



Funding Research Memo: Abandoned Mine Land (AML) Remediation Funding

Last updated: January 2016

THIS MEMO WILL BE UPDATED PERIODICALLY. IF YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING RESOURCES, PLEASE CONTACT THE [SNC FUND DEVELOPMENT TEAM](#).

CAVEAT – Grant guidelines and deadlines are subject to periodic change. Please check the program web sites for new information. The deadlines listed are projected from the last funding round and are particularly unreliable. Check the program’s web site!

FUNDING SUMMARY TABLE

(*Hyperlinks to more complete information later in memo, including links to program web sites.)

Grant	Funding Range	Funding Focus	Estimated Deadline	Eligible Costs
Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Grants	\$200,000, 20% match	Mine-scarred lands are eligible if not federally owned or managed.	December	Assessment or cleanup funding available. Mine-scarred lands specifically listed as eligible.
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Bring Back the Natives/More Fish	\$50,000 - \$100,000 1:1 non-federal match required, 2:1 preferred	Protect and maintain intact and healthy aquatic systems, reverse declines in the quality and quantity of aquatic habitats to improve overall health of native fish and other aquatic organisms.	Check web site. Pre-proposals generally due in June.	Restoration assessment, planning, implementation, and monitoring; water conservation infrastructure; watershed protection; invasive species management. Specific fish species are targeted (see full listing below), so the AML would need to impact waters containing these species.
Wildlife Conservation Board Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program	Wide range of funding, no specific limits. Some landowner contribution required.	Riparian restoration, inland wetlands, and other habitat restoration and improvement projects.	Ongoing. Board meets quarterly. Contact Program Officer.	Acquisition, restoration, and enhancement. Program could be applicable if impacts on fish and wildlife can be documented.

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Grant	Funding Range	Funding Focus	Estimated Deadline	Eligible Costs
National Forest Foundation Matching Awards Program	\$500 - \$100,000. Requires 1:1 cash match of non-federal funds.	Four focus areas: wildlife habitat improvement, recreation, watershed health and restoration, and community-based forestry.	January and June	<p>On-the ground activities including habitat protection and enhancement, conservation projects, and stewardship projects.</p> <p>Watershed health is a funding area. These grants can be implemented on federal lands, but applicant must be nonprofit organization or other non-federal partner.</p>
Urban Streams Restoration Grant	Up to \$1 million. No specific match required, but additional contributions make projects more competitive.	Projects that return streams impacted by urban development to a more natural, stable state. Project should 1) protect and enhance the natural, ecological value of streams, 2) prevent future property damage caused by flooding and bank erosion, and 3) promote community involvement, education, and stewardship.	January	This grant program is more focused on flood mitigation than water quality, but it is possible that AML work could be included in the proposed costs.
State Water Resources Control Board 319(h) Nonpoint Source Grants	Implementation grants: \$250K – \$800K. 25 percent match, but may be waived for disadvantaged communities.	Addresses nonpoint source water pollution. Provides restoration funding for waterbodies that are impaired and have established Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) as targeted by the 319(h) program. These priorities are listed in the grant guidelines.	September	Would have to be for projects with relevant TMDLs. Implementation projects may include project-level planning, design, construction, construction management, implementation, and monitoring.

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Grant	Funding Range	Funding Focus	Estimated Deadline	Eligible Costs
Department of Water Resources Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Grants	Depends on solicitation. General match requirement is 25 percent, but can be waived for disadvantaged communities.	Very broad – the project must address statewide priorities and be listed in the region’s IRWM Plan.	Set periodically. Draft guidelines for the Proposition 1 program are expected in the first half of 2016.	Very broad. Past projects funded include riparian restoration and water quality improvement, and Cosumnes American Bear Yuba (CABY) had a specific mercury and sediment abatement project funded (Sierra Fund was the project proponent.)
California Department of Fish and Wildlife Proposition 1 Watershed Restoration and Delta Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration Grant Programs	Not stated. Match not required, but adds to score.	The focus of the Watershed Restoration Grant Program is on watershed restoration and protection projects outside of the Delta. The Delta Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration Grant Program focuses on water quality, ecosystem restoration, and fish protection facilities that benefit the Delta.	September	Planning, implementation, acquisition, scientific studies, monitoring, and assessments. Indirect costs not to exceed 20 percent. Planning grants can include funding for environmental review.
State Water Resources Control Board Clean Water State Revolving Fund	From <\$1 million to >\$100 million. Low-interest loans with potential for loan forgiveness.	Loan forgiveness for Green Project Reserve (GPR) projects. These must remediate, mitigate the impacts of, or prevent water pollution or aquatic or riparian habitat degradation.	Rolling	This is a loan program, but loan forgiveness is available for certain projects through the GPR. Loan forgiveness is capped at 50 percent of the project cost, or a maximum of \$2.5 million. Eligible costs include the planning, design, and building of capital water quality projects, and environmental cleanup is included in that definition.
Storm Water Grant Program - Proposition 1	Planning grants: \$100k - \$500k. Implementation grants \$500k - \$5 million. 50	Multi-benefit storm water management projects	Spring 2016 and 2018	Planning grants may include tasks for assessments, monitoring, geotechnical/technical investigations, or studies needed to complete preparation of the Storm Water Resource Plan. Implementation projects may be located on either

