



Volunteer Stream Monitoring Program
Aquatic Macroinvertebrate Survey Start-Up
Grant Application Package
Fiscal Year 2017

Administered by the
Great Lakes Commission and the
Huron River Watershed Council for the
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality



Online at
<https://micorps.net>

Application Deadline: February 21, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

MiCorps
Monitoring Michigan's Water Quality

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INFORMATION FOR THE 2017 VOLUNTEER STREAM MONITORING PROGRAM AQUATIC MACROINVERTEBRATE SURVEY START-UP GRANT APPLICATION PACKAGE	2
Funding Source and Authority	2
Description of Aquatic Macroinvertebrate Survey Start-Up Grants	2
Submittal Deadline and Instructions	2
Contacts.....	3
General Information	3
Eligibility.....	4
Match Requirement	5
INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE 2017 VOLUNTEER STREAM MONITORING PROGRAM AQUATIC MACROINVERTEBRATE SURVEY START-UP GRANT APPLICATION PACKAGE	6
List of Information Required for the Application.....	6
Web Application Form	6
Project Description.....	6
Work Plan / Timeline.....	7
Budget Information	7
ACCEPTANCE OF CONTRACT CONTENT	10
APPENDICES AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES.....	10

**INFORMATION FOR THE
2017 VOLUNTEER STREAM MONITORING PROGRAM
AQUATIC MACROINVERTEBRATE SURVEY START-UP GRANT APPLICATION PACKAGE**

Funding Source and Authority

This Grant Application Package (GAP) is for the Volunteer Stream Monitoring Program (VSMP) Aquatic Macroinvertebrate Survey start-up grants offered under the Michigan Clean Water Corps (MiCorps) Program. Up to \$10,000 of the expected \$50,000 total available for VSMP grants in fiscal year 2017 will be available for start-up grants. Multiple start-up grants are expected with a maximum grant award of \$3,000 under this specific GAP. Information contained in this GAP is based on Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) guidance and administrative rules for Clean Michigan Initiative-Clean Water Fund grants. Grants will be awarded in 2017 contingent upon funding approval, which is expected within the next two months.

Description of Aquatic Macroinvertebrate Survey Start-Up Grants

MiCorps has set aside this portion of VSMP grant funds as “seed money” for newly forming volunteer monitoring groups. The start-up grants are intended for individuals and communities that want to get involved in aquatic macroinvertebrate and stream habitat monitoring in wadeable streams and rivers, but do not have a volunteer program to build on and are not sure where to begin.

The goal of the start-up grant program is to support groups in planning a volunteer monitoring program, designing a monitoring strategy, and submitting a full proposal for a future VSMP Aquatic Macroinvertebrate Survey grant cycle that includes this plan and strategy. As such, all start-up grant recipients are strongly encouraged to submit a proposal during the next available VSMP Aquatic Macroinvertebrate Survey request for applications. Start-up grant recipients will also have access to MiCorps resources and training.

During the period of this grant, recipients will address the following questions: (1) why volunteer monitoring would benefit their community; (2) how they want to use the data; (3) where they need to start monitoring; (4) who will supervise scientific aspects of the monitoring program; (5) how they will recruit and retain volunteers; (6) whether they need to form a new organization; and (7) what financial resources will support their monitoring program over the long term.

Submittal Deadline and Instructions

Complete applications – including all required supporting documentation – must be received by **5 p.m. on February 21, 2017**. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered for funding.

All grant applicants must complete the Web Application Form and upload an application at (as a single PDF or MS Word file) to the VSMP Aquatic Macroinvertebrate Survey start-up grant application system: <https://micorps.net/register/startup17.html>. You may also submit your supporting documents via the Web Application Form, provided the application and supporting documents can be combined and uploaded as a single PDF or MS Word file that contains your entire proposal package. This combined file cannot be larger than 4 MB in size. Additional instructions for creating a single combined file are provided below.

Once the Web Application Form and uploaded file have been submitted, a confirmation e-mail will be sent to the e-mail address that was listed for the project's Contact Person in the completed Form. This will be your only notification that the Web Application Form and uploaded file have been submitted successfully. **However, your application is not considered to be complete until all of**

your required supporting documents have also been submitted (if not included in your uploaded file).

All applications and supporting documents must be received by the Contact Person listed below **no later than 5 p.m. on February 21, 2017**. Late applications or applications submitted with incomplete supporting documentation as described within this GAP will not be considered for funding.

If you are unable to access and submit the Web Application Form and uploaded file online, you must notify the Contact Person listed below to determine an acceptable alternative method for submitting your application materials prior to the application deadline.

