



eLINK Guidance Document

Submitting a Biennial Budget Request

February 2016

Purpose: This document provides basic guidance on how to complete a Biennial Budget Request (BBR) in eLINK. An individual must have an eLINK user account to complete the BBR; see the *eLINK Guidance Document Setting up an Account* for more information.

Creating a Biennial Budget Request (BBR)

To access the BBR portal in eLINK, click on the Contacts and Organizations icon in the page header, then select **Biennial Budget Request**.

1. In the overview box on the BBR page, click **Start New Request**. To resume a BBR that has been started, find the Biennial Budget Request record in the grid and click the edit icon  to continue editing.
2. Type the name of the requesting Organization. This field will auto-complete with only those organizations that are eligible to submit a BBR, and with which you are an associated user. If the organization you are looking for does not appear, send an email specifying the missing organization connection to elinksupport@state.mn.us with the subject line of "Account Assistance".
3. Select the organization for which you are completing the BBR, then click **Start New Request**. This will bring you to the BBR Summary page and allow you to begin your request.
4. Begin in the Request Details grid at the top of the screen. Select the **Staff Contact** for the organization.
5. For your convenience, a Grant Program Summary is displayed which shows the total noncompetitive program grant dollars awarded to your organization within the last biennium.
6. Next, enter any Water Resources of Concern, if applicable. Click on **Add New Concern** to add a new entry. This will generate a pop-up screen, prompting you to enter the following:

<p>a. Name of Primary Water Resource of Concern (if applicable):</p>	<p>Enter the specific name for the water resource that you will be working on, if it has one (e.g. Mille Lacs Lake, Mississippi River, Battle Creek, Surficial aquifer in Dusty Township, JD-15 etc.). If the water resource is more general, such as groundwater in Dusty Township, oligotrophic lakes, etc., use a name that will allow you to distinguish it from other water resources described in your BBR. If the activities will be conducted throughout your organization's jurisdiction without focus on a particular water resource or watershed, do NOT enter any information here; instead, check the box labeled "Organization Wide"</p>
<p>b. Organization Wide</p>	<p>If the activities will be conducted throughout your organization's jurisdiction without focus on a particular water resource or watershed, check this box. Organization-wide projects or activities are usually those where the activities are programmatic implementation of grants included in the NRBG and SWCD Program categories throughout the LGU jurisdiction.</p>

	<p>Checking this box will prevent you from choosing a watershed 8-digit HUC of emphasis for activities. A generic name will be generated combining "Organization Wide" with the water resource category that allows activities to be attached.</p>
c. Water Resource Category:	<p>Select one category that best describes the water resource of concern. For those waters where there may be interactions between surface and groundwater, choose the category that will first be affected by the activities contemplated for your BBR.</p>
d. Watershed: 8 Digit HUC Name:	<p>Choose the Major Watershed where the Primary Water Resource is located. If the "Organization Wide" box is checked, you will not be able to select a major watershed. To find your watershed, visit https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/watersheds.</p> <p>Leaving this field blank indicates that the activities will take place more generally within the organization's jurisdiction or across multiple watersheds, and will require you to select "Organization-Wide" (above) before saving.</p>
e. Conventional Water Quality Impairments:	<p>Indicate whether traditional water quality impairments are known to be present.</p>
f. Water Quality Trend:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Choose "up" if water quality is known to be getting better for the named water of concern. Examples of this could include lake transparency increasing, pollutant measurements such as sediment or phosphorus improving or biotic indexes showing movement toward what would typically be expected. Choose "down" if water quality is known to be getting worse. This could include lake transparency decreasing, pollutant measurements such as phosphorus, sediment or nitrogen getting worse or biotic indexes declining. • Choose "stable" if enough data exists for a statistical analysis but there is no definable trend either up or down in water quality. • Choose "not enough data" if there is not enough information available for a trend to be calculated or if some parameters are improving while others are getting worse. • Choose "not applicable" if water quality trend information is not relevant such as the activities contemplated for the BBR are programmatic implementation of grants included in the Natural Resources Block Grant and SWCD Program categories. <p>Trend analysis is used to identify and quantify an actual trend in a mathematically rigorous way. Two or three data points may hint at a change in water quality one way or another, but may not constitute a trend. Trend analysis requires data over a long period and an analysis that explains a high percentage (typically 90-95%) of the variability in the data. This means that there is a 90-95% chance that the data are showing a true trend and a 5-10% chance that the trend is a random result of the data. Transparency or water column concentrations may move up and down over a season or several seasons but that does not necessarily indicate a trend.</p>

