

THE RIM RUNDOWN

October 2024

RIM EASEMENT PROGRAMS SESSION AND OFFICE HOURS AT 2024 BWSR ACADEMY

We look forward to seeing you at the 2024 BWSR Academy at Cragun's Conference Center in Brainerd. Start your day with RIM on Thursday, October 31, from 8:30 to 10:00 AM for *Exploration of RIM Easement Programs*. Kevin Roth, Sara Reagan, and Lucy Dahl will present with the energy equivalent of 3 cups of coffee. Gain a better understanding of current RIM programs, eligibility, site selection, and hear RIM updates. Dennis Rodacker, Wetland Mitigation Supervisor, will also provide updates to the Local Government Road Wetland Replacement Program. We will have Office Hours following the presentation from 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM for any questions regarding the RIM program. We will have a limited quantity of RIM signs on hand for any offices in need.

Contact Kevin Roth (kevin.roth@state.mn.us), Sara Reagan (sara.reagan@state.mn.us), or Lucy Dahl (lucy.dahl@state.mn.us) with questions.

RIM OUTSIDE FUNDING REQUEST ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

The RIM Outside Funding Request Administrative Policy directs the use of the RIM easement program for entities wishing to pursue RIM conservation easement acquisition or for projects proposing restoration/enhancement initiatives on RIM easements with funds from sources other than available BWSR programs. Prior approval from BWSR is required before outside funding is requested for RIM easement acquisition or restoration/enhancement on RIM easements. This updated policy can be found [here](#).

Contact Sharon Doucette (sharon.doucette@state.mn.us), Easement Section Manager, with questions.

ANNUAL FOOD PLOT REQUIREMENTS

To protect pollinator populations, seeds and plants supplied for projects on RIM easements must not be treated with insecticides. This includes neonicotinoid seed coatings or foliar applications. Neonicotinoids can persist in the soil for a year or more. These systemic insecticides can be absorbed by plants and transferred to the pollinators that forage on them. These principles apply to restoration activities as well as food plots.

The Easement Section will be developing a process for SWCDs to track what seed is used on food plots. Any seed planted on RIM easements must be non-GMO and neonicotinoid-free. Once this framework is in place, SWCDs will receive formal guidance on how to move forward.



RIM 1W1P APPLICATION UPDATE

RIM 1W1P now has an updated scoresheet than can be used statewide (where there is an approved CWMP). The scoresheet now reflects program priorities for both restoration- and protection-style easements. Restoration-style easements are predominantly land with crop history, while protection-style easements are predominantly non-cropland. The updated scoresheet can be found [here](#).

Contact Kevin Roth (kevin.roth@state.mn.us), Easement Programs Coordinator, with questions.

RIM CONSERVATION EASEMENT APPLICATION FORM UPDATES

Updates to the RIM [Conservation Easement Application Form](#) include:

- The old Question 2 related to the 5-acre minimum has been deleted, as this requirement has been removed from MN Statute. Minimum size requirements for easements will be made on a program basis.
- A new Question 2 has been added related to MN Statute 500.24, Farming by Business Organizations. Entity landowners who are prohibited from owning and operating farmland under this statute (often referred to as “Corporate Farm Law”) are *not* eligible for RIM. Most entity landowners applying for RIM are either certified or exempt from corporate farming restrictions and are therefore *not* prohibited from owning and operating agricultural land and eligible for RIM. We have added this question to reflect the RIM Statute for eligible landowners.
 - If a landowner is not a business entity, this question should always be answered “no”.
 - If the landowner is an LLC, LLLP, Corporation, or Irrevocable Trust and have not been certified or determined exempt, they should contact MDA for further instructions.
 - More information can be found on the MDA website [here](#), including the ability to look up whether a business entity is certified or exempt.
 - Question 2 on the Conservation Easement Application Form must be answered “no” for an entity to be eligible for RIM.
- Question 5 has been updated to include the language “or has been enrolled in a federal or state conservation program” for two of the last five years. This is to capture land in CRP (or other) that meets the definition of RIM crop history. If the land being enrolled is all non-cropland, please answer this question as “N/A”.
- The list of programs has been updated to reflect all current RIM programs.

[RIM Application Guidance](#) contains a summary of the application materials required for all RIM programs. This comprehensive guide will take staff through the process of what to submit as a part of an application package. This guide can be used every time an application for RIM is being submitted, with links to all current documents needed for applications.

Contact Karli Swenson (karli.swenson@state.mn.us), Conservation Easement Specialist, or Peter Jordet (peter.jordet@state.mn.us), Easement Development Specialist Senior, with questions.