Creating a Single Combined File of all Application Materials

The preferred method for creating a single file out of multiple documents is to combine the files into a single PDF file using Adobe Acrobat Pro or Adobe Writer; however, this capacity does not exist with Adobe Reader. Tutorials and additional instructions are available at:

- <http://tv.adobe.com/watch/learn-acrobat-9/combining-documents-into-a-single-pdf/>, or
- <http://www.images.adobe.com/www.adobe.com/content/dam/Adobe/en/feature-details/acrobatpro/pdfs/combine-multiple-documents-into-one-pdf-file.pdf>.

If you are unable to create a single combined PDF file containing your entire proposal package, you may also submit your materials as scanned images inserted into an MS Word document, provided the file does not exceed the 4 MB size limit. Please note that this method may reduce the resolution (and readability) of the materials. Therefore, you may wish to instead upload and submit one document of your proposal package via the online Web Application Form, and then e-mail, fax, mail, or hand deliver the remaining supporting documents to the Contact Person listed below. **It is the applicant's responsibility to make sure that all applications and supporting documents have been received by the appropriate Contact Person listed below prior to the application deadline.**

Contacts

For Project-Specific Questions:

Dr. Paul Steen
Huron River Watershed Council
1100 North Main Street
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104
Phone: 734-769-5123, ext. 601
Fax: 734-998-0163
E-mail: psteen@hrwc.org

For Application Questions and Submittals:

Ms. Laura Kaminski
Great Lakes Commission
2805 S. Industrial Hwy., Suite 100
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104
Phone: 734-971-9135, ext. 124
Fax: 734-971-9150
E-mail: laurak@glc.org

General Information

- The maximum dollar amount per start-up grant is \$3,000.
- Grant funds are dispersed on a cost-reimbursement basis.
- Project contracts cannot exceed one year. Contracts will begin on June 1, 2017, and end on May 31, 2018. The final report and close-out materials are due by June 30, 2018.
- Successful applicants are strongly encouraged to complete an application for the next available VSMP Aquatic Macroinvertebrate Survey grant cycle to implement the volunteer program plan and strategy designed during the course of their start-up grant. However, receipt of a start-up grant does not guarantee that funding will be provided for a full Aquatic

Macroinvertebrate Survey grant in future years.

- Before applying, potential applicants should familiarize themselves with the MiCorps program (<https://micorps.net>).
- Applicants may be contacted for clarification of proposed project activities, timetable, and grant amounts.
- Information provided in the grant application will not be kept confidential.
- Successful applicants will be required to enter into a project contract with the Great Lakes Commission (GLC), which is administering the MiCorps Program on behalf of the DEQ. The Huron River Watershed Council (HRWC) has been contracted by the GLC to assist in the administration of these grants. Dr. Paul Steen, HRWC, will serve as the Project Officer for the grants awarded under this program, with oversight and fiduciary responsibility provided by the GLC.
- This grant does not require development of a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). Completing a QAPP is part of the full Aquatic Macroinvertebrate Survey grant effort.
- The startup grant is intended to provide a small amount of money to assist groups in developing a monitoring plan and attending the MiCorps training and annual conference. Start-up grant recipients do not carry out actual monitoring under the start-up grant. Some groups choose to hold practice monitoring events, but the data generated from these will not become part of a long-term data record for the program.
- If you have questions about your project, you are welcome to contact Dr. Steen prior to submitting your application.

Eligibility

Local units of government and not-for-profit entities are eligible to receive grant funding. Nonprofit entities are those exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Eligible entities generally include county, city, township, and village agencies; watershed and environmental action councils; universities; regional planning agencies; and incorporated not-for-profit organizations.

To be eligible, entities must meet all of the following:

- Must supply proof of a successful financial audit **of the applicant organization** conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards for a period ending within the 24 months immediately preceding the GAP due date (February 21, 2017), as demonstrated by an Independent Auditor's Report signed by a Certified Public Accountant from a Comprehensive Annual Report. Note: The audit date is based on the audit period and not the date of the audit or the audit letter. To be eligible under this GAP the end date of the audited period must be after February 21, 2015. A sample audit letter can be found at: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/deq/wrd-nps-rfp-audit-letter-example_359089_7.pdf.
- Must not have had a grant revoked or terminated or demonstrated an inability to manage a grant or meet the obligations in a project contract within the 24-month period immediately preceding the application.
- Must submit an online application and all supporting materials by **5 p.m. on February 21, 2017**.

Individuals or entities that do not meet the requirements above must partner with an eligible local unit of government or a nonprofit organization that will serve as the primary applicant and fiduciary agent for the grant.

Match Requirement

There is no match requirement for the Aquatic Macroinvertebrate Survey Start-up grant program. Match funding may be included in the proposal to indicate local community support. However, any local match that is included in the proposed budget will be included in the GLC contract and the grant recipient will be obligated to fulfill this commitment.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE
2017 VOLUNTEER STREAM MONITORING PROGRAM
AQUATIC MACROINVERTEBRATE SURVEY START-UP GAP**

List of Information Required for the Application

The following items are required for all grant applications. All pages must have a header stating the name of the organization.

