



MASSACHUSETTS Rivers Alliance

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OPPORTUNITY FOR DAM REMOVAL EARLY PHASE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

APPLICATION PROCESS

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1. Introduction. Each dam removal effort presents a unique set of conditions and influencing factors that affect its feasibility, anticipated costs, stakeholder preferences, and the overall likelihood of advancing the concept from initial discussion to implementation. The process of progressing a dam removal project from conceptual consideration to realization—where the ecological, safety, and community benefits of river restoration are achieved—can be complex and often involves navigating a variety of technical, regulatory, and financial considerations.

To support dam owners or stakeholders interested in advancing a dam removal program, the Massachusetts Rivers Alliance (Mass Rivers) is offering a competitive process to award technical assistance (TA) services for early-phase, scope-of-work planning to initiate dam removal projects in Massachusetts to three dam owners or stakeholders. *The applicant does not need to be the dam owner* (see Section 3, “Eligibility Requirements” below and Section 7.d., “Dam Ownership and Access to the Project Site”). A specific scope of work for each TA recipient will be determined based upon site specific parameters and will be completed within an estimated \$20,000 budget per site.

TA services will be provided at no cost to the recipient; no matching share for the cost of this program is required to be awarded this assistance. Mass Rivers will coordinate the services of an engineering consultant under direct contract with Mass Rivers to advance the TA assistance. This program will strive to provide TA to projects in rural, underserved, or disadvantaged communities and try to balance the TA portfolio to include groups in different regions across Massachusetts.

2. Timing. Questions should be submitted via email to Andrea Gaut Eigerman, Grant Programs Manager, at andreaeigerman@massriversalliance.org by March 25th by 5:00 pm. Applications are due on Friday, March 27th, 2026 by 11:59 pm to the same email address above. The three TA awardees (TA Recipients) will be chosen in April 2026, and the six-month TA program is anticipated to run from April to September 2026.

3. Eligible Applicants. Eligible applicants include non-profit organizations and institutions, municipalities, tribal governments, regional planning agencies, private dam owners/landowners, academic institutions, and for-profit businesses. Local government/municipality-affiliated groups may also apply, such as Conservation Commissions. The applicant does not need to be the dam owner; however, in the event that the applicant is not the owner, a statement from the owner authorizing access to the site must be provided, as outlined below in Section 7.d., “Dam Ownership and Access to the Project Site”. Although multiple partners may be involved with a project and identified in the project narrative, a single applicant should apply to the TA program.

4. Project Goal and Eligible Projects. TA applicants must be interested in initiating a dam removal project in Massachusetts and desire aid to identify the best steps to proceed. This TA program is only for the initiation of dam removal. Alternatives to dam removal such as dam repairs and/or fish passage infrastructure are not eligible.

5. Program. Each project is anticipated to include the following:

Site Reconnaissance: This initial project phase has three primary objectives:

- (a) Firmly establish a collaborative and foundational relationship between the project team, including but not limited to the TA consultant, Mass Rivers, the owners, and various stakeholders surrounding the project.
- (b) Identify and define project goals.
- (c) Gather data needed for project advancement.

A joint site visit between Mass Rivers, the TA consultant, the owners, and various stakeholders will serve as a kick-off meeting where all relevant parties can share their perspective and vision for the project site.

Project Scoping: Based on input and data collection, the TA assistance will be scoped based upon budget constraints and apparent project specific drivers. Project scopes may include:

- Hydrologic & Hydraulic Review
- Sediment Evaluation & Management Considerations
- Resource Area Inventory
- Historical / Cultural Significance Review
- Rare or Endangered Species Review
- Infrastructure Impacts
- Community Engagement Planning
- Dam Removal Conceptual Design
- Opinions of Probable Cost
- Funding Opportunities Identification/Grant Writing

Ultimately, the consultant working with each TA Recipient is expected to determine the most important information needed to initiate or continue a dam removal project.

Starter Kit Development/Technical Memorandum: The analyses conducted for each project site will be summarized within a final deliverable that serves as a “Starter Kit” that the TA Recipients can utilize to initiate or continue their dam removal project.

The deliverable will summarize the work process, obstacles and opportunities identified, and an anticipated scope for further advancement of the dam removal project.

