

RIM EASEMENT VEGETATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM GUIDANCE

INTRODUCTION

This guidance document outlines the enrollment criteria and conditions for landowner applications and sign-up for the RIM Easement Vegetation Enhancement program. This guidance should be considered additive to existing RIM policy and procedure.

PROGRAM MANAGER

[Sara Reagan](#), Easement Programs Coordinator

GOALS OF PROGRAM

The program goal is to enhance existing RIM easements. Enhancements are for the purpose of climate resiliency, adaptation, and carbon sequestration and include but are not limited to increasing biodiversity and mitigating the effects of rainfall and runoff events. These policies and guidance in this document applies to vegetative enhancements.

PROGRAM POLICY

1. Enhancements **may** include a variety of work, including but not limited to woody removal, invasive species management, and site preparation. Increasing biodiversity via seeding **must** be a component of the Work Plan.
2. Up to \$600/acre is available for enhancement.
3. Pollinator plots (RR-2PP) may be installed and can be cost-shared up to \$600/acre.
4. Tree plantings (RR-3a) that were not a part of the original Conservation Plan are **not** an eligible enhancement activity.
5. In the Enhancement Eligibility Survey, if the landowner agrees to purchase a custom seed mix(es) to receive prioritization points, a custom seed mix will be required. This must be clearly stated on the submitted seed tag. Pre-built seed mixes will not be accepted for cost-share if the landowner agreed to use a custom seed mix.
6. Final reimbursement requests must be submitted within 3 years of BWSR approval date.
7. If the easement Conservation Practice Plan will change as a result of the Work Plan, an amended and signed Conservation Plan, Conservation Practice Plan, and Conservation Plan Map must be submitted.

SIGN-UP CRITERIA SUMMARY

1. Easement Vegetation Enhancement funds are available for any RIM easement.
2. Applications will be reviewed at the end of every month.
3. To be eligible, landowners must be:
 - a. Interested in enhancement.
 - b. In compliance with all easement terms and conditions.

- c. Understand the reimbursement process.
- d. Willing to commit to future and ongoing management.
4. Priority will be placed on sites where:
 - a. The landowner is willing to purchase a custom seed mix(es);
 - b. The current landowner did not receive any portion of the original easement payment;
 - c. The landowner is willing to contribute a cost match (cash or in-kind).

APPLICATION SUBMITTAL

To complete the application process, complete the following steps:

1. Complete the *Enhancement Eligibility Survey*. A minimum score of 11 is required to continue to the Enhancement Capacity Survey.
2. Complete the *Enhancement Capacity Survey* (plus any additional surveys for separate Enhancement Units) and attach any relevant documents.
3. Develop a map of the Enhancement Unit(s). An appropriately labeled Conservation Plan Map can be used. Additional maps or screenshots can be included. All images should be decipherable.
4. Complete PIRF.
5. If there is a change to Practice Type(s), acres, and/or boundaries shown in the current Conservation Practice Plan, complete an amended and signed Conservation Plan, amended Conservation Practice Plan, and amended Conservation Plan Map.
6. Develop proposed seed mix. Note that if the landowner opted to use a custom seed mix on the Eligibility Survey, that should be reflected on the submitted seed tag by noting “custom mix” in the title. Due to cost and availability, seed substitutions are acceptable but should come as close to the proposed seed mix as possible.
7. Label all documents appropriately (see checklist below).
8. Submit to the [RIM inbox](#) with the easement number and “Enhancement application” in the subject line.

BWSR will review and communicate with SWCD staff to either approve of the proposed enhancement Work Plan or request additional information.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

✓	Required Document	Notes	Label
	Enhancement Eligibility Survey		EasementID#_Eligibility
	Enhancement Capacity Survey		EasementID#_Capacity
	Enhancement Unit Map	<i>Can use Conservation Plan Map if desired</i>	EasementID#_EUMap
	PIRF		EasementID#_PIRF
	Amended and signed Conservation Plan	<i>Submit these if there is a change to Practice Type(s), acres, and/or boundaries shown in the current Conservation Plan</i>	EasementID#_Consplan
	Amended Conservation Practice Plan		EasementID#_PracticePlan
	Amended Conservation Plan Map		EasementID#_PlanMap
	Proposed Seed Mix		EasementID#_Seedmix