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Grant	Funding Range	Funding Focus	Estimated Deadline	Eligible Costs
	percent non-state match required, but can be reduced for disadvantaged communities.			public or private lands, and fund projects to infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, treat, or retain storm water or dry weather runoff.
State Water Resources Control Board Proposition 1 Groundwater Sustainability Program	Maximum grant not yet determined. 50 percent match required, with potential to reduce for disadvantaged communities.	Prevent or clean up contamination of groundwater that serves or has served as a source of drinking water.	Fall 2016 and 2017	Planning and implementation grants; also has a Technical Assistance component that can help with assessment, scoping, project development, application preparation, organizational formation, legal assistance, and technical training.
State Water Resources Control Board SB 445 Site Cleanup Subaccount Program	Not stated. Guidelines still under development.	Projects that remediate the harm or threat of harm to human health, safety, or the environment caused by existing or threatened surface or groundwater contamination.	Rolling	Implementation projects. Guidelines are still being developed; it is recommended that applicants contact program staff at gwquality.funding@waterboards.ca.gov Subject Line: SCAP Phone: (800) 813-FUND (3863)



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Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Grants

A brownfield site is defined as real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, controlled substances, petroleum, or petroleum products. Such property includes mine-scarred land.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides brownfields funding for three types of grants:

- Brownfields Assessment Grants – provide funds to inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct planning (including cleanup planning) and community involvement related to brownfield sites
- Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Grants – provide funding for a grant recipient to capitalize a revolving fund and to make loans and provide subgrants to conduct cleanup activities at brownfield sites.
- Brownfields Cleanup Grants – provide funds to conduct cleanup activities at a specific brownfield site owned by the applicant.

Brownfields Grant Guidelines identify AML projects specifically as eligible for funding:

Mine-scarred lands are eligible for brownfields funding... “mine-scarred lands” are those lands, associated waters, and surrounding watersheds where extraction, beneficiation, or processing of ores and minerals has occurred. Mine-scarred lands include lands scarred by strip mining.

Examples of non-coal hard rock mine-scarred lands may include, but are not limited to:

- Abandoned surface and deep mines
- Abandoned waste rock or spent ore piles
- Abandoned roads constructed wholly or partially of waste rock or spent ore
- Abandoned tailings, disposal ponds, or piles
- Abandoned ore concentration mills
- Abandoned smelters
- Abandoned cyanide heap leach piles
- Abandoned dams constructed wholly or partially of waste rock, tailings, or spent ore
- Abandoned dumps or dump areas used for the disposal of waste rock or spent ore
- Acid or alkaline rock drainage
- Waters affected by abandoned metal mine drainage or runoff, including stream beds and adjacent watersheds

Note that facilities owned by, or under the custody or control of, the federal government are not eligible for brownfields funding (see section 1.4 of the guidelines).

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National Fish and Wildlife Foundation - Bring Back the Natives/More Fish

The Bring Back the Natives/More Fish program invests in conservation activities that restore, protect, and enhance native populations of sensitive or listed fish species across the United States, especially in areas on or adjacent to federal agency lands. The program emphasizes coordination between private landowners and federal agencies, tribes, corporations, and states to improve the ecosystem functions and health of watersheds. Sierra Nevada priorities focus on McCloud River redband trout, Eagle Lake rainbow trout, California golden trout, and Little Kern golden trout recovery, so abandoned mine land being remediated would have to have impacts on waters that include these species. Proposals should help achieve the following program goals:

- Protect and maintain intact and healthy aquatic systems
- Prevent further degradation of fish habitats that have been adversely affected
- Reverse declines in the quality and quantity of aquatic habitats to improve overall health of native fish and other aquatic organisms
- Increase the quality and quantity of fish habitats that support a broad diversity of native fish and other aquatic species

A broad range of activities has been funded, including restoration assessment, planning, implementation, and monitoring; water conservation infrastructure; watershed protection; and invasive species management.

