

Vegetation Requirements for BWSR Funded Projects

Effective July 1, 2016

All projects completed with BWSR grant dollars that involve vegetation restoration or establishment are subject to BWSR's [Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines](#). While much of this publication is guidance, a few key components are required. Additionally, some programs may have program-specific requirements that may supersede what is contained in the Guidelines.

Key requirements within the Guidelines include the use of native vegetation, providing pollinator habitat, and incorporating high diversity levels. These apply to all BWSR programs that have vegetation restoration components, as well as other state programs that have adopted the guidelines. Environmentally suitable native, annual, biennial and perennial plant species (following the source selection criteria included in the Guidelines) are required for projects to meet legislative requirements and provide multiple landscape benefits. The Guidelines provide guidance on the topics of landscape resiliency planning, seed and plant sources, native variety/cultivar use, insecticides and chemical carryover, seed mixes, yellow tag seed, project bidding and specifications, protecting natural communities, riparian buffer planning and design, restoring pollinator habitat, climate change considerations, project site preparation, planting and maintenance and guidance for a variety of project types.

The Guidelines were adopted effective June 27, 2012 as policy under BWSR Board Resolution #12-56, with an effective date of July 1, 2012 (FY 2013), and are incorporated into this manual by reference. They replace BWSR's Invasive Non-Native Species Policy (Sept. 8, 2004). The Guidelines were updated for FY17.

Native Vegetation Requirement

Native vegetation for BWSR funded projects to provide multiple landscape benefits, to prevent the use of invasive species and to meet legislative statutes and appropriation language.

Exceptions for Non-native Vegetation

Non-native species may be approved in select cases where the species will provide increased ecological function and not pose a risk to natural plant communities. Contact your Board Conservationist or Clean Water Specialist regarding exemptions for projects completed with BWSR grant funding. For non-BWSR funded projects, please contact the program manager for the agency providing the funding. For the use of cover crops for soil stabilization local conservation staff have the authority to decide if native or non-native species should be used. They also have the authority to decide if native or non-native perennial grasses (with the exception of aggressive species such as reed canary grass, *Phragmites* sp. and *Miscanthus* sp.) should be used for the practice "grass waterways" on working lands due to the need for rapid establishment, the potential for pesticide overspray and repeated haying.

Pollinator Habitat Requirement

State legislation from 2013 states that "prairie restorations conducted on state lands or with state funds must include an appropriate diversity of native species selected to provide habitat for pollinators throughout the growing season". As a result, prairie plantings need to focus on providing spring, summer, and fall blooming plants. It is also important that any

native seed and plants supplied for projects must not be treated (seed coatings or foliar application) with insecticides including but not limited to neonicotinoid insecticides (such as imidacloprid, clothianidin, thiamethoxam, dinotefuran and acetamiprid) that can harm pollinators.

Diversity Levels

As a general rule high diversity levels are promoted to increase the long-term resiliency of projects and to provide competition for invasive species. Appropriate diversity levels for projects are defined in NRCS practice standards for projects.