

Think your group can be a Great Lakes Guardian? Here's How!



**Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund:
Helping Clean Up and Restore your corner
of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin
Application Guide**

Prepared by:

The Government of Ontario

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For more information or to request a printed copy of this document in English or French,
or in an alternative format, please contact the:

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Your group can be Great Lakes Guardians

The Province of Ontario is taking action to help restore and protect our Great Lakes.

We want Ontarians to enjoy healthy, vibrant Great Lakes that are drinkable, swimmable and fishable, now and in the future. The Province is offering grants to community groups and organizations to help restore their own corner of the Lakes.

Here are some of the types of projects that could qualify:

- Restoration and protection projects like shoreline and beach clean-ups;
- Reconnecting people to the Great Lakes through local initiatives like promoting and developing coastal and riverside trails and participating in protecting and restoring wetlands; and
- Restoring or protecting habitat such as streams that flow into the Great Lakes.

This guide provides information on the grant eligibility requirements, the application evaluation process, and instructions for completing the grant application. You are encouraged to apply as early as possible, as grants will begin to be awarded soon after the application period starts in July 2012.

Here's what the Grant Program is all about

Grants are available for projects that take place in Ontario within the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin. This includes: Lake Erie, Lake Huron, Lake Ontario, Lake Superior, the St. Lawrence River, the Ottawa River, and their watersheds. This guide includes a map to help you identify your watershed.

To be eligible your project must contribute to *at least one* of the following Great Lakes goals:

- 1. Empowering communities:** Create opportunities for individuals and communities to become involved in the protection and restoration of the ecological health of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin.
- 2. Protecting water:** Protect the quality and quantity of water in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin.
- 3. Improving wetlands, beaches and coastal areas:** Protect and restore wetlands, beaches and other coastal areas of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin.
- 4. Protecting habitats and species:** Protect and restore the natural habitats and biodiversity of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin.

Ineligible projects include:

- Infrastructure repairs, improvements, upgrades or new infrastructure *except* green infrastructure (e.g., improving or restoring wetlands, green roofs), and trails (e.g., building and repairing biking and walking trails);
- Feasibility studies or plans;
- Land-use planning;
- Contaminated site remediation (e.g., sediment remediation, brownfields);
- Strictly beautification activities; and
- Land acquisition.

What will the grants pay for?

Up to 100 per cent of eligible costs incurred in Ontario directly related to the delivery of eligible projects that are not covered by other

sources. Here are some examples of eligible costs, provided they are reasonable:

- marketing to promote the project
- materials (e.g., needed to build or repair trails or to clean up beaches)
- professional or technical expertise; and
- staff or labour costs.

Ineligible costs include:

- ongoing overhead and core administrative activities of organizations (e.g., rent)
- capital expenses (e.g., vehicles, office furniture, building renovations) *except* those related to green infrastructure (e.g., improving or restoring wetlands, green roofs), and trails (e.g., building and repairing biking and walking trails)
- hospitality or entertainment expenses (e.g., food, beverages)
- insurance
- clothing *except* for safety purposes
- appreciation gifts (e.g., gift certificates for volunteers)
- costs that are unreasonably incurred
- costs incurred prior to the effective date of the agreement with the Province for the grant
- refundable harmonized sales tax (HST); and
- litigation or other legal costs.

How do we know if our group is eligible?

To be eligible for funding a group must be a legal entity and must either be a not-for-profit organization or a First Nations or Métis community or organization. Individuals and for-profit organizations are not eligible. (*Legal entities are those entities that are established by or under legislation; are federally or provincially incorporated; are band councils established under the Indian Act, Canada; are other Aboriginal organizations that are incorporated; or are a partnership as defined under section 2 of the Ontario Partnerships Act.*)

Eligible groups include: community-based organizations, agricultural and land-owner focused organizations, environmental and conservation organizations, academic institutions, First Nations and Métis communities and organizations, conservation authorities and municipalities.

If you are a municipality or conservation authority, you are eligible for only those projects where you join with at least one community-based organization.

If you don't meet the criteria above, you can participate in a project with an eligible organization.

For each project, the Province will enter into an agreement with only one eligible organization or community and that organization or community will be responsible for the entire project.

First Nations or Métis communities or organizations may apply on behalf of other communities or organizations. To do so they must provide a band council or other resolution or motion to support the grant application for each represented community/organization. The band council or other resolution or motion can be submitted after the grant application but must be submitted prior to the grant being provided and no later than November 1, 2012.

