Announcement

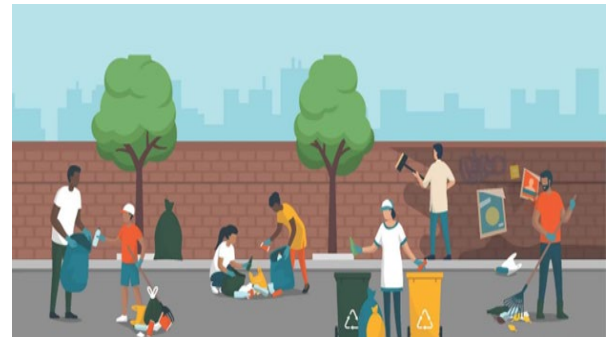# 2025-26 Watershed Stewardship and Education Grant Program

Up to $2,500 Awarded Per Recipient!

The Sacramento County Stormwater Quality Program is offering grants to support creative projects that will keep our waterways clean. Teachers, neighborhood groups, volunteer groups, environmental organizations and other nonprofit associations are encouraged to submit their ideas for protecting, restoring or enhancing creeks, riparian corridors, watersheds, and rivers within the unincorporated urban areas of Sacramento County.

Applying is Easy!

Our grant process is simple:
1) Determine if your project is eligible for funding (see pages 2 -4)
2) Submit your application
3) Wait for status on grant application
4) If approved, sign grant agreement
5) Complete grant project
6) Develop a summary report at the end of the project.

For More Information

In this packet, you will find detailed requirements and commonly asked questions about the educational grant opportunity. If you have additional questions, please contact Jeanette Huddleston at (916) 874-4711 or by e-mail, huddlestonj@saccounty.gov

Application Deadline: October 17, 2025

Project Requirements and Commonly Asked Questions

Who can apply?

- Schools and student groups
- Service clubs
- Youth organizations
- Homeowner's associations
- Community and neighborhood groups
- Not-for-profit groups
- Informal groups with innovative ideas

(Individuals and for-profit groups are not eligible)

Eligible projects must be located within the Sacramento Storm Water Utility boundary and/or directly affect the residents of these areas. Please see map for eligible areas at https://waterresources.saccounty.gov/stormwater/Pages/grants.aspx

Are distant learning or virtual education projects eligible for this grant?

Yes. Projects that involve a virtual or distance learning format that address the importance of reducing stormwater pollution or improving water quality are eligible for this grant program . If your project will fully or partially involve a virtual or distance learning format, please include this information in the grant application.

Projects eligible for funding:

There are many ways to improve our local waterways. Below are some examples to help you get started. We welcome new ideas and encourage innovation. Eligible projects must in some way protect or enhance local creeks, rivers, or watersheds.

Projects will generally fall into one or more of the following categories:

Educational Projects- Projects, which inform or instruct about the aquatic ecosystem, watersheds, or storm water pollution prevention:

- Develop a slide show, video, or public service announcement about storm water quality
- Create a booklet of historical information about a creek, river, or watershed
- Create materials or outreach activities that teach people about preventing pollution in creeks, rivers, or watersheds
- Write a stream or watershed guidebook and conduct tours or field trips

School/Club Projects- Projects which can be organized by teachers, classrooms, or clubs:

- Get involved in environmentally-friendly carwash fundraisers that help keep polluted carwash water from flowing into storm drains and entering waterways. Here are a few ideas:
    - Purchase carwash vouchers from commercial carwash facilities and pre-sell them to the community to raise funds for important causes that benefit your school or community; or

- o Purchase equipment for an environmentally-friendly carwash fundraiser
- Go on a field trip to learn about Sacramento's watershed, creeks, or rivers
- Coordinate a trash pick-up day or event
- Create an eco-friendly landscape
- Purchase a watershed model for classroom use
- Adopt a creek, river, or watershed near your school
- Organize an invasive species plant removal for creeks or rivers
- Conduct monitoring activities on a local creek or river
- Conduct a water quality related experiment
- Create a creek, storm water, or watershed club
- Evaluate the condition of the natural vegetation, native species, and habitat of a specific creek, river, or watershed
- Develop a wildlife habitat, hummingbird, butterfly, or beneficial insect demonstration garden

Community Outreach Projects- Projects which involve and inspire the community:

- Coordinate clean-up days on local creeks or rivers
- Hold a creek, river, or watershed workshop for community members, or a symposium about your watershed

Monitoring Project-Projects which measure water quality, species, or habitat:

- Conduct a citizen's monitoring program on a local creek, river, or watershed
- Evaluate the condition of the natural vegetation, native species, and habitat of a specific creek, river, or watershed

Restoration Projects-Projects, which restore or enhance riparian habitats, wetlands, creeks, or rivers:

- Construct and revegetate stream side interpretative trails
- Organize a nonnative species plant removal and revegetation project for creeks or rivers

Does it matter where the project is located?

