



Grants Quarterly

2018 Year End Reporting Edition

February 1st reporting deadline

BWSR's annual reporting deadline for grants and program reporting is February 1, 2019. A number of administrative activities are subject to this deadline, including:

- Final reporting on grants that expire on December 31, 2018
- Annual reports for most open grants
- Annual program activity reports

You will find a number of resources on BWSR's website to assist you with your reporting, including our library of eLINK guidance documents and videos, the Grants Administration Manual, and materials on the Grant Program Reporting Overview page of BWSR's website. Resources include:

- [eLINK Cookbook](#)
- [Grants Expiration Dates](#)
- [eLINK Reporting at a Glance](#)
- [Grant Profiles](#)

A final report is required for any grants that expire on December 31, 2018. Reference your grant agreements and any amendments to determine the reporting requirements and deadlines as they apply to the specific grants your organization has received.

We encourage you to begin working on your reporting well before the deadline so that you can get help if you need it. Contact your Board Conservationist with grant-specific reporting questions, and direct eLINK-related questions to eLINKsupport@state.mn.us.

Inside this issue:

- [February 1st Reporting Deadline](#)
- [Annual Program Reporting](#)
- [Important Upcoming Dates](#)
- [FY19 Clean Water Fund Grant Awards](#)
- [Workplan Development in eLINK](#)
- [Watershed Based Funding](#)
- [Grants Administration Manual Updates](#)
- [eLINK Development Updates](#)

Annual Program Reporting

In addition to annual BWSR grant reports, a number of program reports are also due on February 1st. These include:

- [BWSR Ditch Buffer Strip Annual Report](#)
- [BWSR TSA Accomplishments](#)
- [BWSR WCA Annual Reporting Form](#)
- [DNR Shoreland Activity](#)
- [MPCA SSTS](#)
- [MPCA County Feedlot Program](#)

Reporting forms for WCA, Ditch Buffer Strip, and NPEA will be available on BWSR's website. DNR and MPCA reporting forms and guidance will originate from those respective agencies.

Important upcoming dates

- Feb 1:** Deadline for annual grant & program reporting
- Mar 12:** FY19 CWF workplan submittal deadline

FY19 Clean Water Fund awards

At its upcoming meeting on December 19th, 2018, the BWSR Board is expected to approve grant awards for the FY19 Projects and Practices, Accelerated Implementation and Multipurpose Drainage Management programs. The awarded grants will total over \$13.6 million, though the amount requested was over \$29 million from the competitive grant application period. This RFP included Accelerated Implementation, Multipurpose Drainage Management, and Projects and Practices programs.



Applications were reviewed by an inter-agency scoring team that included staff

from Minnesota's Pollution Control Agency (PCA), Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Department of Agriculture (MDA), Department of Health (MDH), and the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR).

An RFP for MDH's Well Sealing program was run concurrently, and 8 applications totaling \$166,300 were funded through this program.

Successful applicants will be notified via email. Workplan development will be available in eLINK immediately upon notification, and the deadline to submit workplans for approval is March 12, 2019. Grant agreements will be distributed in January, and must be executed no later than April 9, 2019. Please be sure that the Day-to-Day Contact for the organization and the grant is up to date to ensure timely grant execution.

More details on workplan and reporting requirements for these grants can be found in their Grant Profiles:

- [Accelerated Implementation](#)
- [Multipurpose Drainage Management](#)
- [Projects and Practices](#)
- [Well Sealing](#)

FY19 CWF Competitive Grants	Total \$ Amount Available	Total \$ Amount Requested	Number of Applications Awarded	Total \$ Amount Awarded
Accelerated Implementation	\$1,400,000	\$3,911,804	12	\$1,382,915
Multipurpose Drainage Management	\$610,000	\$1,325,545	4	\$610,000
Projects and Practices	\$11,600,000	\$24,429,036	36	\$11,685,070
Well Sealing (MN Dept. of Health)	\$250,000	\$166,300	8	\$166,300

Workplan development in eLINK

Many recently awarded BWSR grants require an approved workplan as a condition of the grant agreement. This workplan is made up of one or more high-level “Activities”, or broad categories of work, that become the foundation for future grant reporting.

Adding activities from the application

You can import activities proposed as part of the application or funding request to the grant workplan, rather than creating a *new* Activity as part of the workplan. This means less data entry for you, and allows direct comparison between what was proposed during the application—such as the number of practices and the associated proposed pollution reductions—and what is completed as part of the grant.

When adding a new Activity Budget, Activities followed by “(from application)” will appear in the “Activity Name” dropdown. This tag will disappear once an Activity has been successfully imported to the workplan. You can continue adding additional Activity Budgets under that Activity as needed to represent different funding sources, including Current State Grant, Landowner Match, Federal Funds, etc.

View the [Creating a Work Plan in eLINK](#) video module for step-by-step guidance.



