

Isanti SWCD Cost-Share Program Guidelines

The Isanti SWCD offers grants for projects that provide benefits to water quality. The following are local guidelines for the use of grant funds and are specific to Isanti Soil and Water Conservation District. These guidelines will be reviewed and edited and/or amended on an annual basis.

Financial Assistance:

General Funding Information

- All funding program contracts and requests for payment require the approval of the Isanti SWCD Board of Supervisors.
- All funding programs are subject to fund availability and may be discontinued or subject to program policy revisions by the SWCD Board as it deems appropriate.
- A list of projects/interested parties will be kept on file at the District and will be reviewed, ranked, and selected on a first come first serve basis (applies to State Cost Share Only). The District Staff will prioritize projects based on local and state priorities and the potential to provide water quality benefits (See Local Priorities).
- Non-Structural program participants will be selected and prioritized based on scoring related to 1) whether or not the majority of the land is located in a sensitive groundwater area (cover crop only), 2) whether or not the majority of the land is located in a watershed with a completed water quality study, and 3) proximity to surface water. See Ranking sheet and map.
- 50% of annual State Cost Share will be available for non-structural Best management practices (Cover Crops and Residue/Tillage Management). If additional funds (over and above the 50%) remain in the cost share pool on August 1st of the expiring year, the funds will be made available to the waiting list for non-structural practices.

Cost Share Rates

Isanti SWCD will provide up to 75% cost-share to landowners for approved State practices (See [Design Standards](#)). The SWCD Board reserves the right to set a limit on funding at their discretion.

Well sealing cost-share will provide up to 50% cost-share not to exceed \$500 per well.

No till/Reduced till: STANDARD rate \$30/acre; HISTORICALLY UNDERSERVED rate \$45/acre (3 year contract). Rates are based on available funding.

Cover Crops: SINGLE SPECIES rate \$30/acre; 2 OR MORE SPECIES rate \$40/acre. (1 year contract). Rates are based on available funding.

Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses are those expenses that are eligible for grant reimbursement or, if provided by the landowner, count toward the landowner's required project contribution. Only expenses identified as necessary to successfully complete the project for its designed use are eligible for reimbursement. Once the project has been verified complete by the SWCD any further expenses are exempt from reimbursement.

Materials:

- Native plants and seed (See [Project Requirements](#)-Vegetation)
- Erosion control blankets and bio-logs
- Shredded Wood Mulch
- Landscaping fabric
- Stakes or anchors
- Herbicide
- Tool or machine rental
- Lawn edging
- Soil amendments
- Retaining wall block (rain gardens only)
- Drainage materials (rain gardens or other applicable infiltration practice only)
- Rock, if deemed necessary (See [Project Requirements](#)-Hard-Armor)
- Others as approved by the District Board.

In-kind Labor: Unless specified otherwise by Minnesota prevailing wage statutes, the value of labor, equipment, materials and/or services that are proposed to be provided by the applicant to complete the project, shall be estimated at:

- General Labor rate of \$26 per hour. (Date, times and activity must be documented)
- Labor rate of \$52 per cubic yard for concrete work.
- Heavy equipment operation such as skid steers, tractors, backhoes, and scrapers (including labor) at \$62 per hour. (Date, times and activity must be documented)
- Materials: \$8 per ton for gravel, \$5 per yard for sand.
- Professional or semi-professional services, such as engineering, labor rate at \$77 per hour. (Date, times and activity must be documented)
- Others as approved by the District Board or Supervisors

NOTE: In-kind labor is non-reimbursable. This is to be used ONLY as match for the grant.

Eligible Conservation Practices

The primary purpose of projects funded is to assist with structural, vegetative, or non-structural land management practices to correct existing water quality problems. The following elements must be met in order to be eligible for cost share.

Design Standards

All eligible projects must be designed according to the following technical standards: USDA Field Office Technical Guide, MPCA Stormwater Manual, MPCA Protecting Water Quality in Urban Areas, NPDES General Stormwater Permit for Construction Activity, Minnesota Urban Small Sites BMP Manual, and applicable local, state and federal regulations. Design standards for all practices must include specifications for operation and maintenance for the effective life of the given practice, including and inspection schedule and procedure.

Project Specific Requirements

Design Assistance: Prior to offering design assistance—all heads of the household (i.e. both husband and wife or partners) must be present for the initial on-site meeting (a phone call by a head household

member may substitute). Additionally, if the SWCD is using a grant to pay for design assistance, the landowner MUST agree to install the project. See Design Assistance contract.

Vegetation: For certain practices including but not limited to shoreline buffers, riparian buffers and various stormwater infiltration practices where native vegetation is recommended: no exotic species or nursery-derived cultivars will be eligible for cost-share reimbursement, vegetation practices must follow BWSR Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines: www.bwsr.state.mn.us/native-vegetation/seedling-guidelines.pdf

Hard-Armor: Riprap should only be used where necessary and never to replace stable, naturally vegetated shoreline. The District will consider funding hard armoring such as rock rip-rap if it is determined by all applicable parties to be the best solution. Should riprap be approved, the site must be enhanced with a vegetative buffer.

Iron Enhanced Buffers: For shoreline projects that opt for installation of an iron-enhanced filter least 20% of the total project area must be planted as native vegetation for habitat. At least 10% of the area should be directly adjacent to the shoreline. An additional 10% should be within 100 feet of the water.

