



Grants Quarterly

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Amendment requests for expiring grants

If your organization has any BWSR grants expiring at the end of the calendar year that will require an amendment or workplan revision, now is the time to act. Per the [Grants Administration Manual](#), all amendments and work plan revisions must be finalized before a grant agreement expires. BWSR must deny any requests received after the expiration of the grant agreement. To request an amendment or workplan revision, please consult with your Board Conservationist.

Reference your grant agreement and any amendments to identify a grant's expiration date. You can also find a list of original [grant expiration dates](#) on the Reporting page of BWSR's website.

Update on FY17 Clean Water Fund competitive grants

The RFP for FY17 Clean Water Fund (CWF) competitive grants closed on August 8th. Applications were accepted for BWSR's Accelerated Implementation, Community Partners, Multipurpose Drainage Management, and Projects and Practices programs, along with Minnesota Department of Health's Well Sealing program.

Applications are now under review, and projects recommended for funding will be considered by the BWSR Board at their meeting on December 14th.

Successful applicants will be notified via email by the end of the day on Friday, December 16th.



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Time & Effort Documentation video

A new [Time and Effort Documentation training video](#) is now available for viewing on the BWSR website. This seven minute video, which premiered during the "Grant Tracking: What's In Your Toolbox?" session at the 2016 BWSR Academy, explains the two options (direct time tracking or personnel activity reports) that grantees have to document the time and effort that they spend on BWSR grants; clarifies requirements (like the need to account for "100% of an employee's time" while the grant is being spent); and explains how and why time and effort documentation is both important and useful.

Find the video, along with other resources for grantees, on the [Grants](#) page of BWSR's website.

Important upcoming dates

December 31: Expiration date for many FY14 & 15 grants

February 1: Annual reporting deadline

Spotlight on Natural Resource Block Grants

The Natural Resource Block Grant (NRBG) is a composite of base grants available to local government units that help implement programs designed to protect and improve Minnesota's water resources. These grants are typically made directly to counties, and funds are distributed in a 100% advance payment once a grant agreement with BWSR has been executed. Find descriptions of the six programs that currently make up the NRBG at right. Grant profiles are available on the [Grant Reporting](#) page of BWSR's website, detailing the purpose of the grant funds and associated reporting requirements.



Flex it: NRBG Flex Policy

Since FY11, BWSR policy has allowed local governments to determine the amount of grant to allocate between three BWSR Natural Resource Block Grant (NRBG) programs: Local Water Management, Wetland Conservation Act, and Shoreland. MPCA's SSTS grant programs are not eligible for flex spending.

This policy was expanded for FY16 to allow NRBG grant recipients to flex the required match as well. For example, a county may choose to pool all three of these grants, along with the required match amount for each, to focus the funds on one program area.

Consolidating spending of the grant and match funds through the flex option may potentially simplify time and effort documentation for your organization, as reducing the number of programs BWSR grant funds are spent on may translate to fewer employees charging time to the BWSR grant(s).

Learn more about the NRBG Flex Policy and documenting flex spending in eLINK on the [NRBG program page](#) of BWSR's website.

NRBG Grant Programs

Local Water Management (LWM)

This voluntary program requires participating counties to use local task forces to develop and implement water plans based on their priorities. A county may be eligible for a grant amount that is based in part on the Comprehensive Local Water Plan County Levy, as determined by the Minnesota Department of Revenue. A local levy or cash equivalent match is required for this grant, and the levy amount must be calculated using county funds only.

DNR Shoreland

This grant is used for the administration of state approved Shoreland management programs, which are administered at the state level by the DNR. A local 1:1 match is required, and grantees must have a DNR approved shoreland ordinance.

Wetland Conservation Act (WCA)

These grant funds are used for local administration of the Wetland Conservation Act. The formula used to calculate the grant amount is derived from a base amount of county WCA activity. A local 1:1 match is required, and the grantee has 120 days from receipt of payment from BWSR to transfer the designated amount to the SWCD.

Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems (SSTS)

All counties are required to pass ordinances regulating subsurface sewage treatment systems countywide, and these funds are available for SSTS program administration. The grant amount is split equally between eligible counties, and no local match is required.

MPCA SSTS Upgrade

These funds are used to install individual SSTS upgrades. In addition to eLINK reporting, recipients must submit a program report directly to MPCA.

MPCA SSTS Incentive

These funds are awarded through a competitive process conducted by MPCA, and are dependent upon whether a county requires compliance inspections for point of sale/property transfer or inspections with permit applications; has a plan to improve compliance (e.g. a records catalog or inventory); or is implementing a plan based on past compliance inventory or records catalog work.