CWF Erosion Control Project in the Upper Sand Hill River Watershed

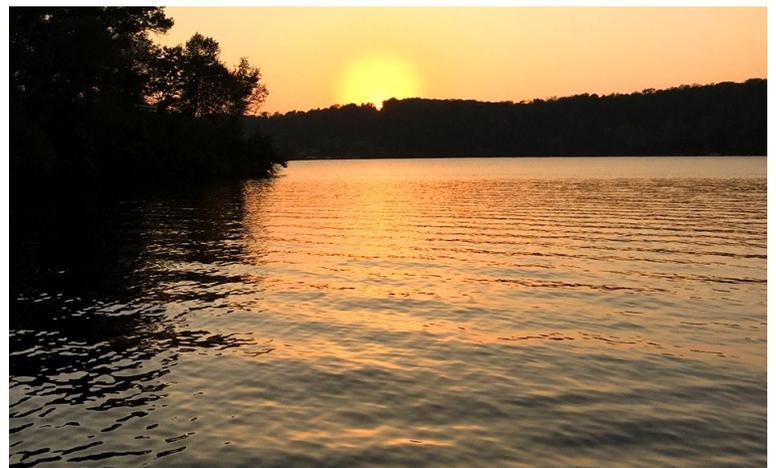
Grouping vs. splitting

To simplify reporting, BWSR requests that you limit the number of Activities you include in your workplan to one per Activity Category whenever possible—also called “grouping” or “lumping” Activities. Unless you are planning to link an Activity to another BWSR funding source, you only need to have one “administration/coordination” Activity or one “agricultural practices” Activity. From there, you can split out individual landowner projects at the Activity Detail level. This should simplify the process of workplan development and reporting. Please review the [Grouping and Splitting Activities](#) eLINK guidance document for more details.

Watershed Based Funding

Watershed-based funding is an alternative to the traditional project-by-project competitive grant processes often used to fund water-quality improvement projects. Watershed-based funding allows collaborating local governments to pursue timely solutions based on a watershed’s highest priority needs.

This approach depends on comprehensive watershed management plans developed by planning partnerships under the One Watershed, One Plan program or the Metropolitan Surface Water or Groundwater Management framework to provide assurance that actions are prioritized, targeted, and measurable. Using the 2018 pilot as a starting point, BWSR has begun a process of engaging our local government partners to develop the apportionment and distribution options for a post-pilot program.



Lake Zumbro where Southeast Minnesota Wastewater Initiative helped residents select a shared sewage treatment system with various CWF grants from BWSR.

Reminder: Review 2018 revisions to the Grants Administration Manual

Several sections of the Grants Administration Manual (G.A.M.) were revised during the past calendar year, with changes going into effect for grants issued after July 1, 2018. Some of these revisions reflect changes in BWSR's business processes, such as procedural changes necessitated by updates to eLINK, while other revisions reflect changes in BWSR or statutory policy.

BWSR strongly encourages you to reference the version of the G.A.M. posted on our website, and to review the sections that were revised within the last calendar year. The updated dates for chapters revised in 2018 have been noted in red.

As always, if the guidance you need cannot be found in the GAM, contact your Board Conservationist for assistance.

eLINK Development Updates

If you haven't logged into eLINK for a while, you will notice a few changes. First, several system security enhancements were implemented in November to meet State of MN requirements. You may be prompted to change your password next time you log in.

Amendments are now being processed through eLINK. The Current Awarded Amount and Current End Date should be correctly reflected in the user interface and on reports for any amendments processed after June 2018. You will receive notifications from eLINK when an amendment document is available for you, and after the amendment is executed — this is the same process used for grant agreements.

Remember to return your signed amendment via email to BWSR.grants@state.mn.us or US Mail, as instructed in the eLINK notification message. Do not upload your signed amendment to the Attachments tab in eLINK.

For fiscal year 2019, updated sections include:

- **Technical Quality Assurance** (updated 7/1/18)
- **Records, Programs & Project Files** (updated 7/1/18)
- **Plan Status and Grant Eligibility Policy** (updated 7/1/18)
- **Grant Monitoring and Reconciliation** (updated 7/1/18)
- **Determining a Billing Rate** (updated 7/1/18)
- **Prevailing Wage** (updated 7/1/18)
- **Allowable and Unallowable Costs** (updated 7/1/18)
- **Conservation Practice Contract: Flat Rate** (updated 7/1/18)
- **Conservation Practice Contract: Percentage Based** (updated 7/1/18)
- **Conservation Practice Contract Amendment** (updated 7/1/18)
- **Cost-Share Contract Workbook** (updated 7/9/18)

We've made a few changes to the user interface as well. You can now generate reports from status change pages (All Details, Application, Financial, and Workplan), eliminating the need to go back to the home page to run the report. Additionally, your search filters will be retained when you use the back button. You may need to use the "Reset" button to perform a new search/filter.

We hope you will find these new features helpful. If you notice any issues, or have suggestions for improvement, please don't hesitate to contact eLINKsupport@state.mn.us

