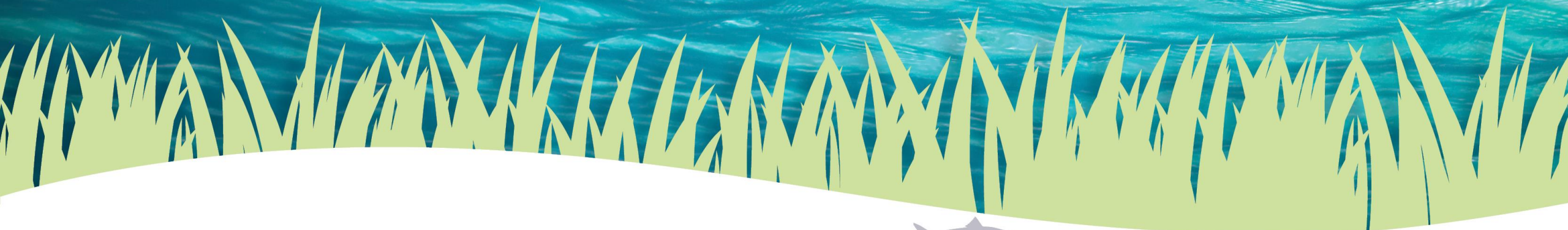


SNEP Rhode Island Decentralized Wastewater Improvement Grant

Informational Webinar



U.S. EPA, Southeast New England Program



January 26, 2023, 12:30-1:30PM (EST)





- CFDA: 66.129
- RFA Link:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=344556>
- Opportunity #: EPA-I-R1-SNEP-2023A



- Please mute/video off during presentation
- This meeting is being recorded
- Slides/recording will be posted to SNEP webpage
- Questions will be addressed at the end of the presentation
- Questions and answers will be posted on SNEP webpage

