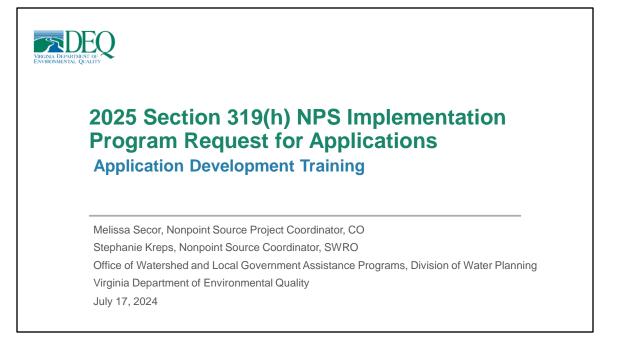


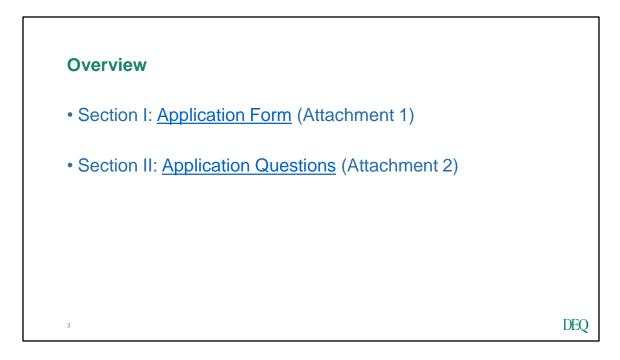
[...Continued after Part I]

Access the recording here: https://youtu.be/xnHPFGNQXMI



Welcome to Part 2 of the RFA webinar. In this part we'll be providing detailed guidance for pulling together your application packet, focusing on the Application Questions and Application Form.

[Refer to Application Questions and Form in handouts to follow along.]



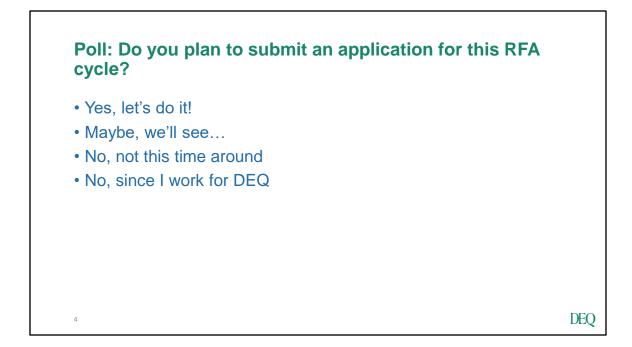
There are two parts to this presentation. The first part will cover the Application Form (Attachment 1):

https://www.deq.virginia.gov/home/showdocument?id=24028

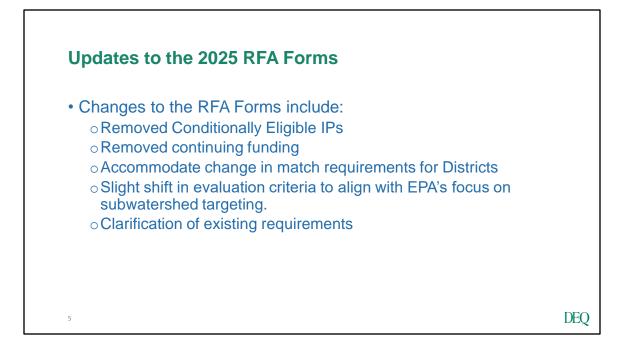
The second part will cover the Application Questions (Attachment 2):

https://www.deq.virginia.gov/home/showdocument?id=24027

Disclaimer: I will be calling attention to specific questions and parts of the application. My emphasis just means that those sections have critical information we need to evaluate your application. Many of those that I'll be highlighting are also the parts we've seen neglected in the past. Please do not neglect to provide complete answers on all questions so reviewers have the info they need to evaluate your application application lower.

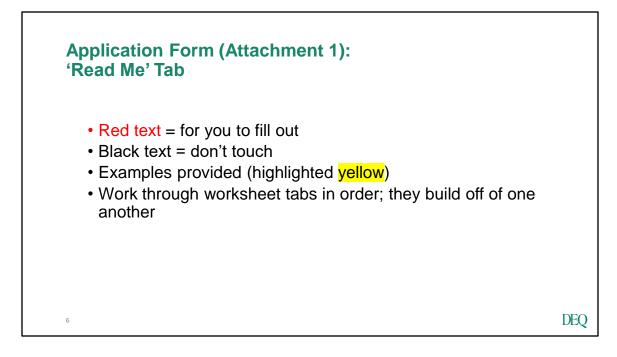


Before we get into the nitty gritty of the application materials, let's do a quick poll.