Yes. Eligible projects must be implemented within the Storm Water Utility boundary of Sacramento County and/or directly affect the residents of these areas. Please see map for eligible areas at
https://waterresources.saccounty.gov/stormwater/Pages/grants.aspx

When does the project have to be completed?

Projects must be completed by May 1, 2026 and final reports must be submitted by May 22, 2026.

Can different groups partner together?

Yes. We encourage groups with similar projects to partner and apply for a grant together.

How much will be awarded to grant recipients?

A maximum of $2,500 will be awarded to each recipient.

What are eligible expenses?

Eligible uses of grant money include:
- purchase of materials and supplies related to watershed education activities
- equipment rental
- bus rental
- tours/field trips
- purchase of native vegetation
- printing or postage to promote events

Grant money does not cover the following expenses:
- wages or salaries for labor (includes substitute teachers)
- personal mileage
- refreshments or food
- purchasing of cameras, video equipment, printers, and computer hardware
- administrative processing fees
- activities required for compliance with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits or other regulatory requirements will not be funded through the grant program

When will funds be disbursed?

Please see the schedule on page 6 for disbursement dates. It is important to save all of your receipts and submit them with the final report.

How do I apply?

Complete the application on the back of this announcement. The Sacramento County Stormwater Quality Program reserves the right to disqualify applications if it is not apparent that the proposed project promotes awareness and/or stewardship of Sacramento's waterways.

When are applications due?

Applications must be submitted by October 17, 2025.

Is a project report required for this grant?

Yes. Each recipient is required to submit the following in both electronic and hard copy:

1. A narrative report at the end of the project, which must include a project description and (at minimum) responses to the questions below.
   a. What was learned from this project?
   b. If you could repeat the project, what would you do differently? Why?
   c. Did you meet your expectations?
   d. Did you encounter any challenges or problems during your project? If so, please explain.
   e. How many people were involved or reached?

f. Identify members of your team and community who were key participants in establishing and/or maintaining the project.

g. Identify how this project will provide ongoing value to your target audience or community.

h. (For teachers only) Identify ties to the curriculum.

i. How effective was your project? Were you able to demonstrate success? Provide a summary of how you assessed/measured your project for effectiveness. Please include results.

2. Report Attachments:

a. A detailed report of expenses including copies of receipts

b. Samples of project materials or work

c. Photos or video of project activities

Since the Sacramento County Stormwater Quality Program recognizes grant recipients by including a summary highlighting their projects and results on our website at the end of the grant cycle, recipients should submit their report in both paper and electronic format.

Additional requirements

Each project must complete the following requirements when applicable:

- Acknowledge the County Stormwater Quality Program as a funding source in all project related promotional materials.
- Obtain appropriate permissions and/or permits for the project where applicable.
- Use only non-invasive, California native and/or Mediterranean type species in restoration projects.
- Follow safety precautions for all projects.
- All purchases must remain property of the award recipient.

Award criteria

All submitted applications will be evaluated and scored based on the following criteria (100 points possible):

1. Education about Storm Water Pollution Prevention (30 points)
   a. Does the project increase awareness of stormwater pollution?
   b. Does the project encourage behavior changes that can help reduce storm water pollution or improve water quality?
   c. Will innovative approaches to improving water quality be used?

2. Clarity of Project Description (30 points)
   a. Is the project clearly described?
   b. Are the proposed tasks reasonable?
   c. Are the tasks clearly defined?
   d. Is the schedule of work/timeline complete?
   e. Does the project include an assessment plan to measure effectiveness?

3. Budget (20 points)
   a. Does the project achieve its stated goals in a cost- effective manner?
   b. Could the project or activity be used again or continued in the future?

4. Publicity/Community Outreach (20 points)
   a. How many people will be involved or reached?
   b. How will the project be publicized?

