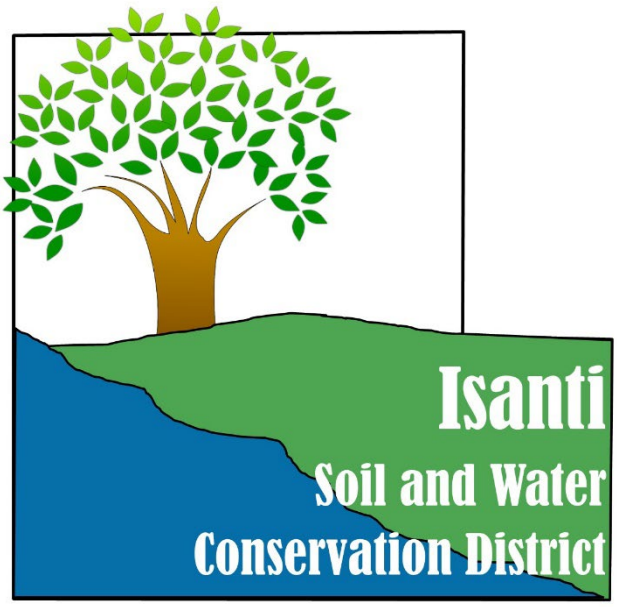

ISANTI SWCD EROSION CONTROL AND WATER MANAGEMENT POLICY

Updated and approved 5/21/2025

Tiffany Determan, District Manager, Isanti SWCD
tdterman@isantiswcd.org

Isanti SWCD Cost-Share Program Policies

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. In addition to these local policies, all projects must be consistent with the administrative requirements of the funding source.

These guidelines will be reviewed and edited and/or amended as needed.

Policies applied to all Funding Programs:

General

- 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.
- 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 by signing an intent to install agreement form.
- If USDA project funds or technical assistance are being used on a joint project, the applicant must sign an Information Release Authorization form that allows the District access to applicable information within the applicant's project case file to be eligible for District funds.
- 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.
- For projects that receive a flat rate payment (for example, cover crops) 1099 tax information must be supplied before a final payment will be issued.
- It is a District goal to fund voluntary conservation projects. Projects that are completed to meet regulatory requirements are not eligible for funding. However, portions of a project may be eligible for funding if that portion is voluntary and exceeds regulatory requirements. Verification that the project is voluntary may be required from the applicant or applicable regulatory agency.
- For projects using state and federals funds, additional specific requirements may apply, including but not limited to Minnesota prevailing wage, BWSR Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines, and project signage requirements. No exotic species or nursery-derived cultivars will be eligible for cost-share reimbursement
- The applicant is responsible for full installation of the project before the installation deadline listed on the cost share contract. If a deadline extension is required to complete the project, the applicant must make the request no less than 30 days prior to the project installation deadline. All contract deadline extension requests require approval by the District Board.
- Upon approval by the District Board, the applicant will receive a letter with a copy of executed cost share contract stating details of the practice that has been approved, the funding amount, and time schedule to start and complete the project, and a copy of the Operations and Maintenance Plan.
- The entire practice shall be installed according to project design requirements, including seeding, mulching, erosion control blanket, or other erosion control devices. Any changes from the approved design requirements shall be agreed to in writing prior to practice certification

- Each practice will have an Operations and Maintenance Plan developed to meet the applicable practice standard that is specific to the site and practice installed.
- Project inspections will be conducted to meet minimum State requirements. The current inspection schedule includes:
    - Compliance inspections at years 1,3,6 and 9 for typical projects under a 10-year contract.
    - Annual compliance inspections for non-structural land management practices.
- 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.

Payment Process

- The technician with the proper Job Approval Authority shall verify if the practice is complete and meets standards and specifications before final payment is issued.
- The Landowner/Applicant is responsible to pay, in full, all receipts and invoices directly to the contractor or vendor unless otherwise specified in the contract.
- For percent of installation cost share payments, the applicant must submit invoices or receipts of actual costs in sufficient detail for the District's review. Requests for reimbursement shall include an applicant signed Voucher and Practice Certification Summary Form.
- For flat-rate contract payments, the applicant must certify, by signing the Flat Rate Voucher and Practice Certification form, that the practice was completed according to plans and specifications developed by the District.
- Reimbursement payments for nonstructural land management practices are identified under the program specific policies.
- A cost share reimbursement payment will be approved by the District Manager and certified by the District Board upon certification that the project has been installed and completed to specifications.

Noncompliance

If the practice has failed prior to the 10-year term due to improper maintenance, or if the applicant fails to implement a nonstructural practice for the term of their contract the applicant will be responsible for the necessary repairs. If the landowner decides not to repair the practice to the original specifications, they shall be obligated to reimburse funding in accordance with the approved cost share contract and grant policies.

Project Selection

A list of projects/interested parties will be kept on file. The District Staff will prioritize projects based on local and state priorities, the potential to provide water quality benefits, or other as identified by the funding source (See Program Specific Policies).

Local Priorities

1. Priority issues and resources are identified in the Lower St. Croix and Rum River Comprehensive Watershed Plans.
2. Strategic planning by the SWCD Board identified that water quality restoration and projection is favored. The following criteria are used to assist with prioritization.
    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 residents and the larger population of county citizens.
c. Projects identified in completed or underway TMDLs.

Specific Conservation Practice Requirements

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 to be eligible for cost share.

Hard-Armor: Riprap should only be used where necessary and never to replace stable, naturally vegetation shoreline.

1) Funding for rock riprap will only be considered when:
    a. It is recommended by a contracted SWCD certified engineer or employee with appropriate job approval authority (JAA).
    b. It is deemed necessary for project success.
    c. It is installed no higher than the elevation the engineer has determined it to be required.

2) A 25-foot minimum native plant buffer will be required behind rock riprap unless existing infrastructure prevents it.

3) The native plant buffer must remain un-mowed other than for the benefit of the native vegetation. Maintenance to control invasive and weedy vegetation is expected. Contact the Isanti SWCD for maintenance guidelines.

4) Each site will be considered on a case-by-case basis, depending on the topography, existing vegetation, location of structures, size of lot, cost benefit for nutrient loading, etc., which may change native plant buffer requirements.

5) This policy does not supersede any local, County or State standards or ordinances.

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.

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
- 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 using the best available information and periodically updated using sources such as the Iowa Farm custom Rate Survey. The rates below are subject to change:

- General Labor rate of $32 per hour . Date, times and activity must be documented. (Based on 2021 values for MN by the Independentsector.org
- Heavy equipment operation such as skid steers, tractors, backhoes, and scrapers (including labor) at $75 per hour. Date, times and activity must be documented.
- Other equipment rates as listed on the most recent Iowa State University – Iowa Farm Custom Rate Survey – Average Charge rate.
- Professional or semi-professional services, such as engineering, labor rate at $100 per hour. (Date, times and activity must be documented)
- Others items: Fair market value with prior approval by the District Board.

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

Staff Credentials

The Isanti SWCD will ensure staff has the necessary skills and training to install and maintain projects according to standards and specifications. Building credentials and maintaining or seeking certifications to retain knowledgeable staff is a high priority.

The following is a documentation of staff skills, training, credentials along with description of other means the District will use to ensure projects meet the requirements of local guidelines and are installed and maintained according to standards and specifications.