- We took some time to carefully review this year's RFA forms and made some changes compared to last years. Specifically:
- Removed the Conditionally Eligible IPs in the RFA because in the past it created confusion due to inconsistent availability of required documentation (closeout reports). The NPS team's RFA evaluation process will naturally assess situations where an application proposes projects in an IP area that has previous projects completed.
- Removed continuing funding RFA for existing subrecipients. Instead existing subrecipients can work with RCs to identify additional funding needs via the modification process.
- RFA reflects the change in match requirements for SWCDs. We previously
  mentioned how Districts don't need to provide match since DCR already provides
  state-wide match funding to SWCDs. Will go into more detail in a bit when
  discussing the budget.
- EPA is encouraging subwatershed targeting so we adjusted points for Section 3 Watershed, Geographic Description, and Location of Project so now the points possible for Section 3 matches the value of the Section 4 Project Methods which covers outreach.
- Clarified existing requirements e.g., level of detail for budgets, indirect cost rates,

BMP design requirements, etc.



[Refer to handouts (application materials added to handouts section of the webinar)]

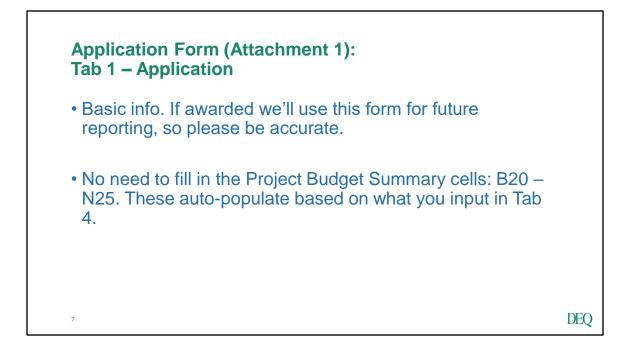
[Open Application Form to show in presentation monitor]

So let's jump into the Application Form.

We'll go through each of these tabs and we'll start out by opening the 'Read me' tab.

- This tab provides step-by-step instructions for approaching the form to better understand it. There are instructions for how to complete each tab (as well as at the top of each tab). The more you understand it, the easier it is/less daunting it is to fill out.
- Look for the cells with red text. These will be the fields you will complete. Fields in black text are locked and meant to be static.
- Examples of how to complete Tabs 1-5 are highlighted yellow after Tab 6. These are not perfect and completing your application the same way doesn't guarantee you'll be selected for funding. It's just a resource. Also, please do not use the EXAMPLE tabs to complete your application as they may not be properly formatted for final submission.

<u>Tip:</u> Resist urge to start filling it out immediately. Start at Tab 1 and work your way through all 6 tabs sequentially (Tab 1 should be filled out before Tab 2, Tab 2 before Tab 3, etc.). What is entered in one tab may populate information in another.

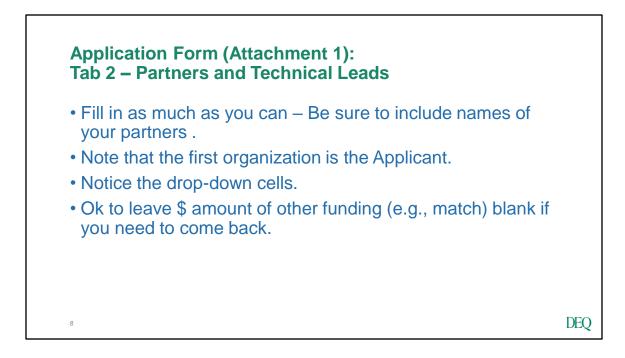


[Demonstrate Tab 1] – Application tab.

Tab 1 is the basic information requested, such as contact information, organizational ID #s, IP name, watersheds, etc. If awarded, we'll use this form for future reporting.

There are entries for the different types of Point of Contacts (project, contract, and reimbursement). Project POC is the main contact for the application and resulting projects. Contract POC is responsible for signing contractual documents. Reimbursement POC signs the quarterly reimbursement reports. In some cases, the same person is used for several or all roles so just enter it in each cell even if it's the same person. The footnote at the bottom explains this.

