



RIM Reserve 2014 Flood Response

SWCD Program Guidance

3/3/2016

Background

In response to the rains and flooding which occurred on or after June 11, 2014 and the resulting federal disaster declaration FEMA, DR-4182), the MN Legislature 2015 appropriated \$4.7M for RIM Reserve conservation easements and costs to acquire permanent easements from private landowners on damaged lands to provide flood attenuation, restore and protect soil and water resources, and to support related fish and wildlife habitat, as provided in Section 103F.515. BWSR Disaster Recovery Assistance Program (DRAP) authorizes staff to develop procedures and conduct a sign up for certain eligible lands as laid out below.

The intent of this guidance document is to outline the enrollment criteria and conditions that will govern the landowner application sign-up for this RIM Reserve conservation easement program on eligible flood damaged lands; and riparian floodplain and wetland restoration areas that could be enrolled to help reduce future flood impacts.

Statute requirements / conditions:

1. Easements will be acquired via the RIM Reserve program (MS 103F.501). All eligible land types for RIM under MS 103F.515, Subd. 2 that have been damaged by flooding are eligible.
2. Eligible counties are limited to those under FEMA DR-4182 that conducted and submitted a preliminary list of RIM easement projects during the summer of 2014 (16 counties). Brown, Carver, Chippewa, Dodge, Faribault, Le Sueur, McLeod, Martin, Murray, Nicollet, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Rock and Watonwan.
3. Eligible Lands:
 - o All private lands are eligible if they have been damaged by floods (both cropland and non-crop lands).
 - o Riparian lands with a history of flooding within and beyond the 100 year floodplain where an easement will help mitigate future flood impacts.
4. Permanent easements only.
5. Cropland is the priority (crop history 2 of last 5 years). Land in CRP is considered cropland if these lands had crop history when enrolled in CRP (marginal pasture CP-22 sites are not cropland).
6. Eligible private land must have been owned by the landowner for 1 year prior to application.
7. Eligible landowners – any individual or entity that is not prohibited from owning agricultural land under MS 500.24 Farming By Business Organizations. *Farm corporations need to be certified by the MN Dept. of Agriculture, contact 651-297-2200.*
8. Floodplains are defined by 100 year Flood Insurance Rate Mapping (FIRM), frequently or occasionally flooded soil types, or unmapped areas with documented damages from flooding. It is the goal to enroll the entire floodplain area and adequate upland buffer to minimize concentrated flows and flooding on any remaining cropland or non-vegetated areas.

Sign-up Criteria:

1. Tentative sign-up period to be held in March 2016 or until funding has been committed.
2. SWCD's within this DRAP area formulated project lists and cost estimates in 2014 that should serve as the basis for current applications. Certain 2014 buffer applications may also be reviewed for applicability. Due to funding levels available, you should solicit no more than 1 priority applications for submittal.
3. SWCDs should rank and prioritize applications prior to submittal to BWSR. BWSR will consider this local prioritization, and overall damage mitigation in its final selections for funding. Priority should also be given to larger parcels and adjacency to other protected lands that compound water quality and habitat benefits.
4. For riparian applications in cropland areas, existing vegetation area between eligible cropland and riparian source must be included in the easement acreage. Payment is authorized on non-crop area up to 50% of the eligible cropland acreage. Non-crop acres over 50% of eligible cropland must be donated.
5. When possible, land on both sides of the riparian source must be enrolled.
6. Minimum size requirement is 10ac.
7. Use easement numbering xx-xx-16-06.

Easement Payment Rates

2015 RIM Reserve payment rates for Cropland and Non-cropland will be used for this sign-up.

Cropland is defined as cropped to an annually planted crop 2 of the last 5 years. CRP is considered cropland for this sign-up if enrolled as a cropland eligible practice.

Conservation Practice Payments

Practice \$s will be available to cover practice installation up to RIM program maximums. Current maximums: RR2 Native species - \$300/ac., RR3 Tree Planting - \$400/ac., RR8 Wetland Restorations - \$600/ac. Temporary cover consisting of Switchgrass should be planned and established within the flooded zone where it is expected succession of wetland species or woody cover is likely to occur. Native vegetation guidelines should be followed in upland areas.

Utilize other state or federal cost-share program funding for structural practices needed on RIM easement lands being acquired. Stream channel stabilization is a good example where RIM does not provide cost share assistance.

Forms and items needed to complete the RIM application materials

A complete application package containing all the items listed on the checklist of the document titled '*2014 Flood Response Workbook*' should be prepared and submitted to bwsr.rim@state.mn.us by March 31, 2016.