

WMA-PFGP Application Instructions

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A. Introduction

Wis. Stats. s. 26.38(2m)(a) and Wis. Adm. Code. ss. 47.960-47.970 establish a private forest landowner grant program for weed management areas. Grants under the Weed Management Area-Private Forest Grant Program (WMA-PFGP) may not exceed \$15,000 (the amount to be reimbursed) to any Weed Management Group (WMG), excluding a rapid response practice. These grants can be used for practices addressing invasive plants that impact forest communities. Each application must have at least one “Person Participating” (defined in section B). The WMA-PFGP allows qualified WMGs to be reimbursed up to 75% of the cost of eligible practices (Practices); a 25% match is required. The grant cycle is 24 months and is based on the state fiscal year, which begins July 1st and ends June 30th.

B. Definitions

Any term not defined in this section shall have the meaning of that term as it is found in the relevant statutes or administrative rules.

- 1) Invasive Species- has the meaning given in s. 23.22(1)(c), Wis. Stats: Nonindigenous species whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.
- 2) Inventory- surveying and mapping for invasive plant occurrences.
- 3) Landowner- any private individual, group, association, corporation, Indian tribe or other native group, or other private legal entity, excluding corporations whose stocks are publicly traded or legal entities principally engaged in the production of wood products.
- 4) Monitor or Monitoring- includes post-activity documentation of management activity results using methods approved by the department.
- 5) Non-Industrial Private Forest Land (NIPF) - rural lands with existing tree cover or which are suitable for growing trees and owned by any landowner as defined in these instructions.
- 6) Participation Agreement- agreement signed by the WMG and all landowners on whose property inventory, control or monitoring takes place. It must be signed by each landowner

prior to work being done on his or her property.

- 7) Person- includes all partnerships, associations and bodies politic or corporate.
- 8) Person Participating - a person who owns 500 acres or less of Non-Industrial Private Forest Land in the state on which a practice or portion of a practice under the grant will be implemented.
- 9) Practice - an activity or conservation measure intended to control invasive plant species. The eight Eligible Practices identified for WMA-PFGP are found in Section D.
- 10) Rapid Response Practice - a practice to control or eradicate prohibited invasive plants and those invasive plants new to the state or to a region of the state as determined by the chief state forester.
- 11) Responsible Party – The individual or group with a tax ID number who fills out the W9 and receives the grant payment.
- 12) Weed Management Group (WMG) – includes persons that are concerned about invasive plants within a WMA.
- 13) Weed Management Area (WMA) – a geographic unit defined by a Weed Management Group.

C. Eligible Applicants under s. NR 47.964(1), Wis. Adm. Code

A Weed Management Group (WMG) is eligible for assistance if it consists of three or more persons of which at least one person is a Person Participating.

Non-profit organizations and government entities may be applicants as long as the funding is used on NIPF land.

D. Eligible Practices under s. NR 47.964(3), Wis. Adm. Code

All the following practices are eligible for grants under this subchapter.

1. Outreach/education: including but not limited to publications, field days, websites, demonstrations, trainings, and planning workshops.
2. Coordination: includes one-time start-up costs, a WMG coordinator salary for up to one grant cycle, assisting a WMG in the formation of partnerships, goals, and objectives for the management of the WMA. It is recognized that funding is needed for coordination beyond the one-time grant cycle. If you have already received the coordination funds as described above, coordination funds can be incorporated into another practice. For example, if planning an outreach/education workshop, a group may include funding for coordination of the specific event.
3. Inventory: of invasive plant species occurrences
4. Control: of invasive plant species that impact NIPF land
5. Monitoring: a post-activity assessment that applies methods approved by the department and described in the application.
6. Miscellaneous practices if they pertain to invasive plant management:
 - a) Reforestation and afforestation which includes establishment or reestablishment of diverse stands of native forest trees through natural regeneration, planting or direct seeding for conservation purposes, and sustainable timber production.
 - b) Forest improvement which includes practices to increase tree growth, tree quality, biological diversity, tree vigor and forest health.
 - c) Soil and water protection and improvement which includes the maintenance or improvement of water quality and soil productivity, and the reduction of erosion on forest and related land.
 - d) Wetland and riparian protection and improvement which includes the management, protection, and improvement of wetlands and riparian areas to maintain water quality,

protect and improve wetlands and riparian areas, reduce sedimentation, and enhance or improve fish or wildlife species.

- e) Terrestrial wildlife and habitat enhancement which includes the establishment, management and enhancement of permanent habitat for game and non-game wildlife species.
 - f) Forest historic cultural and archeological site protection.
 - g) Endangered, threatened or rare natural resource protection, management, restoration and enhancement targeted at threatened or endangered species habitat maintenance or enhancement, and management of significant natural communities or rare native vegetation.
7. Management plan development: a written prioritization plan for management of invasive plants within a WMA.
8. Rapid Response: Current DNR policy allocates up to 20% of WMA funds annually for the rapid response to early detection species upon discovery but may change based on knowledge gained throughout the year. Rapid response practice means a practice to control or eradicate prohibited invasive plants listed in Ch. NR 40, Wis. Adm. Code, and early detection species. Prohibited invasive plants are defined as those that are new to the state or a region of the state, as determined by the department.

Applications for rapid response practices can be submitted at any time. As appropriate, applications submitted for rapid response funding may receive immediate approval and not be required to wait until the April 1st deadline. As species may be detected and reported by anyone, the department will coordinate the distribution of the funding based on the species and the feasibility of control. Consult with the Forestry Invasive Plant Program to determine if a species is considered early detection. **Rapid response funding does not require any match.**

E. Eligible Costs under s. NR 47.965(1), Wis. Adm. Code

Eligible costs are all those identified in an application and associated with the preparation or implementation of one or more eligible practices. The following are costs eligible for awards:

- 1) Documented Reasonable Costs: Costs associated with implementing approved practices as described in the application.
- 2) Labor Costs: In general, \$15/hour is used for landowner, applicant or volunteer labor (if used as in-kind match). Rates may vary for more skilled labor. See Labor Costs in G. Match Requirements.
- 3) Equipment and Space Rental: Actual rental costs for necessary equipment. It also includes rental of space for meeting facilities.
- 4) Capital Purchases: Purchase of equipment and supplies, such as chainsaws, sprayers, herbicide, fuel to operate equipment, etc. with a cap of \$5,000.

F. Ineligible Costs under s. NR 47.965(2), Wis. Adm. Code

- 1) Costs incurred before a grant is awarded.
- 2) Mandatory Practices- The implementation of any practice already required or mandated by law, rule, regulation or other authority, except for a practice required in the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program (under Ch. 77, Wis. Stats.), or a practice required under Ch. NR 40, Wis. Adm. Code, for prohibited and restricted terrestrial plant species.
- 3) Other ineligible mandatory practices include wetland mitigation or disposal site clean-up.

- 4) A practice not approved by the department in writing, or changes to a previously

- approved practice, unless authorized by the department in writing.
- 5) Costs associated with fixing, repairing or redoing a cost-shared practice, damage, or loss because of poor practice implementation or inadequate protection.
 - 6) Costs associated with work on public lands.
 - 7) Costs associated with work on industrial forests.
 - 8) Costs in excess of \$5,000 for equipment purchase.
 - 9) Costs associated with traveling. This includes any travel to or from the WMA by WMG members, landowners, volunteers, students or anyone else. It also includes the transportation of equipment.
 - 10) Costs associated with work on aquatic plant species.
 - 11) Costs associated with work on NIPF land without permission or agreement
 - 12) Purchase of property and associated fees and costs.
 - 13) Costs already being paid for or reimbursed by another program.

G. Match Requirements

The program allows qualified WMGs to be reimbursed up to 75% of the cost of eligible practices; a match of at least 25% is required. In-kind match includes services, supplies, labor costs, equipment and cash.

Example: Total project cost = \$20,000; the grant awarded = \$15,000; the WMG match = \$5,000.

Labor Costs used as match: Costs reasonable for the type of work being done. For example, if an attorney does brush clearing on a property, he/she could not charge \$150/hour towards the project cost, even if that is what they normally make as an attorney. Generally, a standard wage of \$15/hour is used for landowner or volunteer labor (if used as in-kind match).

State funding and state employee time are not eligible as match.