Remember, only fill in the cells with red text. There's no need to fill in the Project Budget Summary cells: B20 – N25. These auto-populate based on what you'll put in Tab 4.



[Demonstrate Tab 2] – Partners tab.

Fill in as much as you can. Do at least put in the names of your partners because you'll need their names in subsequent tabs.

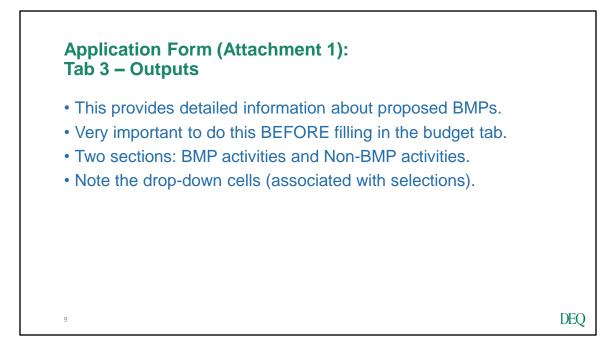
Note that the first organization pertains to the Applicant and the subsequent are the partners.

Notice the drop-down cells:

- Yes/No
- Primary Role in Project (Technical lead= the expertise for BMP design/construction; Supporting partner= provides outreach, ed, or admin support; Project Administrator= organization tasked with oversight and management of partners (usually the Applicant).
- Source Sector
- Secondary Source Sector

Ok to leave \$ amount of other funding (e.g., match) blank if you need to come back later to fill in. Make sure the match funding listed in this tab aligns with the match

funding total in the Tab 4 Budget.



[Demonstrate Tab 3] – Outputs tab.

Provide detailed information about the BMPs planned in your proposed Project.

DO THIS BEFORE YOU DO YOUR BUDGET. This populates Tab 4 and makes it much easier to fill out the budget tab.

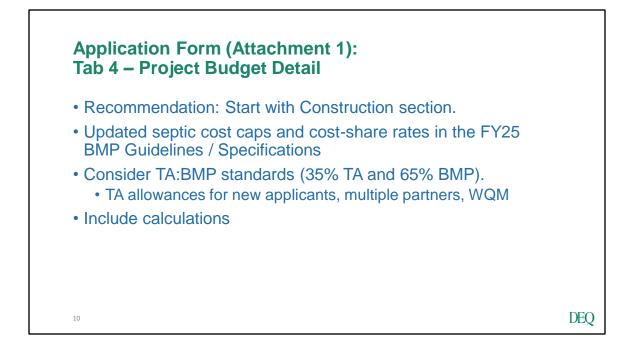
Two sections:

BMP Project Activity Summary – Focused on BMPs (Ag, Septic, Urban, Pet Waste)
 Non-BMP Project Activity Summary – Focused on non-BMPs (Education/Outreach, WQM)

Cells include drop-down options:

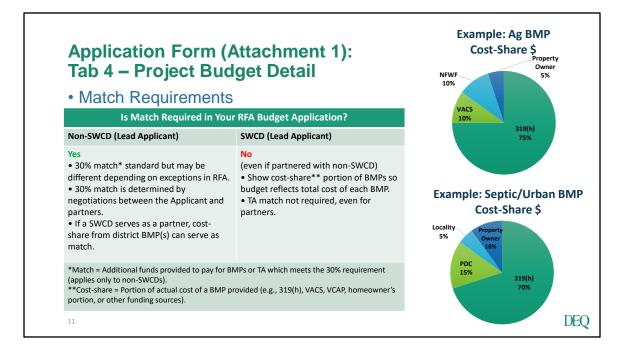
- Source Sector
- BMP Name/BMP code
- Responsible party
- Watershed Name
- Estimated Extent BMP Installed
- BMP units (auto-populates)

- Estimated # of Activities or BMPs to complete
- Comments
- Target Completion Date



First I'll go over some the budget topics the next two slides and then I'll go back to Tab 4 in the spreadsheet to review.

- Everyone probably approaches the development of their budget differently but one recommendation would be to start with the BMP (Construction) budget category since the project is ultimately driven by BMP implementation.
- For septic BMPs, use the updated septic cost caps and cost-share rates in the FY25 BMP Guidelines/Specifications files on our website.
- When preparing the budget, remember the standard TA: BMP is 35% TA and 65% BMP. <u>EXCEPTION:</u> You may be eligible for additional TA allowances that we discussed earlier: 1) Being a new grantee, 1-time additional 5%; 2) Administering multiple partners (2 or more) additional 10%; 3) Doing WQM, additional 5%). Keep in mind that the maximum TA allowable if all exceptions are granted would be <u>50%</u>.
- Include calculations Each cell should show the calculation that resulted in the value. Avoid entering only the total value in a cell. Personnel = hourly rate \* # of hours \* % of funding (319 or match). Same with travel, BMPs, etc.



