

# Lawns to Legumes Demonstration Neighborhood Grants Program Phase 2

(FY 2022)

## Request for Proposals

### General Information

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This grant program is made possible through an appropriation from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF), aimed at increasing the populations of rusty patched bumble bees and other at-risk pollinators. This will be achieved through efforts to establish residential pollinator habitat within neighborhoods in important pollinator corridors/pathways and building overall interest in ecological landscaping. \$1,066,000 is available.

Funding for this program is from the two ENRTF appropriations that have different grant end dates summarized below. Through the application process applicants will be asked if they can complete their projects by May 1 2023 or if they would benefit from an extra year and final decisions about grant periods will be made by the program's advisory team.

- There is \$540,000 available for **new** Demonstration Neighborhood grantees and grant awards will be for a minimum of \$20,000 and a maximum of \$40,000. These appropriations are from Minnesota Session Laws 2021, Chapter 6, Article 6, Section 2, Subd. 8(P). Minnesota Session Laws 2021, Chapter 6, Article 5, Section 2, Subd. 8(M). The end date for projects through this appropriation is May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024
- There is \$526,000 available for **new or past** Demonstration Neighborhood grant recipients who are eligible for a maximum of \$20,000 - \$40,000 (**a maximum of \$20,000 for past grantees**) and will be ranked along with other applications. Minnesota Session Laws 2021, Chapter 6, Article 5, Section 2, Subd. 20(B) This end date is May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

Smaller grant awards may be considered if combined with other sources of verifiable funds that creates a total project size that is at least \$20,000.

A maximum project cost of \$1,500 per residential project is allowed. Or a maximum project cost of \$5,000 per community space or educational landscapes is allowed. The grant funds will not cover the cost of large construction costs for Raingardens or Shoreline installation. Also review the Lawns to Legumes Phase 2 Demonstration Neighborhood Grant Program Policy for additional grant requirements.

## Who May Apply

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- Cities
- Counties
- Watershed Districts
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Non-governmental Organizations
- Tribal Governments

Applicants must be able to comply with the Lawns to Legumes Demonstration Neighborhood Program Policy.

## Eligibility Criteria

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Eligible landscapes must be residential yards, educational landscapes or community spaces but the scale and density of “neighborhoods” can be determined by the applicant.

- **New or past** Demonstration Neighborhood grant recipients are eligible for a maximum of \$20,000 - \$40,000 (**a maximum of \$20,000 for past grantees**) and will be ranked along with other applications.
- Demonstration Neighborhood projects must include multiple parcels (residential, educational landscapes and community spaces) to the extent possible to ensure that residential projects are included along with larger educational or communities space projects and to help build habitat corridor/pathways.
- Residential is defined as land or parcels associated with residential occupancy including single family homes, apartments and similar types of multifamily dwellings, as well as community spaces that are apart of or adjacent to these residences. This includes rural residences. Excluded from this definition are agricultural, commercial, industrial or natural lands not associated with a residence.
- Projects in educational landscapes (daycare; elementary, middle or high school; college) will work to provide environmental education, stewardship skills to youth and partners.
- Community spaces (parks, community living spaces, public golf courses, libraries) are somewhere for local people to build social networks and work together on shared interests or activities. Commercial landscapes are not eligible.
- A plant or animal is considered “at-risk” when:
  - It is proposed for listing as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act
  - It is a candidate species for listing; or
  - It has been petitioned by a third party for listing; or
  - It’s populations are rare, declining, or may be vulnerable to decline.
  - Find a list of [At-Risk Pollinator Species](#) on the Lawns to Legumes Partners webpage.
- All projects will require a landowner agreement with the property owner and plan for maintenance.

A minimum non-state match equal to at least 25% of the amount requested and/or received is required, except in areas identified by the United State Fish and Wildlife Service as areas where there is a high potential for rusty patched bumble bees to be present, where only a 10% match is required. The BWSR Lawns to Legumes [map](#) provides locations for high potential for Rusty Patched Bumble Bees and shows other key habitat corridors in the state. The match must be cash or in-kind cash value of goods, materials, and services directly attributed to project accomplishments.