Mass Rivers will manage the consultant and will have direct contact with the TA Recipients to answer questions and keep apprised of the project progress, which will include a minimum of one site visit in six months with each TA Recipient. As part of this program, each TA Recipient will be required to complete a pre- and post-program evaluation survey to help Mass Rivers determine the effectiveness of the TA program and identify aspects that may need adjustment. In addition, Mass Rivers will have the right to reproduce and share the final report/memorandum that results from this program, as needed, to use for a variety of purposes, such as educational programming.

6. Match. No funding match is required for this opportunity and will not factor into project scoring.

7. Application Submittal and Evaluation. Please provide the information detailed below in not more than 10 pages, *excluding* maps, photos, a recent Phase I Dam Inspection Report, if available, and any letters of support.

- a. **Cover page.** Create a cover page, which includes project title, project location, project applicant, applicant contact name and email address. Please identify the project manager and team members and their respective organizations. The project manager will be the point person for the consultant and Mass Rivers.
- b. **Cover letter.** Include a one-page cover letter, printed on official letterhead, and signed by an authorized representative of the project applicant. The cover letter must state that you are applying for this Mass Rivers TA program.
- c. **Applicant organization narrative.** Please provide an overview of your organization, including any available information on how your group was formed and the history of your group's involvement at the dam removal site, if any. Describe any experience your group has had in completing past projects. Provide any information that you believe demonstrates your organization's capacity for future work and positive outcomes.
- d. **Dam ownership and access to the project site.** Applicants should provide proof (e.g., in the form of signed letter) that either the dam owner endorses the project and/or that the applicants are authorized to access the dam site. If the dam owner is not involved, applicants should explain why, and also provide information on why dam removal is being sought and by whom it is supported.
- e. **Dam Busters registration.** All applicants must register for the Dam Busters program. You may do so [here](#).
- f. **Project narrative.** Please provide any available context and supporting visuals (photos and maps), such as basic details on the type of dam, size of impoundment, hazard potential classification, location, age, and a summary of any preliminary work or analyses completed to date, if any. Note any impacts or project elements that may be a known particular concern.
 - Age, type of dam, type of construction, size, and any history of the dam, if known.
 - Known property owners of the dam and surrounding parcels.
 - Any known or suspected ecological impacts.
 - Any known or suspected infrastructure likely to complicate dam removal.
 - Outline any recreation and public access in the area that currently intersects with or would be created by dam removal .

- List all potential project stakeholders or partners.
 - Outline any previous attempts to initiate dam removal, if any.
 - Outline known potential adjacent barriers to help determine the reconnection of aquatic habitat that would occur as a result of the proposed dam removal project, including culverts, dams, and other barriers.
 - Outline any potential environmental justice impacts;
 - Outline any current or potential community opposition;
 - Outline any historical significance of the dam; and
 - Outline any impacts of this project on the affected watershed, estuary, and/or wetlands.
- g. **Recent Phase I Dam Inspection Report.** Include a copy, if available, of the most recent Phase I Inspection/Evaluation Report for the dam.
- h. **Applicant organization composition, representativeness, and geographic location.** This program will strive to provide TA to projects in rural, underserved, or disadvantaged communities and try to balance the TA portfolio to include groups in different regions across Massachusetts. Please provide any information that will help Mass Rivers understand the community represented by your group and its project. Describe the diversity of community organizations and individuals represented by your group, while also highlighting the ways your group represents individuals affected by the dam removal site. For example, applicants may want to include socio demographic information such as underserved or disadvantaged, non-English speaking communities, or per-capita income.
- i. **Letter of support.** Letters of support are highly encouraged, but not required. Please submit letters of support from potential partners not to exceed two pages in length each. Only submit three letters per applicant maximum.

8. Estimated Project Timeline:

EVENT	DATE
Application Question Period	Feb 23- March 25 by 5:00 pm
Applications Due By	March 27, 2026, 11:59 pm
TA Participants Selected	April 2026
6-Month Phase TA Program Begins & Ends	April-September 2026
Consultant Deliverable Due	October 15, 2026

Applications should be no more than 10 pages in length, *excluding* maps, photos, a recent Phase I Dam Inspection Report, if available, and any letters of support, and they are due on Friday, March 27th, 2026 by 11:59 pm via email to Andrea Gaut Eigerman, Grant Programs Manager, at andreaeigerman@massriversalliance.org. The three TA awardees (TA Recipients) will be chosen in April 2026, and the six-month TA program will run from April to September, 2026.