- Match Requirements
  - Don't forget to fill in match for applicable categories as necessary (30% match required for non-SWCDs from federal and non-federal funds).
  - I've previously mentioned the new match requirements and this table helps explain if match is required for you.
  - See table
  - First define match vs cost-share \*\*\*\*
    - Match is non-319h funding to contribute to the project to pay for BMPs or TAs which must total to 30% for non-Districts. For example, match can include work time, fringe, travel, supplies (TA); and for BMPs it can be cost-share or other funding sources from partners that can contribute to complete the practice (VCAP, VACS, NFWF, etc.) or homeowners.
    - Cost-share is the portion the BMP costs from various sources to pay for the actual total cost of the BMP (i.e. 319(h), VACS, VCAP, homeowner's portion, or other funding sources).
      - The pie charts on the right are examples of various costshare sources that contribute to paying for a BMP. The top shows an Ag BMP that involves funds from VACS, NFWF, and

the property owner in addition to 319h, all of which combines to cover the total BMP costs. The bottom right is an example of septic or urban BMPs that involves funding from the locality, PDC, and property owner as well.

- There are many ways to slice and dice the BMP pizza with various cost-share sources.
- Let's go back to the table to help understand how match/cost-share applies to your application.
- If a non-SWCD is applying for funding Must meet the 30% match requirements. As said earlier, match can be used for BMPs and/or the TA portion of the budget and come from the applicant, partners, and homeowners. The mix or proportions of funds provided by the various entities depends on negotiations between the Applicant and partners. But if a SWCD serves as a partner, cost-share from the District BMPs can serve as match.
  - Also don't forgot to see if you qualify for the match exceptions that can reduce the percentage requirement. For example, if a project includes the residential septic activities in a high or above average fiscal stress area, then you may request a reduced match amount of 15% match for septic-related activities (see DHCD's fiscal stress report to determine fiscal stress of county: https://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/fiscal-stress).
- If a SWCD applying for funding SWCDs don't have the match requirement but should reflect cost-share funding in the BMP Construction section. As a result, Districts don't need to include TA match in their budget but the BMP portion should reflect the cost-share from homeowners/property owners or other programs (e.g., VACS, VCAP, etc.) used to pay for the BMP.

[Demonstrate Tab 4] – Share the Budget EXAMPLE tab.

The RFA example tabs reflects a non-SWCD budget which includes match.

Step 1: As mentioned earlier, start at section 6 (Construction) first. Notice the fields that have been auto populated for you based on what you put in Tab 3. Then fill out your budget costs.

Step 2: You can check the resulting TA:BMP ratio you've put in your budget by looking at Tab 1, row 23 and 24.

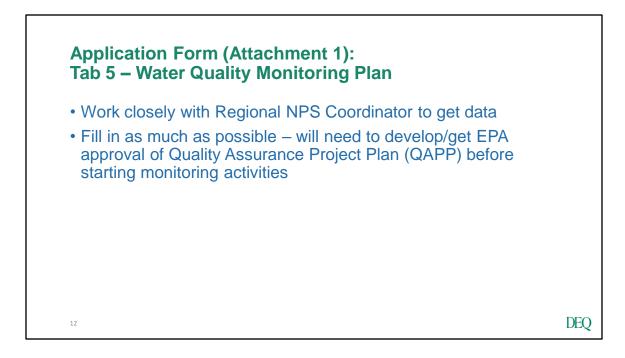
Step 3: Complete the remaining sections of Tab 4 Project Budget, using the amount of TA you determined you'll budget and allocate it to the TA categories: Personnel, Fringe, Travel, Supplies, Contractual, Other Direct, Indirect).

Include calculations – Each cell should show the calculation that resulted in the value. Avoid entering only the total value in a cell. See cell I11. Personnel = hourly rate \* # of hours \* % of funding (319 or match). Same with travel, BMPs, etc.

Something I added here for this webinar is another example budget for SWCDs. You'll see there is no match in the TA budget categories but there is cost-share budget in the Construction section.

Remember I'm showing the example tabs but be sure to fill out the actual application tabs.