## To Apply

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Applications need to be submitted via eLINK. Eligible applicants without a current eLINK user account must submit a request at <https://apps.bwsr.state.mn.us/elink/Account/Register> to establish an eLINK account **no later than 7 days prior to the application deadline** in order to ensure sufficient time to create an account. As part of the application, eLINK will require applicants to map the location of the proposed project area(s).

The following are the application questions to be filled out in eLINK:

- Describe if and how your project's location will benefit the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee and/or other at-risk pollinators.
- Discuss your projects connection to statewide and local habitat corridors/pathways or areas mapped as important for pollinator habitat.
- How will partnerships be established or strengthened as part of the demonstration neighborhood and how is equity considered for the project?
- Discuss the technical expertise of applicants and partners that will be involved with assisting landowners.
- What are your plans for the long-term planning/maintenance/sustainability of projects, including protection from pesticide exposure?
- Discuss the potential to incorporate several project types into the demonstration neighborhood such as pollinator beneficial trees and shrubs, pollinator lawns, pollinator meadows and native pocket plantings that are encouraged for the program.
- Explain the anticipated outcomes upon completion of the project and how these outcomes will be obtained. If you are a past grant recipient please summarize your past outcomes.
- Are you interested in your project timeframe extending an additional year from May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 to May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024? If so, which close date and amount requested? BWSR has two appropriations with two different end dates as noted at the beginning of the RFP. Past grant recipients for Demonstration Neighborhoods are not eligible for the extended grant timeline.

**Proposals must include one image file** of the project area in relation to the priority zones (.jpg, .tiff, .png) which will be one of several considerations of how at-risk pollinators will be benefitted by the program, as an Application Image in eLINK. General attachments will not show up as a part of the application report in eLINK.

Applicants will be required to fill out a project budget summarizing proposed activities and expenditures including technical and administrative costs.

### ***Nongovernmental Applicants***

*All non-governmental applicants must provide proof of nonprofit status. Any non-government applicants requesting >\$25,000 must also complete a Pre-Award Financial Capacity Review Form and the appropriate documentation as outlined below:*

- *Applicants that are new or have an annual income under \$50,000 should submit their most recent board-reviewed financial statements.*
- *Applicants that have an annual income under \$750,000 should submit their most recent IRS Form 990.*

- Applicants that have an annual income over \$750,000 should submit their most recent certified financial audit.

This information should be uploaded within the eLINK application under the “Attachments” tab before the RFP closes.

## Evaluation and Selection

<b>Table 1: Lawns to Legumes Demonstration Neighborhood Program Ranking Criteria</b>	
<b>Ranking Criteria</b>	<b>Maximum Points</b>
<u>Potential benefits for the Rusty Patch Bumble Bee and other at-risk pollinators.</u>	25
<u>Connection to habitat corridors/pathways or areas mapped as important for pollinator plantings and benefiting at-risk species</u>	15
<u>Partnerships established or strengthened as part of the demonstration neighborhoods and equity considerations</u>	10
<u>Sufficient technical capacity of applicant and partners</u>	10
<u>Long-term planning/maintenance/sustainability of projects, including protection from pesticide exposure</u>	10
<u>Potential to incorporate several project types (i.e. flowering trees and shrubs, pollinator lawns, etc.) into the demonstration neighborhood</u>	10
<u>Anticipated Outcomes and Project Value:</u> The outcomes expected upon completion of the project initiatives are identified, consistent with project goals, and it is clear how these outcomes will be obtained.	20
<b>Total Points Available</b>	<b>100</b>

\*For grant ranking, BWSR reserves the right to make selections based on geography, equity in consideration of the Office of Grants Management Policy 08-02 Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review.

## Eligible Activities

- Project and plan development
- Site preparation, planting and management costs (tilling, burning, sod removal, temporary weed barriers, containerized plants, seeding, inter-seeding, weed removal, etc.)
- Tool purchases ( Hand sod kicker, hand shovels, hand rakes, hand trowels, watering tree gator.) must not exceed \$600.00. All tools purchased shall be used as a shared landowner resource and remain with grantee.
- Non-herbicide methods of site preparation and management are preferred, see the Xerces Society guide to [“Organic Site Preparation Methods.”](#)
- Flowering trees and shrubs that are pollinated are eligible for funding, as they often provide early season floral resources and nesting resources. Native plants with few cultivar exceptions are eligible for funding. See [BWSR Grant Programs page](#) for exceptions and further eligible expenses.
- It is encouraged to use this program in combination with other non-state funding sources and practices.

