



Nine Mile Creek Discovery Point

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MEMO

TO: Nine Mile Creek Board of Managers
FROM: Erica Sniegowski, Program and Project Manager
DATE: July 11, 2018
RE: Cost Share Recommendations

1. Background: Updating Maximum Grant Award Levels

The maximum grant award amounts have not been updated since 2008.

Current maximum grant award:

- \$3,000 for single-family residential projects
- \$10,000 for townhome, condominium, or lake associations
- \$25,000 for commercial, government, or nonprofit projects

Recommendation: Updating Maximum Grant Award Levels

With increases in construction costs in the past 10 years and to increase capacity to install BMPs that impact water quality, it is recommended that maximum grant award levels are increased (except for buckthorn and native restoration projects- see #2).

New recommended maximum grant awards:

- \$5,000 for single-family residential projects
- \$20,000 for townhome, condominium, or lake associations
- \$50,000 for commercial, government, or nonprofit projects

As a reminder, grants are awarded up to 75% of a project's cost, with a 25% match required.

2. Background: Buckthorn Removal and Native Restoration

The information below summarizes the number of buckthorn removal with native restoration grants that were awarded in a given year and the percent of the total awarded budget those grants represented.

2018: 6 of 22 grants (27% of the grants awarded); 46% of the total awarded budget

2017: 3 of 23 grants (13% of the grants awarded); 24% of the total awarded budget

2016: 5 of 26 grants (19% of the grants awarded); 17% of the total awarded budget

2015: 4 of 16 grants (25% of the grants awarded); 34% of the total awarded budget

2014: 4 of 20 grants (20% of the grants awarded); 12% of the total awarded budget

2013: 1 of 21 grants (5% of the grants awarded); 3% of the total awarded budget

2012: 0 of 10 grants (0% of the grants awarded); 0% of the total awarded budget

Recommendation: Reduce Buckthorn Removal and Native Restoration Maximums

Have the following maximum grant award for buckthorn removal and native restoration grants:

- \$2,500 for single-family residential projects
- \$10,000 for townhome, condominium, or lake associations
- \$25,000 for commercial, government, or nonprofit projects

Grants are awarded up to 75% of a project's cost, with a 25% match required.

An alternative policy could be to award buckthorn removal and native restoration projects up to 50% of the project's cost and require a 50% match.

3. Background: Project Timelines

Currently all grants have a one-year timeline for project completion. Best practices for restoration often require a longer preparation time before sites can be seeded and planted that does not fit with the one-year project completion timeline. This can result in poor outcomes in the long term on restoration grants.

Recommendation: Project Timelines

For buckthorn removal and native restoration grants, allow a two-year timeline for project completion.

4. Background: Cap on Grants Awarded

For grantees to prioritize projects that have the greatest impact on water and natural resources, and don't use cost share funds as a source of repeated funding and to ensure the education and outreach benefits of the program are best realized, it is recommended that a cap be put on grantees applying for grants at a single site.

Recommendation: Cap on Grants Awarded

Recommended cap on grants (equivalent of 2 grants per site).

Residential: \$10,000 per site

Townhome, condominium, or lake associations: \$30,000 per site

Commercial, government, or nonprofit projects: \$100,000 per site

5. Background: In-kind Labor Rates

In-kind labor rate is currently \$12/hr for match on a grant, which has only been raised \$2 in ten years. The Independent Sector's nationally recognized hourly rate for volunteer time is \$24.69/hr (2017).

Recommendation: In-kind Labor Rates

To calculate the in-kind labor rate for match on cost share grants, the District will use the current Independent Sector's nationally recognized hourly rate found at:

http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time.

6. Background: Master Water Steward Projects

Master Water Stewards (MWS) submit their capstone cost share projects as they work with District staff to develop them. The timing does not always line up with board meetings. As part of the Master Water Steward program, the District has agreed to fund capstone projects that meet the guidelines of our cost share program.

Recommendation: Master Water Steward Projects

MWS applications can be approved by the District Administrator with updates given to the Board of Managers at the subsequent board meeting.