

FY18 Grants approved

The BWSR Board approved a number of Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18) grants at its meeting on June 28th.

Distribution of FY18 grants has begun and allocations have been posted to our website:

- **FY18 NRBG Allocations**
- **FY18 Required Local Levy or Cash**
- **FY18 WCA Base Grant Minimum SWCD Transfer**
- **FY18-19 Conservation Delivery & Cost Share; FY18 Capacity & Buffer Implementation Allocations**

Grants to SWCDs: Riparian Buffer Cost Share grants for FY18 will be distributed on their own grant agreement. The FY18-19 SWCD Program and Operations

biennial grant agreement will include Conservation Delivery and State Cost Share. Buffer Implementation and Capacity funds for FY18 will be distributed together on the same grant agreement.

Grants to TSAs: Nonpoint Engineering Assistance and Enhanced Technical Services grants will be distributed together on the same grant agreement for FY18.

Grants to Counties: The FY18-19 Natural Resources Block Grants (NRBG) biennial grant agreements will include Wetland Conservation Act, Local Water Management, DNR Shoreland, and MPCA Subsurface Septic Treatment Systems grants.

Important upcoming dates

- Aug 1:** Reporting deadline for grants that expired 6/30/17
- Aug 9:** FY17 CWF RFP application deadline
- Nov 1-3:** BWSR Academy at Cragun's in Brainerd

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Grant Agreement Processing: Avoid common errors

BWSR strives to execute your grant agreement and process associated payments as quickly as possible. Here are some common errors that may delay execution and payment.

Grantee's Authorized Representative

BWSR grant agreements request that a title, rather than an individual's name, is listed as the Grantee's Authorized Representative. Using the title rather than the name means there is usually no need for action by the Grantee if there is a staffing change in that position.

Returning the Grant Agreement

After the grantee has signed the grant agreement, return the document to Kari Keating, 520 Lafayette Road North, St. Paul, MN 55155 or BWSR.Grants@state.mn.us. Do not send the document to your Board Conservationist or any other individual, as doing so will cause delays in execution and payment.

It is also unnecessary to send both an electronic and hard copy of the grant agreement.

FY18 Program Policy Updates

At its meeting on June 28th, 2017, the BWSR Board approved new or revised policies for a number of BWSR grant programs for FY18 (effective July 1, 2017). The Board also approved a revised Erosion Control and Water Management (State Cost Share) policy at its meeting on May 24th, 2017. If your organization receives any of these grants, we recommend that you review the applicable policies on our website along with the Grants Administration Manual, which continues to provide the primary framework for local management of all state grants. Below is a summary of some of the program policy changes.

Clean Water Fund Policy

The **FY18 Clean Water Fund Policy** impacts the following programs:

- **Projects and Practices**
- **Multipurpose Drainage Management**
- **Buffer Cost Share**
- **Buffer Implementation**

Per the policy, the FY 2018 Clean Water Fund Competitive Grants Request for Proposal (RFP)—which applies to the Projects and Practices and Multipurpose Drainage Management programs—may identify more specific requirements or criteria when specified by statute, rule or appropriation language.

SWCD Conservation Delivery and Capacity Grants Policy

The new SWCD Conservation Delivery and Capacity Grants Policy was established provide consistency between these two grant programs, which are distributed to Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Disaster Recovery Assistance Program Policy

Changes to the Disaster Recovery Assistance Program (DRAP) policy were made to address policy inconsistencies/redundancies with the Grants Administrative Manual, revise easement sign-up procedures for RIM, and to revise the BWSR project allocation priorities.

Technical Service Area Grants Program Policy

The **Technical Service Area (TSA) Grants Program Policy** incorporates the Nonpoint Engineering Assistance Program and the Accelerated Implementation Enhanced Shared Technical Services Grants under one policy.

The policy standardizes the match requirement of 10% between funding sources, removes redundancies with the Grants Administration Manual and grant agreement, and contains edits for plain language. Furthermore, it shifts the requirement for the Annual Financial Statement for the TSA to March 15 to be consistent with other financial statements submitted to BWSR.

Erosion Control and Water Management Program (State Cost Share)

The State Cost Share policy has had multiple revisions over the years. Changes for FY18 address policy inconsistencies/redundancies with the Grants Administrative Manual, improved administration/implementation of the Cooperative Weed Management Area Program, and increase the buffer maximum flat cost share rate from \$200 to \$300.

FY18 Clean Water Fund RFP now open

The FY17 CWF RFP opened on Wednesday, July 5th, and will close at 4:30 pm on Wednesday, August 9th.

Applications must be submitted via **eLINK**, BWSR's grant management system. Applicants are strongly encouraged to begin the application process early so that they can request help if they need it. Eligible applicants without a current eLINK user account must submit an account request no later than 7 days prior to the application deadline.



FY18 Clean Water Fund Timeline:

- Aug 9, 2017 Application deadline at 4:30 PM*
- Dec 20, 2017 BWSR Board authorizes grant awards (proposed)
- Jan 2018 BWSR grant agreements sent to recipients (proposed)
- Mar 12, 2018 Work plan submittal deadline
- Apr 9, 2018 Grant execution deadline

To learn more about the competitive grant opportunities available, including the RFP and Board-approved policy, please visit the [Apply for BWSR Grants](#)

Grants Administration Manual revisions

A number of updates have been made to the **Grants Administration Manual** for FY18. The changes, effective July 1, 2017, provide consistency and clarity in a revised format, but do not include significant changes to policy.

Some notable changes include:

- **Recommended Local Policies and Requirements** — new section
- **Records, Program and Project Files** — merges two previous chapters, Records Management and Retention and Program and Project Files
- New **Cost-Share Contract Workbook** - enter contract details once to generate all forms

FY2018 Clean Water Fund Competitive Grants

Projects and Practices	\$6,000,000 ¹
Funds are to be used to protect, enhance and restore water quality in lakes, rivers and streams and to protect groundwater and drinking water. Eligible activities include structural and vegetative practices to reduce runoff and retain water on the land, livestock water quality projects, Subsurface Sewage Treatment System (SSTS) abatement grants for low income individuals, and stream bank, stream channel and shoreline protection projects.	
Multipurpose Drainage Management	\$675,000¹
This program funds multipurpose drainage management practices, targeting critical pollution source areas to reduce erosion and sedimentation, reduce peak flows and flooding, and improve water quality, while protecting drainage system efficiency and reducing drainage system maintenance for priority Chapter 103E drainage systems.	
MN Dept. of Agriculture – AgBMP Loans	\$5,000,000¹
These low interest loans to farmers, rural landowners, and agriculture supply businesses support agricultural Best Management Practices that prevent or reduce runoff from feedlots, farm fields and other pollution problems identified by the county in local water plans. Any LGU may apply, but awards will be coordinated through existing contract holders.	
¹ Amounts shown are estimates; actual amounts will be determined prior to the end of the application period.	

Amendments for grants expiring December 31, 2017

July is a good time to assess how progress on any grants expiring at the end of 2017, and begin the conversation within your organization and with your Board Conversation about whether an amendment—including an extension—may be needed.

The **Grant Agreement Amendments and Work Plan Revisions** chapter of the BWSR Grants Administration Manual establishes the procedures for requesting an amendment, which should begin 3-6 months prior to the grant agreement expiration date.