

About the BWSR Grants Administration Manual

Effective Date: 7/1/2017

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Grants Administration Manual (GAM) is to provide the policies, administrative procedures, and best practices for all grants administered through the BWSR.

Applicability

The policies and administrative procedures contained within this manual apply to all grants administered through BWSR, unless a specific Grant Program Policy indicates otherwise.

Policies have been adopted by the BWSR Board. These include requirements that apply to all grants, such as BWSR's policy for grant noncompliance or monitoring as well as grant program specific policies. Grant program specific policies provide expectations for individual programs that are generally designated or supported by authorizing statutes or appropriation language and includes such items as eligible activities, application procedures, program-specific requirements, and match requirements.

Administrative procedures address matters common to all grants, including topics such as: processing and amending grants, technical quality and project assurances, reporting, and records retention. All provisions for the administration of grants that are less restrictive than these administrative requirements are superseded, except to the extent they are required by statute or regulation, pertain to existing agreements, or are authorized in writing by the BWSR. The Implementing Practices section of the manual details procedures for activities that construct practices and projects, including items such as: processing conservation practice contracts, operation and maintenance guidelines, vegetation guidelines, and pertinent forms. The provisions within this section may be required by a specific grant program.

The manual also contains best practices for complying with policies and administrative procedures, and optional and example forms made available for use but not required of any grant program.

This manual will be maintained on the BWSR website. Past versions of the manual can also be found there. Modifications to any section of the manual will include an effective date.

Terminology

The terminology in this section applies to the entire Grants Administration Manual.

Administration: General administration such as accounting/finance, clerical support, and management. Includes staff time not directly charged to a grant that supports general office activities and operations. See also Grant Administration.

Advance Payment: A type of grant payment in which the grantor pays the grantee for costs associated with a grant before the grantee has incurred the expense.

Allowable Cost: A cost that can be charged to a grant.

Application: An application may be specific to a grant program or request for proposal or it may refer to a document where a land occupier request financial assistance from an organization.

Base Rate: The hourly rate that is reported on an employee's paycheck. It can be obtained by dividing the annual salary by 2088 (the number of workable hours in a year for a full-time equivalent).

Billing Rate: An employee's base rate, plus the costs of benefits, leave, facilities, and administration.

Capital Asset: Capital assets means tangible or intangible assets used in operations having a useful life of more than one year which are capitalized in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. Capital assets include: (a) Land, buildings (facilities), equipment, and intellectual property (including software) whether acquired by purchase, construction, manufacture, lease-purchase, exchange, or through capital leases; and (b) Additions, improvements, modifications, replacements, rearrangements, reinstallations, renovations or alterations to capital assets that materially increase their value or useful life (not ordinary repairs and maintenance).

Capital Expenditure: Expenditure to purchase a capital asset, or make improvements to a capital asset that increases value and extends useful life (2 Code of Federal Regulations §200.13).

Closeout: A procedure initiated by a grantee to finalize a grant agreement that generally includes submitting final project and financial reports and returning unspent funds to the state. Closeout may also include BWSR review of final project information. See also Reconciliation.

Conflict of Interest: An actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest occurs when a person has actual or apparent duty or loyalty to more than one organization and the competing duties or loyalties may result in negative impartiality to one or both parties. A conflict of interest may exist even if no unethical, improper or illegal act results.

Conservation Practice Contract. A contract between a grantee and land occupier(s) to provide a legal standing to insure practices are installed and maintained according to approved standards and specifications. Also called a Cost Share Contract

Contract: An agreement to provide a good or service that legally binds two or more parties. Consultation with legal counsel prior to entering into a contract is recommended.

Contractor: A person or organization that enters into a contract with a grantee or land occupier to provide goods or services, and that is not an employee of the grantee.

Cost Share: Financial assistance provided to land occupiers.

Cost Share Contract: A contract between a grantee and land occupier(s) to provide a legal standing to insure practices are installed and maintained according to approved standards and specifications. Also called a Conservation Practice Contract.

Direct Cost: A cost that can be identified specifically with a particular final objective.

Effective Date: The date an agreement begins, as stated in the agreement.

Equipment: Property that has a useful life expectancy of more than one year and is not expected to be significantly depleted in use. See also the Allowable costs section of this manual.

eLINK: An online database for grantees to apply for grants, enter work plans, and submit progress reports. This system allows BWSR to track progress on the use of state funds distributed to our partners through competitive and non-competitive processes.

Executed Date: The date of the last signature by all parties on an agreement. Except when provided by the individual grant program policy, work may not begin under the grant agreement until it is fully executed.

Executed Grant Agreement: A grant agreement that has been signed and dated by all parties.

Expiration Date: The end date stated in the grant agreement or the date that all obligations have been satisfactorily fulfilled, whichever comes first.

