

**River Planning Grants**  
**NR 195, Wis. Admin. Code**

**Purpose:**

River planning grants are intended to provide assistance in the formation of river management organizations and provide support and guidance to local organizations that are interested in helping to manage and protect rivers, particularly where resources and organization capabilities may be limited. This grant program is designed for the collection, assessment and dissemination of information on riverine ecosystems, to assist in developing organizations to help manage rivers, to assist the public in understanding riverine ecosystems, and to create management plans for the long term protection and improvement of riverine ecosystems.

**Eligible Projects:**

1. Organizational development projects which provide programs and materials to assist persons in forming a qualified river management organization or strengthen the capacity of an existing organization to protect or improve rivers and natural river ecosystems. Such activities include:
  - Training, education, or facilitated planning programs and workshops
  - Development, printing and dissemination of information, surveys, educational materials and brochures to describe the group and its purposes and to attract membership
  - Activities that are designed to develop partnerships or achieve organizational objectives to protect a river ecosystem
  - Activities necessary to assist groups in meeting the conditions of a qualified river management organization.
2. Education projects that include the development and dissemination of materials and programs or other activities that increase the public awareness relating to protecting or improving the ways in which rivers are used, the quality of water in rivers, the quality of natural riverine ecosystems or the populations of fish and aquatic life and their habitat in rivers.
3. Assessments and plan development that may include but are not limited to:
  - Collection of new or updated information on the water quality, water quantity, fish, wildlife and other biological or environmental information about a river or its ecosystem and the assessment of this information
  - Descriptions and mapping of existing and potential land and water resource conditions, activities and uses within a riverine ecosystem that may affect its quality and the assessment of this information
  - Review, evaluation or development of ordinances and other local regulations related to control of pollution sources, recreational use, or other human activities that may impact fish and wildlife habitat, natural beauty or other components of the riverine ecosystem.
  - Collection of sociological information through surveys or questionnaires and assessments of river use information that is necessary to the development of a long-term river management plan
  - The analysis, evaluation, reporting and dissemination of information obtained as part of the planning project
  - The development of alternative management strategies, plans, and specific project designs necessary to identify appropriate river protection projects

**Ineligible Projects:** Any capital improvement project.

**Funding Possibilities:** Maximum amount of grant funding is 75% of the total project costs, not to exceed \$10,000.

## River Management Grants *NR 195.05, Wis. Admin. Code*

### **Purpose:**

Cost-sharing to assist eligible applicants in the implementation of management activities that will help protect or improve streams, rivers, and riverine ecosystems.

### **Eligible Projects:**

- Development of local regulations or ordinances that will protect or improve the water quality of a river or its natural ecosystem.
- Installation of practices to control nonpoint sources of pollution
- River restoration projects including dam removal, restoration of in-stream or shoreland habitat
- An activity that is approved by the DNR and that is needed to implement a recommendation made as a result of a river plan to protect or improve the water quality of a river or its natural ecosystem
- Education, planning and design activities necessary for the implementation of a management project.

### **Ineligible Projects:**

- Dam repair and operation
- Purchase of property on which a dam is located unless for the purpose of facilitating dam removal
- Dredging
- Design, installation, operation or maintenance of sanitary sewers, treatment plants or onsite sewerage systems

### **Ordinance Development Projects:**

The DNR has developed model ordinances (e.g., shoreland, wetland, and floodplain) that are available to you free of charge. Your regional River Coordinator will have information on these models as well as other department contacts that can assist you with ordinance development.

**Funding Possibilities:** Maximum amount of grant funding is 75% of the total project costs, not to exceed \$50,000.

## Land/Easement Acquisition *NR 195.13, Wis. Admin. Code*

### **Purpose:**

Land or easement acquisition grants under river management are intended for the acquisition of all property rights (fee simple) or some property rights (easements) to protect rivers and their ecosystems. Land or easement acquisition projects are reviewed and processed by DNR environmental grant specialists. All other types of surface water protection grant projects are reviewed by DNR River Coordinators. A list of environmental grant specialists appears in the front of this guide.

**Important:** Land or easement acquisition is one of the most complicated processes at the DNR. For this reason, it is important for you to plan your project early and communicate with your DNR environmental grant specialist.

**Note:** Your application will not be considered complete unless it includes an appraisal that establishes the value of real property proposed for acquisition. Additionally, DNR approval of your submitted appraisal is required before a grant contract can be issued. [See Appendix A](#) for additional land acquisition details.

**Eligible Costs:**

- Fair market value of the property as determined by DNR-approved appraisals
- Appraisal costs
- Land survey fees
- Relocation payments
- Title insurance
- Recording fees
- Historical and cultural assessments (if required by the DNR)
- Baseline documentation (required for conservation easements)
- Environmental inspections and audits
- Building demolition may be an eligible cost based on the degree to which the demolition contributes to lake protection or restoration.

**Ineligible Costs:**

- Acquisition of any property that is subject to a reversionary right or has restrictions or covenants which would prevent the property from being managed for purposes consistent with this grant program
- Land acquired through eminent domain or condemnation; land where landowners were not treated fairly and negotiations were not conducted on a willing buyer-willing seller basis
- Acquisition of land on which a dam is located unless for the purpose of facilitating dam removal
- Environmental clean-up costs
- Brokerage fees paid by the buyer
- Real estate transfer taxes
- Any other cost not identified as eligible above

**River Funding Possibilities:**

Maximum amount of grant funding is 75% of the total project costs, not to exceed \$50,000.