

## Expression of Interest - Town of Deerfield

### Massachusetts ECO OneStop Grant Program

**Date:** 10/28/2025

**Applicant:** Town of Deerfield, MA

### Project Overview

The Town of Deerfield seeks funding through the Massachusetts ECO OneStop Grant Program to advance a comprehensive, multiscale climate resilience initiative designed to reduce flood risks, restore ecological function, and strengthen local capacity for long-term environmental management. The initiative consists of three integrated projects:

1. **Upland Flood Retention Analysis** - Conduct a hydrological and land-use analysis to identify Bloody Brook and other possible upland areas within Deerfield suitable for natural floodwater retention, infiltration, increase capacity, and to identify parcels for NRCS, DER, FEMA, MVP, and other mitigation programs.
2. **Culvert Optimization and Engineering Plan** - Develop an engineered design and implementation plan to improve and optimize culvert capacity throughout the town's critical drainage network, with a focus on climate-informed hydrology and increased storm event intensity.
3. **Brook Restoration and DPW Training** - address identified obstructions in the Sugarloaf Brook between Eastern Ave. and Graves St. under the Order of Conditions set forth in the approved Notice of Intent (NOI), no. [142-0250](#), dated 8/28/2025, while providing specialized training for the Department of Public Works (DPW) that is required as a condition for future maintenance within the framework of the Town's Bundled NOI.

Combined, these projects will create a layered approach to flood mitigation—linking upland retention, midstream conveyance, and downstream flow management—while building institutional and community capacity for adaptive management.

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### Regional and Local Context

Deerfield lies within the Connecticut River watershed, an area increasingly affected by climate-driven precipitation events that cause widespread flooding across Franklin County and the greater New England region. These events have intensified in frequency and severity, overwhelming local infrastructure and threatening agricultural lands, residential neighborhoods, and critical transportation corridors.

At the State level, this effort aligns with the Mass Ready Act to strengthen and protect Massachusetts communities by focusing on crucial infrastructure improvements,

including upgrades to culverts, improved watershed resilience and maintenance, and increased flood retention. Additionally, as the Town currently seeks to build affordable senior housing in response to a regional and state housing crisis, these projects will help protect municipal infrastructure and assets from future severe climate events.

At the regional level, this effort aligns with the goals of the Franklin Conservation District, which promotes climate adaptation strategies that integrate natural systems with municipal infrastructure. The proposed upland retention and culvert improvement efforts also complement regional initiatives of the USDA NRCS (first phase of PL566) and other programs, which focus on restoring landscape-scale hydrological balance. Furthermore, collaboration with the Franklin Conservation District will ensure that Deerfield's work contributes to broader watershed resilience, sediment management, and aquatic connectivity goals.

At the town level, these projects advance Deerfield's ongoing resilience planning efforts, as outlined in its Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) priorities. By investing in infrastructure improvements and natural flood storage, Deerfield will safeguard municipal assets, residential neighborhoods, highly productive agricultural lands and reduce the need for emergency interventions during extreme weather events. In 2017, Deerfield was the first town to be designated a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) community by the State of Massachusetts. These proposed integrated projects would continue to build on the Town's current and past MVP efforts.

At the neighborhood and residential level, the Sugarloaf Brook project directly benefits nearby residents by reducing localized flooding, protecting property, and improving water quality, flow and public health by greatly reducing mosquito habitat. To work with the Franklin Conservation District and the Delaware County (NY) Soil and Water Conservation District (DCSWCD) using their proven training program will ensure the town's DPW will have sustainable chokepoint management skills.

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## Partnerships and Collaboration

This project will leverage technical assistance and collaborative relationships with:

- **Franklin Conservation District** - for climate adaptation coordination and alignment with regional goals.
- **USDA NRCS PFFR** - for guidance on upland hydrologic analysis, forest resilience, and natural infrastructure design.
- **Connecticut River Conservancy** - for ecological restoration expertise and watershed-scale coordination.

- **Deerfield Conservation Commission** - for regulatory oversight and ecological stewardship under the Bundled NOI.
- **Deerfield Department of Public Works** - for implementation, monitoring, and long-term maintenance of infrastructure and ecological restoration measures.
- **Franklin Regional Council of Governments** - for procurement, regional support and communication, watershed analysis and reports, regional culvert assessments, coordination with FRCOG's MVP Action Grant to implement key recommendations from [“A Framework for Resilience: Responding to Climate Change in the Deerfield River Watershed.”](#)
- **Delaware County (NY) Soil and Water Conservation District** - for expertise and training on soil and water conservation program implementation.

These partnerships will ensure that each project contributes to building a resilient, integrated, and adaptive local infrastructure system that benefits the broader Connecticut River, Deerfield River, Bloody Brook and Sugarloaf Brook watersheds.

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## **Outcomes and Benefits**

The proposed work will:

- Identify and protect upland areas that naturally mitigate downstream flooding.
- Develop shovel-ready engineering plans for culvert upgrades that accommodate future climate conditions.
- Enhance the ecological health and hydraulic function of Sugarloaf Brook.
- Build institutional capacity within the DPW to manage stormwater systems within environmental permitting frameworks.
- Strengthen partnerships across municipal, regional, and federal levels to support long-term ecological resilience.

## **Estimated Funding Request**

The Town anticipates seeking ECO OneStop support for planning, analysis, and implementation stages across the three project components. Preliminary estimates place the combined project cost in the range of **\$150,000-\$300,000**, depending on final engineering and implementation scope.