

Item 5D.  
BCWMC 7-20-23  
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# FY 2024

## Clean Water Fund Competitive Grants Request for Proposal (RFP)



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## WHAT IS NEW FOR FY24

- This RFP is applicable only to Projects & Practices Grants (including Drinking Water subgrant)
- Eligible applicants for Drinking Water subgrant now includes municipalities and public water systems
- Match changed to 10% from 25% in order to 1) be more consistent with other Clean Water Fund grant programs, 2) to make it more accessible for LGUs to apply for funding, and 3) acknowledge that LGUs need to pursue specific landowners in targeted areas where a project may have limited private value but greater public value.

## PURPOSE

The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Clean Water Fund Competitive Grants Program supports activities that restore, protect, and enhance water quality. This RFP includes:

Two grants:

- Projects and Practices
- Drinking Water

Two loans:

- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Clean Water Partnership Loan
- Minnesota Department of Agriculture AgBMP Loan

The Clean Water Fund was established in Minnesota Statute 114D.50 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 in addition to protecting ground water and drinking water sources from degradation. These funds must supplement traditional sources of funding and may not be used as a substitute to fund activities or programs.

## TIMELINE

No late submissions or incomplete applications will be considered for funding. The application must be submitted by 4:30 PM. Late responses will not be considered. The grant applicant is responsible for proving timely submittal.

Grant Cycle	Grant Cycle Dates
Application period open	June 29, 2023
Application period close	August 24, 2023
BWSR Board authorizes grant awards	December 14, 2023
BWSR grant agreements sent to recipients	February 2024
Work plan submittal deadline	March 20, 2024
Grant execution deadline	April 17, 2024

## GRANT ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS

### APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

See the FY 2024 Clean Water Fund Competitive Grant Policy.

### FUNDING AVAILABLE AND MATCH

Table 1 lists the Clean Water Fund (CWF) programs available to BWSR and other executive branch agencies. Final funding decisions will be dependent on the actual funds available.

All BWSR CWF competitive grants require a minimum non-state match. All BWSR grant programs have a match requirement that is up to 10% of the amount of Clean Water Funds requested or received. The match must be cash or in-kind cash value of goods, materials, and services directly attributed to project accomplishments.

<b>Agency Fund</b>	<b>Funding Amount</b>	<b>Required Match</b>
BWSR Projects and Practices Grant	Up to \$6,960,800	10%
BWSR Drinking Water subgrant	Up to \$1,740,200	10%
MDA AgBMP Loans	Up to \$4,799,000	Not Required
MPCA Clean Water Partnership Loans	Up to \$3,500,000	Not Required
<b>Total</b>	<b>Up to \$17,000,000</b>	

<sup>1</sup> Amounts shown are estimates. Actual amounts will be determined prior to the end of the application period.

### PREVAILING WAGE

It is the responsibility of the grant recipient or contractor to pay prevailing wages on construction projects to which state prevailing wage laws apply (Minn. Stat. 177.42 – 177.44). All laborers and mechanics employed by grant recipients and subcontractors funded in whole or in part with state funds included in this RFP shall be paid wages at rates not less than those prevailing on projects of a character similar in the locality. Additional information on prevailing wage requirements is available on the Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI) website <https://www.dli.mn.gov/business/employment-practices/prevailing-wage-information>. Questions about the application of prevailing wage rates should be directed to DOLI at 651-284-5091.

### APPLYING FOR A GRANT

#### HOW TO SUBMIT A QUESTION

Questions regarding grant applications should be directed to your area Board Conservationist or Clean Water Specialist; a map of work areas and contact information is available at [BWSR Maps and Apps Gallery](#). Questions may also be submitted

by email to [cwfquestions@state.mn.us](mailto:cwfquestions@state.mn.us). Responses will be posted on the BWSR website as a “Frequently Asked Questions” (FAQ) document and updated weekly throughout the RFP. The final update will be posted on August 10, 2023.

Questions about the Restoration Evaluation Program can be directed to: Wade Johnson, [wade.a.johnson@state.mn.us](mailto:wade.a.johnson@state.mn.us) or 651-259-5057.