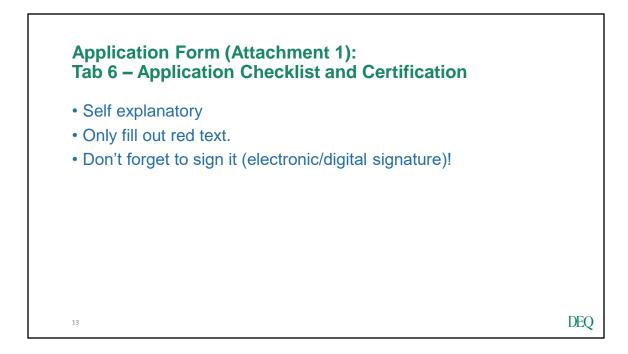
We will go over the last two tabs which will be quick and then open up for questions.



[Demonstrate Tab 5]. WQM Plan

Work closely with Regional NPS Coordinator to get data.

Fill out as much as possible. If awarded, you'll need to develop a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) before monitoring activities can get started. This involves completing EPA's template, DEQ review, and EPA review/approval. Sometimes there can be several review cycles so allow at least 3 months at the beginning of project to complete this process.



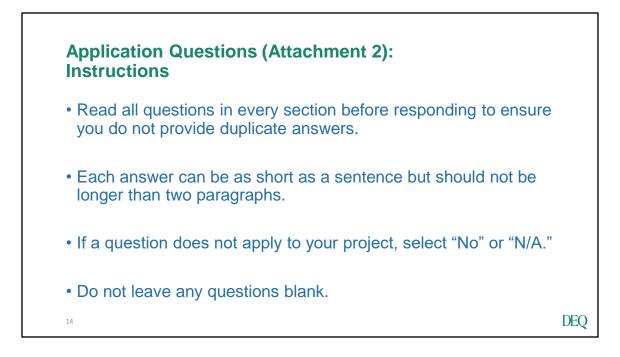
Last tab! Checklist and Certification

Self explanatory- Nice checklist to help make sure you have everything in the application package (and in the correct format)

Only fill out red text.

Don't forget to sign it! Electronic or digital signature.

[STOP FOR QUESTIONS]



[Open Application Questions document] [Refer to handout]

So Attachment 1 was all about the nuts and bolts of your project; Attachment 2 is the narrative to explain everything.

Be sure to read the instructions.

To get a sense of the types of questions (and not to duplicate your responses), it's best to read all the questions before responding.

Each answer should be concise but sufficient. So it can be as short as a sentence but should not be longer than two paragraphs. Enter your response in the cell next to the question.

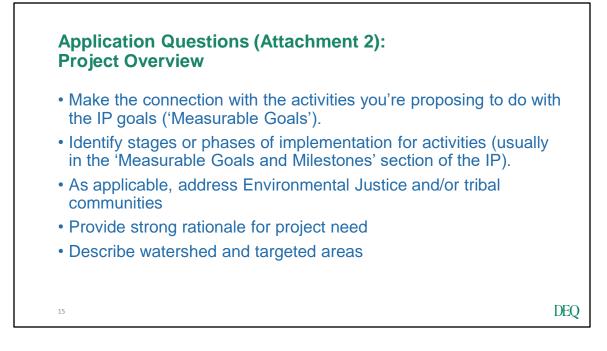
Note the drop-downs for 'yes/no' questions. If a question does not apply to your project, please select "No" or "Not applicable."

Do not leave any questions blank.

Take note of the places you think you'd be providing the same answer twice. Discuss them with your NPS RC to make sure you're understanding the question and providing what the question is asking for.

You'll notice that some of the text is blue and hyperlinked to the definitions tab. This is to help the Applicant understand what is meant by this term so that you're answering the question completely. To open those, click the cell and it will take you to the definition tab.

[Let's go into the form and I'll show an example, click on 'TMDL impairment(s)' to see link to definition].



Now let's go over each of the tabs for the Application Questions sheets. [Share sheet.] The first tab is: Project Overview.

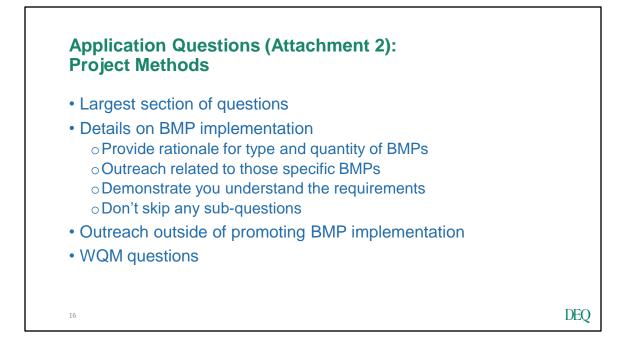
Refer to the Implementation Plan (IP) to help answer these questions and make sure what you're proposing to do is eligible in that area (i.e., which is defined the plan). These questions help pull this information out.

