



Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers (UMATR)

Wild & Scenic Committee

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Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers (UMATR) Wild & Scenic Committee River Community Grants Program

The Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild & Scenic Committee (UMATR Committee) is pleased to announce the availability of our annual **Wild and Scenic River Community Grants**. Grant awards will typically range between **\$1,000 and \$4,000**. These grants are intended to advance or support projects that protect and enhance the quality and enjoyment of the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Wild and Scenic Rivers and their outstanding resources.ⁱ

Deadline:

Applications are due by **Saturday, October 1, 2023**.

Background:

In 2014, 46.1 miles of the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers were designated as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System based on their Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs), which include:

- **Water Quality*** - water quality in Vermont and the Missisquoi and Trout watersheds, biological assessments of water quality, resources contributing to water quality
- **Natural Resources** - geology (including gorges and waterfalls), rare, threatened, and endangered species/natural communities, significant ecological areas, critical wildlife habitats
- **Scenic and Recreational** - swimming holes, covered bridges, paddling, fishing, biking/hiking/skiing/snowmobiling, hunting, wildlife viewing
- **Historic and Cultural** - Native American/prehistoric/archeological, European settlers/historic/covered bridges, contributing community heritage (i.e. agriculture)

The Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild & Scenic Committee is a local entity that works in partnership with the National Park Service to protect and promote our river resources. The UMATR Committee is comprised of appointees from each of the eight local communities that these designated portions of the rivers flow through (Westfield, Troy, North Troy, Richford, Berkshire, Enosburgh, Enosburg Falls, and Montgomery), as well as partners from local organizations and representatives from state and federal agencies. The UMATR Committee recognizes the important role that towns and local organizations play in the rivers' health and vitality, and the goal of this grant program is to support activities that enhance and protect river resources and build strong local stewardship of the rivers. (Additional information about the ORVs, threats to our rivers, and Committee goals can be found in the Upper Missisquoi & Trout Rivers Management Plan: www.umatrwildandscenic.org/management-plan)

Who May Apply:

Eligible entities include, but are not limited to, planning boards, water/wastewater departments, conservation commissions, libraries, recreation departments, schools (including environmental clubs, art programs, science classes, etc.), and other town-sanctioned committees and boards. Community-based organizations, such as historical societies, garden clubs, art associations, churches, local land trusts, and neighborhood groups, are also eligible. Individuals interested in applying should partner with either a town or nonprofit organization.

* Our 2024 grants round will be weighted to encourage projects which focus on the water quality of our region. Read on for more details and examples.



Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers (UMATR) Wild & Scenic Committee River Community Grants Program

The UMATR Committee will consider applications from nonprofit groups based outside the Wild and Scenic communities when the project directly benefits the Upper Missisquoi or Trout River resources and communities. Project proposals must clearly explain this connection.

Previously funded entities may apply again with a different project, or one that takes previously funded work to the next level. Performance on a previous grant will be weighed in decision making, as will the applicant's ability to apply insights from previous evaluation efforts.

Eligible Projects:

Projects that enhance or protect the rivers and the outstanding resources (water quality*, natural resources, scenic and recreational, and historic and cultural), and/or that increase awareness, appropriate use, and appreciation of these resource values are eligible. Possible project ideas include but are not limited to the following:

- Conservation, restoration, or enhancement of fish, wildlife, water quality, historic, or recreational resources
- Public education about the river and its resources and values
- Studies contributing to increased understanding and better management of river resources
- Promotion of recreation encouraging people to use and protect the rivers
- Protection of land or enhancement of soil health along the rivers and their tributaries
- Art projects which engage the public and promote our rivers and their outstanding resources
- Invasive species management
- Water conservation education and implementation
- Efforts to plan and manage for climate resiliency
- Protection of natural river flow regimes
- Projects engaging youth in the arts and sciences of river resources and encouraging an awareness and appreciation of river resources

2024 Emphasis:

For 2024 River Community Grants, the UMATR Committee is particularly interested in advancing projects pertaining to water quality; such projects will receive bonus points during review. Project applications addressing any of our ORVs will be considered, but this year we are hoping to emphasize projects which relate to, assess, or improve the water quality of our region. Examples of such projects may include (but are not limited to):

- A program of water quality testing that focuses on different outcomes or locations than the testing done at the State level.
- Testing other things which may impact water quality, such as sediments, or potential contaminants on agricultural land.
- An educational campaign to encourage better understanding of the importance of water quality – either in schools or at the community level.
- Planting riparian buffers to increase native vegetation along waterways.
- Forestry management practices to reduce runoff or improve stream crossings.
- Wildlife surveys that focus on the health of streams and indicator species.
- An assessment of fish health and how they are impacted by human uses of streams, or even fish stocking practices.

