

What is the MBNEP?

The Morro Bay National Estuary Program is dedicated to protecting and restoring the natural resources of Morro Bay and its watershed. The MBNEP is a cooperative program of government agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses, property owners and interested citizens.

The MBNEP completed a Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) in 1999 which outlines 61 Action Plans or projects aimed at improving the estuary. Every project funded by a MBNEP grant must assist with implementation of this Conservation Plan. Go to www.mbnep.org/plan.htm to learn more.

Who reviews the grant applications?

Each grant application is reviewed by a series of committees. The Education and Outreach Working Group (E&OWG) is the first committee to review Education and Outreach Mini-Grant applications and may invite the applicant to discuss the project in person. The E&OWG is made up of members of the community that are involved in public education and outreach. They make a recommendation to the Implementation Committee, a larger group that includes stakeholders of many backgrounds, and they in turn send a recommendation to the Executive Committee which makes the final funding decision.

How to contact us...

Morro Bay National Estuary Program
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Education & Outreach Coordinator

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How to
Obtain a
Grant for
Estuary

Education
and
Outreach
Projects



What types of projects are eligible for funding?

When developing project ideas, consider the following MBNEP community education goals:

- increase public awareness of the estuarine ecosystem as an environmental and social resource,
- demonstrate how the public can help protect the estuary, and/or
- motivate people to participate in efforts to enhance and restore the resources.

The project must also assist with implementation of the Morro Bay Conservation Plan, known as the CCMP. Each project must address at least one specific CCMP category:

- Conduct general public education on the value of a healthy environment and the role of individuals in protecting it
- Create clean boating educational materials
- Develop educational materials on erosion, sedimentation, sensitive resources, fertilizers, and habitats for agricultural and ranch landowners
- Conduct educational workshops on the impacts of pesticides for the general public or the agricultural community
- Implement youth outreach through schools, youth organizations, after-school programs, etc. that focuses on the estuary as a valuable natural resource.

For more detailed information about the CCMP and its education related goals, contact the MBNEP for a copy of the CCMP Executive Summary or go to www.mbnep.org/plan.htm.

What are some potential project ideas?

Some possible project ideas include:

- Youth projects that protect or restore natural habitats
- Information regarding residential pollution, such as auto oil leaks and paint disposal
- Brochures or signs to inform bay users of impacts of wildlife disturbances
- Formation of a Clean Boating group
- Educational signs at nature preserves and other public use areas along the estuary
- Workshops for gardeners on low impact alternatives to fertilizers and pesticides
- Education for ranchers and rural landowners on impacts of creek bank erosion

What projects have been funded?

Over \$65,000 in grant funds have been distributed since 2001. Projects that have received funding include:

- Los Osos Library Estuary Learning Collection - \$3,000
- Guide to growing and planting dune natives in your yard - \$4,300
- Snowy Plover Volunteer Watch Program training manual - \$5,000
- Estuary field trip manual for 5th-7th grade classes - \$5,000

How Do I Apply?

1. Contact the MBNEP
Contact Cheryl Lesinski at the MBNEP office. Cheryl will help you determine if your project qualifies and will provide the application materials.

2. Develop budget
Develop a clear budget and obtain bids for work others will complete such as graphic design and printing costs. Grants of up to \$2,500 are available.

3. Complete application
The brief application form requires the following information:

- project title
- project description
- project budget
- evaluation (details of how you will determine project success)
- project schedule
- qualifications

4. Submit application
Quarterly application deadlines are the first Friday in March, June, September and December. The application review process includes several committees. Selected applicants will be notified in about 10 weeks, and funds are available once a contract is signed, usually 12 weeks after the submittal deadline.