Todd Kulaf: Assigned Job Approval Authority to design, install, and sign off on ecological practices relating to stabilizing shoreland (critical area planting 342) on 11/182020 by John Crellin, Area Resource

Conservationist with NRCS. On 1/14/2021 Todd was given TAA for Streambank and Shoreline restoration (580 engineering practice).

Matthew Remer: Was assigned Job Approval Authority to design, install, and sign off on ecological practices relating to Cover Crops (340) on 1/3/2022; Conservation Crop Rotation (328), Residue and Tillage Management, No till (329) and Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced Till (345) on 4/14/2025 and Conservation Planner Level 3 certification in June 2025.

When professional engineering is required or specific conservation practices require expertise above current technical capacity, the District will utilize professional engineers or staff from surrounding SWCDs, consultants, local municipalities, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources or the USDA NRCS.

Delegation

The District Board annually delegates signing of all State Grant Contracts, reports, contract documents and vouchers to the District Manager.

Cost Share Rates

The cost-shared rates are specific to the funding source. The SWCD Board reserves the right to set a limit on funding at their discretion.

Structural Practices: Generally, the Isanti SWCD will provide up to 75% cost-share to landowners for approved State practices (See Design Standards). Non-state funding sources may be used to fund any project at 100% if consistent with the administrative requirements of the funding source. Where necessary, structural practice rates are described in the Program Specific Policies attached to this document.

Nonstructural Practices: Generally, these practices are incentivized with a flat rate payment. Rates and other policies are specific to the funding source and are described in the Program Specific Policies attached to this document.

Program Specific Policies

Program specific guidelines and policies are found on the following pages. New ones will be amended to this document as needed.

Approved by Isanti SWCD board on 6/21/2022
Updated 5/21/2025

State Cost Share

In general, all practices will be funded at 75% of the actual cost to install (with the exception of well sealing) if funding is available. Non-state funding sources may be used to fund any project at 100% if consistent with the administrative requirements of the funding source.

Non-structural Policies for State Cost Share are located on policy sheets which are specific to the funding year.

Design Standards:

All eligible projects must be designed according to the USDA Field Office Technical Guide or other recognized standard.

Lakeshore buffers

1. 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 waterfront. The SWCD recognizes the fact that a 15-25-foot buffer is not always practical or cost efficient. Technical staff can decide to waiver from the minimums on a project-by-project basis.
2. Projects are ranked and selected based whether they are in a priority area and on cost effectiveness to reduce phosphorus.

Well Sealing:

Well sealing cost-share will provide up to 60% of the cost to seal a well.

Eligibility Requirements:

1. Wells eligible for cost share must be located within Isanti County. Priority is given to wells located within a delineated well head protection area.
2. Landowner must receive bids from at least two (2) licensed well contractors which will be submitted with the cost-share application.
3. Well sealing must be completed by a Minnesota licensed water well or limited licensed well sealing contractor in accordance with MN Statues Chapter 1031 and Minnesota Rules Chapter 4725.
4. The contractor sealing the well must file a well and boring sealing record with the Minnesota Department of Health.

Approved by Isanti SWCD board on 1/17/2023
Updated 8/21/2024

Green Lake Watershed 319 Program-Federal funding

The purpose of this program is to delist Green Lake from the impaired waters list.

Rates are based on available funding. Rates listed are the maximum.

Project Ranking Criteria

Program participants are selected and prioritized based on proximity to surface water, cost-effectiveness to reduce pollution, leveraged funding, and funding availability. Land within North Brook (CD 16) and Wyanett Creek (CD23) is priority for rural projects.

Design Standards

All eligible projects must be designed according to the USDA Field Office Technical Guide or other recognized standard as described below.

Urban and Residential Practice Funding:

Depending on the availability of funding, cost share may be approved to cover up to 75% of the actual project cost. Non-Federal funding sources may be used to fund any project at 100% if consistent with the administrative requirements of the funding source.

Examples of projects include shoreline erosion control/restoration, rain gardens, infiltration basins, and check dams.

Rural Practice Funding

Depending on the availably of funding, cost share may be approved to cover up to 75% of the actual project cost. Non-Federal funding sources may be used to fund any project at 100% if consistent with the administrative requirements of the funding source.

Examples of projects include water and sediment control basins (WASCOB), wetland restorations, livestock exclusions, and grassed waterways.

Non-Structural Practice Funding and Policies

Practices specific rates and policies follow the most recent Soil Health practice policies adopted by the SWCD.

Approved by RRWP Board 1-26-2023
Updated by RRWP Board 3-21-2024
Updated by RRWP Board 9-26-2024
Updated by RRWP Board 6-26-2025
Updated by RRWP Board 9-25-2025

Rum River Watershed Partnership
WBIF Project Policies

Purpose: This policy establishes an administrative process regarding how the Watershed Based Implementation Funds (WBIF) will be spent implementing the Rum River Watershed Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (RRWCWMP).

This document outlines:

1) Project selection and approval process;
2) Contracting and payment process and policies; and
3) Cost share rates and policies

This policy is intended to be reviewed annually and may be altered at any time to adjust for unforeseen projects and funding opportunities upon approval by the Rum River Watershed Partnership (RRWP) board.

Additional documents should be used in conjunction with this document: 1) Projects ranking form (excel), 2) MN BWSR applicable grant policy and grants administration manual.

Roles and Parties Definitions

Fiscal Agent: Anoka Conservation District, Jamie Schurbon

Coordinator: Isanti Soil and Water Conservation District, Tiffany Determan

Members: Any local or tribal unit of government that has signed the Joint Powers Agreement establishing the RRWP.

Implementation Planning Committee (IPC): The IPC consists of one staff member from each party of the JPA.

Board: The RRWP Board consists of one representative from each party to the JPA.

Project: Any request for RRWP WBIF funds. Projects may include requests for staff time funding or labor and/or materials to install a best management practice.

Approved by RRWP Board 1-26-2023
Updated by RRWP Board 3-21-2024
Updated by RRWP Board 9-26-2024
Updated by RRWP Board 6-26-2025
Updated by RRWP Board 9-25-2025

Section 1. Project selection and approval process

Project Eligibility

The first step in project selection is to determine whether the project is eligible for WBIF funding.

Eligibility:

The following criteria determine whether a project is eligible to be implemented with WBIF Funds:

1. Projects must be associated with an implementation action identified in the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.
2. Projects must meet requirements in BWSR WBIF Policy associated with the fiscal year of the grant(s) to be utilized and with the BWSR Grants Administration Manual.
3. Projects must address issues, activities and priority waters associated with the appropriate fiscal year BWSR approved eLink work plan.

   General Details:
   Eligible Priority issues include **Priority Level A:** Education and Outreach, Surface Water Restoration, and Surface Water Protection and **Priority Level B:** Groundwater & Drinking Water Quality.
   FY23 WBIF: Eligible projects must be within the drainage area of a tier 1 or 2 **priority water as listed in Table 4.5 and 4.8 of the CWMP,** or for projects that maintain or enhance watershed-based ecosystems, be located within a **priority geographic area found in Figure 4.5 of the CWMP**.

   FY25 WBIF: Eligible projects must be within the drainage area of a Tier 1-3 priority water as listed in Table 4.5 and 4.8 of the CWMP or for projects that maintain or enhance watershed-based ecosystems, be located within a **priority geographic area found in Figure 4.5 of the CWMP**.

The Eligibility and Ranking Sheet score must be a "yes" for all eligibility questions for a project to be eligible to use WBIF. All "yes" projects are eligible to move on to the funding ranking step in the project selection process.