1. Completed Web Application Form.
2. Project Description (maximum two pages).
3. Work Plan / Timeline (one to two pages).
4. Grant Application Budget Information Form.
5. Resume or Curriculum Vitae for Project Manager and/or Key Project Participants.
6. One-page letter from a Certified Public Accountant demonstrating proof of a successful financial audit within the previous two years (see Page 4).

All other information provided by the applicant – including binders, extraneous reports, and general letters of support – will not be considered, reviewed, or returned.

Web Application Form

The Web Application Form is to be filled out by all applicants. The form is on the grant application Web page at: <https://micorps.net/register/startup17.html>.

- *Project Name:* The name of the proposed project being submitted for funding.
- *Project Location:* Primary county or counties in which the project will be conducted.
- *Watershed Impacted by Project:* The watershed in which the project will be conducted or the watershed that may be affected by the project.
- *Organization Name:* Group, agency, or local unit of government applying for funding.
- *Organization Address, Fax, and Telephone numbers.*
- *Contact Person:* The person in the organization who can be contacted by MiCorps staff for any needed additional information.
- *Contact Person's Contact Information:* Include mailing address, fax, telephone number(s), and e-mail address. A confirmation e-mail will be sent to this address once the Web Application Form and uploaded file have been submitted successfully.
- *Grant Amount Requested:* The amount of funding being sought.
- *Person with Grant Acceptance Authority and Their Title:* This is the person who will be accepting responsibility for the terms and conditions of the contract. This may be the contact person, or it may be somebody else in the organization (or perhaps a board member).

Project Description

In no more than two pages, please provide a project description that addresses the following issues:

- Why does your community need this project?

- What is the area you will study? (Please attach a map)
- What have you and your group done to prepare for this project?
- What are the primary goals for your monitoring project?
- Describe the relevant qualifications of key project staff and advisors that will carry out and ensure the success of the project. Please attach resumes or curricula vitae for key staff.
- Please describe any other partners and advisors who have agreed to work on the project, their roles and commitments.
- Describe how this project will fit in with other initiatives in the watershed. How will the resulting data be used to further watershed management goals or activities?

Work Plan / Timeline

Maximum two pages.

- Outline the major tasks to be completed and a schedule for accomplishing them.
- The one-year grant period should begin on June 1, 2017, and end on May 31, 2018.
- The following tasks are mandatory:
 - Attend the full-day MiCorps Aquatic Macroinvertebrate Survey training event (usually held in June).
 - Attend the 2017 MiCorps conference (tentatively scheduled for November 8-9, 2017, at the Kettunen Center in Tustin, Michigan).
 - Submit quarterly status reports and Financial Status Reports to Dr. Paul Steen (HRWC Project Officer) within 30 days of the closing of each quarter of the grant period. Reports are due one month after the quarter ends. Quarters are: June-September 2017 (4 months), October-December 2017, and January-March 2018.
 - Upon grant closing, submit a final report, release of claims letter, a final Financial Status Report, and electronic versions of all deliverable products by June 30, 2018.
- The following tasks are strongly encouraged (but not mandatory):
 - Attend an established group's insect collection event.
 - Hold a "mock" insect collection event with a small group of volunteers.
 - Meet and plan with local DEQ staff and other conservation groups familiar with your river or stream.
 - Submit a VSMP Aquatic Macroinvertebrate Survey full grant proposal (usually in January/February).

Budget Information

- Local match support is not required. You are welcome to include match support if you feel it strengthens your application. However, if local match is included in the proposed budget, it will be included in the GLC contract and the grant recipient will be obligated to fulfill this commitment.
- Fill out the two-page Grant Application Budget Information Form. A sample of a completed Budget Information Form is provided in Appendix A. A blank Grant Application Budget Information Form is provided at <https://micorps.net/register/startup17.html>.

Please note the following:

- Local match is a financial commitment made by the grant recipient and other local agencies to help implement the project.
- Labor, in-kind services, and materials can count as match.
- Volunteer labor can be included as match; however, this type of match will be given lesser weight in the proposal evaluation when compared to other types of match support. As per DEQ Grant Contract Administration policy 10-001 (www.michigan.gov/documents/deq/deq-dept-policy-10-001_414724_7.pdf?20140602151149), there are three different rates for volunteer labor:
 - Unskilled laborers: The acceptable rate for these workers is the prevailing minimum wage for the State of Michigan (currently \$8.90/hour).
 - Professionals not working in a professional capacity: The acceptable rate for these professionals is based on the national value for volunteer time (currently \$23.56/hour).
 - Professionals, including skilled labor, working in their normal professional capacity: The acceptable rate for these professionals would be equivalent to their normal hourly rate of pay.
- Any original source (i.e., federal, state, local, or private) of match funds is acceptable. However, grants that were funded by other programs under the Clean Michigan Initiative or the federal Clean Water Act are ineligible to be claimed as match for this program. Other MiCorps grants are examples of grants that have come from the Clean Michigan Initiative.
- Match activities will be held to the same standards as grant-funded activities.
- Match cannot be earned until the starting date of the contract (June 1, 2017).

