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DEEP Announces Availability of Grants for Aquatic Invasive Species Control on Lakes, Ponds and Rivers
Municipalities, Non-Profits, and State Agencies (Including State Colleges and Universities) Eligible to Receive Grants; Proposals Due Feb. 12

Connecticut's Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) is pleased to announce the availability of funding for projects to reduce impacts of aquatic invasive species on inland waters of Connecticut.

"Aquatic invasive species are not just a serious threat to our ecosystems – they are a direct attack on Connecticut's outdoor recreation economy," said DEEP Deputy Commissioner of Environmental Conservation Mason Trumble. "The 2019 Outdoor Industry report from the Bureau of Economic Analysis rated boating and fishing as the largest contributor to Connecticut's outdoor recreation economy. Hydrilla and other aquatic invasives are costly to counteract and they create barriers to many outdoor recreation opportunities. These grants will allow municipalities, non-profit organizations and state agencies to fund programs that will better enable them to gain control over aquatic invaders."

In 2019, the Connecticut General Assembly established an Aquatic Invasive Species Stamp fee (Public Act 19-190) to provide a dedicated funding source for the "Connecticut Lakes, Rivers and Ponds Preservation Account" and made it available to DEEP to fund programs to protect the state's lakes, ponds and rivers by addressing aquatic invasive species and cyanobacteria blooms. The fee, which became effective on January 1, 2020 and has raised approximately \$460,000 to date, applies to boats registered in Connecticut as well as to boats registered in other states using Connecticut's inland waters. The Aquatic Invasive Species Grant Program is funded by this account.

DEEP currently has up to \$360,000 in 2021 for eligible control, research and education and outreach projects. The maximum grant award is \$50,000. Requests for larger grants (up to \$75,000) may be considered, but only for exceptional and well-justified proposals. Matching funds are required and must equal or exceed 25% of the total amount of funding received from DEEP under this grant program.

Municipalities, state agencies (including state colleges and universities), and not-for-profit organizations are eligible to receive grants through this program. If the water body is located in more than one municipality, two or more municipalities may apply jointly, and a lake authority may, when authorized by the legislative bodies of its respective towns, act as the agent for the member towns for the purposes of this grant program. Other organizations may collaborate with a municipality or not-for-profit organization but the municipality or not-for-profit organization must apply for the funding. The study or project must be conducted on an inland waterbody located in Connecticut.

Eligible project proposals include:

- Conducting a project to restore an inland water body of the state through the control and management of a population of aquatic invasive species;
- Research projects to enhance understanding and knowledge of aquatic invasive species and/or cyanobacteria blooms (must have direct practical applicability to lakes, ponds and rivers in Connecticut);
- Education and outreach projects intended to enhance public awareness of aquatic invasive species and/or harmful algal blooms in Connecticut and/or promote good practices to prevent the further spread of aquatic invasive species in Connecticut's lakes, ponds and rivers.
- For control and management projects, the target species must have existed in the project water body as of September 1, 2020.

Complete information on the Aquatic Invasive Species Control on Lakes, Ponds and Rivers program including the full Request for Proposals and other application materials can be found and downloaded at https://biznet.ct.gov/SCP_Search/BidDetail.aspx?CID=55687. Prospective applicants should also remember to check the website for updates. **Proposals must be received by Friday, February 12, 2021.**

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