

## Surface Water Management Grants – Healthy Lakes & Rivers



Healthy Lakes & Rivers is a subprogram of the Surface Water Management grant program that focuses on shoreland landowners that want to install practices on their property to improve habitat and water quality. Healthy Lakes & Rivers grants support five simple and inexpensive best practices that may be installed in the littoral, transition/buffer, and upland zones of shoreland properties. Practices must follow department guidelines published in the

Healthy Lakes and Rivers Action Plan and supporting technical guidance. See program guidance [Appendix D: Healthy Lakes & Rivers](#). Detailed information is available on the Healthy Lakes & Rivers website: <https://healthylakeswi.com/>

### Prerequisites

#### Eligible organization

Applicants must submit their pre-proposal by September 2, applications are due November 1. First-time applicants must provide design plans for approval before implementation. Projects must occur within 1,000 feet of the ordinary high-water mark of a lake, or within 300 feet of the landward side of the floodplain.

### Funding

Grants may be awarded for up to 75% of total project costs, up to \$25,000. \$1,000 in state cost-share is available per practice. At least 90% of the DNR cost share of a project must be spent on implementation. Tangential costs like project management or technical assistance may make up no more than 10% of the DNR cost share, calculated on a per project basis.

### Reimbursements

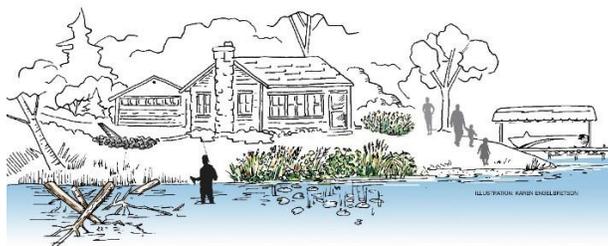
One grant advance is available for up to 25% of the total grant award. A grantee may request up to 2 partial payments overall, no more frequently than one per year. 10% of the grant award is retained until approval of deliverables and reimbursement documentation.

### Eligible projects

Best practices include fish sticks, native plantings, diversion practices, rain gardens and rock infiltration. Fish sticks are not eligible for rivers.

### Conditions

Operation and maintenance requirements are prescribed by the department and must be followed. A signed conservation contract indicating a commitment to operate and maintain the practices' function for at least 10 years must be obtained for all participating landowners.



## Surface Water Management Grants – Surface Water Restoration



Surface water restoration grants help you implement protection and restoration actions. Choose from a set of best practices to make a difference right away. Unlike plan implementation grants, these projects *don't* require a management plan, however, projects shall follow the appropriate NRCS standards published in Appendix E: Surface Water Restoration. Applications shall be submitted with a project design plan.

### Prerequisites

#### Eligible organization

Applicants must submit their pre-proposal by September 2, applications are due November 1.

Applications shall be submitted with a project design plan

Public access required for projects that enhance in-water habitat (e.g., aeration, biomanipulation)

### Funding

Grants cover up to 75% of total project costs, \$50,000 for lakes and wetlands, \$25,000 for rivers.

Wetland incentives are also available: these are not cost-shared; each incentive grant is \$10,000.

### Reimbursements

One grant advance is available for up to 25% of the total grant award.

A grantee may request up to 4 partial payments overall, no more frequently than one per year.

10% of the grant award is retained until approval of deliverables and reimbursement documentation.

### Eligible projects

Shoreland protection projects must follow the standards of [s. ATCP 50](#), as published in the NRCS [Field Office Technical Guide](#) for Wisconsin, Section IV: Practice Standards and Specifications. We included direct links for each practice in program guidance [Appendix E: Surface Water Restoration Practice Standards](#).