7. Click Save to save the New Concern, and Close to return to the BBR Summary page.
8. Continue adding new Water Resources of Concern as needed. To edit a Water Resource of Concern, click on the edit icon  to access and edit the details.
9. Each Water Resource of Concern will have associated activities. You can enter all of the Water Resources of Concern at this step or proceed to the Activity summary grid for each Water Resource of Concern as they are entered. Proceed to the Activity Summary grid when you are ready to enter an Activity. Click Add New Activity to add a new activity. This will generate a pop-up screen, prompting you to enter the following:

a. Water Resource Name:	Select a Water Resource from the dropdown list, which is populated based on what you have entered in the Water Resources of Concern Summary Tab.
b. Activity Category:	<p>Your BBR may contain more than one Activity Category per Named Water Resource of concern. The activity description can be found at http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/outreach/eLINK/Guidance/Activity_Categories.pdf.</p> <p>In general, it is assumed that installation of BMPs includes administration, reporting, project development, and technical/engineering services in addition to materials and labor. The estimated budget for items described in this line should include all of those components.</p>
c. Capital Improvement Project?	<p>Choose "Yes" if the activity is listed in a capital improvement program in an approved water management plan or if it is a long-term structural improvement intended to provide a public benefit of 25 years or greater.</p> <p>Choose "No" if the activity is not listed as a capital improvement project in an approved water management plan or is most accurately described as a Best Management Practice with an effective life of at least 10 years implemented on private or public land.</p>
d. Narrative Activity Description:	Provide a more detailed description of what will be accomplished by implementing the chosen activity. Describe opportunities to restore water quality by addressing identified problems or to achieve water quality goals for protection by addressing identified risks. Information from a WRAPS document or other watershed analysis may be useful. The character limit is 3,500. (Sentence fragments are acceptable.)
e. Estimated Number of BMPs:	For constructed or installed activities, enter the estimated number of individual Best Management Practices or Capital Improvement Projects that will be installed. Installation of BMPs is assumed to include administration, reporting, project development, and technical/engineering services. The estimated budget for items described in this line should include all of those components.
f. Estimated Number of FTEs:	For activities such as administrative, technical assistance, monitoring, etc. where staff time costs constitute the majority of the expense, enter the estimated number of full-time equivalent employees that will be needed to accomplish the identified activity during the next biennium. 2088 hours per calendar year constitutes an FTE. Partial FTEs can be entered using decimal equivalents.
g. Describe how this activity could be accomplished in the biennium:	Considering the entire scope of the anticipated workload for your organization, describe the general timeline, anticipated activities or sequence of events that would lead to completion of this particular activity within the biennium if funding were to become available. The character limit is 3,500. (Sentence fragments are acceptable.)
h. Plan Type:	Choose the type of plan that contains the activity identified. Eligible plans are not limited to those adopted by the LGU submitting the BBR, but that LGU must have a role identified in the water management plans of other organizations.
i. Plan Priority Connection (Identify Action Item or Objective from plan)	Provide the water plan citation (page #, section or chapter etc) that relates to the identified activity and copy the citation, or provide a brief summation of the plan reference. The character limit is 3,500. (Sentence fragments are acceptable.)
j. Source of State Contribution	Select the state program fund that is most likely to fund the selected activity. In cases where more than one program would work, select the program that is best suited. If the list does not contain specific funds for this activity, select the general state agency category. <i>For assistance in determining suitable funding sources, please reference Appendix A "Description of Fund Types", below, or contact your Board Conservationist.</i>
k. Estimated State Fund Contribution:	For the state program selected, enter the state funds needed to fully accomplish this activity during the FY18-19 biennium (July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2019) considering all pertinent

	<p>costs such as construction, administration, reporting, project development, and technical/engineering services. For NRBG and SWCD Program grants (Conservation Delivery, State Cost Share, SWCD Capacity Funds or Buffer funds), the amount entered here may be more than the level of funding provided during the FY16-17 biennium if additional funds are necessary to fully implement the responsibilities of those programs. The additional funding requested should not be a substitute for locally generated funds. Existing match requirements should be assumed for additional state funds requested beyond the FY 16-17 funding levels and be reflected in the anticipated leveraged funds to be provided.</p>
<p>I. Estimated Leveraged Funds:</p>	<p>Enter the amount of non-state funds budgeted for this project or activity including required matching funds and the cash value of any local and federal contributions. Be sure to include all pertinent contributions, such as those for construction, administration, reporting, project development, and technical/engineering services in activities. For NRBG and SWCD Program grants (Conservation Delivery, State Cost Share, SWCD Capacity Funds or Buffer funds), leveraged funds must, at a minimum, satisfy existing matching requirements for the amounts entered in the State Fund Contribution.</p> <p>Local funds estimated as match or leverage are not funding commitments. Required match amounts will be identified in executed grant awards or as workplans associated with grant agreements during the FY 18-19 biennium.</p>

10. Click Save to save the new Activity, and Close to return to the BBR Summary page.
11. Continue adding new Activities as needed. To edit an Activity, click on the edit icon  to access and edit the details. Be sure to confirm that at least one Activity per Water Body of Concern has been added.
12. Confirm that your request is complete by verifying the numbers in the Request Details grid at the top of the screen. In most cases, the Total Requested Biennial State Contribution should meet or exceed the Program Grant Summary on the right of the Request Details grid, which tallies the amount of program funds received from BWSR within the past biennium.