## Additional Information

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Grantees will be required to comply with prevailing wage provisions and other assurance and administrative requirements via a grant agreement and workplan as approved by BWSR consistent with appropriations and state grants administration policies. Additional information on prevailing wage requirements is available on the Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI) website <https://www.dli.mn.gov/business/employment-practices/prevailing-wage-information> . Questions about the application of prevailing wage rates should be directed to DOLI at 651-284-5091.

See the programs policy document for more information about eligible and Ineligible expenses. It is important to note that Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) that is the source of funding for this program **cannot be used to pay for space and other associated overhead costs**. Billing rates charged to these grants may include the employee's base hourly rate plus benefits. Required match can be provided through other facilities and administration costs such as space, vehicle, computers, and other associated overhead costs. Lawns to Legumes Demonstration Neighborhood grants can only be used for the Lawns to Legumes Demonstration Neighborhood program and not for other Federal or State programs.

BWSR recognizes that not all participating landowners will be signed onto the program at the time of application, but some documented interest should be identified at the time of application.

BWSR has left the definition of "neighborhood" open-ended to allow applicants to determine how to most effectively establish demonstration projects and benefit pollinators.

Projects must be sustained for a minimum of 5 years and have a focus on long-term care of ecological functions and aesthetics.

Grantees must follow project planning and design requirements using project planning information as provided below:

- See [BWSR's Pollinator and Biodiversity Toolbox, Lawns to Legumes Program Guide](#) , as well as [Xerces Society resources](#), and Metro Blooms turf alternative resources for additional design guidance.

Projects must include plans for long-term maintenance, inspection monitoring and site access for the duration of the life of a project as part of their project files. Work plans developed for funded applications will rely on this information for operation, maintenance and inspection requirements after the project is completed.

Project size up to three acres with no minimum size.

Pollinator signage is required for all completed projects funded through this program. Signage will be provided by BWSR.

Projects are strongly encouraged to be located in areas protected from pesticides (at least 200 feet away from pesticide application). See the BWSR/Xerces Society fact sheet on [Protecting Conservation Lands from Pesticides](#) for additional protection strategies.

There is also an emphasis on incorporating different types of habitat as part of the demonstrations including native pocket plantings, pollinator beneficial trees and shrubs, pollinator lawns and pollinator meadows (all discussed in the Lawns to Legumes [Planting for Pollinators Habitat Guide](#)). It is also encouraged to combine the demonstration neighborhoods with public and commercial pollinator plantings to strengthen the overall

demonstration value of the efforts. Plantings can be conducted in city boulevards, but approval must be given by the city for the project.

When practical, projects must have at least three blooming species during, spring, summer and fall, with higher diversity strongly encouraged. Use of milkweeds is encouraged to provide monarch habitat.

- Seed and plant source requirements are summarized in BWSR’s [Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines](#). Additional details about species for pollinator plantings are included in the Lawns to Legumes Habitat Guide and BWSR’s Pollinator Toolbox. See the [Lawns to Legumes Grant Program page](#) for information about non-native species that can be funded as part of the establishment of Trees/Shrubs and Pollinator Lawns. Any plants installed must be neonicotinoid (systemic pesticide) free. This [Wild Ones website](#) shows many nurseries in Minnesota that have plants that meet this criteria. The Minnesota DNR also has a [list of native plant vendors](#) (it is important to check with any vendor to ensure that their plants are neonicotinoid free).

All projects are encouraged to register with the Xerces Society Pollinator Pledge

<https://www.xerces.org/pollinator-conservation/pollinator-protection-pledge>

For additional public outreach tools see resources on BWSR’s Lawns to Legumes Page, BWSR’s brochure on “[Protecting Minnesota’s Pollinators](#),” Fact Sheet on “[How You Can Help Pollinators](#),” and [Featured Plant Articles](#) that include over seventy species for benefitting pollinators. USFWS information on plants for Rusty Patch Bumblebee.

