August 25, 2026

Mayors, County Commissioners, Regional Authority Officials,
Consulting Engineers, and Interested Citizens

Re: Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF)
Program Year 2027 Call for Project Nominations

Dear Interested Party:

The Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance (DEFA) is pleased to announce the WPCLF Program call for nominations and invite you to submit projects for financial assistance during calendar year 2027. We anticipate that sufficient loan funds will be available for eligible projects that are ready to proceed within 2027 with a continued focus on regionalization, sewer overflows, failing household sewage treatment systems, Water Resource and Restoration Sponsor Program (WRRSP) and backup power/generator purchase.

Nominations are due by close of business **September 25, 2026**.

This will be the final year the WPCLF program expects to receive additional funding through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). For PY2027, up to $84 million in principal forgiveness funding will be made available for disadvantaged communities along with up to $11.9 million in principal forgiveness for emerging contaminants projects. Principal forgiveness is the portion of a loan that does not require repayment. To be considered for principal forgiveness funding, entities must meet the WPCLF program disadvantaged community criteria benchmarks. Projects are evaluated for principal forgiveness based on project score, readiness-to-proceed and Agency priorities. Nomination materials including a readiness-to-proceed overview, lists of entities eligible for principal forgiveness and disadvantaged community overview are available on the WPCLF program website: WPCLF Nomination Materials.

To ensure emerging contaminant projects have access to principal forgiveness funding, nominations for these projects may be submitted at any time during the program year. Awards will be issued on a first come-first served basis until funding is fully allocated. Planning, design and construction projects addressing an emerging contaminant are eligible for this limited principal forgiveness funding opportunity.

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Changes for program year 2027 discounts and reduced interest rates include a cap for regionalization discount at $5M per project and revisions to qualifying criteria for hardship rates. Hardship rates of 0% and 1% will be available for communities that meet WPCLF program disadvantaged community criteria benchmarks.

Program discounts including regionalization, green project reserve (GPR), water reuse and WRRSP will be available for qualifying projects. Refer to the 2026 Program Management Plan for a full list of discount options.

Major improvement projects must include a regionalization evaluation with project planning information. These projects include new wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs), plant expansions, major WWTP improvements and extension of services to unsewered areas. An approved regionalization evaluation is required for design or construction of these major improvement projects prior to loan award.

Nomination information is available in a presentation style document including highlights and updates for 2027 and the nomination submission process: WPCLF Nomination Materials.

To be considered for WPCLF funding in 2027, nominations must be received no later than September 25, 2026. Submit nominations with all required supporting documents to defamail@epa.ohio.gov. To submit nomination files larger than 10MB, use Ohio EPA's File Share system. Please review the instructions before submitting documents as the file share process has been revised.

To ensure timely review and award, any nomination with an anticipated loan award in the first quarter of 2027 (January - March) should be submitted by the September 25th deadline.

Thank you for your continuing interest in improving Ohio's water resources. If you have any questions, please contact our office at defamail@epa.ohio.gov.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Bernstein

Jon Bernstein, P.E., Chief
Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance