

Natural Resource Improvement Grants Policies and Guidelines



The Anoka Conservation District (ACD), in conjunction with partnering agencies, offers grants for projects that provide public benefits to natural resources. This includes grants for the following project types:

Project Type	Description
Shoreline Stabilization	Stabilize shoreline erosion on lakes, streams, or rivers through the use of hard or soft engineering techniques. Soft engineering techniques such as natural-fiber erosion control materials, cedar tree revetments, brush bundles, and/or native plants are preferred.
Stormwater Treatment Projects	Treat stormwater runoff to positively impact a target water resource through one or more of the following: improved water quality, increased infiltration, and/or increased storage. Project examples: curb-cut rain gardens, hydrodynamic devices, vegetated swales, pond modifications, enhanced filtration, and infiltration basins.
Groundwater Conservation	Conserve groundwater by reducing waste, improving efficiency, utilizing surface water, capturing and reusing, and/or reducing demand. Project examples: high-efficiency fixture and equipment installations or retrofits, pond water irrigation sourcing, gray water utilization, rain barrels, smart irrigation technology, and turf grass conversion to native species.
Habitat Improvement and Management	Establish or enhance habitat by increasing the presence and diversity of native species and/or removal of invasive non-native species. Project examples: vegetative ecosystem restoration, hydrologic wetland restoration, backyard habitat enhancement, pollinator gardens, lake/river/ditch native vegetated buffers, and prescribed burning.
Agricultural Projects and Practices	Improve soil productivity and water quality through projects and practices that improve soil health, reduce erosion, increase water storage and infiltration, and treat runoff. Project examples: grassed waterways and filter strips, water and sediment control basins, cover crops, nutrient management, integrated pest control, livestock waste containment and treatment, and conservation tillage.
Other	Projects not listed above that improve natural resource quality, quantity or distribution will be considered.

Funding for these projects may be available from several sources. Interested landowners should contact ACD staff regarding available funding and the application process. Grants are limited and availability may vary by area.

POLICIES

- Projects must benefit Anoka County natural resources.
- Projects are reviewed by ACD staff and complete grant applications are considered for funding by ACD's Board of Supervisor at their monthly meeting.
- Grant applications should be submitted to ACD staff at least two weeks prior to regularly scheduled board meetings.
- The following will be considered when determining grant awards and funding amounts (up to 100%) to ensure the greatest public benefit.
 - Natural resource benefited
 - Amount of benefit
 - Cost-effectiveness relative to similar projects
 - Multiple benefits
 - Cause of the problem
 - Benefactors of the solution
 - In-kind or cash match of non-public funds
- Grant awards will be based on the lowest cost option that achieves the project objective.
- Expenses incurred prior to grant approval are ineligible.
- Grants are reimbursement grants, unless otherwise approved in advance. Grant recipients must submit receipts for eligible expenses to ACD. Reimbursement checks will be issued within six weeks.
- A single application may include multiple project types.
- Applicants may apply to other entities for grants. In no case will funding from all sources to the grant recipient exceed eligible project expenses.
- Grant recipients will not be compensated for their labor. Grant recipient labor may be considered an in-kind contribution.
- Grant recipient must assume operations and maintenance responsibilities for the life of the project.
- Grants will not be awarded for projects required by permit or law.

- ACD reserves full discretion for funding decisions and may deviate from these policies.
- Policies specific to certain funding source may differ, and supersede those found in this document.

EXPENSE ELIGIBILITY

Eligible expenses may be direct or in-kind and must be essential for project completion. Only direct expenses are reimbursable and must be supported with paid receipts. In-kind expenses may include services, equipment, and materials and must be supported with documentation, such as a signed affidavit. In-kind expenses may be considered toward the grant recipient's contribution to the project. Operations and maintenance expenses on projects with an active operations and maintenance agreement are ineligible.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications are accepted at any time; however, funds are limited. To apply, complete ACD's "Natural Resource Improvement Grant Application." The grant recipient must execute an agreement for operations and maintenance for the life of the project.

Questions should be directed to:

Water Improvement Projects – Mitch Haustein, Stormwater and Shoreland Specialist at 763-434-2030 X 15 or

Mitch.Haustein@AnokaSWCD.org

Habitat Improvement Projects - Carrie Taylor, Restoration Ecologist at 763-434-2030 x19 or Carrie.Taylor@AnokaSWCD.org

PROJECT DESIGN

Depending on the project type, scope, size, and complexity, design credentials may be required. ACD reserves the right to require that projects designs be prepared or approved by professionals with credentials appropriate for the project such as a licensed professional engineer or landscape architect.

ASSISTANCE

ACD staff may be available to assist landowners with pre-project planning, design, cost estimation, and construction management. Fees may apply.

PERMITS AND APPROVALS

The grant recipient is responsible to secure required permits and approvals either directly or through their contractor. In some cases ACD may be able to help with this.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

Grant recipients must own or have a legally affirmed right to construct, operate and maintain the proposed project on the project site. If this is not the case, prior to the application process, a signed letter of concurrence shall be submitted by the landowner indicating their understanding of the project and intent to work with the applicant to transfer title to the property or some other form of agreement over the project area for the life of the project to convey the right of access for project construction, operation, and maintenance. Failure to secure adequate rights to the subject property prior to installation of the project will result in a strict cancellation of the grant agreement.

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

A separate plan and agreement outlining the operations and maintenance responsibilities of the grant recipient for the life of the project is required. Project life depends on the nature, size, and complexity of the project and typically ranges from five to twenty-five years.

SIGNAGE

Informational and/or accrediting signage may be installed at project sites at ACD's discretion and cost.

SITE ACCESS

Acceptance of public funds to complete a project that benefits natural resources does not open the property to public access. Site access will be required by ACD staff or representatives during project installation and for the life of the project to complete inspection/monitoring of project function and to provide maintenance guidance.

CONFORMANCE TO GUIDELINES

ACD reserves the right to withdraw or withhold funding in whole or in part, for any project not completed in accordance with these guidelines.

PUBLIC DATA

Any submitted information, including applications, designs, cost estimates, project specifications, permits, photos, studies and reports, and proof of expenditures becomes part of the public record.