Funding Request Components

Each funding request from a member must include a completed Eligibility and Ranking Sheet and Statement of Work. The Eligibility and Ranking sheet will be on a central database and filled out there. The activity statement of work can be downloaded from the database and sent to the Coordinator.

Funding Request Ranking

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Updated by RRWP Board 3-21-2024
Updated by RRWP Board 9-26-2024
Updated by RRWP Board 6-26-2025
Updated by RRWP Board 9-25-2025

All projects determined to be eligible for WBIF funds will be scored using the Eligibility and Ranking Sheet. The spreadsheet must be completed by the member wishing to receive funding for a project. The sheet calculates (1) eligibility on a pass/fail basis and (2) a project score. Projects with scores above a threshold amount (40) shown in the spreadsheet are anticipated to be funded.

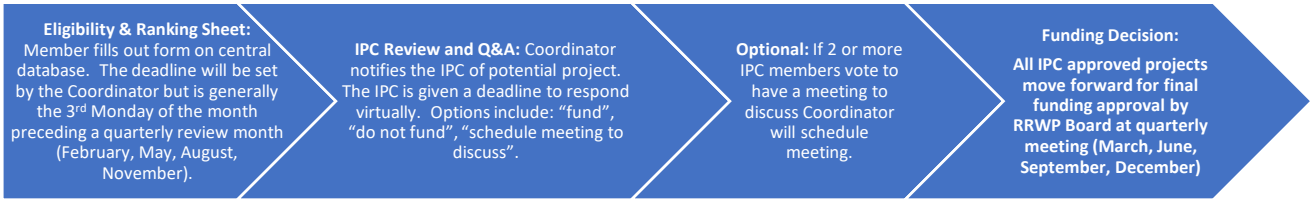
For projects that are eligible and scoring above the threshold, the Coordinator will send the completed Eligibility and Ranking Sheet and any supplemental information by email to the Implementation Planning Committee (IPC) for electronic review (See Funding Request Periods). Each IPC member shall reply within the timeframe specified by the Coordinator with their recommendation to "fund," "do not fund," or "schedule a meeting to discuss." If two or more recommend a meeting, the Coordinator will schedule and facilitate that meeting. IPC meetings will typically be held the second Monday of the month. All IPC approved funding requests will be referred to the Board for consideration where funding approval is by majority vote.

IPC and Board funding decisions may include consideration of available funding, cost effectiveness, matching funds leveraged, degree to which other funding has been pursued, and criteria as established in the RRCWMP and the accompanying WBIF work plan. If insufficient WBIF funds exist to fulfill current and anticipated funding requests, projects will be scored against each other. If tied, the project with a better $/pollutant value of the construction costs will be funded. Additionally, projects specifically mentioned in the grant work plan or compiled list used for work plan development will receive priority over those that are not.

Staff Time Funding Requests

Certain WBIF activities are primarily to fund staff time but are nonetheless often referred to as "projects" in this policy. These activities include Education/Information; Project Development (PD); Technical/Engineering Assistance (TA); and planning, assessment, and special studies. Funding requests for these activities use the same process described above. Consideration of these requests shall favor work that makes progress toward installation of projects achieving CWMP goals consistent with the grant work plan and policy.

Summarized Project & Program Approval Process



Funding Request Periods

Funding requests must be submitted to the Coordinator by the deadline set by the Coordinator. Deadlines are generally the third Monday of the month preceding a RRWP quarterly meeting (i.e. February, May, August, November). IPC recommended projects will go to the RRWP board during a quarterly meeting (March, June, September, December).

Final Six Months of Grant Period

The Board determines that, due to its limited meeting schedule, it is appropriate to establish an alternative process to review and approve projects in the final six months of a grant period to provide for the efficient administration of its grant program. Therefore, the Board delegates authority to the Fiscal Agent and the Watershed Coordinator to consider and jointly approve projects within the last six months of a grant.

If the Fiscal Agent and Watershed Coordinator determine a project is eligible for funding and scores above the established threshold, the Coordinator will send a notice to the Implementation Planning Committee (IPC) for electronic review. Each IPC member shall reply within the specified timeframe with the recommendation to "fund", "do not fund", or "schedule a meeting to discuss". If two or more of those replying recommended a meeting, the coordinator will schedule a meeting to discuss. At any such meeting, a project will be approved if a majority of the IPC votes in favor.

If a grant work plan revision with the grantor becomes necessary, the Fiscal Agent and Watershed Coordinator may collectively request a revision and make the changes in Elink.

Cost Share Rates and Policies

Approved funding requests must comply with the RRWP Cost Share Rates and Policies found in Section 3.

Appeals

The Board will review and make a funding decision on all projects, including those that receive a "do not fund" recommendation from the IPC. Decisions of the Board are final. Projects may be re-submitted for reconsideration if changes are made in response to input from the IPC or board.

Project Splitting or Grouping

Members may make a single funding request for a grouping of similar projects.

Requests for Future Funds

Requests will not be considered for future rounds of WBIF grant funding that is not yet in-hand. However, Members are encouraged to make future projects known during grant work planning.

Activity Budget Shifts

Shifting funds from one activity to another in the grant work plan to fund projects will be considered after the first complete year of the grant unless otherwise agreed upon by all voting members of the IPC.

Revisions to the Eligibility and Ranking Sheet

The IPC may, from time to time, revise the Eligibility and Ranking Sheet. Grammatical, formula and other edits that do not change project eligibility may be made at the discretion of the Coordinator and Fiscal Agent. Other edits shall be approved by the Implementation Planning Committee and notice provided to the Board.

Section 2. Contracting Process and Policies

Contracts

Upon approval of a funding request by a Member, the Member will execute an agreement and statement of work with the RRWP. The Board may choose to authorize the Chair or Coordinator to execute the agreement.

The Member must execute a cost share contract with landowner for any structural or non-structural best management practices. That agreement must contain ownership and maintenance provisions throughout the duration of the project's anticipated life. Such agreements must contain a deed restriction and easement agreement for projects with a WBIF cost greater than $5,000 and with a 10-year or longer anticipated life to compel the current and future landowners to maintain the project. Members may choose to have a more restrictive policy. Such deed restrictions shall expire at completion of the anticipated project life, as specified in the landowner agreement. Deed restrictions and easement agreements are not required for publicly or tribally owned land, permanently protected land, or fee to trust land.

Payments

All requests for reimbursement must be submitted to the Fiscal Agent and made on forms provided by the Fiscal Agent that include signatures of responsible parties overseeing the work. Requests for reimbursement of direct payments must be substantiated by receipts, paid invoices, or similar documentation in accordance with Grant policy and acceptable to the Fiscal Agent. Requests for staff time reimbursement must be substantiated by a log of hours worked and billing rate calculations in accordance with Grant policy and acceptable to the Fiscal Agent. All documentation must include dates of services. It is the Member's responsibility to know and comply with State grant and Rum River Watershed Partnership Policy.

Fiscal Agent authorization to issue payments: The Fiscal Agent is authorized by the Board to issue payments for approved projects and report these transactions at each Board meeting. Complete requests for reimbursement submitted not less than 10 non-holiday workdays prior to Fiscal Agent's regularly scheduled Board meeting will be acted upon at that Board meeting.

Payment Process: The Member will pay all expenses up front. The Fiscal Agent will reimburse the Member as directed by the Fiscal Agent's board, within work plan limits, and considering recommendation of the Member.