Questions about the MDA AgBMP Loan Program and requesting funds through this application can be answered by calling Richard Gruenes (651) 201-6609 or emailing [AgBMP.Loans@state.mn.us](mailto:AgBMP.Loans@state.mn.us).

Questions regarding the MDA Groundwater Protection Rule and Township Testing can be answered by calling Larry Gunderson at 651-328-9034 or emailing [larry.gunderson@state.mn.us](mailto:larry.gunderson@state.mn.us).

Questions about the MPCA Clean Water Partnership Loan Program can be answered by calling Cindy Osborn at 651-757-2099 or emailing [cynthia.osborn@state.mn.us](mailto:cynthia.osborn@state.mn.us).

For more information on who to contact at the Minnesota Department of Health in regards to questions about Drinking Water Supply Management Areas or Well Head Protection areas, visit:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/swpstaffmap.pdf>.

## HOW TO APPLY USING ELINK

### 1. Set up your eLINK user account

Proposals need to be submitted via [eLINK](#). Eligible applicants without a current eLINK user account must register for an account at <https://elink.bwsr.state.mn.us> no later than seven days prior to the proposal deadline. For eLINK related questions, first visit the eLINK section of the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) page. If your question is not addressed here, please contact [elinksupport@state.mn.us](mailto:elinksupport@state.mn.us).

### 2. Complete your funding request (proposal)

See the “[Completing a Funding Request in eLINK](#)” under the “eLINK Training Videos” tab on the eLINK webpage to view a 11-minute online module describing how to complete a Funding Request within eLINK.

- As part of the proposal, eLINK will require applicants to map the location of the proposed project area.
- Answers to each question is limited to 2,000 characters. Due to differences in how programs are encoded, be aware that the character limit in eLINK is not the same as Microsoft Word or other text editors.
- Proposals may include only one image to be submitted within their eLINK application. Only .jpg, .tiff, or .png file types are allowed.

Applicants must provide answers to the following questions as part of their proposal submitted in eLINK. The questions are related to the ranking criteria categories, which determine how proposals are scored by reviewers. The ranking criteria can be found in the “Application Review” section of this RFP.

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## APPLICATION GUIDELINES

- Proposals submitted under the BWSR Clean Water Fund Grant categories must request state funds that equal or exceed \$30,000. Proposals submitted that do not fall within this dollar range will not be accepted.
- Proposals may receive partial funding based on eligibility or availability of funds. Prior to final selection, the Board may engage applicants to resolve questions or to discuss modifications to the project or funding request. Actual awards may be less than this minimum if proposals receive partial funding. Applications may receive partial funding for the following reasons: 1) an absence of or limited identification of specific project locations, 2) budgeted items that were

not discussed in the application or have no connection to the central purpose of the application were included by an applicant; 3) to address budget categories out of balance with the project scope; 4) application contains ineligible components; and 5) insufficient funds remaining in a grant category to fully fund a project. Prior to final selection, the Board may engage applicants to resolve questions or to discuss modifications to the project or funding request.

