiscal year 2006. This office reserves the right to determine the allocation of state and federal sources of grant funds as project and budgetary conditions warrant.

Self-Help, Urban Self-Help and the LWCF Programs each have specific eligibility requirements and are awarded on a competitive basis. Grants for state assistance range from 52-70% reimbursement based upon a community's equalized valuation per capita (EVPC) decile rank, and 50% for federal assistance. The maximum grant award for any project has been set at \$500,000, but may be reduced or increased at my discretion.

Be sure that your proposal advances Sustainable Development objectives by protecting significant environmental or recreation resources, guiding development away from sensitive natural resources and to appropriate development areas, or maximizing public access via alternative transportation modes (e.g., public transit, bicycle, walking). This year, both rating systems have been significantly amended to give more points for natural resource value (especially water resources and green infrastructure), and a community's sustainable development track record as measured by the Commonwealth Capital Score. Proposals that involve inter-municipal and municipal-state cooperation, and multiple partners including non-profits, are encouraged. For information that can help you implement Sustainable Development objectives, visit http://www.mass.gov/envir/sus_dev/default.htm.

In order to encourage municipalities to implement Smart Growth consistent land use practices, the Romney Administration has launched an incentive policy known as Commonwealth Capital. Discretionary grant programs include a Commonwealth Capital Score in their rating systems, and each applicant must apply directly to the Office for Commonwealth Development to receive its score. The FY06 Commonwealth Capital rating sheet is being revised and will be available online at <http://www.mass.gov/ocd/comcap.html>. Be sure to submit a Commonwealth Capital Application on or before the grant round deadline of 3p.m. on Monday, August 1, 2005 to maintain your community's eligibility for the grant round. For questions on Commonwealth Capital email commcap@massmail.state.ma.us or call (617) 626-4949.

Please contact DCS at (617) 626-1011, if you wish to learn more about these grant programs and to request an application package. More information and application forms may also be found on the DCS web page at www.mass.gov/envir/dcs. I invite each and every community to take advantage of this opportunity, and thank you for your partnership in land conservation and public outdoor recreation.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ellen Roy Herzfelder". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Ellen Roy Herzfelder