10% Retainage: The Fiscal Agent will issue reimbursement payments, except 10% may be retained. Any retained amounts will be paid after Board of Water and Soil Resources releases the final 10% of grant funds.

Payment as grant funds are available: The Fiscal Agent will issue reimbursement payments as grant funds are available. Grant funds are provided to the Fiscal Agent by the State in 50%-40%-10% payments with reconciliation processes that may cause delays between those payments. The Fiscal

Agent's board may prioritize payments and may issue partial payments if available funds are insufficient to pay all reimbursement requests.

Progress Payments: Members may request progress payments before final completion of work on project contracts, provided they comply with grant requirements. Prior to authorization for progress payment, the Member must attest that the request for payment has merit, the payment request is equal to or less than the percent of work that is complete, and that the project will still be completed within the contract timeline.

Documentation required with payment requests:

- Executed landowner contract (if applicable).
- Operation and Maintenance Plan. Typically included in the landowner contract.
- Payment voucher. Vouchers should include sign-off by the designer or technical staff with project oversight and Member administrator.
- Vendor invoices (not required for flat-rate payments). Invoices must include the vendor name; materials, labor or equipment provided; component unit costs; invoice date; and date(s) work was performed.
- Staff time and hourly rate documentation (when applicable) consistent with grant policy.
- Pollutant reductions (for completed projects, if applicable). Calculations or models must be consistent with BWSR grant guidelines.
- Certified as-build design (for completed projects, if applicable).
- Before and after photos.
- Certified contractor payrolls to comply with prevailing wage requirements (if applicable).
- IC-134 withholding affidavit for contractors (if applicable).

Advance payments: Advance payments of grant funds are discouraged but may be considered. Such requests will be made during the request for funds and project ranking process. If the funding request is approved, a recommendation of advance payment may be provided to the Fiscal Agent by the Board. The Fiscal Agent shall make the final decision regarding whether to issue advance payment and provide reasoning.

Invoicing frequency: Staff time payment requests may be submitted up to quarterly. Installation or other requests can be submitted up to monthly.

Project Statement of Work Amendments

A Project statement of work amendment may include (a) requests for additional Partnership funding or (b) a change to the scope and type of work that results in reduced benefits such that the Partner agreement for the project must be modified.

Changes in funding or scope will be approved as follows:

≤10% funding change and if the change of scope remains proportional to the original agreement: The Member submits a request to the Fiscal Agent. The Fiscal Agent staff person can approve the amendment. An amended SOW will be produced bearing the signature of the Fiscal Agent staff person and Partner staff or board.

>10% funding change or if the change of scope is not proportional to the original agreement: Member must submit the request to the Fiscal Agent. The Fiscal Agent will notify the coordinator to place the item on the next scheduled JPE board meeting agenda. The member must present the requested change to the JPE board for approval/denial. An amended SOW will be produced bearing the signature of the RRWP Board and Partner board.

During the final six months of a grant, >10% changes to Statements of Work will follow the same procedure as is used for new requests during the period.

In the event that a grant funding source's expiration is extended, the Fiscal Agent staff my extend statement of work expiration dates by email notice to the Partner.

After the Fact Funding Requests

Work to be paid or reimbursed must occur after a funding request is approved and associated contracts executed.

Designer Credentials

Project designs must have sign-off by a person with credentials acceptable under grant policy such as job approval authority or professional engineer. The NRCS Field Office Technical Guide, MN Stormwater Manual, BWSR Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines, or other standards generally accepted by the engineering profession must be used for project design, construction, operations and maintenance.

Section 3. Cost Share Policies

To be eligible for WBIF funding, projects must meet requirements in BWSR WBIF Policy associated with the fiscal year of the grant(s) to be utilized and with the BWSR Grants Administration Manual.

Cost-share and local match

General funding rates for all project types are described in the table below. Under some circumstances, a Member may request 100% funding for structural projects and forestry practices. Such requests will be made during the request for funds and project ranking process.

Match for the all WBIF grants must be from a non-state source and comply with all grant policy. Non-state funding sources may be used to fund any project at 100% if consistent with the administrative requirements of the funding source.

Grant activity	WBIF Cost Share Funding Rates	Non-State Match Required[1]
Administration/Coordination	100%	0%
Education/Information	100%	0%
Project Development	100%	0%
Tech/Engineering	100%	0%
Ag Non-Structural[2]	Flat-rate	0%
Structural Urban BMPs	75%	25%
Structural Rural BMPs	75%	25%
Wetland Restoration	75%	25%
Forestry Practices[2]	75%	25%
Planning, Assessment, & Special Studies	100%	0%
Woodland Stewardship Plans[2]	80%	20%
Well Sealing	60%	40%

1Percentage of WBIF grant funds.

2 Detailed policies can be found in the following pages

Ineligible Projects

Required projects - Cost share is not available for projects required by local, state or federal rules or ordinances.

Grant work plan & policies – Projects must be consistent with the funding source grant work plan or grant policies.

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Updated by RRWP Board 9-26-2024
Updated by RRWP Board 6-26-2025
Updated by RRWP Board 9-25-2025

Activity Specific Policies and Incentive Rates:

Agricultural Non-Structural Practices

Flat-rate incentives to install or adopt non-structural best management practices that improve or protect water quality are eligible for use of funds. The goal of these practices is ongoing landowner adoption unless otherwise approved by BWSR.

Non-structural BMPs will be planned and implemented according to the Natural Resource Conservation Service standards and specifications found on the Electronic Field Office Technical Guide (EFOTG). However, seeding dates for cover crops may follow Midwest Cover Crop Council seeding guide recommendations.

For all non-structural BMP practices, cost share funding will be comprised of a flat per acre rate incentive based on the Minnesota NRCS Practice Average Annual Cost Information Spreadsheet FY2018 (or more recent as it becomes available) and the Practice Cost Information Workbook Tool 2019 (or more recent) found in the EFOTG.

Contract length

Practices will be planned for 1- or 3-years of implementation.

1-year contracts are available to allow landowners to start small by trying a practice with little commitment. 1-year contracts apply to cover crops only.

For practices with 3 years of implementation, practices may be implemented on the same acres for the 3-year duration (required for nutrient management and prescribed grazing), practices may move with the rotation but must implement the same amount or greater acres in years 2 and 3, or two or more practices may be implemented on the same acres for the 3-year period alternating years (ex. Plant cover crops after corn harvest, no-till soybeans the following year).

Contract Payments

FY23 WBIF: A one-time payment shall be made upon the first season's certification by the Member for both one- and three-year contracts. Certification includes verification of seeding, seed mix, and rate. The practice must be certified and inspected by the Member annually for three-year contracts to ensure implementation. If the practice is not continued in years 2 & 3 as required, the Partner shall recover funds for those years.

F25 and beyond: Members must follow the current version of the GAM posted online.

Eligibility

1-year Contracts (applies to cover crops only): Eligibility requirements include that planned practices are newly adopted; not previously implemented on the acres by the current owner/operator and did not

previously meet NRCS standards and specifications. Up to three consecutive contracts may be applied for on the same land.

3-Year Contracts: Eligibility requirements include that planned practices are newly adopted; not previously implemented on the acres by the current owner/operator and did not previously meet NRCS standards and specifications. For cover crops, a second application is eligible if cover crops species or acreage is enhanced.