- Proposals that do not comply with all proposal requirements will not be considered for funding, as provided below:
  - Components of the proposal are incomplete or missing;
  - The match amount does not meet grant requirements; or
  - The minimum grant dollar amount is not met, or the maximum amount is exceeded.
- Proposals should clearly articulate what water resource is being targeted in the application. Proposals should demonstrate significant, measurable project outputs and outcomes targeted to critical pollution source areas that will help achieve water quality objectives for the water resource of concern; be consistent with a watershed management plan that has been state approved and locally adopted or an approved total maximum daily load study (TMDL), Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy (WRAPS), Groundwater Restoration and Protection Strategy (GRAPS), surface water intake plan, or well head protection plan.
- Proposals should ensure they are citing the current, state approved and locally adopted plan for the project area. For example, once a Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan is adopted for an area, the County Water Plan or SWCD Comprehensive Plan can no longer be referenced since it is no longer the applicable plan in the project area, even if it continues to be used elsewhere in the county where a CWMP has not yet been developed and adopted. Improper plan references will negatively affect the prioritization score.
- As appropriate, outputs should include scientifically credible estimates of pollutant reductions expected as a result of the project, as well as other measures such as acres of wetlands/forest, miles of riparian buffer or stream bank restored, acres treated by stormwater BMPs, or acres of specific agricultural conservation practices implemented including acres treated by the installation of the practice. **Applications with unrealistic pollution reduction estimates will not be considered.**
- Proposals for projects meeting a waste load allocation and located on publicly owned land and exceeding \$750,000 should first consult with the [Minnesota Public Facilities Authority](#) before applying for BWSR Clean Water Funds.
- Proposals must have plans for long-term maintenance and inspection monitoring for the duration of the life of a project as part of their project files. Work plans developed for funded applications will rely on this information for operation, maintenance and inspection requirements after the project is completed.
- Applicants should evaluate the impacts that climate change (such as fluctuating precipitation patterns and drought) may have on the ability of the proposed project to meet objectives and whether the proposed project increases landscape resiliency.
- For projects that are proposing to infiltrate stormwater, the following guidance should be taken into consideration: [https://stormwater.pca.state.mn.us/images/3/3a/Evaluating\\_Proposed\\_Stormwater\\_Infiltration\\_Projects\\_in\\_Vulnerable\\_Wellhead\\_Protection\\_Areas.pdf](https://stormwater.pca.state.mn.us/images/3/3a/Evaluating_Proposed_Stormwater_Infiltration_Projects_in_Vulnerable_Wellhead_Protection_Areas.pdf)
- Proposals from applicants that were previously awarded Clean Water Funds will be considered during the review process for applications submitted in response to this RFP. However, applicants that have expended less than 50% of previous award(s) at the time of this application will need to demonstrate organizational capacity to finalize current projects and to complete new projects concurrently.
- Proposals involving in-lake treatment and feedlot projects must include required attachments in eLINK at the time of application.

## APPLICATION REVIEW

BWSR staff initially review all applications for eligibility. Eligible applications are further screened and forwarded to an interagency work team (BWSR, MPCA, MDA, MDH and DNR) that will review and rank the applications, in order, to make a funding recommendation to the BWSR Board. See Ranking Criteria for each grant in the sections below.

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### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

State Grant Policy 08-01, (see <https://mn.gov/admin/government/grants/policies-statutes-forms/>) Conflict of Interest for State Grant-Making, also applies to BWSR grantees. Grantees' conflicts of interest are generally considered organizational conflicts of interest. Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- A grantee is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice due to competing duties or loyalties,
- A grantee's objectivity in carrying out the grant is or might be otherwise impaired due to competing duties or loyalties, or
- A grantee or potential grantee has an unfair competitive advantage through being furnished unauthorized proprietary information or source selection information that is not available to all competitors.

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### PRIVACY NOTICE

Under Minnesota Statute 13.599, responses to an RFP are nonpublic until the application deadline is reached. At that time, the name and address of the grantee, and the amount requested becomes public. All other data is nonpublic until the negotiation of the grant agreement with the selected grantee is completed. After the application evaluation process is completed, all data (except trade secret data) becomes public. Data created during the evaluation process is nonpublic until the negotiation of the grant agreement with the selected grantee(s) is completed.

## GRANT RECIPIENT INFORMATION

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### GRANT AGREEMENT AND PROJECT PERIOD

Notification of grant award will be in the form of an automated notification from the BWSR eLINK system or an email from BWSR Grants staff to the grantee. Notifications are sent to the Day-to-Day Contact(s) identified by the organization within the eLINK system. This notification includes instructions for further processing of the grant agreement and may also contain grant-specific information such as requirements for completing work plans, disbursement terms, or additional required documentation for processing the grant. Read these instructions carefully as requirements can vary by grant and fiscal year.