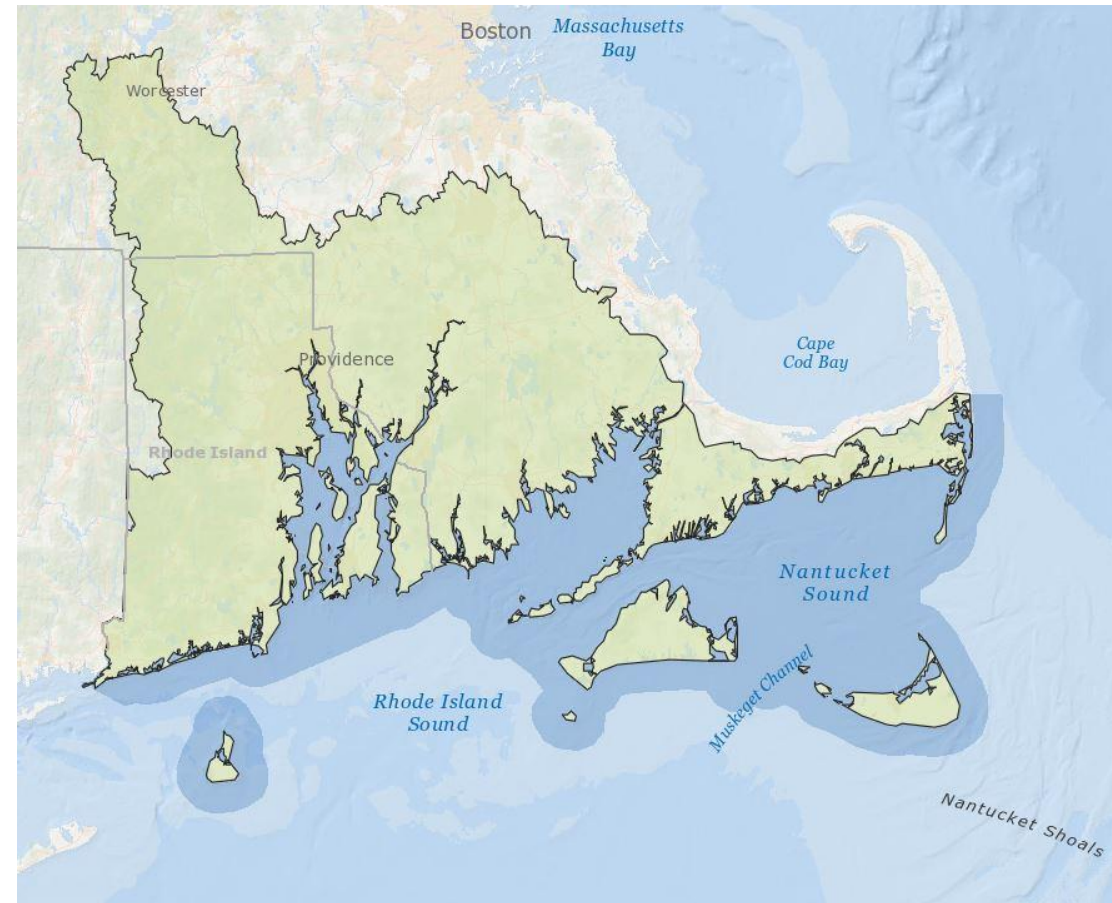


- SNEP Overview
- Background and Priority Topics
- RFA Review Criteria
- Build America, Buy America Act
- Question & Answer Period

SNEP Overview



- Southeast New England Program
- EPA Led (Region 1)
- Established in 2012, funded since 2014
- Rhode Island and S.E Massachusetts
- Foci:
 - Water Quality/Habitat
 - Climate Resilience
 - Innovation
 - Collaboration
 - Transferability
 - Holistic Approaches
 - Environmental Justice





Program Vision 2050

A resilient ecosystem of safe and healthy waters, thriving watersheds and natural lands, and sustainable communities in the SNEP coastal watershed region

Resilient Ecosystem of Safe and Healthy Waters

- Waters support native seagrasses and aquatic life, plentiful native fish and shellfish, and a variety of water-based recreation opportunities

Thriving Watersheds and Natural Lands

- Watersheds provide essential ecological functions, species diversity, and protection from both human-based and naturally occurring environmental stressors, and healthy, connected natural lands support a variety and range of native plant and wildlife communities

Sustainable Communities

- Communities share robust water-based economics, protect and provide access to natural lands, open spaces and parks, encourage local food sources, and are adapting for resilience to expected impacts of climate change

Goals and Key Actions



Increase Local Capacity to Complete Projects and Adopt New Policies

Increase Available Solutions

Ensure Diverse Representation in Program Decision-Making

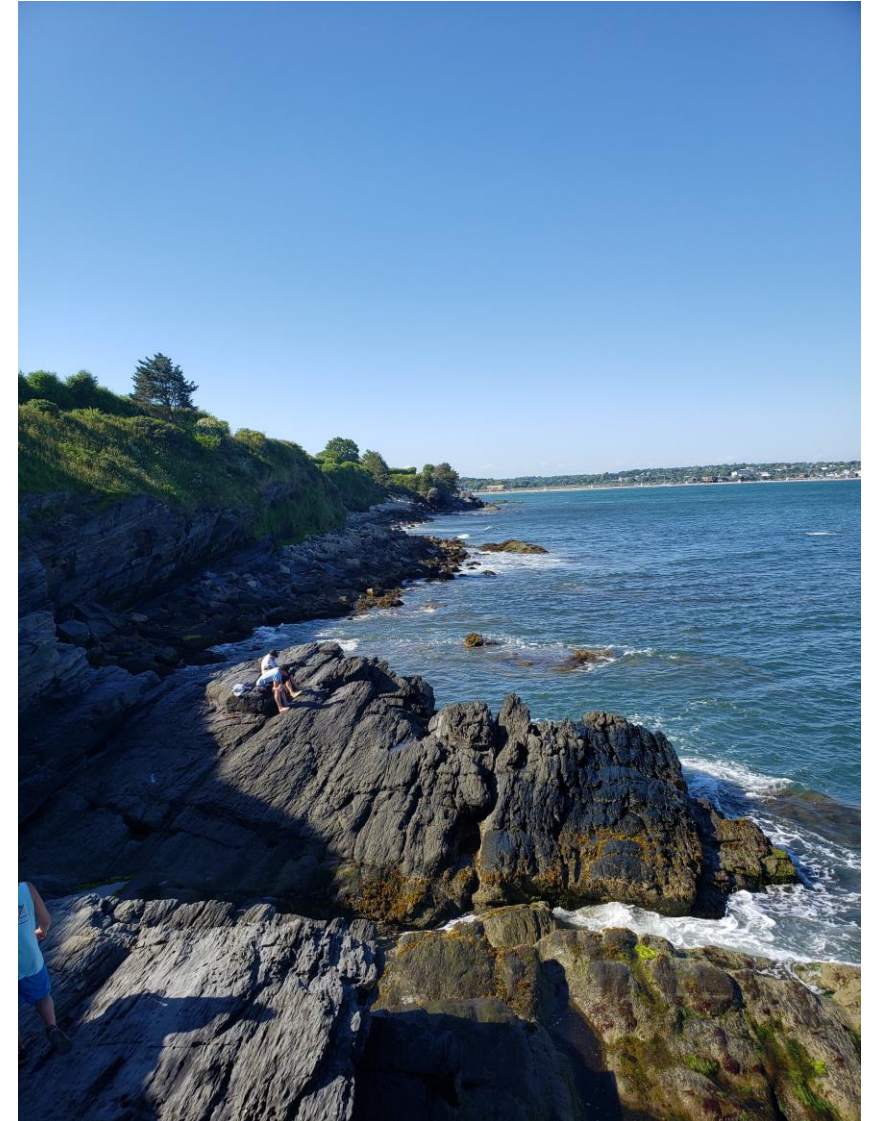
Demonstrate Ways to Address Common Challenges