Incentive Rates:

- **Cover Crops** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 340
  - 1-2 species $50/acre/year
  - 3+ species $60/acre/year
  - Implementation can occur on different acres within the three-year contract or on the same acres consecutively
- **Nutrient Management** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 590
  - $20/acre/year
  - Implemented on the same acres annually
- **Prescribed Grazing** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 528
  - $40/acre/year
  - Implemented on the same acres annually
- **Residue and Tillage Management – No-Till & Strip Till** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 329 for No-Till/Strip-Till
  - $20/acre/year
  - Implementation can occur on different acres within the three-year contract or on the same acres consecutively
- **Residue and Tillage Management - Reduced Till** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 345 for Conservation Till
  - $10/acre/year
  - Residue cover following a corn crop at the time of planting the subsequent crop must be 60% or greater.
  - Residue cover following a soybean crop at the time of planting the subsequent crop must be 30% or greater.
  - Residue cover following a small grain crop at the time of planting the subsequent crop must be 60% or greater.
  - Implementation can occur on different acres within the three-year contract or on the same acres consecutively.

Forestry Practices

Funds are available to support the implementation of forestry-related practices that protect or improve water quality. The goal of these practices is to promote forest stewardship on private lands in a way that achieves measurable water quality benefits aligned with the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.

Partners may request a lump sum allocation requests through project proposals that include descriptions of proposed practices, estimated water quality benefits, and alignment with plan goals. Requests will be reviewed by the Implementation Planning Committee (IPC) and require approval by the Joint Powers Entity (JPE) Board.

Eligible Practices

Potentially eligible forestry-related practices are listed in the Excel spreadsheet found in the shared drive, or below. This list is a reference only. The inclusion of a practice on this list does not guarantee eligibility or indicate water quality benefit.

Each proposed practice must:

- Include a primary water quality benefit and be explained as such in the proposal.
- Be located within a priority area and implement one or more actions identified in the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.
- Be evaluated using the standard project ranking sheet.
- Include a plan to quantify the anticipated water quality benefit, using any applicable method. The quantification plan must be included in the proposal.

Cost Share and Funding Model

Forestry practices will be supported using a 75% cost-share model:

- 75% of eligible project costs will be reimbursed. A 25% match must be provided by the landowner or non-state source.

Funds may be allocated to partners through lump sum requests, similar to a program structure:

- No minimum funding amount is required.
- Requests are intended to support multiple projects or a coordinated program effort.

Proposal Review and Approval

- Proposals must be submitted by partners and will be reviewed by the IPC for alignment with water quality goals and eligibility criteria.
- Final approval requires a vote by the JPE Board.

Practice	NRCS Code	Water Quality Justification
Tree and Shrub Establishment	**612**	**Tree and shrub establishment provide water quality benefits through erosion control, nutrient uptake, riparian buffer zones, filtration, and stormwater management (sponge).**
Tree and Shrub Site Preparation	**490**	**Tree and shrub site preparation is an investment to enhance the success of a planting project.**
Tree Protection		**Tree and shrub site preparation is an investment to enhance the success of a planting project.**
Riparian Forest Buffer	**391**	**Riparian forest buffers can deliver a number of benefits including filtering nutrients, pesticides, and animal waste from agricultural land runoff; stabilizing eroding banks; filtering sediment from runoff.**
Silvopasture	**381**	**Improper or unplanned grazing of forests lead to forest degradation that impacts water quality. Unmanaged woodland grazing can result in soil compaction, erosion, loss of biodiversity, water contamination, tree damage leading to reduced timber and livestock yields. Proper silvopasture techniques are essential in improving and maintaining water quality.**
Invasive Brush Management*- Removal	**314**	**Invasive species alter the ecosystem creating more risk of erosion and nutrient cycling changes (buckthorn).**

Invasive Brush Management*- Cover Crop	**340**	**Removing the invasive species will remove the soil protection. Therefore a cover crop is needed to protect the soil from soil erosion and prevent the colonization of new/more invasive species.**		
Road-Trail-Landing Closure and Treatment	**654**	**Closure and treatment can reduce erosion, reduce offsite movement of chemical residues, reduce offsite movement of sediment, reduce invasive species, and restore hydrologic function.**		
Hedgerow Planting	**422**	**Water quality benefits will be observed through reduced wind erosion.**		
Windbreak-Shelterbelt Establishment and Renovation	**380**	**Water quality benefits will be observed through reduced wind erosion.**		
Seeding and Establishment of Herbaceous and Woody Species	**550**	**This will prevent soil erosion and establish native vegetation in riparian areas, prevent excessive nutrient runoff, stabilize banks/soil, and improve water quality and storage capacity.**		
***practice only applicable within 500ft. of lakes, rivers, and streams**				

Woodland Stewardship Plans

WSPs funded with Watershed Based Implementation funds must promote sustainable forest management practices with a focus on water quality preservation.

WSPs can be completed by SWCDs, DNR, or Private Consultants.

The cost-share rate is 80% of the DNR Rate of $300 + $10/Acre.

Woodland Stewardship Plan requirements:

1. WSP plan writers must be qualified as follows:

- be a certified plan writer with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).
- have a current professional registration.

2. Focus on Water Quality: In addition to normal WSP requirements, plans shall emphasize water quality by:

- Assessing impacts of forest management on water quality.
- Incorporating Best Management Practices (BMPs) for water quality protection.
- Identifying areas for impactful water quality improvement where possible.
- Recommending sustainable practices minimizing negative impacts on water quality.

Process:

1. Plan writers other than the SWCD must request funding from the appropriate SWCD. The SWCD will submit the funding request to the Rum River Watershed Partnership (RRWP) during a quarterly request period.
2. The SWCD will notify plan writers in writing upon approval.
3. Note: the landowner will be reimbursed. Cost-share does NOT cover any portion of the plan upfront.
    a. The WSP must meet the requirement listed above.
    b. The WSP must be approved by the SWCD before reimbursement occurs.

4. Reporting and Documentation:

Approved by RRWP Board 1-26-2023
Updated by RRWP Board 3-21-2024
Updated by RRWP Board 9-26-2024
Updated by RRWP Board 6-26-2025
Updated by RRWP Board 9-25-2025

Plan writers must provide:

- Woodland Stewardship Plan
- Invoice showing
    - Plan acres
    - Plan cost

Well Sealing

Wells will be cost shared at 60% of the total cost to seal the well**.** If well sealing funds are received from another state agency, the landowner must report this to the member organization, and the member organization will withdraw its cost-share contribution such that the total state funds do not exceed 60%.

Each local partner administering well-sealing funds will decide whether to make payments on a reimbursement basis or directly pay the contractor the grant funded portion. No payments shall be made until the contractor has produced and submitted to the MN Department of Health a Well Sealing Boring Record.

Work must be completed by a contractor licensed by the State of Minnesota to seal wells.

Well sealing is *a priority throughout the watershed per* Rum River Comprehensive Plan page 128: "*As unsealed wells can be a contamination risk to any groundwater supply, well sealing is a watershed wide activity that does not require additional screening criteria".*

First-come, first-serve. If insufficient funds exist to fund all requests submitted, the local partner board administering the funds shall make prioritization decisions.

Labor Provided by Owners

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 landowner to complete the project, shall be estimated at:

- General Labor rate of $32 per hour. (Date, times and activity must be documented)
- Heavy equipment operation such as skid steers, tractors, backhoes, and scrapers (including labor) at $75 per hour. (Date, times and activity must be documented)
- Other equipment rates as listed on the most recent Iowa State University – Iowa Farm Custom Rate Survey – Average Charge rate.
- Professional or semi-professional services, such as engineering, labor rate at $100 per hour. (Date, times and activity must be documented)
- Other items: Fair market value with prior approval by the Rum Watershed Partnership Board.