BWSR will use grant agreements, and an associated work plan, as contracts for assurance of deliverables and compliance with appropriate statutes, rules, and established policies. BWSR reserves the right to require a work plan revision or grant agreement amendment for changes in scope. Willful or negligent disregard of relevant statutes, rules and policies may lead to imposition of financial penalties on the grant recipient. Upon receiving the notification of grant award, which indicates approval of an application, and prior to beginning work on the grant project(s) and receiving grant funds, the applicant is required to do the following:

1. Complete an IRS W-9 form or register as a vendor in SWIFT, the state's accounting system, and submit other required documentation within 30 days of award notification.

2. Sign a grant contract agreement indicating their intention to complete the project(s) contained in the application. The agreement also authorizes BWSR to monitor progress of the grant. The grant contract agreement must be signed within 30 days of being sent to the grantee.

The project period starts when the grant agreement is executed, meaning all required signatures have been obtained. Work that occurs before this date is not eligible for reimbursement with grant funds and cannot be used as match.

Grant contract agreement templates can be reviewed on the [Office of Grants Management Forms and FAQs website](#).

All grants must be completed by **December 31, 2026**. If a project receives federal funds, the period of the grant agreement may be extended to equal the length of time that the federal funds are available, subject to limitation. Applicants using federal funds are encouraged to contact BWSR soon after the award of funds to ensure the grant agreement can be developed appropriately.

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## PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Grant payments will be distributed in three installments to the grantee. The first payment of 50% of the grant amount will be paid after work plan approval and execution of the grant agreement provided the grant applicant is in compliance with all BWSR website and eLINK reporting requirements for previously awarded BWSR grants. The second payment of 40% of the grant amount will be paid once the grantee has provided BWSR with notification and BWSR has reviewed and approved the eLINK reporting, financial report, and possibly completes a grant reconciliation of the initial payment. The last 10% will be paid after all final reporting requirements are met, the grantee has provided BWSR with a final financial report, and BWSR has reconciled these expenditures.

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## REPORTING AND ADMINISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

- All grantees must follow the FY2024 Clean Water Fund Competitive Grant Policy adopted by the BWSR, and the Grants Administration Manual (<https://bwsr.state.mn.us/grants/manual/>)
- All grant recipients are required to report on the outcomes, activities, and accomplishments of Clean Water Fund grants. Outputs will serve as surrogates for outcomes and will be reported as estimated pollutant reductions and progress towards goals based on the best available information.
- All BWSR funded grants are managed through eLINK. All applications will be submitted electronically through eLINK. Successful applicants will be required to complete a work plan in eLINK. All required reporting will be completed through eLINK. For more information go to <https://bwsr.state.mn.us/elink>.
- When practicable, grant recipients shall prominently display on their website the legacy logo. Grant recipients must display on their website either a link to their project from the Legislative Coordinating Commission Legacy Site (<http://legacy.leg.mn>) or a clean water project summary that includes a description of the grant activities, including expenditure of grant funds and measurable outcomes.
- When practicable, grant recipients must display a sign with the Legacy Logo at the project site or other public location identifying the project was built with assistance from Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment. When practicable, grant recipients must display the Legacy Logo on printed and other media funded with money from the Clean Water Fund. The logo and specifications can be found at <http://www.legacy.leg.mn/legacy-logo>.
- Structural projects and practices must be of long-lasting public benefit. LGUs must provide assurances that the landowner or land occupier will keep the project in place for the effective life of the project.
- Effective life is defined in the <https://bwsr.state.mn.us/grant-program-policies>. Information defining effective life not provided in the application must be defined in the work plan. The effective life for in-lake or in-channel treatments such as alum treatments must be assessed and determined as part of the required feasibility study prior to applying for funding.



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## RESTORATION EVALUATION PROGRAM

All restoration projects with restoration benefits funded via the Clean Water Fund may be subject to an evaluation in accordance with Minn. Stat. 114D.50 Subd. 6. Primary goals of the restoration evaluation program are to evaluate the projects relative to the law, current science, and the stated goals and standards in the restoration plan and to improve future habitat restorations by creating a feedback loop from lessons learned in the field.