Increase Community Leaders' Understanding of the Benefits of Restoration Projects

Current Foci



- Reducing nutrients from septic systems, stormwater, and fertilizer
- Addressing and monitoring harmful algal blooms
- Testing innovative solutions such as permeable reactive barriers and aquaculture
- Restoring saltmarsh, eelgrass, and riparian buffers
- Evaluating and quantifying ecosystem service benefits



Background



- Nitrogen from conventional septic systems is a threat to our coastal waters; this may be exacerbated by climate change.
- Decentralized wastewater planning, upgrades, oversight, and research are needed to address this threat.
- Grants awarded under this RFA will address decentralized wastewater enhancement under the following themes:



Priority Topics



- Development, expansion, or improvement of Responsible Management Entities (either through a third party or by a municipality) to administer, operate, and/or manage decentralized systems on a community-wide scale.
- Creation of or updates to data systems related to decentralized wastewater, such as performance monitoring, operation and maintenance monitoring, or location tracking. Examples may include developing ways to use data to optimize inspection and oversight or increase data driven planning and decision making.

Priority Topics



- Creation or expansion of innovative financial mechanisms to upgrade old/failing traditional septic systems or cesspools, provide assistance to residents unable to replace old/failing systems, including planning/incentivizing upgrading to Alternative/Experimental (A/E) nitrogen reducing systems, especially, in nitrogen sensitive areas. This may include developing programs to assist non-residential wastewater treatment as well.
- Commercial district decentralized wastewater planning.



- Evaluation of climate change impacts on the performance of decentralized systems, impact timelines, and development of plans to act on that information. Potential impacts from climate change include, but are not limited to, changes in precipitation patterns, flooding, sea level rise, groundwater rise/ salt intrusion, and rising temperatures.
- Evaluation of where sewerage needs to replace decentralized systems in light of climate change.
- Creation or updates of Onsite Wastewater Managements Plans.



- Execution of decentralized wastewater aspects identified in existing Hazard Mitigation Plans.
- Creation or updates to local ordinances regarding onsite wastewater management to reduce their impact on coastal water quality or withstand hazards projected by climate change.



- Development of sustained direct municipal capacity to more effectively manage decentralized wastewater operations in their jurisdiction. Examples could include development of fee systems, fundraising mechanisms, staffing, education, and efficiency tools.
- Evaluation of age, location, risk, and status of existing and planned decentralized systems.