Appendix A: Description of Fund Types

Below is a description of the Fund Types as they appear in the dropdown list. Click on the hyperlink to go to a grant profile or webpage, if available.

Column3	Description
BWSR Clean Water Fund - Projects and Practices	This competitive CWF 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 but are not limited to stormwater practices, agricultural conservation, livestock waste management, lakeshore and stream bank stabilization, stream restoration, and SSTS upgrades.
BWSR Clean Water Fund - Accelerated Implementation	Clean Water Fund Accelerated Implementation Grants are competitive and invest in building the capacity of local governments to accelerate on-the-ground projects. Examples include but are not limited to conducting inventories of potential pollutant sites, utilizing existing analytical targeting tools, providing technical assistance or increasing citizen interaction. The grant funds may be used for local grant management and reporting that are directly related to and necessary for implementing the project or activity.
BWSR Clean Water Fund - Community Partners	Clean Water Fund Community Partners grants are competitive and leverage the interest of non-governmental partners such as faith organizations, lake and river associations, scout troops, and other civic groups. Examples include but are not limited to rain gardens, shoreline enhancements and other practices to increase infiltration, reduce runoff and keep water on the land.
BWSR Clean Water Fund - Multi Purpose Drainage Management	This grant's purpose is to implement conservation practices on drainage systems that will result in water quality improvements. Eligible activities under this grant can consist of structural practices and projects, non-structural practices and measures, project support activities, and grant management and reporting. New pattern tiling is not an eligible practice. Technical and engineering assistance necessary to implement these activities are considered essential and are to be included in the total project or practice cost.
BWSR Clean Water Fund - Targeted Watershed Program	Targeted Watershed grants are funded through the competitive Clean Water Fund application process. Grants are awarded to local government units organized for the management of water in a watershed or subwatershed that have multiyear plans that will result in a significant reduction in water pollution in a selected subwatershed.

<p>BWSR Clean Water Fund - Planning Grants for One Watershed One Plan</p>	<p>Planning Grants are available for participants in One Watershed One Plan development to acquire technical assistance and facilitation for plan development. One Watershed Plans are intended to align local water planning on major watershed boundaries with state strategies leading to prioritized, targeted and measurable implementation plans</p>
<p>BWSR Disaster Recovery Assistance Program (DRAP)</p>	<p>The DRAP provides technical and financial assistance to LGUs in the event of a declared disaster and other extreme environmental impacts. Assistance focuses on installation or repair of erosion and sediment control and water quality and watershed protection projects.</p>
<p>SWCD Conservation Delivery</p>	<p>Conservation Delivery Grants provide each Soil and Water Conservation District with funds for the general administration and operation of the district. Examples of eligible costs include but are not limited to the costs of employing staff, office space, transportation, postage and utilities, and supervisors' compensation and expenses.</p>
<p>SWCD State Cost Share</p>	<p>The State Cost Share program, formally established in Minnesota Statutes §103C.501 as the Erosion Control and Water Management Program, provides funds to Soil and Water Conservation Districts to share the cost with the landowner of systems or practices for erosion control, sedimentation control, or water quality improvements that are designed to protect and improve soil and water resources. The Cost share program can also fund to establish and maintain diverse native vegetation buffers using seeds of local ecotype regions.</p>
<p>SWCD Cooperative Weed Mgmt.</p>	<p>Cooperative Weed Management grants are available to Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMAs), which are partnerships of federal, state and local government agencies along with tribes, individual landowners and various other interested groups that manage noxious weeds or invasive plants in a defined area. Cooperative Weed Management grants provide funding to manage invasive species across LGU boundaries, control emerging weed threats, and facilitate the removal of invasive species.</p>
<p>SWCD Local Capacity Funds</p>	<p>This non-competitive CWF grant invests in building the capacity of local soil and water conservation districts. The grant targets four resource concern areas—Soil Erosion, Riparian Zone Management, Water Storage and Treatment, and Excess Nutrients—and supports increased capacity by funding expenses in the following categories: Staffing, Cost Share/Incentives, Technology/Capital Equipment, and Operations.</p>
<p>NRBG Shoreland</p>	<p>The Natural Resources Block Grant (NRBG) is a composite of base grants available to local government units that help them implement programs designed to protect and improve water resources. The DNR Shoreland grant is used for the administration of state approved Shoreland management programs. Grant recipients must have a DNR approved shoreland ordinance.</p>

