



FY 2027 One Watershed, One Plan Mid-Point Grants

GRANT REQUEST FOR INTEREST (RFI)

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)

www.bwsr.state.mn.us



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Grant Overview

Purpose

The Clean Water Fund was established in Minnesota Statute 114D.50 to implement part of Article XI, Section 15, of the Minnesota Constitution, with the purpose of protecting, enhancing, and restoring water quality in lakes, rivers, and streams in addition to protecting ground water and drinking water sources from degradation. These funds must supplement traditional sources of funding and may not be used as a substitute to fund activities or programs.

The Board of Water and Soil Resources offers One Watershed, One Plan Mid-Point Grants to support partnerships of governments in conducting evaluations and/or amending comprehensive watershed management plans (CWMPs) developed through the One Watershed, One Plan program.

The *One Watershed, One Plan – Plan Content Requirements* requires CWMPs to include a schedule for a mid-point evaluation of progress, along with an examination of new data, to determine whether a plan amendment is warranted (section III.G.5.c).

The *One Watershed, One Plan Operating Procedures* requires a plan evaluation at least once every ten years, which must precede a plan renewal amendment.

The *One Watershed, One Plan Operating Procedures* also define criteria for three different types of amendments to comprehensive watershed management plans. Guidance and process steps for these amendment types are available on BWSR’s website.

Funding is from the Clean Water Fund:

- ML 2019, 1st Special Session, Chapter 2, Article 2, Section 7 (i)
- ML 2021, 1st Special Session, Chapter 1, Article 2, Section 6 (i)
- ML 2023, Chapter 40, Article 2, Section 6 (i)

Timeline

Eligible partnerships may access these funds at the mid-point of the plan implementation period. Eligible partnerships may access these funds at the mid-point of the plan implementation period (no less than four years after the plan approval date). Timing may vary depending on factors including BWSR’s PRAP schedule. Groups must work with their BWSR Board Conservationist and the One Watershed, One Plan Program Coordinator to determine the appropriate time to access funding.

Funding requests will be processed in monthly batching periods, due the last business day of each month. Late submissions or incomplete funding requests will not be processed until the following month. The funding request must be submitted by 4:30 PM CT/CST on the last business day of each month within the RFI period. The grant recipient is responsible for proving timely submittal.

Table 2: Grant Cycle Dates

Grant Cycle	Grant Cycle Dates
RFI period open	September 21, 2026

RFI period close	April 30, 2027
Anticipated awards	Within 30 days after each monthly batching period closes
Anticipated grant agreements sent to recipients	Within 30 days after each monthly batching period closes
Work plan submittal deadline	Work plans must be submitted and approved prior to grant execution
Grant execution deadline	June 1, 2027
Grant agreement end date	December 31, 2029

Grant Eligibility and Program Requirements

Eligible Recipients, Funding Available, and Match

Grants are available for partnerships implementing comprehensive watershed management plans developed through the One Watershed, One Plan program. Eligible recipients are local governments with a current state-approved and locally adopted comprehensive watershed management plan authorized under Minnesota Statutes §103B.801; and that have an implementation agreement with other members of the planning partnership. Eligible recipients for these grants include:

- Political subdivisions/Local governments
 - Counties
 - Joint powers boards
 - Soil and water conservation districts
 - Watershed districts

Recipients must operate in Minnesota and conduct grant activities that benefit the resources of Minnesota. Recipients must have state or federal recognition as a formal organization or entity, such as a Minnesota Tax ID or Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number. Organizations or groups that do not have state or federal recognition must respond with a fiscal agent. Organizations that are debarred or suspended by the State of Minnesota or the Federal Government are not eligible. Recipients must be in compliance with all applicable federal, State, and local laws, policies, ordinances, rules, and regulations.

There is a \$75,000 cap on individual grant awards. Partnerships may request more than one One Watershed, One Plan Mid-Point grant as long as the total amount of all One Watershed, One Plan Mid-Point grants for a given watershed in a ten-year period does not exceed \$75,000.

Match is not required.

Eligible Activities

Two main activities are allowable under One Watershed, One Plan Mid-Point Grants: plan evaluation and plan amendments.