For more ideas and information about our Natural Resources ORV, see chapter IV.b.iv of our [Management Plan](#).



Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers (UMATR) Wild & Scenic Committee River Community Grants Program

Application Process:

Interested parties are encouraged to contact the UMATR Committee prior to starting the application process to confirm their eligibility and the appropriateness of the River Community Grants for their project. Applicants must fully complete the **River Community Grants 2024 Application** form and **Checklist** (both are attached at the end of this document); completed forms should be sent by email to info@vtwsr.org. If electronic filing is a barrier to applying, please contact the Committee at 802-393-0076 to arrange an alternative to electronic filing.

- **Projects must occur along or adjacent to the designated Wild and Scenic sections** of the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers (generally within or impacting the municipalities of Lowell, Westfield, Troy, Jay, North Troy, Richford, Berkshire, Enosburgh, Enosburg Falls, and Montgomery).
- Grant requests can be made in the range of **\$1000 to \$4,000**. Projects which exceed this funding cap may still be considered; please contact us in advance of applying to discuss the value of such projects to our rivers.
- Fifty percent of the award amount will be provided up front; the remainder will be received after the project has been completed and a final report has been submitted.
- Match is encouraged but not required; projects which provide match will receive a bonus score when under review.
- Successful applicants will be notified of results of the selection process by early November 2023.
- Projects should strive to be completed on or before September 30, 2024 (the end of our fiscal year). Let us know if this will be a barrier for your proposed project.
- Decisions to fund a project will be based on how well the project meets the Review Criteria (see Checklist at the end of the application) and on available funds. The UMATR Committee reserves the right to offer partial funding, or to reject all proposals.

Restrictions and Other Details:

- The UMATR Committee reserves the right to ask an applicant to attend a monthly Committee meeting to further explain their application and/or project.
- The UMATR Committee may consider out-of-cycle proposals, or projects that will require a longer timeline. Please contact us to discuss the value of such projects to our rivers.
- If the proposed project is one where human health or safety is a concern, the applicant may be required to provide proof of insurance.
- Funding may not be used for federally mandated activities or to address violation enforcement requirements or mitigation. Funding may also not be used for entertainment, lobbying, illegal activities or any other restrictions associated with federal fund use (reference NPS).
- River Community Grant funds are not eligible as match for other federal grant programs.
- Projects mandated as part of a regulatory requirement are not eligible. This may include mitigation for enforcement actions and/or permit requirements.

For further information, or to obtain a hard copy of the UMATR Management Plan:

Contact Lindsey Wight at 802-393-0076 or info@vtwsr.org.

You Matter to your local rivers!

ⁱ Funding for this grant program is through Cooperative Agreements between the National Park Service and the Committee under Federal Assistance Listing #15.962 (the Missisquoi River Basin Association serves as the UMATR Committee's fiscal agent but does not influence the decisions of the UMATR Committee nor the River Community Grants program).



**Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers (UMATR)
Wild & Scenic Committee
River Community Grants Program**

Compete both the Application form and Checklist fully and send to info@vtwsr.org by October 1, 2023.

Tips: Be sure to enter text in all fields. The Checklist is provided to give applicants guidance for writing a successful grant application. We suggest you read through the checklist prior to starting your application. The strongest proposals will meet all the criteria, and will clearly address them in their project narrative and budget (a written description or a list with provided details are both acceptable for the Project Description and Budget Narrative). Let us know if you have any questions or would like more details, or some examples.

