

## Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Outside Request Easement Policy

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This policy is to direct the use of the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) reserve easement program for entities wishing to pursue RIM conservation easement initiatives with funds from sources other than available BWSR easement programs. The RIM Reserve Program was established in 1986 and provides unique opportunity for entities, such as SWCDs, to accomplish important conservation projects on private lands. To sustain the high quality of the RIM Reserve Program, ensure users 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's natural resources.

### Criteria

- All current RIM Reserve program statute (MS 103F.501 – 535), policies and procedures shall be followed. The RIM Handbook and associated forms can be found at <http://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.
- Conservation practices must meet current native vegetation standards found at: [http://bwsr.state.mn.us/native\\_vegetation/seeding\\_guidelines.pdf](http://bwsr.state.mn.us/native_vegetation/seeding_guidelines.pdf)
- BWSR Engineering oversight of a project is required for all wetlands 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](http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/easements/2012_Wetland_Restoration_Evaluation_Worksheet.xlsm)
- BWSR Engineering coordination is required for all channel restoration projects.
- There is a BWSR easement service charge of \$5000/easement and a SWCD easement service charge of \$2000/easement. Easement services include: easement development, title insurance, recording, legal description and conservation plan development. In addition there is an Easement Stewardship charge of \$6500/easement. This money will be placed into an interest bearing account and used for easement stewardship costs per MS 103B.103.
- 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 that 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 assume project manager roles for any grants received. This includes all reporting, coordination, change requests, etc. BWSR will provide data to the applicant for these purposes.

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. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain any required permits.

## **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.
- 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 [bill.penning@state.mn.us](mailto:bill.penning@state.mn.us), [tabor.hoek@state.mn.us](mailto:tabor.hoek@state.mn.us), or [john.voz@state.mn.us](mailto:john.voz@state.mn.us)