- Critical area stabilization
- Diversions
- Filter strips
- Grade stabilization structures on artificial or non-navigable watercourses
- Riparian buffers
- Water bars
- Sediment and water basins
- Pervious pavement
- Rain gardens
- Vegetation planting
- Urban pollution and runoff control
- Streambank or shoreline protection
- Impervious area removal within 35 feet of the ordinary high-water mark

[In-Water Management projects](#) protect or improve in-water conditions. Eligible activities include the installation of department-approved habitat structures, culvert or road crossing removal or modification and aquatic re-vegetation. For connectivity projects, see program guidance [Appendix F: Surface Water Connectivity](#). Aeration projects are eligible if dissolved oxygen levels are below water quality standards and the project will provide adequate supply. Aeration for sediment translocation is not eligible. Other projects are subject to department approval.

[Wetland Restoration projects](#) will help restore or enhance a prior converted or existing wetland. Projects must occur on hydric soils and implement the best practices for wetland restoration or enhancement.

Projects must follow the [NRCS standards](#) for either [Wetland Restoration \(657\)](#) or [Wetland Enhancement \(659\)](#). Eligible activities included drainage tile disablement, ditch plugs and fills, water level manipulation or vegetation enhancement, but cannot be necessary to achieve mitigation standards.

[Wetland Incentives](#) are available for grantees that have completed a comprehensive land use plan that includes a recommendation for wetland enhancement or restoration. Incentive grants are \$10,000 each with no cost-sharing required. Activities are the same as those for Wetland Restoration projects, above.

[Ordinance Development](#) projects help a grantee develop local regulations to support water quality, aquatic life, and habitat. Ordinances include lake use, boating, conservancy, wetland, shoreland, floodplain, construction erosion control and others. Eligible activities include development, legal fees, facility rental, training for compliance and enforcement, and presentation for adoption as well as an assessment of the administrative and enforcement capacity and implementation costs.

**Note:** Comprehensive land use plans are defined by Wisconsin state statute, s. 66.1001 (1) (a)

#### *Conditions*

Projects must occur within 1,000 feet of the ordinary high-water mark (OHWM) of a lake or wetland, within 300 feet of the OHWM of a river, or to the landward side of a flood plain, whichever is greater.

Unless state-owned, a grantee shall have control over the restored property and ensure its conservation value is maintained for at least 20 years with easements, deed restrictions or recorded contracts.

Streambank or shoreline protection projects may contain structural practices (e.g. rip rap) where the site assessment determines bioengineering and vegetation management will not control erosion. Structural practices must include shoreland habitat restoration following the NRCS [shoreland habitat standard 643A](#). Planting dimensions shall be a minimum of 35 feet deep with an exception for principal structures, extending the entire length of the project or property, save an optional viewing and access corridor, and shall include structurally diverse plantings. Refer to the technical standard for more detail.

#### *Project design plan*

Although surface water restoration projects do not require a comprehensive management plan, they still must be well-planned and appropriate for the site. **A project design plan includes the following elements:**

##### *Project implementation timeline*

Establish goals and objectives for the project and outline tasks to accomplish them. Organize the tasks on a schedule, include a timeline that indicates when each phase of the step will start and end, and who will accomplish the task.

##### *Maintenance plan*

Describe how the project will be managed or maintained to maintain its conservation value.

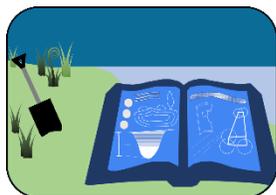
##### *Site map*

Clearly indicate the location and bounds of the project

##### *Additional supporting documents (if applicable)*

Many of the projects fundable under this section require design; some of them require engineering. You may include additional materials that will help biologists understand what the project will accomplish. Consider including schematics, site plans, a monitoring plan and schedule, landscape designs or vegetation planting lists as appropriate for the project.

## Surface Water Management Grants – Management Plan Implementation



Management plan implementation projects will always implement an approved recommendation found in a surface water management plan. Projects will improve or protect surface water or aquatic ecosystems. Eligible activities include the actions necessary to implement the recommendation. Detailed instructions related to management plans and their required elements, and how to go about getting recommendation and implementation projects approved can be found in program guidance [Appendix B: Management Planning](#).