Approved by RRWP Board 1-26-2023
Updated by RRWP Board 3-21-2024
Updated by RRWP Board 9-26-2024
Updated by RRWP Board 6-26-2025
Updated by RRWP Board 9-25-2025

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

Approved by Isanti SWCD board on 8/21/2024

FY'25 Isanti SWCD Soil Health Cost Share Program

These policies apply to FY25 BWSR Soil Health Phase 2 funding, Green Lake 319, and any other funding source without existing, adopted non-structural policies.

Non-structural BMPs for the purpose of Soil Health will be planned and implemented according to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) standards and specifications found on the Electronic Field Office Technical Guide (EFOTG). However, seeding dates for cover crops will follow the Midwest Cover Crop Council seeding guide recommendations. Design standards for all practices must include specifications for operation and maintenance for the effective life of the given practice, including an inspection schedule and procedure.

Nonstructural Ag BMPs (management BMPs) must be an enhancement of existing management practices that will reduce soil erosion, improve soil health from existing levels, and have a benefit for water quality. A practice must implement a higher level of conservation than what has been implemented on the field in the past 3 years.

Eligibility

1-year Contracts (applies to cover crops only): Eligibility requirements include that planned practices are newly adopted; not previously implemented on the acres by the current owner/operator and did not previously meet NRCS standards and specifications. Up to three consecutive contracts may be applied for on the same land.

3-Year Contracts: Eligibility requirements include that planned practices are newly adopted; not previously implemented on the acres by the current owner/operator and did not previously meet NRCS standards and specifications. For cover crops, a second application is eligible if cover crops species or acreage is enhanced.

Project Ranking Criteria

Soil health program participants will be prioritized and selected based on:

1. Whether most land is in a drainage area within a Tier 1-3 water as identified in the Rum River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.
2. Whether most of the land is in a drainage area within a priority area identified in the Lower St. Croix Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.
3. Practice must have a water quality (surface or groundwater) benefit.
4. Repeat contracts will rank lower than first-time contracts.
5. Quality/multiple benefits of seed mix based on technical review.

Contracts

- Incentives to install or adopt land management practices will have the option of a 1 or 3-year contract length.

- Applicants are responsible to submit application forms, project plans and cost estimates as requested by the District in sufficient detail for the District to complete its review.
- The applicant is responsible for full installation of the project before the project installation deadline listed on the cost share contract. If a deadline extension is required to complete the project, the applicant must make the request no less than 30 days prior to the project installation deadline. All contract deadline extension requests require approval by the District Board.
- Upon approval by the District Board, the applicant will receive a letter with copy of executed cost share contract stating details of the practice that has been approved, the funding amount, and time schedule to start and complete the project, and a copy of the Operations and Maintenance Plan.
- The landowner and applicant shall allow District staff access to property for which the installed conservation practice is located during the life of the contract. The installed practice will be subject to periodic inspections by District staff.

Reimbursement

- The applicant must certify, by signing the Flat Rate Voucher, and Practice Certification form, that the practice was completed according to plans and specifications developed by the district.
- The technician with the proper Job Approval Authority shall verify if the practice is complete and meets standards and specifications before final payment is issued.
- The Landowner/Applicant is responsible to pay, in full, all receipts and invoices directly to the contractor or vendor.
- Payments will be made on an annual basis after certification of implementation by the technician.
- A cost share reimbursement payment will be approved by the District Manager and certified by the District Board upon certification that the project has been installed and completed to specifications.

Practice specific policies and rates

Practice rates closely follow those established by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) program.

- **Cover Crops** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard (**340)**
    - One or Three-year contract
    - 1-2 species $50/acre/year
    - 3+ species $60/acre/year
    - Implementation can occur on different acres within the three-year contract or on the same acres consecutively but must be implemented on the same amount or greater acres in years 2 and 3.
    - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 340 (except for the seeding date which will follow the Midwest Cover Crop Council Seeding Guide recommendations)
    - Seeding dates will follow the Midwest Cover Crop Council Seeding Guide recommendations (the latest date allowed to plant a cover crop is November 20th).
    - One or three-year contract option.
    - Cover crop must be applied to an annual crop.
    - Cover crop cannot be terminated until after January 1 of the following year.

Approved by Isanti SWCD board on 8/21/2024

- **Conservation Cover –** Must follow NRCS practice standard **(327)**
  - Introduced Species $162.75 / ac
  - Introduced Species w/ Foregone Income $487.04
  - Native Species $192.51 / ac
  - Native Species w/ Foregone Income $554.08

- **Conservation Crop Rotation –** Must follow NRCS practice standard **(328)**
  - Short term perennial $49.92 / ac
  - Small grain $26.30 / ac
  - Basic rotation, organic & non-organic, $7.75/ac
  - Specialty crop rotation, small scale, $20.08 / kSqFt
  - Specialty crops, organic and non-organic, $20.66/ac

- **Critical Area Planting –** Must follow NRCS practice standard **(342)**
  - Hydroseeding $0.07 / sqft
  - Native or introduced vegetation, moderate grading; $654.97 / ac
  - Native or introduced vegetation, normal tillage $240.51 / ac
  - Native or introduced vegetation, including shrub planting, normal tillage; $947.80 / ac
  - Permanent cover $16.60 / kSqFt

- **Nutrient Management –** Must follow NRCS practice standard (**590)**
  - Nutrient Management $20.21 / ac
  - Non-organic $15.14 /ac
  - Precision Nutrient Application $65.40 / ac
  - Prescription Nutrient Efficiency $48.20 / ac
  - Implemented on the same acres annually

- **Pasture & Hay Planting –** Must follow NRCS practice standard **(512)**
  - Cool season $238.93 / ac
  - Frost seeding $148.21
  - Interseed $192.20
  - Warm season, 2 or more species, $340.63

- **Prescribed Grazing –** Must follow NRCS practice standard **(528)**
  - Deferred Grazing, foregone income $47.34 /ac
  - Grazing system managed to benefit wildlife habitat $56.61 /ac
  - Pasture Intensive $67.88 / ac
  - Pasture Standard $30.73 / ac

- **Residue and Tillage Management – No-Till & Strip Till –** Must follow NRCS practice standard **(329)**
  - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 329 for No-Till/Strip-Till
  - Three-year contract
  - No-till / strip till complex $27.95 / ac

  - No-till/strip till w/ herbicide, no cover crop $31.55 / ac
  - Small scale no-till $34.23 / kSqFt
  - Implementation can occur on different acres within the three-year contract or on the same acres consecutively but must be implemented on the same amount or greater acres in years 2 and 3.

- **Residue and Tillage Management - Conservation Tillage –** Must follow NRCS practice standard **(345)**
  - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 345 for Conservation Till
  - Three-year contract
  - Reduced till, less than 0.5 ac $15.81 / ksqft
  - Reduced Till $9.18 / ac
  - Residue cover following a corn crop at the time of planting the subsequent crop must be 60% or greater.
  - Residue cover following a soybean crop at the time of planting the subsequent crop must be 30% or greater.
  - Residue cover following a small grain crop at the time of planting the subsequent crop must be 60% or greater.
    Implementation can occur on different acres within the three-year contract or on the same acres consecutively but must be implemented on the same amount or greater acres in years 2 and 3.

