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Grants Administration Manual

A number of chapters in the Grants Administration Manual have been updated for FY20, including a revision to the [Grants Noncompliance Policy](#) to format the document consistent with other GAM policies and clarify language regarding noncompliance procedure and steps.

Additionally, minor changes have been made to the [Processing a BWSR Grant](#) chapter to add additional language about approval of expenditure of grant funds as well as delegation of authority for that approval.

Format changes were also made to the [Grants Monitoring & Financial Reconciliation Policy](#) to combine what had been two GAM chapters into one. The new version now contains a brief reference to the original policy for historical context but now follows the format of other policy chapters within the GAM.

The [Allowable & Unallowable Costs](#) chapter was revised to provide more clarity on how to report on capital assets and depreciation. There was also additional language added regarding depreciation methods for vehicles. Finally, there were minor changes made to the section referencing building purchase and usage to allow for expenses for buildings that are either *owned and/or occupied* by the grantee.

FY20-21 Grants approved by BWSR Board

At its meeting on June 26th, 2019 the BWSR Board approved a number of Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) grants. Some FY21 grants were also approved and will be associated with a biennial grant agreement. These include Natural Resource Block Grants (NRBG) and SWCD Program & Operations grants (Conservation Delivery and State Cost-Share). Payments on FY21 grants will be made after the start of that fiscal year.

SWCD Local Capacity will go to the BWSR Board in August and Watershed Based Funding is scheduled to go to the board in September.

Allocations to Counties

- [FY 2020 & FY 2021 NRBG Allocations & WCA Transfer](#)

Allocations to SWCDs

- [FY 2020 and FY 2021 Conservation Delivery, State Cost-Share Allocations](#)
- [FY 2020 Buffer Implementation Allocations](#)
- [FY 2020 Watershed Conservation Planner Initiative Amendments](#)

Allocations to TSAs

- [FY2020 and FY 2021 Nonpoint Engineering Assistance](#)
- [FY2020 and FY 2021 Enhanced Technical Assistance](#)

FY20 Clean Water Fund RFP now open

The **FY20 CWF RFP** opened on July 1st, and will close at 4:30 pm on Monday, September 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.

FY20 Clean Water Fund Timeline:

- **Sept 9, 2019** Application deadline at 4:30 PM
- **Jan 22, 2020** BWSR Board authorizes grant awards (proposed)
- **Feb 2020** grant agreements sent to recipients (proposed)
- **April 15, 2020** Work plan submittal deadline
- **May 15, 2020** 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.



FY 2020 Clean Water Fund Competitive Grants

Multipurpose Drainage Management Up to \$700,000¹

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 Up to \$13,500,000¹

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.

Drinking Water Subprogram Up to 20% of P&P

This grant makes an investment in land treatment projects and practices that will protect or improve drinking water sources. Surface water (streams, rivers, and lakes) and groundwater (aquifers) can both serve as sources of drinking water.

MPCA – CWP Loans Up to \$10,000,000

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 \$12,000,000

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.

Revised Policies & New Programs

■ Erosion Control and Water Management Policy (State Cost-Share)

Updated to allow for pre-construction cover as an eligible activity. To address the need for vegetative cover when construction cannot begin immediately and the site requires stabilization to prevent further erosion. Updates to both the percent based and flat rate contracts.

■ FY 2020 CWF Policy

Additional language about in-lake or in-channel treatment: eligible activity requiring feasibility study that meets minimal requirements as defined by BWSR completed prior to application and submitted in eLINK with application. Includes additional ineligible activities.

■ Wellhead Protection Partner Pilot Program Policy

New pilot program policy for permanent or long term protection of vulnerable wellhead protection areas.

■ Cover Crop Program Authorization

BWSR Board authorized staff to begin program development, allocating up to \$1M from CWF Projects & Practices for these grants.

■ Lawns 2 Legumes Program

BWSR was appropriated \$900K by legislature from LCCMR funding for conversion of residential lawns to pollinator habitat. Focus is on the endangered rusty patched bumble bee and other threatened pollinator species. Program development in process with a multi-track plan for implementation.

1. Partnering with Metro Blooms/Blue Thumb to put on workshops throughout the state for interested landowners with funding available for pollinator friendly seeds and/or plants for turf conversion.

2. Planned RFP in late fall/early winter 2019 for grants in late winter/early spring 2020 to local government units to work with landowners to provide technical assistance on demonstration projects on residential lawns that meet the program criteria.

Important Upcoming Dates

- **Sept. 9:** FY20 CWF RFP closes
- **Aug. 23:** FY20 Wellhead Protection Partner Pilot Grant RFP closes
- **Oct 29 - 31:** BWSR Academy

Amendments for grants expiring December 31, 2019

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 2019, 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.*