SNEP RI Decentralized RFA Overview



Funding:

- \$930,000 total (Bipartisan Infrastructure Law)
- \$310,000-\$465,000 per grant
- Up to 3 grants total
- No match requirement

Project Period:

- Up to 3-year project period

Other Details:

- Build America Buy America
- Applications completed through [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) (CFDA 66.129)



SNEP RI Decentralized RFA Overview



Important Dates:

- Opened 11/18/2022
- Informational Webinar 1/26/2023 12:30-1:30PM (EST)
- Last Day to Ask Questions: 2/2/2023
- Application Deadline: 3/10/2023 11:59PM (EST)
- Notifications of Selection/Rejection: Spring 2023
- Public Announcement: Spring/Summer 2023



SNEP RI Decentralized RFA Eligibility



- All applicants must substantially comply with eligibility requirements (Section III & IV of RFA)
- Eligible Entities
 - State, local, tribal governments/departments
 - Institutions of higher education
 - Nonprofit institutions and organizations
 - Interstate agencies
- Ineligible Entities
 - Private business*
 - Federal agencies*
 - Individuals*

*these entities are encouraged to partner with eligible entities



SNEP RI Decentralized RFA Eligibility



- Submissions must be received before March 10, 2023, 11:59 EDT via [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)
- Must support EPA's Strategic Plan Goals (Sec. I.E)
- Must include all mandatory documentation (Sec IV.F).
- Must address at least one priority topic
- Project must occur in Rhode Island



Mandatory Documents



1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
3. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
4. EPA Form 4700-4 Preaward Compliance Review Report
5. Budget Detail (Budget Narrative Attachment Form)
6. Project Narrative Attachment Form: Use this to submit your Project Narrative, prepared as described in Section IV.G
7. Supporting documents (see next slide)

Mandatory Documents



7. Supporting Documents (Other Attachments Form)
 - a) Resumes or curriculum vitae of staff that will be working on the grant
 - b) Letters of commitment from any partners identified in the proposal in order to confirm their partnership.
 - c) List documenting past or ongoing federal and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements administered by the applicant, including documentation supporting grant performance and meeting of reporting requirements.
 - d) Documents of nonprofit status if appropriate.
 - e) Verification of proposed sources of leveraged funding.

Review Process



- Threshold Eligibility Determination/Notification
- Merit Review by EPA and State staff
- Review meeting
- Selection finalization



SNEP RI Decentralized RFA Overview



Scoring Criteria (100 pts. Total):

- Problem Description/ Site Selection (20 pts.)
- Project Description/ Project Impact (25 pts.)
- Leveraged Funds/Partnerships (10 pts.)
- Programmatic Capabilities (5 pts.)
- Cost Effectiveness (5 pts.)
- Monitoring/Tracking of Results (5 pts.)
- Transferability of Results (10 pts.)
- Timely Expenditure of Funds (5 pts.)
- Priority Topics (15 pts.)





Problem Description/Site Selection (20 pts)

- Demonstrates that the current conditions in the proposed project area would benefit from proposed project activities.
- Demonstrates that the problem(s) to be addressed in their proposal impacts coastal water quality.
- Justifies their proposed project area





Project Description/ Project Impact (25 pts.)

- Clearly and concisely describes their proposed project.
- Demonstrates how their proposed project will contribute to improved coastal water quality, and/or resilience to expected impacts of climate change.
- Demonstrates that their project is in line with SNEP's Strategic Plan.
- Demonstrates that the project will improve operation and management of decentralized systems.
- Describes whether and to what extent this project benefits communities with environmental justice concerns.



Leveraged Funds/Partnership (10 pts)

- How they will coordinate the use of EPA funding with other Federal and/or non-Federal sources of funds/resources to leverage additional resources beyond the grant funds awarded to carry out the proposed project(s) and/or that EPA funding will complement activities relevant to the proposed project(s) carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources. Applicants will also be evaluated based on the type and amount of leveraging proposed, how the applicant will obtain the leveraged resources, the likelihood the leveraging will materialize during grant performance, the strength of the leveraging commitment, and the role the leveraged resources will play to support the proposed project activities.

Leveraged Funds/Partnership (10 pts)



- Includes a clear and concise description of how the proposed project promotes collaboration with partners.
- Describes planned roles for each partner, including how each partner will contribute resources to the project and has a vested interest in working in the partnership.
- Includes letters of commitment from partners in their application package.
- Demonstrates the expertise and financial resources brought to the project by partners and the applicant.



