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Grants Administration Manual + policy updates

A number of chapters in the Grants Administration Manual have been updated for FY19, including a revision to the Grants Monitoring and Reconciliation Policy and a new Local Water Plan Status and Grant Eligibility Policy.

Additionally, a new **Local Water Plan Status & Grant Eligibility Policy** has been established to provide clear and consistent direction for grantees and potential grantees on how the status of their local water plan impacts BWSR decisions on grants and grant payments and clarity on if plan status can impact grant payments.

The **Grants Monitoring and Reconciliation Policy** was revised in response to modifications to the Department of Administration's Office of Grants Management (OGM) policies that allow a granting agency with multiple grants of similar grant periods with the same grantee to choose - through a documented risk assessment - which grant(s) represent a sample that will receive monitoring and financial reconciliation.

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FY19 Grants approved by BWSR Board

At its meeting on June 27th, 2018 the BWSR Board approved a number of Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19) grants. Some FY19 grants were approved last year and are associated with a biennial grant agreement. These include Natural Resource Block Grants (NRBG) and SWCD Program & Operations grants. Payments for these grants will be made within CY18.

Nonpoint Engineering Assistance and Enhanced Shared Technical Services grants to Technical Service Areas will go to the BWSR Board in August.

Allocations to Counties

- **FY 2019 NRBG Allocations***
- **FY 2019 Required Local Levy or Cash**
- **FY 2019 WCA Transfer**

*FY19 MPCA Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems (SSTS) grants will be distributed on a separate grant agreement via eLINK later this summer.

Allocations to SWCDs

- **FY18-19 Conservation Delivery, Cost Share, Capacity and Buffer Implementation Allocations**

Important Upcoming Dates

- **Aug 31:** FY19 CWF RFP closes
- **Oct 29 - 31:** BWSR Academy

FY19 Clean Water Fund RFP now open

The FY19 CWF RFP opened on July 9th, and will close at 4:30 pm on Friday, August 31st.

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 31, 2018** Application deadline at 4:30 PM*
- **Dec 19, 2018** BWSR Board authorizes grant awards (proposed)
- **Jan 2019** BWSR grant agreements sent to recipients (proposed)
- **Mar 15, 2019** Work plan submittal deadline
- **Apr 12, 2019** 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](#) page of BWSR's website.



FY2019 Clean Water Fund Competitive Grants

Accelerated Implementation	\$1,400,000¹
Projects and activities for accelerating implementation of projects and practices that supplement or exceeds current state standards for protection, enhancement, and restoration of Minnesota's surface and ground water resources, including compliance and citizen and community outreach.	
Multipurpose Drainage Management	\$610,000¹
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.	
Projects and Practices	\$11,600,000¹
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.	
MDH – Well Sealing	\$250,000
These MN Department of Health funds are to be used to provide assistance to well owners for the sealing of unused wells in accordance with Minnesota Rules 4725.	
MPCA – CWP Loans	Up to \$15,000,000
MN Pollution Control Agency's Clean Water Partnership (CWP) program offers zero -interest loans to local units of government for addressing nonpoint-source pollution to improve water quality.	
MDA – AgBMP Loans	\$5,000,000
MN Department of Agriculture offers 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, 2018

Are you on track to complete projects and close out grants that will expire at the end of this year? Summer is a good time to assess progress on any grants expiring at the end of 2018, and begin the conversation within your organization and with your Board Conservationist 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.

Grant amendments are now part of eLINK workflow, and the process is nearly identical to accessing grant agreements. Your grant day-to-day contact will receive notification when an amendment is available in eLINK, and the document will be accessible through the Attachments tab of the grant as well as the Document Library. The signed amendment will need to be returned to: BWSR, Attn: Kari Keating, 520 Lafayette Road North, St. Paul, MN 55155 or

BWSR.Grants@state.mn.us. You will receive a notification once the amendment is executed. *Do not send the document to your Board Conservationist or any other individual, as doing so will cause delays in execution.*

eLINK updates

Maintenance and new feature development in eLINK is ongoing. A few notable new features include:

- Grant Amendments are now distributed via eLINK. See the “Amendments for grants expiring December 31, 2018” section above for more details.
- Quick Reports are now available for closed grants: This includes All Details, Application, Financial reports, and more.

Grants Administration Manual + policy updates (*continued from page 1*)

The policies can be found via the links above, or on BWSR’s website at <http://bwsr.state.mn.us/grants/manual/>. The following chapters were also updated:

- **Grant Agreement Amendments and Work Plan Revisions:** Revised to reflect amendment document distributed through eLINK, include a dollar amount for when work plan budget changes require BWSR approval, and clarify budget adjustments are considered cumulative in the Criteria for Requests.
- **Grants Monitoring and Reconciliation:** Revised to reflect revision of the Grants Monitoring and Reconciliation Policy
- **Determining a Billing Rate:** Revised for clarity. Updated billing rate calculator spreadsheets, and added a new calculator option for smaller organizations.
- **Prevailing Wage:** Updated language for clarity.
- **Allowable and Unallowable Costs:** Paragraph added clarifying that billing rate requirements apply when one local government provides services to another when using state funds, and bullet added clarifying when food costs can be part of project costs.

Finally, the Conservation Practice Contract forms have also been updated, and can be found at:

- **Conservation Practice Contract: Percentage Based**
- **Conservation Practice Contract: Flat Rate**
- **Conservation Practice Contract Amendment**

A number of additional features are on the way before the end of 2018, and include a Technical Training tracking module, security updates, and a few minor upgrades to the user interface. Interested in joining our test team? Send a message to elinksupport@state.mn.us.

Finally, we have begun planning for a future version of eLINK, and your feedback will be critical. Watch for an email invitation in September to take our user survey!