If you are not sure you can apply, send us an email or give us a call.

How much money could we be eligible for?

You can receive up to a maximum of \$25,000 for each project. Smaller projects are encouraged to apply as well.

You can have other funding sources, but please identify these in your grant application. The activities that you are asking for funding from the Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund must be distinguished from the activities funded by other sources.

All activities funded by the Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund for the first application period must be completed by February 3, 2014.

The Province reserves the right to fund only selected activities identified in a grant application; that is, not all parts of a project may be funded by the Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund.

Our group thinks our project is eligible. How will we be evaluated?

First, ensure you have filled out all the necessary information required in the grant application.

Once your completed grant application is submitted, we will evaluate your grant application using the criteria noted below. We will also consider where your project will take place, the kind of project you are planning, and your organization type so the Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund supports a variety of projects across the province.

Grant applications will be scored from zero to three for each of the four criteria in the table below. To be eligible for the grant, at minimum, your grant application must get eight points, and must not score a zero on any criterion. If your grant application doesn't meet the minimum, you can strengthen it to better demonstrate how it meets the evaluation criteria and re-apply before the deadline.

Criterion	Description
Project connects Ontarians to the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Basin and results in community actions	Projects must get a community involved in restoring and protecting ecological health, work toward changing citizen's behaviours or attitudes, or create opportunities for citizens to interact with the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin. Projects with robust community engagement and action, and those making strong connections will score high points.
Environmental benefit	Projects must address an environmental need described in Ontario's Draft Great Lakes Strategy, or a report or study, or by a local community, with a clear link to the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Basin. Projects with direct and long-term environmental benefits will score high for this criterion. Those with short-term or indirect benefits will score lower. For example, wetlands restoration would get a higher score than workshops promoting stewardship (indirect) or litter cleanup (short-term).

Criterion	Description
Collaboration	Projects with volunteers, additional financial contributions, and/or donations of staff time, supplies, equipment, or services will receive a higher score than projects without. Projects that promote collaboration among groups, particularly those that draw from the community for volunteers, will receive a higher score.
Sound project methodology and reasonable costs	<p>The project must have achievable objectives, sound ways to measure progress toward these objectives, practical timelines, and a reasonable budget. Also, we will look at the qualifications of the people who will work on the project and your organization's experience with similar projects.</p> <p>Our evaluation includes looking at purchasing procedures and administrative costs. As a general rule, a competitive process should be used for purchases, and the amount of the grant going toward project management should not exceed 15 per cent.</p>

Examples of the kinds of projects we're looking for include:

- community action to accelerate the clean-up of a local problem spot
- actions by a school, camp or youth group to prevent water pollution in their community
- habitat protection or restoration
- actions by a First Nation or Métis community to protect and restore habitat or ecological health
- community events or activities that provide landowners with information and tools to improve shoreline or stream bank stewardship; and
- building trails, boardwalks or other recreational infrastructure that will help protect sensitive coastal ecosystems while allowing more people to enjoy and connect with the Great Lakes.

When can we apply?

The sooner the better! The Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund will support a variety of projects across the province. So get in a

complete grant application early to take best advantage of this opportunity.

You can access the grant application and review regularly updated 'frequently asked questions' at Ontario.ca/GreatLakesFund.

You can apply for more than one project but please use a separate grant application for each project. The Province may limit the maximum number of grants it provides to any one applicant.

Grant applications must be received by October 12, 2012, 5:00 p.m. E.D.T. via email, fax or mail. You are encouraged to apply quickly before the funding runs out – grants will begin to be awarded soon after the application period starts.

What happens after we apply?

We will let you know that we have received your grant application right away. Your grant application will be reviewed promptly to see if it meets the evaluation criteria. If your grant application does meet the criteria, the Province may contact you if more information is needed before the grant can be provided. Once

the Province has the information it needs, and your project is approved for funding, you will receive a letter from the Province.

If your project is approved for funding you'll be given an opportunity to share your photos and stories.

Will there be more than one application period?

There will be future funding opportunities under the Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund.

Note that the requirements for future grants may differ from those set out in this guide. To be notified of future funding opportunities under the Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund please send us an email at GreatLakesFund@ontario.ca or give us a call.

For more information:

Ministry of the Environment Public Information Centre

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Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin

The map below is provided to help you identify your watershed. You'll need this information to complete the grant application. The map shows the boundaries for the five eligible watersheds: Lake Erie, Lake Huron, Lake Ontario, Lake Superior, and the St. Lawrence River (including the Ottawa River).