Plan Evaluation: Activities described in the “Evaluating” section of [Guidance for Assessing the Implementation of Comprehensive Watershed Management Plans](#) (pages 6-9) are eligible under this grant. In the evaluation, each item in the list below should be examined to determine if a plan amendment is needed:

- o New information
- o Progress toward plan goals
- o Administrative or other changes

Plan Amendments: One Watershed, One Plan Mid-Point grants can be used for amending a comprehensive watershed management plan. See the One Watershed, One Plan Operating Procedures (policy) for amendment types and requirements.

Activities in this grant will align with the following eLINK activity categories:

- Administration/Coordination
- Planning and Assessment

Ineligible Activities

The following activities are ineligible for these funds:

Staff time to participate in committee meetings specifically representing an individual's local government unit; staff time for an individual, regularly scheduled, county water plan task force meeting where One Watershed, One Plan will be discussed as part of the meeting; and stipends for attendance at meetings.

Allowable and Unallowable costs

Allowable costs are those costs solely incurred through project activities that are directly related to and necessary for producing the project outcomes described in the proposal. Grant recipients are required to account for the staff time charged to BWSR grants in order to track the expenditure of grant funds and match to ensure the use of the funds is consistent with applicable State and BWSR requirements. Unallowable costs to be charged to BWSR grants include but are not limited to:

- Bad debts, monetary settlements and judgements, late payment fees, and investment management fees
- Donations, fundraising, sponsorships, and acknowledgements
- Entertainment, gifts, prizes, and decorations
- Alcohol
- Interest on loans not authorized under state statute
- Loans of BWSR grant funds
- Lobbying, lobbyists, and political contributions
- Merit awards and bonuses

Grant Management and Reporting

Eligible activities include local grant administration, management, and reporting that are directly related to and necessary for implementing the project or activity associated with the grant. Grantee is required to report on the outcomes, activities, and accomplishments. Recipients who have previously received a grant from BWSR must be in compliance with BWSR requirements for grantee website and eLINK reporting before grant execution and payment.

Requesting Funds

How To Submit a Question

Prior to submitting a request, contact your board conservationist to discuss your approach to using these funds.

For questions regarding this grant program and RFI, contact Julie Westerlund at julie.westerlund@state.mn.us

For questions regarding the eLINK grants management system, email elinksupport@state.mn.us. Please review the eLINK-related topics below and on BWSR's eLINK webpage before contacting eLINK support.

How to Respond Using eLINK

1. Set up your eLINK user account

Proposals need to be submitted via [BWSR's grants and conservation tracking system, eLINK](#). Eligible recipients without a current eLINK user account must register for an account in [eLINK](#) no later than seven days prior to the proposal deadline. For eLINK related questions, first visit the eLINK section of the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) page. If your question is not addressed here, please contact elinksupport@state.mn.us.

2. Complete your funding request (proposal)

See the [eLINK Guidance: Completing a Funding Request in eLINK video](#) to view a 11-minute online module describing how to complete a Funding Request within eLINK.

Important clarification for this One Watershed, One Plan Mid-Point grant fund request: Find this opportunity in eLINK by clicking on "Funding Opportunities" under the "Request Funds" heading in the side menu, **not** the "RFI Opportunities" under the "Request For Interest (RFI)" heading.

- Answers to each question is limited to 2,000 characters. Due to differences in how programs are encoded, be aware that the character limit in eLINK is not the same as Microsoft Word or other text editors.

Recipients must provide answers to the Funding Request Questions as part of their request submitted in eLINK.

Funding Request Questions

1. Have you previously received a One Watershed, One Plan Mid-Point grant? If so, list the grant date (month and year) and amount.
2. Briefly describe the approach you will take for evaluating your plan (if applicable). Include types of information and analysis, your plans for advisory committee/state agency participation, and other relevant information.
3. Briefly describe the approach you will take for amending your plan (if applicable). Include the type(s) of amendment you are considering, aspects of your plan the amendment will focus on, your plans for participation from the advisory committee/state agencies, and other relevant information.