Key things to keep in mind:

- IP goals are listed in each IP, usually as 'Measurable Goals'. These are targets for implementation activities. Examples include the number of Ag BMPs, number of residential septic BMPs, outreach campaigns, etc. Make the connection with the activities you're proposing to align with these IP goals.
- For question 4, each IP has stages or phases of implementation for activities. Be sure you find this information (usually in the 'Measurable Goals and Milestones' section of the IP). For example, Cunningham Creek's IP has Stage 1 and Stage 2 Goals outlined in Table 7-4.
- Question 10, indicates if your project addresses Environmental Justice and/or tribal communities. Please be sure to respond to this question as applicable. Earlier I showed you the VA EJScreen+ mapping tool that can help with this question. More

information can be found on the DEQ website: https://www.deq.virginia.gov/ourprograms/environmental-justice

- Input enough information to provide a strong rationale for interest and activities.
- Describe the watershed you propose to work in and any targeted areas you'll focus in. Targeting is important. Helps show progress towards meeting IP goals. There is a section in the Implementation Plan that will explain areas to target and why it's necessary to focus there first. We'll be taking this into consideration when reviewing your application (if you've made that connection). Maybe there's a reason to target somewhere differently than what the IP says so give us a compelling reason why you may be targeting a different area.



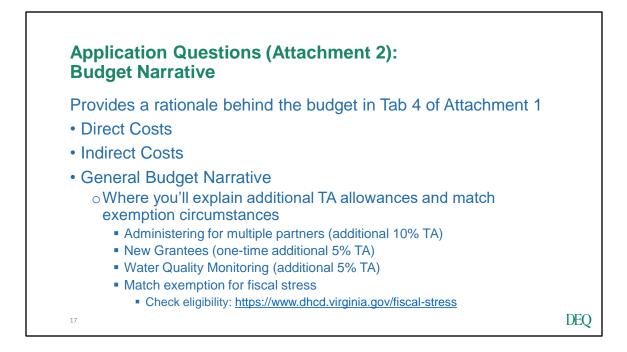
The Project Methods tab is the largest section of questions. Even though it's the largest, depending on your project, there may be several sections that are N/A if you're only focused in one source sector. The questions are grouped into sectors: Agriculture, residential septic, pet waste, and urban. Then there's a section for public outreach and water quality monitoring.

It's important to:

- Provide rationale for the type and quantity of BMPs this often relates back to how you're prioritizing/targeting (be realistic with your time/resources/budget)
- Describe outreach related to those specific BMPs how you will promote the program
- Demonstrate you understand the requirements: cost-share admin, contractor selection, design, install, O&M requirements, etc.
- Don't skip any of the sub-questions. Contact us if you think something is duplicative or don't fully understand.

If you plan to do outreach outside of promoting BMP implementation, be sure to fully answer #21.

If you plan to do water quality monitoring, be sure to fully answer #22.



The next tab is asking for the rationale behind your budget in Tab 4 of the Application Form: Budget Narrative.

Be sure to be comprehensive and accurate AND demonstrate that the amounts requested are reasonable and realistic. What is the rationale behind the numbers? Explain your numbers in your budget.

This section is broken down into

- Direct costs (bulk of budget- Personnel, Fringe, Travel, Supplies, Contractual, Construction (BMPs), and Other Direct Costs)
- Indirect costs (most people don't use this but if applicable then complete)
- General budget narrative (TA allowances) This is the section where you'll explain any additional TA allowances and match exemption circumstances where you can request more than 35% TA. If you are an applicant with any of these circumstances, you can get additional TA:
  - Administering for multiple partners (#32) An Applicant with multiple partners or sub-grantees (two or more) receiving 319(h) funds aside from the Grantee, is eligible for up to <u>10% additional TA</u> for administrative support to coordinate all of the partners, associated meetings, and

reporting. NOT applicable to contractors.