GET LANDOWNERS PAID FASTER WITH ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS

Electronic payment is a faster, easier, and more secure way to be paid, even when folks aren't always at their primary residence.

A landowner is usually eligible for payment when there is one bank account associated with the easement or conservation practice payee. If the payee is a couple or a single person or entity, talk to them about these benefits! Ineligible payees include those with co-payees such as lenders or 1031 exchange entities, as well as those with more complicated ownership situations such as a group of siblings.

After an easement application is approved for funding, BWSR enters landowners into the state financial system (SWIFT) and obtains their supplier number. Following notification of easement approval and funding, to **confirm payee eligibility** and **receive their supplier number**, contact Sumbal Rana at sumbal.rana@state.mn.us.

Landowners may then use their supplier number to apply for direct deposit in the SWIFT Supplier Portal. Districts may assist landowners with this process but should not do it for them, as it would involve being in possession of private financial information.

More information on electronic payments can be found [here](#).

Contact Sumbal Rana (sumbal.rana@state.mn.us), Assistant Program Analyst, with questions.

RIM PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

RIM Grasslands

RIM Grasslands focuses on protecting moderate quality remnant prairie, with options to protect associated cropland and CRP. Recently, a RIM Grasslands easement closed in Traverse County, consisting of 74 acres of moderate level diversity remnant prairie. On those acres are prairie violets, which bloom early in the year and are a host species for the larval form of the Regal Fritillary butterfly. Violets (*Viola* spp.) are necessary for Regal Fritillary caterpillar survival. Concentration of violets is a critical factor, as caterpillars only find the plant by chance, stumbling upon it while they travel. Working with MN DNR's Native Prairie Bank and USFWS staff, adult Regal Fritillary butterflies were surveyed near this site. This RIM Grasslands easement will result in permanent protection for a site that will be incredibly beneficial to a State of Minnesota Special Concern species.

In addition to the focus on moderate quality unbroken grasslands, RIM Grasslands can protect adjacent cropland and/or current CRP to act as a buffer for the remnant prairie. Cost-share is also available for initial management activities, such as prescribed fire or tree removal.

Contact John Voz (john.voz@state.mn.us), Easement Programs Coordinator, with questions.



BWSR EASEMENT STAFF CONTACTS

If you have a general question and aren't sure who to ask, please send it to the general RIM inbox (bwsr.rim@state.mn.us).

Topic	Current BWSR Contact(s)	
General Easement Processing	Lucy Dahl	651-358-8676 lucy.dahl@state.mn.us
Easement Application Submittal and Landowner Eligibility (Non-CREP Programs)	Karli Swenson	651-440-2456 karli.swenson@state.mn.us
	Peter Jordet	651-539-2580 peter.jordet@state.mn.us
General Payment Questions	Kristina Geiger	651-539-2531 kristina.geiger@state.mn.us
Electronic Payments	Sumbal Rana	651-539-2592 sumbal.rana@state.mn.us
General CREP Questions	Dusty VanThuyne	651-539-2573 dusty.vanthuyne@state.mn.us
CREP Module Questions	Pat Sherman	651-539-2570 pat.sherman@state.mn.us
Site Inspections/Boundary Issues	Peter Jordet	651-539-2580 peter.jordet@state.mn.us
Easement Compliance/Violations	Karli Swenson	651-440-2456 karli.swenson@state.mn.us
Easement Alteration Questions	Karli Swenson	651-440-2456 karli.swenson@state.mn.us
Conservation Plan Amendments & Practice Implementation Request Forms (PIRF)	Sara Reagan	651-539-2533 sara.reagan@state.mn.us
	<i>Continue to send PIRFs to bwsr.rim@state.mn.us</i>	
Conservation Practice Reimbursement/Cost-Share Vouchers (CSV)	Alan Ritchie	651-539-2562 alan.ritchie@state.mn.us
	<i>Continue to send CSVs bwsr.rim@state.mn.us</i>	
Work Orders	Alan Ritchie	651-539-2562 alan.ritchie@state.mn.us
Wetland Bank Easements	Brittany Polzin	651-539-2564 brittany.polzin@state.mn.us
Questions on Specific Easement Programs	Contact appropriate BWSR Program Manager (see Program pages)	
	Bill Penning	651-262-6403 bill.penning@state.mn.us
	Sara Reagan	651-539-2533 sara.reagan@state.mn.us
	Kevin Roth	651-539-2521 kevin.roth@state.mn.us
	John Voz	218-850-4283 john.voz@state.mn.us
	Dusty VanThuyne	651-539-2573 dusty.vanthuyne@state.mn.us