Approved by Isanti SWCD board on 5/21/2025
Amended 8/20/2025

Soil Health Cost Share Program

This cost share policy applies to all cost share programs that don't have a separate cost share policy (i.e. Lower St. Croix or Rum River Watershed Based Implementation Funds).

Non-structural BMPs for the purpose of Soil Health will be planned and implemented according to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) standards and specifications found on the Electronic Field Office Technical Guide (EFOTG). Design standards for all practices must include specifications for operation and maintenance for the effective life of the given practice, including an inspection schedule and procedure.

Eligibility

Nonstructural Ag BMPs (management BMPs) must be an enhancement of existing management practices that will reduce soil erosion, improve soil health from existing levels, and have a benefit for water quality. A practice must result in a higher level of conservation than what has been implemented on the field in the past 3 years.

- Applicants with existing conservation management practices may also meet the enhancement requirement by contributing to local conservation outreach and education efforts through collaboration with the SWCD Agricultural Conservation Specialist. The Ag Specialist will work with the applicant to determine an appropriate contribution during the approval process. Eligible contributions include hosting a field day to showcase and discuss your conservation practices or other activities as determine by the Ag Specialist.

Project Ranking Criteria (RCPP only)

Soil health program participants will be prioritized and selected on a monthly basis based on:

1. Whether the applicant identifies as historically underserved rancher/farmer.
2. Whether the project addresses at least one resource concern.
3. If the applicant has utilized the proposed practice in the past.
4. If the practice falls within a Drinking Water Supply Management Area.
5. If the project is located in a priority area identified in a Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.
6. If the project area falls within a sensitive groundwater area.
7. Proximity to surface water.

Contract Length

- Funding to install or adopt land management practices will have the option of a 1-to-4-year contract length.
- For RCPP the maximum contract length is dependent on RCPP fund expiration dates (12/31/2028).

Approved by Isanti SWCD board on 5/21/2025
Amended 8/20/2025

Practice specific policies and rates

FLAT-RATE Practices

- **Cover Crops** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard (**340)**
  - 1-2 species $50/acre/year
  - 3+ species $60/acre/year
  - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 340 (except for the seeding date which will follow the Midwest Cover Crop Council Seeding Guide recommendations for non-Federally funded projects only)
  - Seeding dates will follow the Midwest Cover Crop Council Seeding Guide recommendations (the latest date allowed to plant a cover crop is November 20th).
  - Cover crop must be applied to an annual crop.
  - Cover crop cannot be terminated until after January 1 of the following year.

- **Nutrient Management –** Must follow NRCS practice standard (**590)**
  - $20/acre/year
  - Implemented on the same acres annually
- **Prescribed Grazing –** Must follow NRCS practice standard **(528)**
  - $80/acre/year
  - Implemented on the same acres annually

- **Residue and Tillage Management – No-Till –** Must follow NRCS practice standard **(329)**
  - $35/acre/year

PERCENTAGE-BASED Practices

- **Critical Area Planting – Must follow NRCS practice standard (342)**
  - 75% cost share, no more than $700/acre
  - 10-year practice lifespan
- **Pasture & Hay Planting – Must follow NRCS practice standard (512)**
  - 75% cost share, no more than $400
  - Conversion from an annual crop is required
  - 5-year practice lifespan
- **Conservation Cover – Must follow NRCS practice standard (327)**
  - 75% cost share, no more than $600/acre
  - 5-yr practice lifespan
- **Filter Strip – Must follow NRCS practice standard (393)**
  - 75% cost share, no more than $700/acre
  - 10-year practice lifespan
- **Forest Stand Improvement – Must follow NRCS practice standard (666)**
  - 75% cost share, no more than $700/acre
  - 10-year practice lifespan
- **Tree and Shrub Establishment – Must follow NRCS practice standard (612)**
  - 75% cost share, no more than $12/each
  - 15-year practice lifespan

Approved by Isanti SWCD board on 6/21/2022

WBIF21-Lower St. Croix Non-Structural Practices

Non-structural BMPs will be planned and implemented according to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) standards and specifications found on the Electronic Field Office Technical Guide (EFOTG). However, seeding dates for cover crops will follow the Midwest cover crop council seeding guide recommendations. Design standards for all practices must include specifications for operation and maintenance for the effective life of the given practice, including an inspection schedule and procedure.

Nonstructural Ag BMPs (management BMPs) must be an enhancement of existing management practices that will reduce soil erosion, improve soil health from existing levels, and have a benefit for water quality. A practice must implement a higher level of conservation than what has been implemented on the field in the past 3 years.

The following practices may be implemented on the same acres for the three-year period alternating practices per year: Cover Crops, Residue and Tillage Management – No-Till & Strip Till, and Residue and Tillage Management – Conservation Tillage.

Project Ranking Criteria:

Non-Structural program participants will be selected and prioritized based on whether the majority of the land is located in an ag priority location as identified in the Lower St. Croix comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. Reference Section VII.B of the Lower St. Croix Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan for targeting process and scoring projects.

Isanti SWCD will further prioritize based on criteria such as: 1) criteria defined in Section VII.B. of the Lower St. Croix Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (targeting and scoring); 2) whether the proposed practices will be implemented on the same acres for three consecutive years and 3) proximity to surface water.

Contracts

- Incentives to install or adopt land management practices must have a minimum duration of 3 years.
- Applicants are responsible to submit application forms, project plans and cost estimates as requested by the District in sufficient detail for the District to complete its review.
- The applicant is responsible for full installation of the project before the project installation deadline listed on the cost share contract. If a deadline extension is required to complete the project, the applicant must make the request no less than 30 days prior to the project installation deadline. All contract deadline extension request require approval by the District Board.
- Upon approval by the District Board, the applicant will receive a letter with copy of executed cost share contract stating details of the practice that has been approved, the funding amount, and time schedule to start and complete the project, and a copy of the Operations and Maintenance Plan.
- The landowner and applicant shall allow District staff access to property for which the installed conservation practice is located during the life of the contract. The installed practice will be subject to periodic inspections by District staff.

Approved by Isanti SWCD board on 6/21/2022

Reimbursement

- The applicant must certify, by signing the Flat Rate Voucher, and Practice Certification form, that the practice was completed according to plans and specifications developed by the district.
- The technician with the proper Job Approval Authority shall verify if the practice is complete and meets standards and specifications before final payment is issued.
- The Landowner/Applicant is responsible to pay, in full, all receipts and invoices directly to the contractor or vendor.
- A one-time payment will be made after successful completion of the first year of implementation of the practice.
- A cost share reimbursement payment will be approved by the District Administrator and certified by the District Board upon certification that the project has been installed and completed to specifications.

Practice specific policies

- **Cover Crops** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 340
    - Three-year contract
    - 1-2 species $50/acre/year
    - 3+ species $60/acre/year
    - Implementation can occur on different acres within the three-year contract or on the same acres consecutively but must be implemented on the same amount or greater acres in years 2 and 3.
    - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 340 (except for the seeding date which will follow the Midwest Cover Crop Council Seeding Guide recommendations)
    - Seeding dates will follow the Midwest Cover Crop Council Seeding Guide recommendations (the latest date allowed to plant a cover crop is November 20th).
    - Three-year contract
    - 100 acres maximum per person, entity, or corporation
    - Cover crop must be applied to an annual crop, eligible crops include corn, soybeans, or small grains.
    - Prevent plant acres are not eligible for this program.
    - Cover crop cannot be terminated until after January 1 of the following year.