<u>NRBG SSTS</u>	<p>The Natural Resources Block Grant (NRBG) is a composite of base grants available to local government units that help them implement programs designed to protect and improve water resources. All counties are required to pass ordinances regulating SSTS countywide. All counties that have enacted countywide ordinances and have a BWSR approved locally adopted comprehensive local water plan are eligible to receive this grant. No local match is required. The grant amount is determined by equal county allocations.</p>
<u>NRBG Water Plan</u>	<p>The Natural Resources Block Grant (NRBG) is a composite of base grants available to local government units that help them implement programs designed to protect and improve water resources. The Local Water Management Program is a voluntary program that uses science based principles of hydrology and watershed management to develop and implement water plans based on their priorities in a watershed or groundwater context.</p>
<u>NRBG WCA</u>	<p>The Natural Resources Block Grant (NRBG) is a composite of base grants available to local government units that help them implement programs designed to protect and improve water resources. Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) grant funds are used for local administration of the Wetland Conservation Act.</p>
<u>TSA NPEAP</u>	<p>The Non Point Engineering Assistance Program (NPEAP) Grants are allocated annually to the NPEA (TSA) Joint Powers Boards to increase the capacity of soil and water conservation district to provide engineering technical assistance to landowners.</p>
<u>TSA Enhanced Shared Technical Services 1 (no match)</u>	<p>This non-competitive CWF grant invests in building the capacity of NPEA (TSA) Joint Powers Boards to increase the capacity of soil and water conservation districts to provide technical and engineering assistance to landowners. Part 1 has no matching requirement.</p>
<u>TSA Enhanced Shared Technical Services 2 (25% match)</u>	<p>This non-competitive CWF grant invests in building the capacity of NPEA (TSA) Joint Powers Boards to increase the capacity of soil and water conservation districts to provide technical and engineering assistance to landowners. Part 2 requires a 25% match, of which 10% must be local cash match.</p>
<u>RIM—(All Sources)</u>	<p>Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) funds come from a variety of sources including Legislative appropriations, Bonding, Legislative Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources, Clean Water Land and Legacy funds including Clean Water Fund, and Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage committee recommendations. There are targeted areas and targeted programs such as Wild Rice, Source Water Protection and Grassland Reserve and Groundwater Protection among others. The funds are used for permanent conservation easements and the installation of conservation practices to restore wetlands, native habitat and install riparian buffers.</p>

RIM Easement Delivery	Easement Delivery grants are issued to assist each SWCD with their site inspection costs and other miscellaneous management activities associated with the easements in their county.
RIM Easement Implementation	Easement Implementation grants are a reimbursement to SWCDs to help cover costs for managing a successful conservation easement application and applying any necessary conservation practices.
Buffer Implementation Funds	Buffer Law Implementation funds are provided to conservation districts to work with landowners, and provide technical assistance toward meeting the requirements of the riparian buffer law or alternative practice requirements
Farm Bill Assistance	Farm Bill Assistance grants allow SWCDs to hire staff to accelerate implementation of the Farm Bill as well as other state and federal conservation projects that involve grasslands and wetlands.
MN Dept. of Natural Resources	Funding potentially available for forestry activities, stream channel and lakeshore restorations and habitat enhancements among others. Contact local DNR staff with specific questions.
MN Dept. of Agriculture	Funding potentiall available for nitrogen, pesticide and irrigation management activities among others. Contact local DNR staff with specific questions.
MN Dept. of Health	Funding potentially available for groundwater protection, well sealing, drinking water and source water protection activities among others. Contact local Dept. of Health staff with specific questions.
MN Pollution Control Agency	Funding potentially available for monitoring and watershed analysis, restoration activities (EPA 319 funds), and civic engagement as part of Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy (WRAPS) document development.
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (Except RIM)	Competitive funding potentially available for habitat enhancements on public lands and waters or land acquisition via fee title purchase. Budget items for Conservation Easement acquisition should be classified as RIM--All Sources.
MDA Ag Water Quality Certification Funds	Dedicated funds to help install conservation practices that address needs identified during the Ag Water Quality Certification Process.
USDA EQIP/CSP/CRP	Federal Funds including but not limited to cost sharing practice installation, Conservation Reserve Program and Conservation Stewardship Program enrollment.