Facilities: General operating and maintenance expenses, such as insurance, rent, and utilities.

Financial Report: A report is submitted by a grantee when a payment request is being made, after all grant funds have been spent, after a financial reconciliation, or the grant agreement expires. It is a summary of financial expenditures specific to each grant at the time the report is generated.

Financial Reconciliation: Reconciling a grantee's reported expenditures for a given period with supporting documentation, such as purchase orders, receipts and payroll records. Reconciliation occurs before final payment is made or grant closeout.

Fiscal Agent: The entity that will receive grant funds with a State-issued vendor number through the MN Department of Administration, Materials Management Division (MMD).

Grant Administration: Activities such as local grant tracking, grant agreement management, reporting, and project management or oversight of activities. See also Administration.

Grant Agreement: A written instrument or electronic document defining a legal relationship between a granting agency and a grantee when the principal purpose of the relationship is to transfer cash or something of value to the recipient to support a public purpose authorized by law.

Grant Agreement Amendment: An addition, deletion, or change to a fully executed grant agreement.

Grant Assignment: A grant agreement summarizes the rights, responsibilities, and duties of BWSR and the grantee. When some or all of these rights, duties, and responsibilities are transferred to a different entity, it is known as “grant assignment.” Grant assignment is generally not permitted without written approval from BWSR and the grantee. An executed assignment agreement is needed to transfer any rights, responsibilities, or duties under a grant agreement to a different entity.

Grant Budget: A plan for all income and expenses for the grant project. Grant budgets typically include line items for salaries and benefits, contracted services, training, travel and transportation, equipment, office expenses, and program expenses.

Grant Period: The time period between the executed date and expiration date of a grant agreement.

Grantee or Grant Recipient: The party responsible for implementing the terms of the grant agreement with BWSR. Also see Fiscal Agent.

Authorized Representative: The person or position designated by the grantee as the point of contact for a particular grant. It is recommended to be a staff person, not an elected or appointed official.

Incentives and Incentive Payments: Payments to encourage land occupiers to install or adopt land management practices. Incentive payments may require a form 1099 be filed with the IRS and Minnesota Department of Revenue. Consult the IRS Publication 225 or your tax advisor for more information.

Indirect Cost: A general support cost that cannot reasonably be directly charged to an agency, appropriation, or program.

Land Occupier: A person, corporation, or legal entity that holds title to or is in possession of land as an owner, lessee, tenant, or otherwise. Also referred to as Cooperator in eLINK.

Match: Services, materials, or cash contributed to the accomplishment of grant objectives. Specific program policy may have stricter requirements for what may be used as match.

Modified Base Rate: An employee’s base pay rate plus additions for benefits and leave.

Monitoring: A procedure of reviewing and documenting progress towards grant agreement implementation and compliance with grant agreement provisions.

Monitoring Visit: A visit involving both state granting agency staff and the grantee that occurs during the grant period. The purpose of grant monitoring visits is to review and ensure progress toward the grant’s goals, address any problems or issues before the end of the grant period, and build rapport between the state agency and the grantee.

Not Public Data: Any government data classified by statute, federal law or temporary classification as confidential, private, nonpublic or protected nonpublic.

Official Signature: A signature from the person who signs the grant agreement, grant agreement amendment, or other fiscal documents. The person designated as the official signatory must be an elected or

appointed official of the grantee, or a person authorized through official action by the grantee board to sign fiscal documents.

Prevailing Wage: The minimum hourly wage, plus benefits, employers must pay certain workers who work on construction projects where state dollars are used to fund the construction (MN Department of Labor and Industry). Questions about the application of prevailing wage rates should be directed to the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry at www.dli.mn.gov/LS/PrevWage.asp.

Professional/Technical Services: Services that are intellectual, in character, including consultation, analysis, evaluation, predication, planning, or programming, or recommendation, and result in the production of a report or the completion of a task. See also Technical and Engineering.

Progress Report: A summary of grant activities and outcomes for a given period. A progress report may have narrative, statistical, and/or financial elements.

Project Assurances: Guarantees from grantee that installed conservation practices will remain in place for the expected lifespan and provide benefits for which they were designed.

Project Development: Project support activities such as civic engagement; public outreach; initial contacts, actions, and activities with partners and/or landowners; preliminary information gathering; conservation marketing, or other activities which directly support or supplement the goals and outcomes of the application or work plan. See also Technical and Engineering.

Risk: The possibility that an event will occur and adversely affect the achievement of objectives.

Risk Assessment: Evaluating a grant recipient's risk of noncompliance with statutes, rules, grant agreements and policies to determine appropriate monitoring and reconciliation procedures.

Risk Factor: Significant interactions within the entity and with external parties, changes within the entity's internal and external environment, and other internal and external factors to identify risks throughout the entity.