Key recommendations that applicants should follow are:

1. **Improved Project Planning** - Thorough project planning will enable project managers to make informed decisions and improve capacity to achieve desired outcomes
2. **Improved Vegetation for Stream Projects** - Well established vegetation is critical for the long-term success of stream projects. Establishing native vegetation takes planning and diligent maintenance.
3. **Improved Project Teams** - Bringing more sets of expertise to the table will ideally: minimize instances of non-native plant use, identify plan components with high risk of limited success, help plan contingencies for potential challenges, and broaden project goals.
4. **Improved Documentation** - Documentation is critical for understanding, tracking, and achieving successful restorations.

For more information regarding the Restoration Evaluation Program visit the follow website:

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/legacy/restoration-evaluation.html>

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## NATIVE VEGETATION

All projects that involve vegetation restoration or establishment are subject to BWSR's Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines found at: <https://bwsr.state.mn.us/node/8806>. Key requirements within the Guidelines include the use of native vegetation, providing pollinator habitat, and incorporating high diversity levels.

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## PERMITTING

The applicant is responsible for obtaining and complying with all permits necessary to execute the project. If applicable, successful applicants will be required to provide sufficient documentation prior to work plan approval that the project expects to receive or has received all necessary federal, state and local permits and meets all water quality rules, including those that apply to the utilization of an existing water body as a water quality treatment device. ***Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the appropriate regulatory agencies early in the grant application development process to ensure potential projects can meet all applicable regulatory requirements.***

For information regarding MPCA storm water permitting requirements, please go to:

**Construction stormwater permit overview**

<http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/view-document.html?gid=7386>

**Common Plan of Development**

<http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/view-document.html?gid=7396>

**Untreated Stormwater Runoff to Lakes, Streams, and Wetlands**

<http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/view-document.html?gid=11864>

## BWSR CWF COMPETITIVE GRANTS

### PROJECT AND PRACTICES GRANT

This grant makes an investment in on-the-ground projects and practices that will protect or restore water quality in lakes, rivers or streams, or will protect groundwater or drinking water. Examples include stormwater practices, agricultural conservation practices, feedlot related practices, lakeshore and stream bank stabilization, stream restoration, and SSTS upgrades.

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#### SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS – PROJECTS AND PRACTICES

- Through the Nonpoint Priority Funding Plan, the following three high-level state priorities have been established for Clean Water Fund nonpoint implementation:
  1. Restore those waters that are closest to meeting state water quality standards
  2. Protect those high-quality unimpaired waters at greatest risk of becoming impaired
  3. Restore and protect water resources for public use and public health, including drinking water.
- To meet the project assurances (see FY24 Policy) for streambank stabilization or stream restoration projects, applicants must commit to provide financial assurance from local sources for repairs and maintenance. Assurance (recommended at least 20 percent of total project cost) needs to be documented prior to work plan approval to ensure projects provide the proposed long-term clean water benefits.
- Proposals must include a measurable goal. For projects proposed to help meet a Total Maximum Daily Load, measurable goals need to be quantified as the needed annual pollution load reduction.
- SSTS project landowners must meet low-income thresholds. Applicants are strongly encouraged to use existing income guidelines from U.S. Rural Development as the basis for their definition of low income.
- Feedlot Applications:
  - a. Practices must follow the MN NRCS practice docket, which is found on the NRCS website: <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/details>
  - b. Supplemental questions **must** be submitted in eLINK via attachment as part of any application that contain feedlot practices including practices to address stockpiles. Applications that do not have this attachment will be deemed ineligible.
  - c. Funding will only be provided for those facilities listed on the supplemental questions sheet, which shall be incorporated into the grant work plan.
- In-lake management activities must have completed a feasibility study that is attached to the eLINK grant application. The study must include:
  - a. Lake and watershed information based on data that has been collected within the last 10-years (at minimum, include lake morphology and depth, summary of water quality information, and the assessment of aquatic invasive species);
  - b. Description of internal load vs. external load nutrient reductions needed to meet the state's water quality standard;
  - c. History of projects completed in the lake's watershed (if none have been completed, that should be stated), as well as other in-lake activities, if applicable;
  - d. Cost benefit analysis of all options considered, and reasons given for why you are choosing the proposed activities;
  - e. Projected effective life of the proposed activities;

