



Grants Quarterly

February 2016

Minnesota Board of Water & Soil Resources • www.bwsr.state.mn.us

SWCD Capacity grants: Please submit workplans

BWSR is still awaiting workplan submittals for SWCD Capacity Grants from many SWCDs. The capacity grants are \$100,000 to each SWCD in FY16 and \$100,000 to each SWCD in FY17. FY16 ends June 30, 2016. It is critical that SWCDs receive their FY16 grant funds before FY17 begins.

These grants represent a response to SWCD demand for increased funding. BWSR did not set a due date for submittal of the grant agreements and workplans, as we expected all SWCDs would want to receive the funds as soon as possible.

BWSR intends to set a due date for the grant execution (which includes an approved workplan), and also have the Board approve a penalty for any grants not finalized by a certain date before the end of this fiscal year. It is likely the due date for submittal of the grant materials would be no later than **May 1, 2016**, the date for a penalty would be no later than mid-June, 2016, and the penalty amount would be on the order of 10-20%. Questions about the grant agreements or workplans should be directed to your Board Conservationist.

Important upcoming dates

- Feb 26:** Deadline to request DRAP Phase III funding
- Mar 9:** Targeted Watershed RFI deadline
- Mar 15:** Website reporting must be completed
- April:** Biennial Budget Request due (exact date TBD)

Inside this issue:

- [SWCD Capacity Grants](#)
- [Targeted Watershed RFI](#)
- [Important Upcoming Dates](#)
- [Spotlight on Clean Water Fund Grants](#)
- [Biennial Budget Request](#)
- [Deadline to request Phase III DRAP funding](#)
- [Annual Website Reporting](#)

Targeted Watershed RFI closes March 9

The Request for Interest (RFI) period for BWSR's Targeted Watershed program is currently open. These grants are awarded to local government units organized for the management of water in a watershed or subwatershed that have multiyear plans that will result in a significant reduction in water pollution in a selected subwatershed.

Eligible applicants include Watershed Districts, Watershed management Organizations, and Watershed-based Joint Power Organizations, as well as Counties, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and formal partnerships of these organizations with a hydrologic watershed contained wholly within the partnership boundary.

For more information about the program, eligibility, or how to nominate a watershed, visit the [Apply for BWSR Grants](#) page of our website. All responses must be received no later than 4:30 pm on **March 9, 2016**.

Spotlight on Clean Water Fund Grants

Grant agreements for FY16 Clean Water Fund grants have been distributed via eLINK, and the deadline for workplan submittal was February 19th. Before you begin work on your FY16 CWF grant, or continue work on a previous year's CWF grant, be sure to read your grant agreement and read through the reminders in this Grants Quarterly. Reference the [Grants Administration Manual](#) for BWSR's administrative and programmatic requirements, and consult with your Board Conservationist if you have any questions.

FY 2016 Grant Period

The grant period starts when the grant agreement is executed, meaning the workplan has been approved and all required signatures have been obtained. Work that occurs before this date is not eligible for reimbursement with grant funds and cannot be used as match. All FY16 grants must be completed by December 31, 2018.



BWSR has reviewed and approved the reported expenditures of the initial payment. The final 10% will be paid after all final reporting requirements have been completed, the grantee has provided BWSR with a final financial report, and BWSR has approved expenditures and reporting.

Match Verification

BWSR requires documentation for any match dollars. If you will be claiming federal funds as match, this may require working with the FSA office and obtaining a FOIA waiver from the landowner. Please contact your Board Conservationist or Clean Water Specialists if you have questions.

FY 2016 Payment Distribution

FY16 CWF grant payments will be distributed in three installments to the grantee. The first payment of 50% of the grant amount will be paid after execution of the grant agreement. The second payment of 40% of the grant amount will be paid once the grantee has provided BWSR with notification and

Clean Water Fund Signage & the Legacy Logo

Clean Water Fund grant agreements from BWSR state that the Grantee will "comply with requirements for project signage." Legislative language requires that recipients of CWF grantees display the logo "where practicable". This includes printed materials, as well as signage on construction sites or public access points.

Read more about the guidelines or download the appropriate logo(s) for print or web at www.legacy.leg.mn/legacy-logo.



Native Vegetation Guidelines

BWSR's grant policies require that projects must use ecotypes native to Minnesota when planting vegetation or sowing seed, to the extent possible and practicable. Project specific guidance is available for a wide range of project types including wetland restoration, agricultural BMPs, raingardens and biofiltration areas, lakeshores, temporary cover, streambank stabilization, and ravine stabilization.

For more information, please refer to the full guidance at http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/native_vegetation/seeding_guidelines.pdf.

Habitat Evaluations

The habitat evaluation program annually evaluates a sample of up to ten Clean Water Fund projects with anticipated habitat restoration benefits.

The goal of this program is to provide greater transparency and accountability in the "on the ground" efficacy of restoration projects in achieving stated water quality goals. In addition, this program intends to be an educational resource aimed at improving future restoration outcomes by communicating technical challenges and lessons learned.

For further information, please contact Wade Johnson, Restoration Evaluations Program Coordinator at Wade.A.Johnson@state.mn.us.

Biennial Budget Request scheduled to open in March

The 2016 **Biennial Budget Request** (BBR) period will be completed in eLINK, BWSR's statewide conservation tracking tool. Testing is currently underway, and we expect the BBR period to open in early March.

BWSR conducts the BBR every two years to gather accurate funding request information from local governments. The process seeks to put local water management plans at the beginning of the State budget process by collecting information on projects and activities for the next State biennium found in state-approved, locally adopted water management plans.

Flood of 2014 Phase III recovery funding request deadline is February 26

The deadline is approaching to apply for Phase III funding for counties that received a Presidential Disaster Declaration (DR-4182) following the 2014 floods. Eligible applicants within the **declared counties** were notified of the funds by email on January 19, 2016.

These funds will be administered under BWSR's **Disaster Recovery Assistance Program (DRAP) Policy**. To apply, submit an updated damage assessment and **proposed project list** to your Board Conservationist.

Annual website reporting due March 15

For grants with **website reporting requirements**, information must be completed and available on your organization's website by March 15th. Check your grant agreements to see if your grants are subject to the website reporting requirement. It is recommended that the posted information is maintained on the website for a minimum of three years after the end of the grant period.

Website reporting is a statutory requirement for local governments receiving state funding through BWSR. However, many landowners and constituents may use the web as their first point of contact with your organization. Therefore, keeping your website up to date can be an important part of your organization's communication strategy, letting your constituents know about the types of projects, services, and expertise your organization can offer, and what you have achieved through various funding mechanisms.