Proposed Measurable Outcomes

Grant-specific proposed outputs/outcomes will be detailed in the activity descriptions of the work plan. For the "Proposed Measurable Outcomes" field in the funding request, select the generic statement from the following list that applies for the intended use of the grant:

"The deliverable for the grant is an evaluation report for the {Plan Name}"

"The deliverable for the grant is a plan amendment for the {Plan Name}"

"The deliverable for the grant is an evaluation report and a plan amendment for the {Plan Name}"

Grant Recipient Information

Grant Agreement and Project Period

Notification of grant award will be in the form of an automated notification from the BWSR eLINK system or an email from BWSR Grants staff to the grantee. Notifications are sent to the Day-to-Day Contact(s) identified by the organization within the eLINK system. This notification includes instructions for further processing of the grant agreement and may also contain grant-specific information such as requirements for completing work plans, disbursement terms, or additional required documentation for processing the grant. Read these instructions carefully as requirements can vary by grant and fiscal year.

BWSR will use grant agreements, and an associated work plan, as contracts for assurance of deliverables and compliance with appropriate statutes, rules, and established policies. BWSR has the right to require a work plan revision or grant agreement amendment for changes in scope (visit the [BWSR Grant Agreement Amendments and Work Plan Revisions webpage](#) for more information). Willful or negligent disregard of relevant statutes, rules and policies may lead to imposition of financial penalties on the grant recipient. Upon receiving the notification of grant award, which indicates approval of an application, and prior to beginning work on the grant project(s) and receiving grant funds, the recipient is required to do the following:

1. Complete an IRS W-9 form or register as a vendor in SWIFT, the state's accounting system, and submit other required documentation within 30 days of award notification.
2. Sign a grant contract agreement indicating their intention to complete the project(s) contained in the application. The agreement also authorizes BWSR to monitor progress of the grant. The grant contract agreement must be signed within 30 days of being sent to the grantee.

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

Grant contract agreement templates can be reviewed on the [Office of Grants Management Forms and FAQs webpage](#).

The grant agreement will expire on December 31, 2029.

Payment Schedule

Grant payments will be distributed in three installments to the grantee. The first payment of 50% of the grant amount will be paid after work plan approval and execution of the grant agreement provided the grant recipient is in compliance with all BWSR website and eLINK reporting requirements for previously awarded BWSR grants. The second payment of 40% of the grant amount will be paid once the grantee has provided BWSR with notification and BWSR has reviewed and approved the eLINK reporting, and possibly completes a grant reconciliation of the initial payment. The last 10% will be paid after all final reporting requirements are met, and BWSR has reconciled these expenditures.

Reporting and Administration Requirements

- When practicable, grant recipients shall prominently display the legacy logo on their website. Grant recipients must display on their website either a link to their project from the [Legislative Coordinating Commission Legacy webpage](#) or a clean water project summary that includes a description of the grant activities, including expenditure of grant funds and measurable outcomes.

- When practicable, grant recipients must display the Legacy Logo on printed and other media funded with money from the Clean Water Fund. The logo and specifications can be found at the [Clean Water, Land & Legacy Amendment's Legacy Logo webpage](#).
- All grant recipients are subject to BWSR's [Providing Financial Assistance chapter](#).
- BWSR recommends all contracts be reviewed by the grant recipient's legal counsel.
- All grant recipients are required to report on the outcomes, activities, and accomplishments of the grant.
- All grant recipients are subject to BWSR's [Grant Monitoring and Financial Reconciliation Procedure chapter](#).
- All grant recipients are subject to BWSR's [Grant Noncompliance Policy chapter](#).
- 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.
- Grant reporting, fiscal management, and administration requirements are the responsibility of the grant recipient.
- Additional information regarding BWSR grant reporting and administration can be found in the [BWSR Grants Administration Manual](#).

Prevailing Wage

It is the responsibility of the grant recipient or contractor to pay prevailing wages on construction projects to which state prevailing wage laws apply (Minn. Stat. 177.42 – 177.44). All laborers and mechanics employed by grant recipients and subcontractors funded in whole or in part with state funds included in this RFI shall be paid wages at rates not less than those prevailing on projects of a character similar in the locality. Additional information on prevailing wage requirements is available on the [Department of Labor and Industry \(DOLI\) website](#). Questions about the application of prevailing wage rates should be directed to DOLI at 651-284-5091.

Subagreements

Funds may be distributed to partner(s) through the use of sub-agreements. Activities identified in the sub-agreement must fit within the scope of the agreement between BWSR and the recipient and include requirements for fund distribution, implementation, and reporting.