

SWCD Conservation Delivery and Capacity Grants Policy

From the Board of Water and Soil Resources, State of Minnesota

Version: 2.00
Effective Date: 08/29/2019
Approval: Board Resolution #19-43

Policy Statement

The Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Conservation Delivery and Capacity Programs are implemented under the authority of Minnesota Statutes §103C.321 and §103C.331. These programs provide each SWCD with funds for the general administration and operation of the district, and for building the capacities of the soil and water conservation districts.

District boards are responsible for the administration and decisions concerning the local use of these funds in accordance with: Minnesota Statutes, §103C.321 and §103C.331; BWSR policies; grant agreement; and all other applicable laws. BWSR will use grant agreements as contracts for assurance of deliverables and compliance. Failure to comply with relevant statutes, rules, and policies may lead to imposition of financial penalties on the grant recipient.

Applicable Programs and Grants

- Conservation Delivery (State General Fund)
- Capacity (Clean Water Fund)

Activities implemented with Capacity funds allocated from the Clean Water Fund must be consistent with the purposes of the Minnesota Constitution, article XI, section 15 to “...protect, enhance, and restore water quality in lakes, rivers, and streams and to protect groundwater from degradation...”

Reason for the policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide specific requirements for the implementation of funds appropriated to BWSR associated with the Conservation Delivery and Capacity Programs.

BWSR’s Grants Administration Manual (<http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/grants/manual/>) provides the primary framework for local management of all state grants administered by BWSR.

Eligible Activities and Program Requirements

1. Eligible and Ineligible Activities

Conservation Delivery and Capacity Grants provide each Soil and Water Conservation District with funds for the general administration and operation of the district, and building the capacity of the district. Eligible Activities must be identified in the work plan and include items 1.1-1.5.

- 1.1 **Staffing.** The salary, benefits, leave, and applicable training for staff are eligible if necessary for work plan activities funded by the grant.
- 1.2 **Facility Administration.** Operation and maintenance of office and its functions.
- 1.3 **Supplies Acquisition.** The purchase of temporary, office support goods like software, tools, and fuel, as defined in the Grant Administration Manual - Allowable and Unallowable Cost section.
- 1.4 **Conservation Practice Cost Share and Incentives.** Funds used from this policy for cost share or incentives must follow the BWSR Erosion Control and Water Management Program Policy.
- 1.5 **Equipment Acquisition.** The acquisition of permanent goods like vehicles, ATVs, and survey equipment, as defined in the Grant Administration Manual - Allowable and Unallowable Cost section.
- 1.6 **Ineligible Activities.** See the unallowable costs as defined in the Grant Administration Manual - Allowable and Unallowable Cost section

2. Grant Match Requirements

No match is required for Conservation Delivery Funds. Grant match requirements for other programs will be determined by BWSR Board Resolution.

3. Grant Work Plan and Reporting Requirements

To ensure the continued success of the program regular reporting of expenditures and technical assistance accomplishments are required. Work plans are required for all programs funded through the Clean Water Fund.

- 3.1. **Grant Work Plan.** Work plans shall be developed in eLINK and must be approved before work can begin on any grant associated with these programs. Work plans shall reflect each eligible activity that will be implemented, a description of the anticipated activity outcomes or accomplishments, and grant and match funding amounts to accomplish each of the activities.
- 3.2. **Reporting.** Descriptions of actual results and financial expenditures for each work plan activity must be reported in eLINK by February 1 of each year.
- 3.3. **Grant Closeout.** Within thirty (30) calendar days of the conclusion of each grant agreement or expenditure of all grant funds, grantees are required to:
 - a. Provide documentation of all work plan activities completed with the grant funding in eLINK; and
 - b. Submit a signed eLINK Financial Report to BWSR; and

c. Return any unspent funds to BWSR.

3.4. Districts are responsible for documenting and defending their legacy fund expenditures as needed, reasonable, consistently applied, rationally allocated, and consistent with Minnesota Management and Budget’s Guidance to Agencies on Legacy Fund Expenditure.

4. BWSR Program Monitoring and Reconciliation Requirements

BWSR staff is authorized to develop grant agreements, including requirements and processes for project outcomes reporting, closeouts, fiscal reconciliations, and grant verifications. All grantees must follow the grant agreement and Grants Administration Manual.

In the event there is a violation of the terms of the grant agreement, BWSR will enforce the grant agreement and evaluate appropriate actions, up to and including repayment of grant funds at a rate up to 100% of the grant agreement.

History

Version	Description	Date
1.0	SWCD Conservation Delivery and Capacity Policy; first adoption	07/01/2017
2.0	Additional language added to more directly reference Clean Water Fund Statutory requirements and Minnesota Management and Budget’s Guidance to Agencies on Legacy Fund Expenditure	08/29/2019