### Prerequisites

#### Eligible organization

Applicants must submit their pre-proposal by September 2, applications are due November 1. Applicants must request a determination of project eligibility by September 2 (see *Conditions*, below). Public access, for projects that enhance in-water habitat (e.g., aeration, biomanipulation, habitat work).

### Funding

Grants cover up to 75% of total project costs, \$200,000 for lakes and wetlands, \$50,000 for rivers and ordinance development.

### Reimbursements

One grant advance is available for up to 25% of the total grant award, not to exceed \$25,000. A grantee may request up to 4 partial payments overall, no more frequently than one per year. 10% of the grant award is retained until approval of deliverables and reimbursement documentation.

### Eligible projects

Management plan implementation grants support a broad range of projects, some examples are below:

**Nonpoint Source Pollution Control** projects reduce the loading of nutrients and sediment into the waterbody. A wide range of best management practices are available depending on the pollution source and location. For additional examples, see the list of practices outlined under s. NR 154.04. Applications should be specific as to the BMPs proposed and their location.

**Habitat Restoration** projects improve the shoreline, nearshore or upland habitat in a way that will significantly improve the ecological condition of surface water or aquatic life.

**Water Quality** projects address problems related to water quality that remain after best management practices have controlled nonpoint source pollution. Activities include alum treatments or other solutions that support a return to the natural characteristics of a lake, wetland or river.

**Management Staffing grants** provide funding for implementation and support. The project must result in the implementation of one or more approved recommendations in one or more management plans. Applications must be submitted with a position description, including goals, objectives and tasks, and the percentage of time assigned to each activity. For grants of over 1,000 hours, the department may require semi-annual performance reviews.

**Applied Management studies** employ a research-based approach to increase understanding of surface water management. Projects must implement an approved recommendation from a management plan;

some will involve close collaboration with community groups. Projects will employ innovative approaches, experiments, or otherwise increase understanding waterbody protection and restoration.

[Landowner Incentives](#) encourage the implementation of an approved management plan recommendation. Payments may provide incentive for installing conservation best practices, participating in program-approved initiatives, or taking agricultural land out of production. Landowner incentive costs do not include the cost of implementation of the best management practice. Applications must include a justification, a description of the payment and documentation process, and expected outcomes. Incentive payments may make up no more than 10% of total project cost of a grant. One-time or annual incentive payments should include compensation for a period no greater than 3 years or the duration of the grant period.

### *Conditions*

It is better to treat the ultimate cause of a problem rather than repeatedly treating the symptoms. External sources or causative factors that create adverse conditions must be controlled to the best practical extent possible before a project is eligible under this section. Eligible projects must be likely to meet the management objectives or achieve state water quality standards.

It is important that state dollars are invested in projects that will maintain their conservation value over time. Unless the property is owned by the state, the grantee shall have control over the property through ownership, easements, deed restrictions or recorded contracts such that the sites being restored with grant funds maintain their conservation value for at least 20 years.

Implementation projects must be consistent with an approved recommendation in a management plan. A grantee must request a determination of eligibility for one or more recommendations in a current management plan at least 60 days prior to the application deadline. The request must include 1) a cover letter with a brief description of the activities proposed for grant funding, 2) The citation of the supporting recommendation(s) in the plan, 3) a complete copy of the management plan, and 4) a summary of any public comments received.

Management plans establish project eligibility. Plans must supply enough information for a biologist to evaluate the recommendation. Biologists will consider ecological condition, management goals, recommendations and alternatives, management history, and stakeholder views. A plan funded with a Surface Water Planning Grant will provide this information. Other plans (e.g. Nine Key Element Plans, Total Maximum Daily Load implementation plans, county land and water plans, aquatic plant management plans) may also provide the necessary information to establish project eligibility. For more information, see the section on eligibility determinations at the end of program guidance [Appendix B: Management Planning](#).

Eligible plans have a completion date of no more than 10 years prior to the year in which an implementation grant application is submitted. The department may determine a longer lifespan is appropriate if the applicant can demonstrate a plan has been actively implemented and updated during its lifespan.