COST SHARE GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Overview and Purpose
The Nine Mile Creek Watershed District (NMCWD) Cost Share Program offers grant funds for efforts that protect and improve water and natural resources within the Nine Mile Creek Watershed.

Cost Share funds are available for implementing projects that support one or more of the following goals:
- Improve water quality or increase the capacity of the watershed to store water
- Preserve, protect and restore native plant and wildlife habitats, with emphasis on lakes, rivers and wetlands
- Protect and preserve groundwater quality and quantity

Eligibility
Project is in the Watershed
All projects must take place within the Nine Mile Creek watershed. Determine if your project is within the watershed by checking the “Are you in the watershed?” map at: ninemilecreek.org/are-you-in-the-watershed or contact NMCWD at 952-358-2276.

Types of Projects
Examples of eligible projects include:
- Raingardens
- Shoreline buffers
- Pervious pavers
- Native habitat restoration
- Chloride reduction efforts (anti-icing equipment purchases, equipment retrofitting, etc.)

Examples of past funded projects are available: ninemilecreek.org/grants/#Projects

Who May Apply
Grant funding is open to:
- Residents
- Townhome, condominium, and lake associations
- Commercial, government, and nonprofit organizations

Funding and Expenses
Grant Awards
Grants are awarded for up to 75% of a project’s cost, on a reimbursement basis, for materials, labor, and engineering/consulting fees. The NMCWD may offer to fund all or a portion of a project. NMCWD will only cost share invasive species removal projects (e.g. buckthorn removal) at 50%. These projects must include native planting as part of the project.
**Funding per Grant**
Maximum grant awards:
- Residential projects: $5,000
- Townhome, condominium or lake associations projects: $20,000
- Nonprofit, commercial and government projects: $50,000

The minimum grant award is $500.

**Funding Limits**
A site can only receive one grant per year. The maximum grant funds a site can receive, cumulatively, are:
- Residential: $10,000 per site
- Townhome, condominium, or lake associations: $40,000 per site
- Commercial, government, or nonprofit: $100,000 per site

**Eligible Expenses**
Labor and Materials:
- Labor and materials are eligible expenses
- Engineering or consulting fees are eligible expenses, except for any project planning expenses.

Plants:
- Plants must be selected from the provided NMCWD plant lists to be eligible for reimbursement
- Plants not on the NMCWD’s list, must be paid for with match

In-Kind Contributions:
- In-kind contributions are eligible for required grant match dollars. Labor contributions are eligible expenses for grant match dollar. One hour of landowner labor is eligible for $20 of in-kind match

**Ineligible Expenses**
NMCWD staff and board reserve the right to determine the eligibility of expenses. The following items are ineligible for reimbursement:
- Materials for aesthetic purposes only
- Engineering or consulting fees for project planning
- Any materials bought or consultant/contractor time expended before a grant agreement is signed
- Any project expenses for a project already required by NMCWD Rules (and permit program). For example, if a permit requires a wetland buffer that is 20 feet wide, and you decide to install a buffer 25 feet in width, you can apply for a cost share grant for the last 5 feet only.

**QUICK TIP**
Completed projects or in progress projects are *ineligible* for grant funds. Project work may not start until a signed grant agreement is in place.

**Project Period**
Grantees have up to one-year to complete the cost share project from the grant agreement start date (which is typically mid-May to mid-June). Native restoration projects have a two-year timeframe for project completion.

**QUICK TIP**
Grant agreements are typically signed between mid-May to mid-June. Work may not start on a grant project, including the purchase of any materials, until a cost share agreement has been signed by both the grantee and the NMCWD. Plan your project schedule accordingly.
Agreement

Each grantee is required to enter into a Cost Share Grant Agreement with the NMCWD.

The agreement defines the obligations of the applicant and the NMCWD. This includes, but is not limited to, such items as promoting and acknowledging the NMCWD sponsorship, reporting, payment schedule, terms of the agreement and use of funds, cost overruns, and cancellation. The agreement also allows the District access to the project area for evaluation and promotion of the project.

The applicant is responsible for securing all permits necessary for the work.

Payment Schedule

All payments from NMCWD to the grantee are reimbursement based. Requests for reimbursement require receipts or paid invoices.

NMCWD can reimburse funds throughout the grant period, as requested by the grantee, up to the final 10% of the grant. The final 10% of the grant is reimbursed upon successful completion of the project and submission and approval of a final report. To receive reimbursement during the grant period, copies of receipts/paid invoices must be submitted to the NMCWD, along with a progress report. Reporting and reimbursement forms are available at: ninemilecreek.org/grants/#Reporting.

Maintenance Agreement

Each grantee is required to enter into a maintenance agreement with the NMCWD.

The minimum maintenance agreement is five years. For projects receiving over $5,000, the District will require a ten-year maintenance agreement.

Project Reporting Requirements

Final Report: Within 30 days of project completion, the grantee must submit a final report to the NMCWD.

Yearly Reporting: Following the final report, yearly reporting with photo documentation must be submitted to the NMCWD for the remainder of the maintenance agreement period.

Reimbursement Requests: A progress report and copy of receipts/paid invoices is required when requests for reimbursement are submitted.

Reporting and reimbursement forms are available at: ninemilecreek.org/grants/#Reporting.

QUICK TIP

Grants are reimbursement based. Save your receipts/paid invoices to get reimbursed.

Quick Tip

Add due dates for the final report and the yearly reporting to your calendar right away:
- 30 days after project completion: final report due
- December 30 (for length of maintenance agreement): yearly reports due
Submission of Application

Applications materials and instructions are at ninemilecreek.org/get-involved/grants/applications or can be requested from esniegowski@ninemilecreek.org.

Include:
- Cost Share Application
- Project form
- NMCWD plant form (if applicable)
- NMCWD budget form

Submit applications as one PDF document, when possible.

Submit applications by e-mail (preferred method) to Erica at: esniegowski@ninemilecreek.org

Applications can be submitted by mail to:
Nine Mile Creek Watershed District, Attn: Erica
12800 Gerard Drive
Eden Prairie, MN 55346

Applications are due Friday, March 20, 2020 by 4 PM.

Contact Erica at NMCWD with questions: 952-358-2276.

Incomplete Applications

Applications that do not comply with all requirements, including applications that are late, incomplete or missing application components will not be considered for funding.

Evaluation of Applications

1. This is a summary of who reviews cost share application and the process of review and funding.
2. The grant review panel receives applications from staff that arrive on time and that meet the criteria of the grant program. There are two review panels:
   a. Staff and NMCWD Board members review government, association, business, and nonprofit applications.
   b. Staff and Citizen Advisory Committee members review residential applications.
3. Review panel members give each application a numerical score by completing a Cost Share Grant Scoring Form for each application.
4. The group review panels meet, and funding recommendations are made using the numerical scores of the grants and group discussion. Funding recommendations go to the NMCWD Board of Managers.
5. The NMCWD Board of Managers votes on the funding recommendations.

Timeline

February 19, 2020 Grant Information Session at District office at 5:30 PM
March 20, 2020 Application deadline at 4 PM
April 15, 2020 NMCWD Board authorizes grant awards
May 2020 NMCWD grant agreements sent to recipients
June 30, 2020 Grant execution deadline