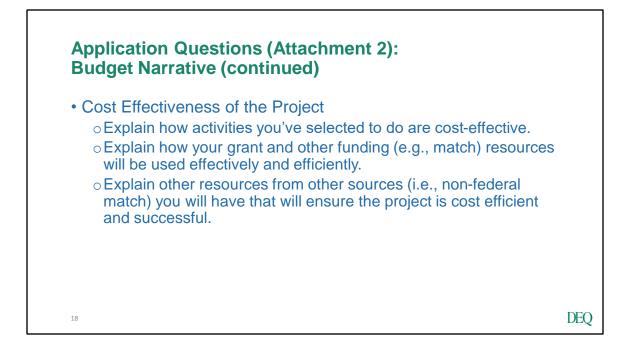
- New Grantees (#33) Applicants that have never received or administered a NPS Implementation project, nor received Section 319(h) funds from Virginia may request a <u>one-time 5% increase in TA</u> funds.
- Water Quality Monitoring (#34) Applications including plans for water quality monitoring to document progress in improving water quality based on implementation are eligible for <u>additional TA funds of up to 5%</u> of grant funding requested. Additional TA funds only to be used on monitoring activities.

#35: If you've requested additional TA for all three of these TA allowances, your TA funds shouldn't exceed 50% of the total funds requested. If they do, need to provide a strong justification for why it does.

Match exemption for fiscal stress(#36) – There's a minimum 30% match requirement for non-SWCD lead applicants. However, if you're project is doing septic BMPs, and your locality is in a High/Above Average Fiscal Stress area, you can use a higher cost-share rate for homeowners to receive more cost-share funds. Then as a Grantee, you don't have to provide 30% match on these activities and rather <u>only 15% match</u> on budget categories related to septic work. All other activities (Ag, urban, etc.) would still need to provide 30% match.

You can check your eligibility via the link to the VA Dept of Housing and Community Development: https://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/fiscal-stress

Also you can view on EDM by selecting "County Fiscal Stress" layer under the TMDL/IP watersheds layer. As demonstrated earlier.]



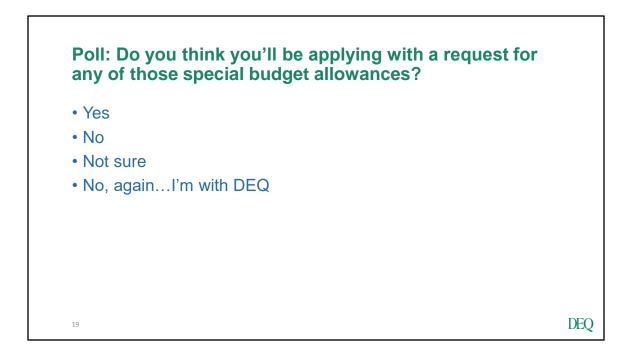
The Budget Narrative tab also includes a section about Cost Effectiveness.

The question DEQ will ask during the review is, are the activities you've selected to do cost-effective (i.e., it's effectiveness or productivity of an effort in relation to its cost)? There are other reasons why things may cost more (material costs have gone up, shortage of materials, etc.) so explain this – help us to understand your thought process for justifying these practices' costs and why some practices (that may be more expensive) are needed to successfully implement your project.

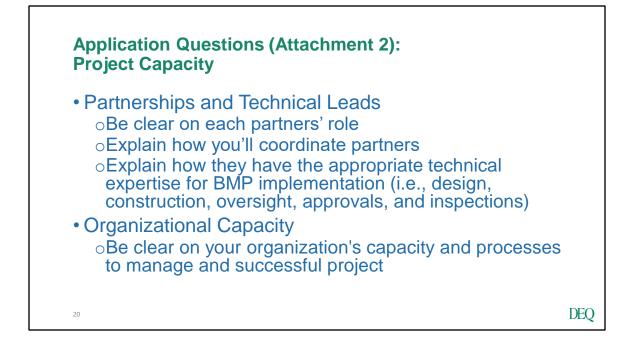
Basically, we want to know why you're proposing the number of BMPs for the total amount you're asking. So, break it down: we'll get 5 stream exclusion projects for \$250,000 of 319(h) funding. Comes out to \$50,000 per BMP. I can compare that with another project that is proposing \$60,000 per similar BMP. Obviously, there are a lot of factors that play into costs, but give us an idea of how you've calculated the value of choosing some BMPs over others.

How will your grant and other funding resources (e.g., cost-share or match) be used effectively and efficiently? For example, if you know a significant amount of Personnel time is needed to work with homeowners in your septic projects, then this is an effective use of your funding. Also be sure it's clear where match or other funding is coming from.