- **Nutrient Management** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 590
    - $20/acre/year
    - Implemented on the same acres annually

- **Prescribed Grazing** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 528
    - $40/acre/year
    - Implemented on the same acres annually

Approved by Isanti SWCD board on 6/21/2022

- **Residue and Tillage Management – No-Till & Strip Till**
  - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 329 for No-Till/Strip-Till
  - Three-year contract
  - $20/acre/year
  - Implementation can occur on different acres within the three-year contract or on the same acres consecutively but must be implemented on the same amount or greater acres in years 2 and 3.
  - 100 acres/year maximum per person, entity, or corporation.

- **Residue and Tillage Management - Conservation Tillage**
  - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 345 for Conservation Till
  - Three-year contract
  - $10/acre/year
  - Residue cover following a corn crop at the time of planting the subsequent crop must be 60% or greater.
  - Residue cover following a soybean crop at the time of planting the subsequent crop must be 30% or greater.
  - Residue cover following a small grain crop at the time of planting the subsequent crop must be 60% or greater.
  - 100 acres/year maximum per person, entity, or corporation.
    Implementation can occur on different acres within the three-year contract or on the same acres consecutively but must be implemented on the same amount or greater acres in years 2 and 3.

Approved by Isanti SWCD Board on 1/17/2023

Non-Structural Policy: Lower St. Croix Watershed FY 2022 Soil Health Grant Funding:

Non-structural BMPs will be planned and implemented according to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) standards and specifications found on the Electronic Field Office Technical Guide (EFOTG). However, seeding dates for cover crops will follow the Midwest cover crop council seeding guide recommendations. Design standards for all practices must include specifications for operation and maintenance for the effective life of the given practice, including an inspection schedule and procedure.

Nonstructural Ag BMPs (management BMPs) must be an enhancement of existing management practices that will reduce soil erosion, improve soil health from existing levels, and have a benefit for water quality. Eligibility requirements include that planned practices are newly adopted or enhanced; not previously implemented on the acres by the current owner/operator and did not previously meet NRCS standards and specifications.

Practices may be implemented on the same acres for the 3 year duration (required for nutrient management, prescribed grazing, conservation cover, and forage and biomass planting), practices may move with the rotation but must implement the same amount or greater acres in years 2 and 3, or two or more practices may be implemented on the same acres for the 3 year period alternating years (cover crops, no-till/strip till, and crop rotation).

Contracts:

- Incentives to install or adopt land management practices must have a minimum duration of 3 years.
- Applicants are responsible to submit application forms, project plans and cost estimates as requested by the District in sufficient detail for the District to complete its review.
- The applicant is responsible for full installation of the project before the project installation deadline listed on the cost share contract. If a deadline extension is required to complete the project, the applicant must make the request no less than 30 days prior to the project installation deadline. All contract deadline extension request require approval by the District Board.
- Upon approval by the District Board, the applicant will receive a letter with copy of executed cost share contract stating details of the practice that has been approved, the funding amount, and time schedule to start and complete the project, and a copy of the Operations and Maintenance Plan.
- The landowner and applicant shall allow District staff access to property for which the installed conservation practice is located during the life of the contract. The installed practice will be subject to periodic inspections by District staff.

Reimbursement:

- The applicant must certify, by signing the Flat Rate Voucher, and Practice Certification form, that the practice was completed according to plans and specifications developed by the district.
- The technician with the proper Job Approval Authority shall verify if the practice is complete and meets standards and specifications before final payment is issued.
- The Landowner/Applicant is responsible to pay, in full, all receipts and invoices directly to the contractor or vendor.
- A one-time payment will be made after successful completion of the first year of implementation of the practice.
- A cost share reimbursement payment will be approved by the District Administrator and certified by the District Board upon certification that the project has been installed and completed to specifications.

Approved by Isanti SWCD Board on 1/17/2023

Practice specific policies:

- **Cover Crops** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 340
  - 1-2 species $50/acre/year
  - 3+ species $60/acre/year
  - Implementation can occur on different acres within the three-year contract or on the same acres consecutively
  - Stand-alone practice
- **Nutrient Management** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 590
  - $20/acre/year
  - Implemented on the same acres annually
  - Add on practice eligible only on acres implementing core soil health practices.
- **Prescribed Grazing** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 528
  - $40/acre/year
  - Implemented on the same acres annually
  - Stand-alone practice
- **Residue and Tillage Management – No-Till & Strip Till** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 329 for No-Till/Strip-Till
  - $20/acre/year
  - Implementation can occur on different acres within the three-year contract or on the same acres consecutively
  - Stand-alone practice
- **Conservation Cover** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 327
  - max 20 ac, contract duration 10 yrs, practice lifespan 10 yrs
  - Introduced species $200/ac
  - Native species $350/acre
  - Pollinator species $500/ac.
  - Stand-alone practice
- **Conservation Crop Rotation** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 328
  - max 100 ac, contract duration 3 yrs, practice lifespan 1 yr,
  - $30/ac
  - The additional crop added to the rotation must improve the SCI to be eligible. Minimum of 3 crop types in the rotation and listed in the 328 practice standard Table 2: High Residue Producing Annual Crops. Participants must demonstrate the applied for acres have a history of continuous annual crop. Fall tillage will not be allowed in the 328 year and minimal disturbance required if applying manure. Light tillage allowed if broadcasting a cover crop after small grain harvest to lightly incorporate.
  - Stand-alone practice
- **Forage and Biomass Planting** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 512
  - max 100 ac, contract duration 10 yrs, practice lifespan 10 yrs
  - $150/ac
  - Requires conversion from row crop.
  - Stand-alone practice

Project Ranking Criteria:

Non-Structural program participants will be selected and prioritized based on whether the majority of the land is located in an ag priority location as identified in the Lower St. Croix comprehensive Watershed Management Plan and follow the Grants Administration Manual and the FY 2022 Clean Water Fund Competitive Grant Policy.

Approved by Isanti SWCD Board on 1/17/2023

Reference Section VII.B of the Lower St. Croix Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan for targeting process and scoring projects.

Isanti SWCD will further prioritize based on criteria such as: 1) criteria defined in Section VII.B. of the Lower St. Croix Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (targeting and scoring); 2) whether the proposed practices will be implemented on the same acres for three consecutive years and 3) proximity to surface water.

Operation and Maintenance*:*

Each practice will have an Operations and Maintenance Plan developed to meet the applicable practice standard that is specific to the site and practice installed.

Non-compliance*:*

Inspections will occur per BWSR Grants Administration Policy for nonstructural land management practices; inspection will be completed annually to ensure that the practice has been incorporated. Non-compliance with the program will follow BWSR's Grants Administration Manual guidelines with the goal of bringing the land occupier into compliance. If there is a failure to maintain compliance, the land occupier is liable to the SWCD for up to 150% of the flat-rate payment received.

Technical Expertise:

The following is a documentation of staff skills, training, credentials along with description of other means the District will use to ensure 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.

Matthew Remer: Was assigned Job Approval Authority to design, install, and sign off on ecological practices relating to Cover Crops (NRCS Practice340) on January 3, 2022, by John Crellin, Area Resource Conservationist with NRCS.

In a case where staff does not have existing JAA or does not have adequate experience as detailed and approved above, we will utilize staff from neighboring SWCDs and the USDA NRCS.