Schedule

Application Deadline	October 17, 2025
Awards Announced	November 2025
Funds Distributed	Dec 2025
Project Completed	May 1, 2026
Final Report Due	May 22, 2026

Safety Guidelines

For your safety, please use (at least) the following safety guidelines if your project involves being outdoors.

- Have an adult supervise the activity.
- Never perform activities alone. It's fun to work with partners and much safer.
- Do not perform the activity in heavy rain or if a storm is expected.
- Let someone else know where you are, when you intend to return, and what to do if you don't come back at the appointed time.
- Do not walk on steep, slippery or unstable stream banks. Streams and rivers can be dangerous due to cold water, strong currents, and obstructions.
- Do not walk into streams or rivers. Stream and river bottoms are slippery, can contain deep pools or sink holes, and can also have sensitive habitats that should not be disturbed.
- Do not touch or eat any plants you see while on the activity. Be cautious of poison ivy and other poisonous plants. Also be aware of plants with thorns such as blackberry bushes.
- Wear boots or other closed-toed shoes, long pants, and shirts during the activity.
- Watch for bees and other insects that may bite or sting.
- Wildlife should be observed but not disturbed. Watch for animals that can pose a danger to humans such as coyotes, deer, dogs, and snakes.
- Never enter private property without the permission of the landowner.

Project activities funded by this grant are strictly voluntary. The County of Sacramento is not responsible to participants or others for any injuries, damages, or loss of property.

2024-2025 Watershed Stewardship and Education Grant Application

Project Information:

Please describe the purpose and content of your project (no more than 3-4 pages typed), including a description of:

1) **Project location:** Please note that all projects must be located within the unincorporated portion of the County and/or directly affect the residents of these areas. **Please see map for eligible areas at** https://waterresources.saccounty.gov/stormwater/Pages/grants.aspx . Identify exact location of the project site and explain how your project will impact local waterways and/or directly affect the residents of these areas. Include a map of the location with your completed application. Provide the names of the creeks, rivers streams, and other water bodies in the immediate area, if applicable. For school-related projects: If your school is interested in applying, we strongly encourage you to view the list of eligible schools at https://waterresources.saccounty.gov/stormwater/Pages/grants.aspx .

2) **Problem or issue your project will address.** How does the project increase awareness of stormwater pollution? How does the project encourage behavior changes that can help reduce stormwater pollution or improve water quality?

3) **Proposed tasks:** Describe the major project tasks and milestones, including start and end dates for each. Discuss how these tasks are pertinent to the project purpose.

4) **Group description:** Describe your group's purpose, history, and (formal or informal) organization.

5) **Describe project participants:** Who will participate in your project and in what capacity? How many participants will be involved? Do you plan to work with other groups or organizations? If so, which ones? If your project involves working with underserved or low-income communities, please include the information in this section.

6) **Publicity efforts:** Who do you plan to reach? How will you make this project known to the community (e.g. brochure, newspaper, social media, presentation, etc.)?

7) **Evaluation and continuation:**
   - What is your vision of a successful project?
   - How will you evaluate the success of the project (All awardees must describe the assessment plan and provide results in the grant report at the end of the project).
   - If this is an ongoing project, how will you continue the activities of this project after your group expends the grant award?

Contact Information:

Project Title: _____

Organization/Group's Name: _____

Address: _____

Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN) or Federal Tax ID Number (TIN) **REQUIRED**: _____

Project Leader: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Grant Funds Manager (i.e. individuals responsible for handling funds): _____

 Phone: _____ Email: _____

Check the box(es) that most appropriately describes your project:

- ☐ Education project
- ☐ School project
- ☐ Monitoring project
- ☐ Restoration project
- ☐ Community involvement project

Check the box that describes your organization:

- ☐ Schools and student groups
- ☐ Service clubs
- ☐ Youth organizations
- ☐ Homeowner's associations
- ☐ Community and neighborhood groups
- ☐ Not-for-profit groups
- ☐ Other (Please fill in the blank): _____

Budget (Maximum: $2,500):
Please provide a list of expense items for the grant amount requested. Eligible items include purchase of materials and supplies, equipment rental, bus rental, tours/field trips, purchase of native vegetation, and printing or postage to promote events. You may use additional sheets if necessary.

Expense Item	Purpose	Cost
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____
6. _____	_____	_____
	Total	_____

Please return completed applications by email: huddlestonj@saccounty.gov *or by mail: Sacramento County Dept. of Water Resources, Attn: Jeanette Huddleston, 827 7th St., Room 301, Sacramento, CA 95814*