Pre-proposals are generally due in June, with full proposals due the end of August. Grant awards generally range in size from \$50,000 to \$100,000, although grants greater than \$100,000 will be considered. Applicants must provide at least a 1:1 non-federal match, though 2:1 is preferred. Eligible non-federal matching sources can include cash, in-kind donations, and/or volunteer labor.

Wildlife Conservation Board Programs

The state Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) offers several relevant programs, including Riparian Habitat Protection, Inland Wetlands, and the Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program. Abandoned mine clean-up is not the primary activity generally funded by these programs; however, it is possible that the WCB would participate as a funder of a cleanup effort if it was clearly impacting target habitat.

The WCB programs emphasize partnerships and have a great deal of flexibility. Each program web page has a link to the program officer. Contact the program officer for information on how to submit an application and how to maximize the chance of obtaining funding. Eligible applicants include 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, local governmental agencies, state departments, and federal agencies.

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The WCB meets four times a year, typically in February, May, August, and November. Processing time for applications can vary depending on completeness of the application, project benefits, and funding availability.

National Forest Foundation Matching Awards Program

The National Forest Foundation (NFF) Matching Awards Program (MAP) is a grant program that provides matching funds for direct on-the-ground and citizen-based monitoring projects benefiting America's National Forests and Grasslands. MAP funds can be used to support conservation and restoration projects benefiting wildlife habitat, recreation, watershed health, and community-based forestry. By pairing federal funds—provided through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Forest Service—with non-federal dollars raised by award recipients, the resources available to nonprofit partners to implement projects are effectively doubled.

A common thread connecting NFF program areas is an interest in action-oriented projects that enhance the viability of natural resources while benefiting and directly engaging surrounding communities. The NFF will accept applications from non-governmental, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, and Native American tribes working on or adjacent to National Forests and Grasslands throughout the United States. Organizations completing on-the-ground conservation work can apply for matching funds up to twice a year, though only one MAP award may be active at any time.

All MAP awards require at least a 1:1 cash match of non-federal funds. Federal funds and in-kind contributions should be noted to show leverage for a project, but cannot be matched by MAP funds. MAP funding is available to support specific conservation and restoration projects and does not provide general programmatic support.

Relevant categories of funding include:

- Wildlife Habitat Improvement
- Recreation
- Watershed Health and Restoration

Past awards range from \$500 to over \$100,000, with a mean of \$30,000 and a median of \$25,000.

Urban Streams Restoration Program

The intent of the Urban Streams Restoration Program (USRP) is to fund projects that utilize innovative, non-structural methods to return streams impacted by urban development to a more natural, stable state. The program goals are: 1) protecting and enhancing the natural, ecological value of streams, 2) preventing future property damage caused by flooding and bank erosion, and 3) promoting community

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involvement, education, and stewardship. Direct project-related costs specified in the grant agreement will be eligible for reimbursement.

Grants range from \$1,000 to \$1 million. While no specific amount of local matching funds is required to receive a grant, applicants who contribute something to the project are generally more competitive. The contribution may be a financial match of the grant, an in-kind contribution, or a combination of both. Examples of these contributions include labor, materials, expertise (planning, design, etc.), use of equipment, right of way/easements, and funds.

Projects must be designed for a creek, stream, or river that **crosses built-up residential, commercial, or industrial property, or which crosses land where, in the near future, the land use will be residential, commercial, or industrial.**

Waterways satisfying this definition may be perennial or ephemeral.

Additionally, projects must have the following elements:

- Protect, restore or enhance ecological viability of riparian or riverine ecosystems
- Provide flood management or erosion control benefits
- Promote public awareness and local stewardship of streams
- For those projects acquiring real property, real property must be acquired only from a willing seller(s)
- Comply with other laws and regulations pertinent to the project site, including environmental review laws

Abandoned mine land projects that impact 'urban streams' may be eligible for funding through this program if they are part of a larger stream restoration program. Examples of eligible projects include:

- Projects designed to use bioengineering techniques to install plant materials, large woody debris, rock, biodegradable fabrics, mulch, fencing, irrigation or drainage systems necessary to control erosion, stabilize banks, improve channel capacity, promote natural stream processes, or diversify habitats
- Projects designed to carry out nonstructural flood control actions that contribute toward the goal to protect, restore, and enhance natural stream environments, including the acquisition of land, and the elevation, relocation, and/or flood proofing of public or private structures in conjunction with restoration activities
- Projects designed to improve or provide riparian habitat on streams in heavily impacted urban areas, such as daylighting a buried stream or attenuating excess runoff due to nearby or planned development

All proposals must have two applicants, a sponsor, and co-sponsor. One applicant must be a local public agency and the other a citizens' group.