Violation or Permit Requirement: Projects to repair violations or projects that are required, such as stormwater treatment required by local ordinances or repair/replacement of wetlands under the MN Wetland Conservation Act are NOT eligible.

Contractor Work: The applicant may be required to obtain three quotes for the proposed conservation work if the total project cost exceeds \$25,000 prior to contract approval by the board.

Project Maintenance: Applicants must complete a project maintenance workshop OR request a one-on-one maintenance session with the SWCD within three years of project installation.

Lakeshore buffers: Unless specified differently in a grant, the minimum requirement is an average of 15 feet deep. Buffers must target the treatment of stormwater runoff and reduce erosion. For State-Cost share projects the minimum recommended average is 25 feet deep and must cover 75% of the water front.

Non-structural practices: Non-structural practices must be developed in accordance with the requirements of the NRCS conservation practice standard. Detailed guidelines are found at the end of this document.

- 340 (Cover Crops): contract length 1 year. Future applications are eligible if cover crop species or acreage is enhanced. Payment is made after successful completion of planned management.
- 329 & 345 (Residue and Tillage Management): contract length 3 years. Payment is made after successful completion of 1st year.

Local Priorities

1. High Priority Water Quality Problems

“High Priority Water Quality” means areas where sediment, nutrients, chemicals, or other pollutants discharge to protected waters or to a sinkhole or ground water so as to impair their quality or usefulness. The Isanti SWCD most strongly favors:

- a. Projects identified in completed or underway subwatershed analyses (aka stormwater retrofit analyses),
- b. Projects beneficial to a lake, stream, or river that meet standards and/or are in satisfactory condition to the local residents and the larger population of county citizens.
- c. Projects identified in completed or underway TMDLs.

2. High Priority Erosion Problems

“High priority erosion problems: means areas where erosion from wind or water is one ton per acre per year or any area within 300 feet of a water course or within 1,000 feet of a water basin or wetland. The water basin, wetland, or watercourse must be classified by the Department of natural Resources as protected water.

3. High Priority Sedimentation Problems

“High priority sedimentation problems” means areas within 300 feet of a water course or 100 feet of a water basin or wetland where the water erosion rate exceeds 3 tons per acre per year or areas where the District can show that sediment delivery occurs from a watershed or direct conveyance structure such as a storm sewer or paved outlet channel discharging to these waters. The water basin, wetland, or watercourse must be classified by the Department of natural Resources as protected water.

4. High Priority Feedlot Problems

“High Priority Feedlots” means feedlots ranking highly with current NRCS farm evaluation methods/software and which are discharging pollutants to DNR protected waters or to a sinkhole or shallow soils overlaying fractured or cavernous bedrock or within 100 feet of a water well.

Noncompliance:

At its discretion, the board may consider compliance to the terms of the previous Cost-share contract as a subsequent cost Share contract with an applicant.

Technical Expertise

The following is a documentation of staff skills, training, credentials along with description of other means the District will use to insure projects meet the requirements of local guidelines and are installed and maintained according to standards and specifications. This document should be reviewed and updated annually.

Ecological Practices: The SWCD board assigned the District Manager, Tiffany Determan, Technical Approval Authority to design, install and sign off on ecological practices relating to stabilizing shoreland on June 21st, 2016 at the regular board meeting. Should TAA be required for any other practice, the staff will seek partnership with a surrounding district or provider with the appropriate experience and credentials.

Engineering Practices: For all practices requiring engineering, the SWCD will oversee the plans to make sure they meet local requirements and the engineer will sign off on the completed project.

Below is a listing of the credentials of the District Manager, Tiffany Determan, staff which qualify her to make recommendations, design and install and sign off on Ecological Practices as described above:

District Manager, Tiffany Determan:

Shoreline Ecological Practices (TAA approved June 21st, 2016)

- Approved by BWSR to sign off on the TAA for the Native Buffer Cost-Share program funds for Benton SWCD. This resulted in the design and installation of 9 shoreland buffers.
- Sherburne SWCD experience: Assisted with design for three shoreline buffers and made recommendations for over 20 shoreline buffers during site visits.
- Annual attendance at Shoreland Users Group: a gathering of professionals to share information and new techniques and lessons learned regarding shoreland and riparian buffers.
- Isanti SWCD: Provided TAA for 12 shoreline restorations on Long Lake and four on Green Lake. Also assisted with planning for three shoreline buffers on Blue Lake.

Stormwater

- Rain Garden Workshop, 2008. U of M Extension Service: details about design, construction, maintaining residential rain gardens.
- Have worked with engineer during the design and installation process of five raingardens, and the development of one alternative stormwater reduction project.
- Extensive involvement in the Metro subwatershed assessment process. This involves training and experience in visually inspecting the land and making educated recommendations for BMP placement. This work makes it necessary to stay current on new and innovative Stormwater BMPs.
- Watershed Specialist Training, University of MN, 2013. Included a special training on BMP planning and evaluation.
- On a regular basis: Lead and make recommendations on stormwater site assessments associated with Isanti County Ordinance Requirements.

River and Stream:

- The Fundamentals of Stream Restoration: Applied Geomorphology & Ecology Workshop, 2011.
- Diagnosing Streams: Symptoms, Underlying Causes, and Remedies, 2013.
- Have worked with engineer during the design and installation process of one streambank stabilization practice in Sherburne County and one bio-engineering (toe-wood) project in Isanti County.

2020 Non-structural Cost-Share Guidelines.

Adopted January 27, 2020