- f. Expected water quality outcome of the proposed activity; and
  - g. Plan for monitoring water quality to assure the proposed activity's total phosphorus goal will be achieved during its effective life (monitoring plans should include monitoring through the effective life), and
  - h. For activities related to rough fish (example carp), the feasibility study must also include:
    - i. Methods used to estimate adult and juvenile carp populations;
    - ii. Description of the known interconnectedness of waterbodies (lakes, ponds, streams, wetlands, etc.);
    - iii. Identified nursery areas;
    - iv. Methods used to track carp movement;
    - v. Proposed actions to limit recruitment and movement; and
    - vi. Proposed actions to reduce adult carp populations
- Streambank and stream channel restoration project applicants will be more successful if they present sufficient data and information that demonstrates a detailed understanding of the channel and watershed conditions for the project, the proposed approach to channel design, and substantial early coordination efforts to ensure a successful project:
- a. Describe assessments of watershed, channel, and floodplain conditions that helped identify the root cause of the pollution issue being addressed by the proposed project (Question 3).
  - b. Describe geomorphic assessments, stream surveys, and other analysis that have been completed to assess channel and floodplain conditions (Question 8).
  - c. Describe the proposed approach to channel design and the specific factors considered in the design including the restoration potential of the site given the channel, floodplain, and watershed conditions (Question 8).
  - d. Describe the status of early coordination efforts with landowners, partners, and permitting agencies and level of concurrence on the assessment, design, and permitting for the proposed project (Question 9)

RANKING CRITERIA – PROJECTS AND PRACTICES

Projects and Practices Ranking Criteria	
Ranking Criteria	Maximum Points Possible
<u>Project Abstract</u> : The project abstract succinctly describes what results the applicant is trying to achieve and how they intend to achieve those results.	5
<u>Prioritization (Relationship to Plans)</u> : The proposal is based on priority protection or restoration actions listed in or derived from the current state approved and locally adopted plan for the project area (see plans listed in 'Applicant Eligibility' of this RFP) and is linked to statewide Clean Water Fund priorities and public benefits.	20
<u>Targeting</u> : The proposed project addresses identified critical pollution sources or risks impacting the water resource(s).	25
<u>Measurable Outcomes and Project Impact</u> : The proposed project has a quantifiable reduction in pollution for restoration projects or measurable outputs for protection projects and directly addresses the water quality concern identified in the application.	20
<u>Cost Effectiveness and Feasibility</u> : The application identifies a cost effective and feasible solution to address the non-point pollution concern(s).	15
<u>Project Readiness</u> : The application has a set of specific activities that can be implemented soon after grant award.	15
<b>Total Points Available</b>	<b>100</b>

# FY 2024 PROJECTS AND PRACTICES QUESTIONS

## FY 2024 CWF Projects & Practices Application Questions

(Answers to each question are limited to 2000 characters.)

**Note that the following questions need to be answered in eLINK and the character limit in eLINK is NOT the same as Microsoft Word.**

### Project Summary

**Project Abstract (5 points):** Succinctly describe what you are trying to achieve and how you intend to achieve those results, including the type and quantity of projects and/or practices included in the application budget and anticipated outcomes.

Does your organization have any active CWF competitive grants? If so, specify FY and percentage spent. Also, explain your organization's capacity (including available FTEs or contracted resources) to effectively implement additional Clean Water Fund grant dollars.

**Water Resource:** Identify the water resource the application is targeting for water quality protection or restoration.

**Proposed Measurable Outcomes:** Succinctly describe the proposed measurable outcomes of this grant application.

### Prioritization (Relationship to Plan) – 20

**Question 1. (18 points):**

(A) Describe why the water resource was identified in the plan as a priority resource, identify the specific water management plan reference by plan organization (if different from the applicant), plan title, section, and page number. (B) In addition to the plan citation, provide a brief narrative description that explains whether this application fully or partially accomplishes the referenced activity. (C) Provide weblinks to all referenced plans.