Programmatic Capabilities (5 pts.)

- (i) past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.A of the solicitation,
- (ii) history of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.A of the solicitation including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements and the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on their progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not.

Programmatic Capabilities (5 pts.)



- (iii) organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and
- (iv) staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.



Cost Effectiveness (5 pts.)

- Under this criterion, the reviewers will evaluate the application based on the degree to which it is cost-effective, considering the following factors: organizational overhead, indirect cost, prudent cost allocation over the life of the award, organizational and partner resources brought to the effort; consistency with proposed budget detail; and ability to perform the duties within the operational range of budgets provided by SNEP.



Monitoring/Tracking of Results (5 pts.)

- Describes the plan to monitor and track the outcomes, outputs, and metrics related to their proposed project.
- Describes the specific SNEP metrics they propose to track and report on during the life of the grant. (See Appendix B)

Transferability of Results (10 pts.)



- Demonstrates that their proposed project could serve as an example for other groups/areas.
- Plans to gather and develop information to support and communicates lessons learned from the proposed activities.
- Plans to share and disseminate their results to serve as a model for other groups/areas to learn from.



Timely Expenditure of Funds (5 pts.)

- Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.

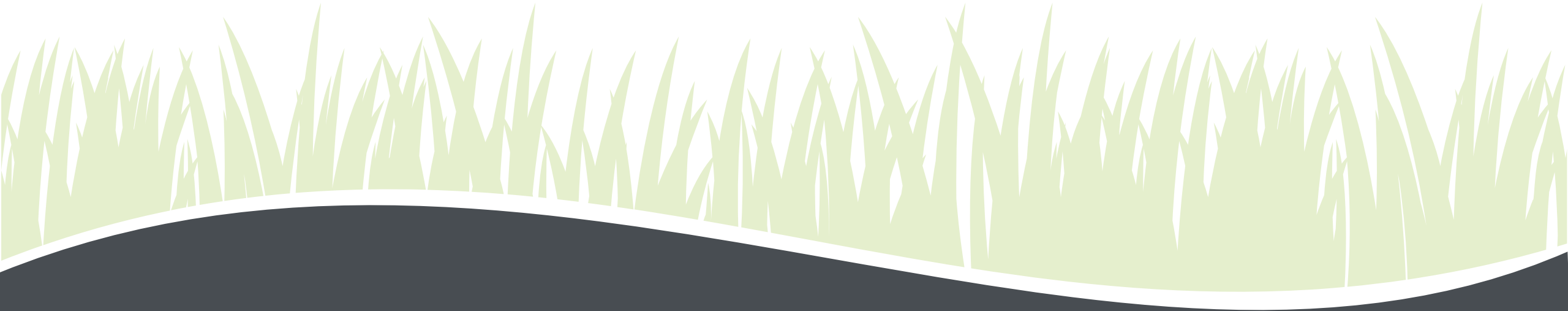


Priority Topics (15 pts.)

- Under this criterion, the reviewers will evaluate the application based on the extent and quality to which the applicant addresses one or more of the priority topics described in section I.B.



Build America, Buy America Act



Build America, Buy America (BABA)



BABA requires federal infrastructure projects to source American made materials:

1. **All iron and steel** must be American made, “from the initial melting stage through the application of coatings...”
2. **Manufactured products** must also be made in the U.S., meaning the “cost of the components of the manufactured product that are mined, produced, or manufactured in the United States is greater than 55 percent of the total cost”
3. **Construction materials** like lumber, plastics, glass, non-ferrous metals, etc., must be sourced from the U.S.

Build America, Buy America (BABA)



Two important general waivers have already been approved

1. Projects receiving under **\$250,000** of federal funding will be exempt from BABA requirements
2. Up to 5% of the **total project** costs can be used on materials that do not meet BABA requirements

Other waivers may be granted for specific projects or materials after going through a specific application process

For additional questions search “EPA BABA” or go to

<https://www.epa.gov/cwsrf/build-america-buy-america-baba>



Question and Answer Period





Please direct formal questions to SECoastalNE@epa.gov by
February 2, 2023, 11:59p EST

Application Deadline: March 10, 2023, 11:59p EST



Thank you for your time and attention!

