



Mount Olive Chronicle

Grants available for grassroots groups working to protect Highlands

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Local grassroots organizations working on protecting the water supply for more than half of New Jersey by implementing the Highlands Regional Master Plan or fighting damaging development in the Highlands can apply for grants up to \$5000 through the New Jersey Highlands Coalition's 2014 Small Grants Program. Applications must be received by March 31, and grants will be awarded in June.

Grassroots organizations are defined as non-governmental organizations with a total annual operating budget of less than \$200,000. It is not necessary that the organization be incorporated.

Grant applications should meet at least one of five criteria, with the items at the top getting more weight than those below:

- Focus on implementation of the Highlands Regional Master Plan; Establish a precedent advancing strong environmental protection in the Highlands;
- Assist an organization to fight against an environmentally damaging development in the Highlands;
- Support capacity building of Highlands Region grassroots organizations;
- Educate the public about Highlands water and resources.

12 Organizations

Last year's recipients included 12 grassroots organizations working on projects that will help protect the Highlands resources that are the source of drinking water for 850,000 people in the Highlands and more than four million outside the region who depend on Highlands water. Major

New Jersey industries such as pharmaceuticals and food manufacturing also depend on Highlands water.

Grant recipients in 2013 included groups in Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex and Warren counties. Groups considering applying for the 2014 program can learn from the types of projects that were funded last year.

Grants funded last year include:

- Roxbury Environmental Action Coalition (REACT) in Roxbury Township to create an outreach and capacity building campaign focusing on issues at the Fenimore Landfill.
- Citizens for Health Safety & Welfare of Parsippany and Mountain Lakes, to help protect the region's water supply from a harmful, proposed development in Parsippany (Waterview).

Grassroots organizations wishing to be considered for a grant in June should submit applications by March 31, 2014. For more information, contact Julia Somers at 973-588-7190 or julia@njhighlandscoalition.org, or visit www.njhighlandscoalition.org and click on the red button on the left labeled "2014 Small Grants Program."

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