

Climate Resiliency: Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Easement Program Enhancements

2023 Proposed Funding

BWSR is requesting **\$7.1 million** to fund enhancements to new and existing conservation easements under the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Program. These initiatives align with the Minnesota Climate Action Framework's natural and working lands initiative to sequester and store carbon in grasslands, wetlands, and other landscapes with high conservation value.



A RIM easement in Lincoln County restored 76 acres of wetlands and provides wildlife habitat. Photo credit: Steve Snyder, landowner

What are conservation easements?

Private landowners work with BWSR to voluntarily take marginal cropland and pastures out of agricultural production, placing the land into a permanently protected conservation easement. Beneficial conservation practices are then installed on the land. These include native vegetation establishment, wetland restorations, tree planting, and construction of structures to manage water and mitigate flooding concerns.

BWSR specializes in establishing and enhancing conservation easements. The RIM Reserve Conservation Easement Program is BWSR's premier easement program, having successfully restored and protected more than 300,000 acres of private lands over the past 30 years. In recent years, the RIM program has been expanded to target sensitive grasslands and working lands in addition to traditional farmland.

Easement program proposed enhancements

BWSR intends to leverage the requested funding to inspect aging easement infrastructure and make repairs and improvements to practices on existing conservation easements so they will be more resilient to climate change. These projects will support local businesses and contractors needed to complete the work. Funding will also expand opportunities for landowners to enroll grasslands and working lands in RIM easement programs. Grassland and working land restorations can store carbon via higher native plant species diversity which provides greater value for wildlife and pollinators.

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