Federal funds or funds from other sources (e.g., another grant) may be used as match but DNR will not reimburse for any project costs that are already paid for by federal funds or other funding sources. In other words, a WMG may not be reimbursed by both the DNR and another agency or organization for the same work (i.e., no “double-dipping”).

H. Limitations

- 1) A grant under the Program may not exceed \$15,000 (the amount to be reimbursed) to any WMG, excluding a rapid response practice.
- 2) Cost share reimbursement may not exceed 75% of the approved, actual eligible costs and may be less than 75%.
- 3) The minimum cost for a practice is \$200 per applicant per year and this is the total cost, including the match.
- 4) Applications must be approved by the Forestry Invasive Plant Program before being awarded funding.
- 5) Work done prior to an award date is ineligible for cost-sharing under the grant.
- 6) Cost sharing will not be approved for commercial practices. A commercial practice is when the applicant is paid for the project approved under the grant.

I. Completing the Applications

Complete the Application (2400-141), including the signatures from 3 WMG members, at least one of which must be a person participating.

A W-9 and Participation Agreement (2400-141A) must be submitted with the completed application.

Submit the application to:

Forestry Invasive Plant Program
107 Sutliff Ave.
Rhinelander, WI 54501

OR

DNRWMAGrantProgram@wisconsin.gov

Applications, except those for rapid response projects, are due by April 1* for consideration for grants to be awarded in the upcoming fiscal year. All applications received by April 1 will be reviewed together. If an application is incomplete, it will be returned. Grants are awarded after July 1 (beginning of the fiscal year).

Applications for rapid response projects can be submitted at any time and will be reviewed immediately. Rapid response grants will be awarded if funding is available. The award may not always be the full amount requested.

The grant cycle for all grants is 24 months.

***Note that DNR may change the application due date if the new date is posted on the application form. Please refer to the application form (2400-141 & 2400-141A) to ensure submittal by the correct date.**

J. Approval Criteria

All applications will be reviewed to determine if they meet application requirements.

Submittal of a complete application does not guarantee funding.

The department can approve a portion of any request or decrease the amount of a request. Department approval of an application constitutes an agreement between the state and the WMG.

K. How to get Reimbursed

The WMG will complete a Payment Request (Form 2400-141B) and provide proof of payment for money spent and in-kind match. Proof of payment includes: invoices marked paid, canceled checks, credit card statements, volunteer time logs, etc.

The WMG should inform the department as soon as possible, if the total award is not going to be spent so funds can be redirected to other projects.

L. Reporting Requirements

An interim report is required by March 1 following the year awarded. A final report is required prior to or along with the final reimbursement request, but no later than June 30 of the second year of the grant.

M. W-9 Form for Landowners

It is imperative that W-9 forms be filled out correctly by the responsible party since this will determine how the cost-sharing monies are reported by the DNR to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for tax purposes. The responsible party should read these instructions carefully before completing a W-9.

The DNR reports all WMA grant payments over \$600 to the IRS. Both the IRS and the applicant will be notified by issuance of Form 1099-G from the DNR around the end of a calendar year.

- a) The responsible party must fill in their tax identification number (TIN) and check the appropriate box underneath to indicate whether this number represents a social security number (SSN) or an employer identification number (EIN).
- b) Social security numbers should only be used in the TIN field when you are applying as an individual, sole proprietor, or LLC-Single Owner.
- c) If the responsible party is applying as a legally recognized partnership, corporation, company, etc., then they must provide the corresponding EIN in the TIN field.
- d) The applicant's TIN must match that of the entity they specified in the Legal Name field of the W-9 form.
- e) If the responsible party is not considered a legal partnership, corporation, etc. with a federally recognized EIN but the property involved is jointly owned, then the entity designation on the W-9 form must be designated as an Individual/Sole Proprietor.
- f) Only one individual's name and TIN may be written on the W-9.
- g) Property jointly owned by a married couple is eligible for cost sharing, but only one co-owner's name may appear on the W-9.
- h) Either co-owner may apply for cost sharing, but it is important that one co-owner's name be used consistently on both the Weed Management Area Private Forest Grant Program Application (Form 2400-141) and the W-9 form.