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State Water Resources Control Board 319(h) Nonpoint Source Grants

The California Nonpoint Source (NPS) Program allocates funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to support implementation and planning projects that address water quality problems in surface and ground water resulting from NPS pollution¹. The ultimate goal of these projects is to lead to restoration of the impacted beneficial uses in these water bodies. Projects are required to be located in a watershed that has an adopted or nearly adopted Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for the constituent of concern, and must also be identified in the NPS Program Preferences. These priority watersheds and problems are listed in the grant guidelines.

The program previously included both planning and implementation grants. However, it has run out of funding for planning projects. Eligible implementation projects may include project-level planning, design, construction, construction management, implementation, and monitoring to implement full-scale on-the-ground management measures and practices. Grants range from \$250,000 to \$800,000. All grants require a minimum 25 percent match.

The solicitation process is conducted in two phases: Concept Proposal and Full Proposal. The two-phase process takes approximately ten months. Typically, the solicitation process for a §319(h) grant runs from August (of the previous year) through May of the following year.

Eligible applicants include local public agencies, public agencies, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, federally recognized Native American tribes, state agencies, public colleges, and federal agencies. Applicants must work with the appropriate Regional Water Board grant contact when developing their proposals. Grant contacts are identified in the Grant Program Guidelines.

Department of Water Resources Integrated Regional Water Management Grants

While all of the Proposition 84 Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) funding has been distributed, Proposition 1 has allocated an additional \$510 million to the program. The guidelines for the new Proposition 1 grant program are expected in the first half of 2016. Make sure to check the web site for the most recent information.

IRWM grant applications must be approved by IRWM regions through the Regional Water Management Groups (RWMG), though they are submitted through individual agencies. In order to be approved, the proposed grant activity must be included in the IRWM Plan for that region. These Plans can be amended and modified by the RWMG.

¹ Unlike pollution from industrial and sewage treatment plants (point sources), nonpoint source (NPS) pollution comes from many diffuse sources. NPS pollution is caused by rainfall or snowmelt moving over and through the ground. As the runoff moves, it picks up and carries away natural and human-made pollutants, finally depositing them into lakes, rivers, wetlands, coastal waters and ground waters. See <http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/nps/whatis.cfm>.

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So if considering funding a project through IRWM funding, check the IRWM Plan for your region, and if the project is not already part of the plan, take steps to have it added.

IRWM grants do not have a standard maximum amount; this is set in each solicitation. The general match requirement is 25 percent, though that can be waived if the project addresses the needs of a disadvantaged community.

The scope of IRWM grant projects is very large. The projects must address statewide priorities, which are listed in the program solicitation. These include protecting and restoring surface water and groundwater quality to safeguard public and environmental health, and to secure water supplies for beneficial uses.

[California Department of Fish and Wildlife \(CDFW\) Proposition 1 Watershed Restoration and Delta Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration Grant Programs](#)

CDFW administers two relevant grant programs. The Watershed Restoration Grant Program focuses on watershed restoration and protection projects of statewide importance outside of the Delta, and the Delta Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration Grant Program focuses on water quality, ecosystem restoration, and fish protection facilities that benefit the Delta. Priorities include:

- Managing headwaters for multiple benefits
- Enhancing fish migration
- Restoring mountain meadow habitats
- Protecting, restoring, and enhancing water-dependent habitats for fish and wildlife

Funding is available for planning, implementation, and acquisition projects. There is also funding available specifically for scientific studies, monitoring, and assessment projects, but these funds will only be awarded under the Delta Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration Grant Program. However, the Watershed Restoration Grant Program may include scientific studies, monitoring, and assessment activities as part of the work plan.

Eligible applicants are limited to public agencies (state agencies or departments, special districts, joint powers authorities, counties, cities, or other political subdivisions of the state), nonprofit organizations, public utilities, federally recognized Indian tribes, state Indian tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's California Tribal Consultation List, and mutual water companies. Federal agencies may not be applicants, but there does not appear to be a limitation against doing project work on federal lands. The applicant, however, must have site control of the property for at least 25 years. The CDFW website has a good [summary of its mercury-related activities](#).

Matching funds are not required, but provide additional scoring points. The deadline in 2015 was September 16.