## Timeline

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November 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2021	Application period begins
February 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2022	Application deadline at 4:30 PM
March 2022	BWSR Board authorizes grant awards
April 2022	BWSR grant agreements sent to recipients (proposed)
June 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Deadline to sign and return grant agreement to BWSR. And work plan submittal deadline.
May 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2023 or May 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2024	Grant Expiration date

## Project Period

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The project period starts when the grant agreement is executed, meaning all required signatures have been obtained from BWSR and the Grantee. Work that occurs before this date is not eligible for reimbursement with grant funds.

All grants must be completed by May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 for projects selected for this timeline

All grants must be completed by May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 for projects selected for this timeline

A question will be included as part of the application about whether new grantees are able to complete their project in 2023 or are interested in having an additional year (2024) for their projects. The programs advisory team will recommend projects for the longer grant timeline.

## Submittal

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Applications will be submitted via eLINK. Eligible applicants without a current eLINK user account must submit a request to establish an eLINK account no later than 7 days prior to the application deadline. As part of the application, eLINK will require applicants to map the location of the proposed project(s). If registering for a new eLINK user account training will be provided for application and grant management.

## Incomplete Applications

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Applications that do not comply with all requirements, including incomplete or missing application components, will not be considered for funding.

## BWSR Grant Administration

BWSR reserves the right to partially fund any and all proposals based on the amount of funding available. Proposals that are deemed complete may be considered for future available funds.

## Grant Execution

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Successful applicants will be required to develop and submit a work plan in eLINK prior to execution of the grant agreement.

## Payment Schedule

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Grant payments will be made on a quarterly reimbursement schedule after submission of documentation of eligible expenditures and approval by the program manager, provided the grant applicant is in compliance with all BWSR reporting requirements for previously awarded BWSR grants. Upon award, see contact agreement for exact dates of quarterly reimbursement submittal.

## Project Reporting Requirements

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- All grantees are required to report on the outcomes, activities, and accomplishments of Lawns to Legumes Demonstration Neighborhood grants. All BWSR funded projects will be required to develop a work plan, including detail of each eligible activity, a description of the anticipated activity accomplishments, and grant and match funding amounts to accomplish each of the activities. All activities will be reported via the BWSR eLINK reporting system. For more information about eLINK, go to: <http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/mlink>.
- BWSR Lawns to Legumes Demonstration Neighborhood Program funds will be administered via a standard grant agreement. BWSR will use grant agreements as contracts for assurance of deliverables and compliance with appropriate statutes, rules and established policies. Willful or negligent disregard of relevant statutes, rules and policies may lead to imposition of financial penalties on the grant recipient.

- Grant recipients must display program logo, their program goals and major program activities on a fact sheet (or a separate webpage) that is linked to their website. This website link needs to be placed in eLINK as an attachment and provided to BWSR grant staff to include on the BWSR Demonstration Neighborhood webpage. These links will help connect the public to see further efforts underway by Demonstration Neighborhood grantees.
- Reporting deadlines will be 30 days after quarter end to submit reimbursement receipts.

## Grants and Public Information

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Under Minnesota Statute 13.599, responses to a Request for Proposals are nonpublic until the application deadline is reached. At that time, the name and address of the applicant, and the amount requested becomes public. All other data is nonpublic until the negotiation of the grant agreement with the selected grantee is completed. After the application evaluation process is completed, all data (except trade secret data) becomes public. Data created during the evaluation process is nonpublic until the negotiation of the grant agreement with the selected grantee(s) is completed.

## Conflict of Interest

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State Grant Policy 08-01 (see [http://www.admin.state.mn.us/ogm\\_policies\\_and\\_statute.html](http://www.admin.state.mn.us/ogm_policies_and_statute.html)) Conflict of Interest for State Grant-Making, also applies to BWSR grantees. Grantees' conflicts of interest are generally considered organizational conflicts of interest. Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

1. A grantee is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice due to competing duties or loyalties,
2. A grantee's objectivity in carrying out the grant is or might be otherwise impaired due to competing duties or loyalties, or
3. A grantee or potential grantee has an unfair competitive advantage through being furnished unauthorized proprietary information or source selection information that is not available to all competitors.

## Questions

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For more information concerning the request for proposal, contact BWSR's Lawns to Legumes Demonstration Neighborhood Program Coordinator:

Technical program questions contact: Dan Shaw at [dan.shaw@state.mn.us](mailto:dan.shaw@state.mn.us) or at 612-236-6291