**Question 2. (2 points):**

(A) Describe how the resource of concern aligns with at least one of the statewide priorities referenced in the [Nonpoint Priority Funding Plan](#) (also referenced in the "Projects and Practices" section of the RFP).

(B) Describe the public benefits resulting from this proposal from both a local and state perspective.

### Targeting - 25

**Question 3. (15 points):** Describe the methods used to identify, inventory, and target the root cause (most critical pollution source(s) or threat(s)). Describe any related additional targeting efforts that will be completed prior to installing the projects or practices identified in this proposal.

**Question 4. (10 points):** How does this proposal fit with complementary work that you and your partners are implementing to achieve the goal(s) for the priority water resource(s) of concern? Describe the comprehensive management approach to this water resource(s) with examples such as: other financial assistance or incentive programs, easements, regulatory enforcement, or community engagement activities that are directly or indirectly related to this proposal.

**Measurable Outcomes and Project Impact - 20**

**Question 5. (5 points):** (A) What is the primary pollutant(s) this application specifically addresses? (B) Has a pollutant reduction goal been set (via TMDL or other study) in relation to the pollutant(s) or the water resource that is the subject of this application? If so, please state that goal (as both an annual pollution reduction AND overall percentage reduction, not as an in-stream or in-lake concentration number). (C) If no pollutant reduction goal has been set, describe the water quality trends or risks associated with the water resource or other management goals that have been established. (D) For protection projects, indicate measurable outputs such as acres of protected land, number of potential contaminant sources removed or managed, etc.

**Question 6. (10 points):** (A) What portion of the water quality goal will be achieved through this application? Where applicable, identify the annual reduction in pollutant(s) that will be achieved or avoided for the water resource if this project is completed. (B) Describe the effects this application will have on the root cause of the issue it will address (most critical pollution source(s) or threat(s)).

**Question 7. (5 points):** If the project will have secondary benefits, specifically describe, (quantify if possible), those benefits. Examples: hydrologic benefits, climate resiliency, enhancement of aquatic and terrestrial wildlife species, groundwater protection, enhancement of pollinator populations, or protection of rare and/or native species.

**Cost Effectiveness and Feasibility - 15**

**Question 8. (15 points):** (A) Describe why the proposed project(s) in this application are considered to be the most cost effective and feasible means to attain water quality improvement or protection benefits to achieve or maintain water quality goals. Has any analysis been conducted to help substantiate this determination? Discuss why alternative practices were not selected. Factors to consider include, but are not limited to: BMP effectiveness, timing, site feasibility, practicality, and public acceptance.

(B) If your application is proposing to use incentives above and beyond payments for practice costs, please describe rates, duration of payments and the rationale for the incentives' cost effectiveness.

**Note:** For in-lake projects such as alum treatments or carp management, please refer to the feasibility study or series of studies that accompanies the grant application to assess alternatives and relative cost effectiveness. Please attach feasibility study to your application in eLINK.

**Project Readiness -15**

**Question 9. (10 points):** a) What steps have been taken or are expected to ensure that project implementation can begin soon after the grant award? b) Describe general environmental review and permitting needs required by the project (list if needed). c) Also, describe any discussions with landowners, status of agreements/contracts, contingency plans, and other elements essential to project implementation. d) What activities, if any proposed, will accompany your project(s) that will communicate the need, benefits, and long-term impacts to your local community? This should go above and beyond the standard newsletters, signs and press releases.

**Question 10. (5 points):** Describe how the budget categories support the activities in your application. Please provide adequate Activity Category detail in your budget table to support your application and show project readiness (see eLINK Activity Categories).

**Stream Restoration Projects Only**

The Legacy Fund Restoration Evaluation Report recommends early coordination and comprehensive planning for stream projects. Describe the expertise of your team (i.e., geomorphology, hydrology, plant and animal ecology, construction site management, and engineering) and early coordination efforts you have been part of to ensure project success.

Describe how your organization will provide financial assurance that operations and maintenance funds are available if needed.

The Constitutional Amendment requires that Amendment funding must not substitute traditional state funding. Briefly describe how this project will provide water quality benefits to the State of Minnesota without substituting existing funding.