



Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve

Partnership Easements Policy

February 6, 2012

This policy is to direct the use of the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Program easement program for entities wishing to pursue RIM conservation easement initiatives, as outlined in M.S. 103F.501-535. The RIM Reserve Program was established in 1986 and provides a unique opportunity for landowners to accomplish important conservation projects on private lands. To sustain the high quality of RIM Reserve Program, insure uses are consistent with enabling legislation and requirements, accommodate future stewardship obligations, and efficiently process easements, BWSR has developed this guidance for other organizations interested in utilizing RIM as a vehicle to secure long term protection of the state resources.

Criteria

- All current RIM Reserve program statute, policies and procedures shall be followed. The RIM Handbook and associated forms can be found at <http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/easements/handbook>.
- BWSR approved payment rates for cropland and non-cropland are to be followed. Payment rates are typically adopted annually. Contact the Easement Section Manager for current rates.
- Proposals must meet RIM Reserve program priorities for wetland restoration and riparian lands.
- Conservation practices must meet current native vegetation standards found at: http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/native_vegetation/seeding_guidelines.pdf.
- BWSR Engineering oversight of a project is required for all wetland restorations. All engineering associated costs must be identified and incorporated in easement project costs. If your project involves a wetland restoration we must receive a completed **Minnesota Wetland Restoration Evaluation Worksheet as part of your proposal**, which can be found at: http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/easements/2012_Wetland_Restoration_Evaluation_Worksheet.xlsm.
- There is a BWSR easement service charge of \$5000/easement and a SWCD easement service charge of \$2000/easement for a total of \$7000/easement. Easement services include: easement development, title insurance, recording, legal description and conservation plan development.
- Easement Stewardship for monitoring and enforcement are to be calculated for a 25 year period. A minimum of 12 inspections are required for a minimum of \$2400/easement.
- As some funding sources (e.g. DNR CPL) require local match and operate on a reimbursement basis, the applicant should have made all necessary arrangements to cover costs and submit funding to BWSR for easement and practice payments prior to final recording. BWSR may require a written agreement with the unit of government prior to funds being transferred to the state.
- BWSR reserves the right to reject, or work to modify, projects that do not meet current program priorities or that may obligate the state to unreasonable future management or liability issues.
- Management/maintenance activities identified within the easement are the responsibility of the landowner and will be stated in the conservation plan.
- Proposers may be asked to submit documentation to substantiate public benefits for wildlife and water quality or other criteria.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to meet the DNR Heritage Database review requirements or any other application information required of the funding source.

Procedure

- Applicants should submit a summary of their RIM Reserve project proposal to the BWSR Easement Section Manager. The proposal should contain a brief outline of the resource concern that would be addressed by the RIM program, along with a detailed budget, aerial photo or map, and wetland restoration information form if applicable. These items must be submitted in electronic format no later than 4 weeks before a project proposal deadline.
- The BWSR Easement section will evaluate each proposal on a case by case basis.
- The BWSR Easement section will work to refine proposals that meet RIM priorities, withhold support of requests outside of the scope of RIM, or refer projects to a more appropriate program. All project proposers will be notified no later than two weeks after submission of the proposal.
- Prior approval from BWSR will be required before any funding is requested with the intent of using RIM for easement acquisition.

For further information, please contact Kevin.lines@state.mn.us or tabor.hoek@state.mn.us.