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State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Clean Water State Revolving Fund

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) program offers low-cost financing for a wide variety of water quality projects. The program has significant financial assets, and is capable of financing projects from <\$1 million to >\$100 million.

This is a loan program, but loan forgiveness is available for certain projects through the Green Projects Reserve (GPR). Loan forgiveness is capped at 50 percent of the project cost, or a maximum of \$2.5 million. Eligible costs include the planning, design, and building of capital water quality projects. Planting trees and shrubs, developing educational programs and equipment purchases are considered capital projects, as are environmental cleanups. The projects must remediate, mitigate the impacts of, or prevent water pollution or aquatic or riparian habitat degradation.

The SWRCB has started an [Office of Sustainable Water Solutions](#), which provides technical assistance to communities facing water quality issues. The office can provide assistance in preparing applications, reviewing project alternatives, planning and organizing budgets, providing community outreach and information, etc.

Storm Water Grant Program (SWGP) - Proposition 1

Proposition 1 provided \$200 million for matching grants to public agencies, nonprofit organizations, public utilities, state and federally recognized Indian tribes, and mutual water companies for multi-benefit storm water management projects. A Storm Water Resource Plan is required to receive grants for storm water and dry weather capture projects. This program has a 10 percent set-aside for planning and monitoring projects. The planning grants will be available to eligible applicants that do not have a conforming Storm Water Resource Plan.

Implementation grant funds will be awarded in two rounds of funding: Spring 2016 and Spring 2018. Program preferences related to water quality include:

- Increased filtration and/or treatment of runoff
- Contribution to compliance with applicable permit and/or total maximum daily load (TMDL) requirements
- Nonpoint source pollution control
- Reestablished natural water drainage and treatment

Other preferences relate to water supply, water conservation, flood management, environmental enhancement, and community benefits.

A proposal for an AML cleanup project under this program would have the best chances for success if it were part of a larger storm water management program including flood control, water supply, or community benefit.

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State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Proposition 1 Groundwater Sustainability Program

This program has \$800 million to prevent and clean up contamination of groundwater that serves (or has served) as a source of drinking water. The funds can be provided as grants or loans. As of December 2015, the guidelines for this program were still being developed; however, the Board has already started accepting pre-applications. The first funding solicitation is expected in the fall of 2016. The entire \$800 million must be spent by 2020, so interested parties should submit pre-applications as soon as possible. Eligible applicants include public agencies, tribes, public utilities, nonprofits, and mutual water companies.

The draft guidelines include a set-aside for disadvantaged communities and economically distressed areas, which could help target smaller, rural communities. The Board is setting up a technical assistance unit that can help with assessment, scoping, project development, application preparation, organizational formation, legal assistance, and technical training. It may also be able to help with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review requirements, or if not these might be funded under the Planning Grant set-aside. CEQA compliance is required before implementation projects can be funded.

The grants require a 50 percent match, which can be waived or reduced for disadvantaged communities and economically distressed areas.

State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) SB 445 Site Cleanup Subaccount Program

The Site Cleanup Subaccount Program (SCAP) is a new funding program established by [Senate Bill \(SB\) 445 \(Hill, 2014\)](#) allowing the SWRCB to issue grants for projects that remediate the harm or threat of harm to human health, safety, or the environment caused by existing or threatened surface or groundwater contamination.

The SCAP is unique because SB 445 allows for applicants who are not typically eligible to apply for public funding, including private companies and individuals. It requires the SWRCB to consider whether there are alternative sources of funding for projects, so that the SCAP can focus on projects where no other funding options are available. SCAP projects are likely to be smaller than many projects funded by bonds and state revolving funds. There are two types of projects that are likely to obtain funding from this program:

- Projects to address contaminated drinking water of unregulated sources, such as contaminated drinking water supplies with less than 15 connections
- Projects to clean up sources of contamination at “orphan sites”

SB 445 requires that the eligible project’s responsible party does not have the financial resources to implement a remedy. Eligible projects must remediate harm or threat to

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human health, safety, and the environment. For the project to be competitive, a regulatory agency will have issued a directive (unless this is infeasible), and the responsible party must lack financial resources. The contaminants must be human-made. Rating factors include significant threat to human health or the environment, disadvantaged or small community impact, cost vs. environmental benefit, lack of availability of other funding sources, and possible other considerations from the SWRCB.

This program has not put out grant guidelines. Interested parties should submit pre-applications and if the project looks viable, the staff will request a full application. Program staff have confirmed that AML projects would be eligible.