1) Project and Contact Information:

Project Name:

Total Amount Requested:

Name of Town or Organization:

Name of Primary Contact:

Email:

Phone:

Address:

2) Description of Project:

Use the below space to describe your project, how it relates to our rivers, and how it will enhance or protect them. Please also indicate how you will account for the 'success' of your project (i.e. how many people a program will engage; a brochure or document that will be produced; a project completed (with photos!); a pre- and post- event survey or assessment).

Describe your project, including goals and outcomes. 200-600 words.



**Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers (UMATR)
Wild & Scenic Committee
River Community Grants Program**

3) Project Budget:

Use the following table to fill out your project budget. Add more rows as needed; if a line item does not fit your project, you may delete or change it, if desired.

Item	Description	Budgeted cost	Match (if any)
<i>Example: Personnel</i>	<i>Staff time for the project</i>	<i>\$900</i>	
<i>Example: Travel</i>	<i>Staff mileage for community meetings</i>	<i>\$58</i>	
Personnel			
Fringe			
Travel			
Materials			
Contractor			
Indirect			

Budget Narrative:

Use this narrative to justify your budget. Here you can add details about each item in your budget. Also include details about any match that you will provide.

Example - Personnel: One crew leader will work 40 hours on the project at \$15/hour; 3 crew members will work 40 hours at \$10/hr. Travel - Staff will travel 100 miles for the community meetings; \$0.58/mile.

4) Project Timeline:

Please use the following table to write in your project milestones and the estimated dates by which they will be accomplished. Add more rows as needed.

	Title or description of milestone	Date accomplished
<i>Example</i>	<i>Event dates booked</i>	<i>Mid-April 2024</i>
<i>Example</i>	<i>All events held</i>	<i>August 2024</i>
<i>Example</i>	<i>Final report submitted</i>	<i>September 30, 2024</i>
Milestone 1		
Milestone 2		
Milestone 3		
Milestone 4		
Milestone 5		

Optional narrative: add timeline explanation below if doing so would be helpful or if your project's timeline will extend beyond September 30, 2024.

Explain your project timeline here.



**Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers (UMATR)
Wild & Scenic Committee
River Community Grants Program**

Checklist – check off the criteria that are addressed by your application.

The checkboxes below are intended to assist you with submitting a strong and complete application; the 8 primary checkboxes directly align with our review criteria. Projects do not need to meet every criterion to be eligible; however, the strongest proposals will be those that address all of the following:

- 1: Proposal addresses the protection, enhancement, or promotion of our Wild and Scenic rivers. Please indicate which of the Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) your project addresses (select all that apply) - be sure your project description outlines how your project addresses this/these ORVs:

- Water Quality* (i.e. water quality in Vermont and the Missisquoi and Trout watersheds, biological assessments of water quality, resources contributing to water quality)
- Natural Resources (i.e. geology (including gorges and waterfalls), rare, threatened, and endangered species/natural communities, significant ecological areas, critical wildlife habitats)
- Scenic and Recreational (i.e. swimming holes, covered bridges, paddling, fishing, biking/hiking/skiing/snowmobiling, hunting, wildlife viewing)
- Historic and Cultural (i.e. Native American/prehistoric/archeologic, European settlers/historic/covered bridges, contributing community heritage (i.e. agriculture))

**For 2024, projects addressing natural resources will receive bonus points during review.*

- 2: Clear benefits: proposal clearly states the benefits that this project will provide to the river and/or the communities through which the rivers flow.
- 3: Project plan: proposal provides both a clear and reasonable timeline and enough budget details that will enable the project to be completed successfully.
- 4: Measuring “success”: proposal clearly outlines how the applicant will know their project is successful.
- 5: Partnership/public awareness/community support: proposed project engages partners and/or raises public awareness about the rivers; proposal demonstrates support from all involved parties.
- 6: Experience/capability: proposal demonstrates sufficient experience or available expertise needed to complete the project (either from the applicant or through partners/contractors).
- 7: Longevity/sustainability: is the project sustainable after completion of the grant? If the project will require ongoing maintenance, who will be responsible & how will that work be funded? Strong applications will demonstrate a plan for the lifetime of this project, beyond just the grant cycle.
- 8: Are there matching funds or in-kind contributions to the project? This is strongly encouraged but not required.