1. Staffing Costs.

- In column 1, list each staff person (project manager, senior analyst, clerical, etc.), the number of hours each person will work on the project, and their hourly rate. Place the costs for each staff person (number of hours times hourly rate) in columns 2 and 3.
- Each staff person listed under staffing cost should also be included in the Work Plan.
- Staffing costs for staff in agencies other than the grant recipient should be budgeted under Contractual.

2. Fringe Benefits.

This can include insurance, FICA, federal, state, and local taxes, vacation and sick time, and workers compensation.

- Most agencies have set fringe benefit rates. Use your agency's fringe benefit rate, up to 40% maximum.
- In column 1, list each staff person and their fringe rate. Put the dollar amount corresponding with each staff person in columns 2 and 3.
- MiCorps reserves the right to request applicants to supply information indicating how their fringe benefits were calculated.

3. Indirect Costs.

Indirect costs have been referred to as the cost of doing business. Typical indirect costs are associated with, but not limited to, office space, telephones, office equipment rental and usage, and general office supplies.

- Most agencies have a set indirect rate. Use your agency's indirect rate, up to 20% of salary and fringe benefits.
- In column 1, indicate the rate at which indirect costs are being calculated, and the resulting indirect costs.
- Enter indirect costs in columns 2 and 3.
- MiCorps reserves the right to request applicants to supply information indicating how their indirect costs were calculated.

4. Contractual Services.

Contractual costs are services provided by staff or agencies other than the grant recipient. Any services not provided by the grant recipient should be listed here. If any part of the work in the grant is to be subcontracted, your grant application must include a description of all work to be subcontracted. MiCorps reserves the right to approve all subcontractors and to require grant recipients to replace subcontractors found to be unacceptable.

- In column 1, list all contractual services. List amounts in columns 2 and 3.
- All contractual services included here should also be described in the Work Plan.

5. Project Equipment, Supplies, and Materials

- Equipment is defined as an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year (e.g., microscope, nets, waders).
- Supplies and materials are consumable goods (e.g., ethanol, insect jars, printing costs, postage).
- The purchase of any single piece of equipment greater than \$1,000 (e.g., an expensive microscope) is not allowed using grant funds. This equipment can be purchased using match funds.
- In column 1, itemize equipment and supplies and explain any cost that may appear out of the ordinary. List amounts in columns 2 and 3.
- Costs related to food and drinks are not acceptable.
- Equipment should not be the focus of a start-up grant, but a small amount of starter equipment is acceptable.

6. Travel Costs.

- Show mileage separate from lodging and meals in column 1. Mileage costs should be shown in columns 2 and 3 as number of miles multiplied by the mileage rate. For current mileage rate, individuals should refer to the Federal Mileage Reimbursement Rate Web page at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/100715>.

- Also, include travel costs other than mileage directly related to carrying out the project. Conferences and other training fees, except those related directly to the official MiCorps training and conference, will not be accepted. Food costs while on travel cannot be covered by the grant.
- Subtotal travel costs.

7. Totals.

Note that the Totals at the bottom of the budget sheet should be the same as listed in the Web Application Form.

8. Sources of Match.

At the bottom of the second page of the budget sheet, indicate the source(s) of any local match and the corresponding dollar value provided by the applicant or other local sources.

Acceptance of Contract Content

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a project contract with the GLC. A project contract consists of standard “boilerplate” language (Appendix B), the applicant’s project description, work plan, time line, and budget information. Failure of a successful applicant to accept these obligations will result in cancellation of the grant award.

Appendices and Additional Resources

- Appendix A: Example Grant Application Budget Information Form
(available at: <https://micorps.net/wp-content/uploads/VSMP-Macro-Startup-AppendixA-FY17.pdf>)
- Appendix B: Terms and Conditions for Grant Contracts
(available at: <https://micorps.net/wp-content/uploads/VSMP-Macro-Startup-AppendixB-FY17.pdf>)
- Blank Grant Application Budget Information Form
(available at: <https://micorps.net/wp-content/uploads/VSMP-Budget-FY17.doc>)
- Sample Grant Application
(available at: <https://micorps.net/wp-content/uploads/VSMP-Macro-Startup-SampleApp-FY17.pdf>)
- Grant Reporting Guidelines and Templates
(available at: <https://www.micorps.net/stream-monitoring/stream-documents>)