What other resources do you have from other sources (i.e., non-federal match) that will ensure the project is cost efficient and successful?



So will you be requesting any of these allowances or match exemption? (i.e. additional TA for administering multiple partners, new grantee, WQM or reduced match for septic work?)



For the next tab, we'll ask for more details on your Project Capacity including:

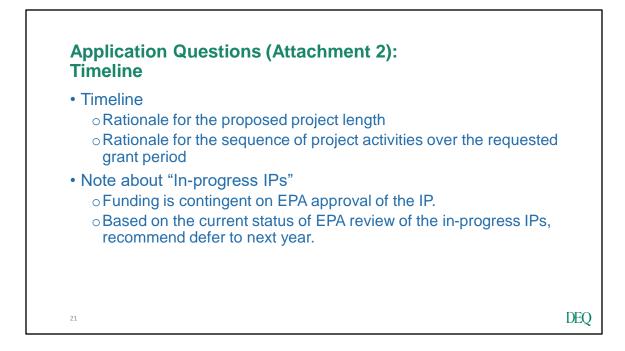
- Partnerships and Technical Leads
- Organizational Capacity

## Regarding Partnerships and Technical Leads:

- Be sure you're clear on each of the partners' roles and how they're contributing to the project. (#42; See definition)
- Explain how they have the appropriate technical expertise for BMP implementation (i.e., design, construction, oversight, approvals, and inspections).
   #42a (How will you coordinate partners to complete the work?) and #43 (How will you ensure the appropriate technical expertise is utilized for BMP implementation to ensure that project activity is technically sound and meets the approved BMP specifications?)

## Organizational Capacity:

• Be clear on your organization's capacity and processes to lead and administer a successful implementation project



The last tab is on Timeline.

Regarding Timeline, provide a rationale for :

- The proposed project length
- The sequence of project activities in relation to the requested grant period

Be sure to explain the rationale for why activities will take place when they do. Time of year can affect what can be done so help us understand your rationale. Example: If you say you'll have all the BMPs under contract in six months...is that realistic? Probably not. If that's your timeline, tell us why it IS realistic. We want to know your assumptions for the decisions. Don't try to impress us with a speedy, unrealistic timeline. You need to be able to defend your decisions.

Additionally, there are IPs currently <u>in-progress</u> that are awaiting EPA approval which is required for funding. As discussed earlier, the IPs that are still in progress are only eligible for this RFA funding if it gets EPA approval by 12/1/2024. Based on current status of EPA review, we recommend deferring to next year if you want to use those areas. Let your Regional Coordinator know of this case so we can keep you informed of any updates on the approval process.

Really, the key is to <u>refer to Table 1</u> to see if it's an IP in progress or fully approved.

[STOP FOR QUESTIONS]

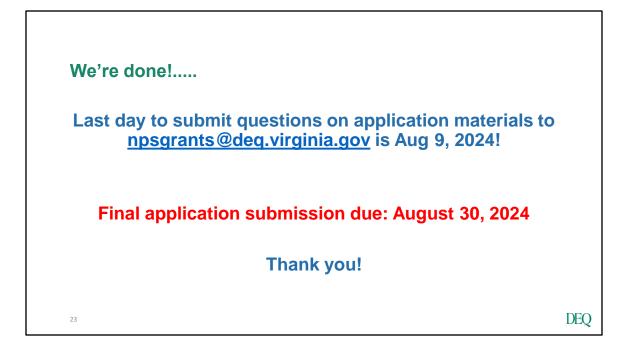


- Yes, gotta get to work on it
- Maybe, still not sure

22

- No, not this time around
- No,... still me from DEQ

DEQ



Reminder: This webinar was recorded and a link will be sent to everyone who registered (and can be shared with others) in a couple days. We will post the video recording and presentation (with notes) on the <u>DEQ NPS website</u>: <u>https://www.deq.virginia.gov/our-programs/water/water-quality/nonpoint-sourcemanagement/funding-grant-and-project-resources</u> (under Current Funding Opportunities) and the <u>Virginia Business Opportunities (eVA)</u> <u>website: https://mvendor.cgieva.com/Vendor/public/IVDetails.jsp?PageTitle=SO+Det</u> <u>ails&rfp\_id\_lot=69207&rfp\_id\_round=1</u>

Feel free to contact your regional NPS Regional Coordinator or npsgrants@deq.virginia.gov if you have any questions with your application by August 9, 2024.

Thank you for interest and participating today! Hope to hear from you by August 30, 2024.