



FY 2016 Grants Policy

One Watershed, One Plan Planning Grants



Purpose

The Clean Water Fund was established 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 and to protect groundwater and drinking water sources from degradation. The purpose of this policy is to provide expectations for One Watershed, One Plan Planning Grants conducted via the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Clean Water Fund (CWF) grants to facilitate development and writing of Comprehensive Watershed Management Plans consistent with Minnesota Statutes §103B.801.

BWSR will use grant agreements for assurance of deliverables and compliance with appropriate statutes, rules and established policies. Willful or negligent disregard of relevant statutes, rules and policies may lead to imposition of financial penalties or future sanctions on the grant recipient.

1.0 Applicant Eligibility Requirements

Eligible applicants include counties, watershed districts, watershed management organizations, and soil and water conservation districts working in partnership within a single One Watershed, One Plan planning boundary, meeting the participation requirements outlined in the One Watershed, One Plan Operating Procedures. Application for these funds is considered a joint application between participating local governments and may be submitted by a joint powers organization on behalf of local government members (partners). Formal agreement between the partners, consistent with the One Watershed, One Plan Operating Procedures, is required prior to execution of a grant agreement.

2.0 Match Requirements

No match will be required of the grantees. Grantees will be required to document local involvement in the plan development process.

3.0 Eligible Activities

Eligible activities must be directly for the purposes of providing services to the plan development effort and may include activities such as: contracts and/or staff reimbursement for plan writing; technical services; preparation of policy committee, advisory committee, or public meeting agendas and notices; taking meeting minutes; facilitate and prepare/plan for facilitation of policy or advisory committee meetings, or public meetings; grant reporting and administration, including fiscal administration; facility rental for public or committee meetings; materials and supplies for facilitating meetings; reasonable food costs (e.g. coffee and cookies) for public meetings; publishing meeting notices; and other activities which directly support or supplement the goals and outcomes expected with development of a comprehensive watershed management plan.

4.0 Ineligible Expenses

Ineligible expenses include 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.

5.0 Grantee Administration of Clean Water Fund Grants

The grantee for these funds includes the partners identified in the formal agreement establishing the partnership, consistent with the One Watershed, One Plan Operating Procedures. The formal agreement is required prior to execution of a grant agreement and must identify the single local government unit which will act as the fiscal agent for the grant and identify a grantee authorized representative. Grant reporting, fiscal management, and administration requirements are the responsibility of the grantee.

- a. All grantees are required to report on the outcomes, activities, and accomplishments of Clean Water Fund grants.
- b. Grantees have the responsibility to approve the expenditure of funds within their partnership. The local government unit fiscal agent administering the grant must approve or deny expenditure of funds and the action taken must be documented in the governing body's meeting minutes prior to beginning the funded activity. This responsibility may be designated to a policy committee if specifically identified in the formal agreement establishing the partnership.
- c. BWSR recommends all contracts be reviewed by the grantee's legal counsel. All contracts must be consistent with Minnesota statute and rule.
- d. Grantees are required to document local involvement in the plan development process in order to demonstrate that the grant is supplementing/enhancing water resource restoration and protection activities.

6.0 BWSR Grant Reporting, Reconciliation, and Verification Requirements

BWSR staff is authorized to develop grant agreements, including requirements and processes for project outcomes reporting, closeouts, fiscal reconciliations, and grant verifications.

6.1 BWSR Grant Reconciliation and Verification Procedures

- a. BWSR staff will review grant recipient compliance with contractual requirements in a manner which is consistent with the policies established by the Office of Grants Management and adopted by the BWSR Board.
- b. Elements described in the project work plan will be reviewed during grant reconciliation.
- c. Project files for CWF expenditures must be retained by the grant recipient pursuant to MS 138.17 and consistent with ongoing record retention schedules.
- d. 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 150% of the grant agreement.

For additional information, see the BWSR grants manual at: <http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/grants/manual/>