

POLICY

Columbus Water & Power (previously Columbus Department of Public Utilities) recognizes watershed organizations and other conservation entities which provide essential services to both the City of Columbus and CWP's Contract Communities within its service area. These organizations support CWP's efforts to address water quality concerns through community engagement and education, monitoring, and the planning, funding, and implementation of projects – particularly those involving innovative stormwater management practices, such as green infrastructure. These practices help reduce pollution and minimize stormwater entry into storm, sanitary, or combined sewers. Additionally, these organizations advance the mission of the Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District's (FSWCD) by promoting responsible land use decisions that conserve, protect, and improve soil and water resources through partnerships, technical guidance, and education.

PROCESS

Through FSWCD, CWP seeks to fund Service Agreements with watershed organizations and other legally recognized conservation entities demonstrating the ability to deliver public education relevant to CWP/FSWCD, and to implement projects that apply pollution prevention techniques and stormwater best management practices. These projects should aim to improve water quality, promote climate resiliency, and support water-quality-focused education and outreach. Please note: **only projects implemented within the City of Columbus limits will be accepted at this time.**

- 1) Each year FSWCD will issue a Request for Proposals for eligible watershed organizations and other legally recognized conservation entities able to provide services to CWP and CWP customers in the City of Columbus.
- 2) The eligible services may change from year to year and will be defined in the Request for Proposals.
- 3) Watershed organizations with 501(c)(3) status that primarily provide service to the tributary watersheds within Columbus City limits are eligible to propose services to FSWCD as detailed in this Request for Proposals. For the purpose of this call for funding, "watershed organization" means any 501(c)(3) nonprofit focused on preserving and improving the quality of rivers, streams, and their watersheds in the Columbus region. Sustainability or conservation focused 501(c)(3) organizations or other legally recognized conservation entities may also qualify for funding if the project proposal falls under one of the categories of eligible purposes set forth in the Request for Proposals.
- 4) A committee of FSWCD and CWP staff will review and evaluate qualified proposals based on predetermined criteria.
- 5) The committee will determine specific services to be contracted under a Service Agreement for each watershed group.

- 6) Upon approval, FSWCD will enter into a 12-month Service Agreement with selected watershed organizations.
- 7) Awarded watershed organizations or conservation entities will be required to submit quarterly reports and invoices to FSWCD based on contracted services detailed in the Service Agreement. Based upon staff approval of the quarterly reports, the watershed organization will receive payment for services rendered in the previous quarter.

PROCEDURE

Request for Proposals

FSWCD intends to offer an annual Request for Proposals to regional watershed organizations and other legally recognized conservation entities for services. The Request for Proposals includes: submission criteria, definition of eligible organizations and services, selection criteria, and schedule for deliverables.

Eligible Services

Within an annual Request for Proposals, CWP and FSWCD will list eligible services that will be considered during the proposal cycle. This list of services may be modified from year to year depending on FSWCD and CWP needs.

Evaluation Criteria, Process, and Recommendations

Proposals must be submitted no later than the specified due date and time in the Requests for Proposals. Any materials that are not included in the initial submission will not be considered. The proposals are checked for completeness, filed electronically, and disbursed to the selection committee for review.

Final recommendations for Service Agreements will be based on the value of the proposed services to the City of Columbus, and past organizational performance. The selection of services is solely at CWP and FSWCD discretion and CWP and FSWCD are not obligated to award any Service Agreement(s).

The final recommendations must be approved by the joint committee of FSWCD and CWP.

Service Agreement

Upon final approval of the District's Board of Supervisors, the watershed organization(s) will enter into a one-year Service Agreement that will define expectations of each party entering into the agreement. A reporting schedule will be defined in the agreement.

Budget Modification

A Budget Modification request form shall be submitted and approved to permit any changes in the proposed services.

Reporting

Reporting by awarded organizations for services contracted under a Service Agreement will be reviewed quarterly with watershed organizations receiving payment upon review and approval of submitted documentation by FSWCD.

FSWCD provides report forms that can be found on FSWCD's website at www.franklinswcd.org/columbus-watershed-partners for the Watershed Partner Service Agreement Program. These documents include: Reimbursement Request, Progress Report, Expense Report, Budget Report, and AmeriCorps Time Tracking sheet.

Qualifying Reimbursement

Contracted services described in Agreement and/or approved modifications are exclusively eligible for reimbursement. Any modifications must be documented by written FSWCD approval.

Reimbursement Request Submission

Use the reporting forms located at www.franklinswcd.org/columbus-watershed-partners for reimbursement(s); forms provided: Reimbursement Request, Activity Report, Expense Report, AmeriCorps Time Tracking. For purchase reimbursements an invoice and proof of payment through paid receipts, cancelled checks, or credit card payment verification is required. For AmeriCorps members, a Time Tracking sheet is required with proof of compensation and location of completed work. Time is to be billed to the Service Agreement only when hours are earned.

The Reimbursement Request is submitted to FSWCD and reviewed for completeness. Submissions will be sent to:

Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District
Henry Stahl or Watershed Resource Specialist
1404 Goodale Blvd #100 Columbus, OH 43212
hstahl@franklinswcd.org

Upon successful review of the submission FSWCD's Watershed Resource Specialist will have the final review of the Reimbursement Request for disbursement to occur.

Upon final approval by the Watershed Resource Specialist the Reimbursement Request will be processed for disbursement.

The service provider can anticipate reimbursement within 30 – 60 days of the final approval of a Reimbursement Request.