Technical and Administration (TA): Activities performed on the Erosion Control and Water Management Program, such as grant administration, staff training to maintain appropriate technical approval authorities or licenses, site investigation and assessments, design and cost estimates, construction supervision, and inspections.

Technical and Engineering: Activities associated with technical site assessment, surveys, preliminary analysis and design, final design, construction supervision, installation, inspection, and completion of projects. See also Professional/Technical Services.

Technical Approval Authority (TAA) or Job Approval Authority (JAA): applicable professional licensure; reputable vendor with applicable expertise and liability coverage; or other applicable credentials, training and/or experience.

Technical Assistance Provider: The person with appropriate credentials identified by the grantee as responsible for the technical quality assurance for a given project or practice. Credentials can include conservation

partnership Technical Approval Authority (TAA) or Job Approval Authority (JAA); applicable professional licensure; reputable vendor with applicable expertise and liability coverage; or other applicable credentials, training, and/or experience. See also Technical Approval Authority

Technical Quality Assurance: Guarantees throughout each phase of implementation and administration from grantees that appropriate levels of technical expertise are utilized.

Use Allowance: A basic or minimum rate established for the use of an item.

Workable Hours: The number of hours that are available to work in a year. The Minnesota Legislative Coordinating Commission calculates full time equivalents based on 2088 hours in a year. See Minnesota Statutes §3.303, subdivision 10.

Work Plan: A written project or program management tool that identifies desired project or program activities, timelines, and outcomes. This is generally entered and approved in eLINK after an application for a particular grant fund has been approved. See also Application.

Acronyms

State Agencies and Commissions

BWSR:	Board of Water and Soil Resources
CWC:	Clean Water Council
DNR:	Department of Natural Resources
LCCMR:	Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources
LSOHC:	Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
MDA:	Minnesota Department of Agriculture
MDH:	Minnesota Department of Health
MnDOT:	Minnesota Department of Transportation
MGS:	Minnesota Geological Survey
MMB:	Minnesota Office of Management and Budget
MPCA:	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Federal Agencies

ACOE:	Army Corps of Engineers
CED:	Community Economic Development (Division of USDA)
CFSA:	Consolidated Farm Services Agency
EPA:	Environmental Protection Agency
FEMA:	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FSA:	USDA Farm Service Agency
NRCS:	USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
RC&D:	Resource Conservation & Development
USDA:	United States Department of Agriculture
USFWS:	United States Fish & Wildlife Service

USGS: United States Geological Survey

Regional/Local

CAC: Citizen Advisory Committee
CHS: Community Health Service
JPB: Joint Powers Board
LGU: Local Government Unit
RDC: Regional Development Commission
SWCD: Soil and Water Conservation District
TAC: Technical Advisory Committee
WD: Watershed District
WMO: Watershed Management Organization

State Associations

ADA: Association of (Watershed) District Administrators
AMC: Association of Minnesota Counties
AMT: Association of Minnesota Townships
AMWRAP: Association of Minnesota Water Resources Administrators and Planners
LMC: League of Minnesota Cities
MACDE: Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees
MACPZA: Minnesota Association of County Planning and Zoning Administrators
MARC&D: Minnesota Association of Resource Conservation and Development
MASWCD: Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
MAWD: Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts

National Associations

NACD: National Association of Conservation Districts
NWF: National Wildlife Federation
SWCS: Soil and Water Conservation Society

State Programs

CLMP: Citizens Lake Monitoring Program
CLWP: Comprehensive Local Water Planning
CREP: Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
C-S: Cost-Share Program
CWL: Clean Water Legacy
CWP: Clean Water Partnership
LAP: Lake Assessment Program
LWRPMP: Local Water Resources Protection and Management Program
NPEA: Nonpoint Engineering Assistance

NRBG: Natural Resources Block Grant
 PFM: Private Forestry Management
 PWP: Permanent Wetland Preserve
 RIM: Reinvest in Minnesota
 SLR: Streambank, Lakeshore, and Roadside Program
 SRF: State Revolving Fund
 WCA: Wetland Conservation Act

Federal Programs

ACP: Agricultural Conservation Program
 CRP: Conservation Reserve Program
 EQIP: Environmental Quality Incentive Program
 FDR: Flood Damage Reduction
 FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Act
 WBP: Water Bank Program
 WRP: Wetland Reserve Program

Additional Acronyms

GIS: Geographic Information System
 GPS: Geographic Positioning System
 NPS: Nonpoint Source Pollution
 TMDL: Total Maximum Daily Load
 WRAPS: Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies Report

History

Version	Description	Date
2017	Previous versions of the Grants Administration Manual contained two sections called <i>Purpose and Scope</i> and <i>Terminology</i> that have been combined into one section for the 2017 version, revises existing terminology for clarity and consistency, removes unused terms, and adds new terms.	7/1/2017