

Redwood River Watershed Partnership

FY2026 Watershed Based Implementation

(Approved June 4, 2026)

Grant Policy – FY26 Redwood River Watershed Implementation Grant

Grant # C26-0200

ABSTRACT:

The Redwood River (RRW) Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan focuses on high and medium priority issues (pgs. 3-4 to 3-5) that address 9 measurable goals (pgs. 4-3 to 4-20) in the areas of Surface Water Quality, Groundwater/Drinking Water, Water Quantity and Hydrology, and Land Use and Urban Areas. The watershed was divided into 5 planning regions where specific actions were tailored for the specific regions consisting of Upper, Middle, Redwood River, Ramsey Creek and Wabasha Creek. Within the Implementation section, an overview of each planning region is presented with goal milestones and a focus area map. The Projects and Practices action tables (pgs. 5-11, 5-14, 5-17, 5-20, 5-23) were based on the priority issues of each planning region which summarize the tailored actions for implementing structural and non-structural practices to achieve measurable goals progress. PTMApp generated vital information to target projects and practices for each planning region to maximize reductions of sediment, total phosphorus, and total nitrogen. A watershed-wide summary of action tables can be found on page 5-6. Additional action tables were created to address Research and Data Gaps and Education and Outreach (page 5-7) and Capital Improvement Projects (page 5-8).

Implementation efforts will be focused in the higher priority areas illustrated on each measurable goal map:

- Soil Health and Working Lands pg. 4-4
- Nutrients and Bacteria pg. 4-6
- Protection and Restoration pg. 4-8
- Groundwater Contamination pg. 4-10
- Water Storage and Flooding pg. 4-12
- Bank Erosion pg. 4-14
- Riparian and Shoreline Management pg. 4-16
- Barriers to Fish Passage pg. 4-18
- Stormwater pg. 4-20

Projects will be prioritized using a Scoring and Ranking Spreadsheet developed by the RRW Technical Committee and approved by the Redwood-Cottonwood Rivers Control Area (RCRCA) Joint Powers Board. Plan Partners will work with all landowners (urban and rural) to encourage the installation of BMPs on the landscape while focusing on priorities set forth in the Plan. This implementation grant will fund approximately 33 agricultural practices, 3,530 acres of nonstructural management practices, 30 unused/abandoned wells sealed, 1 stacked hydrograph analysis and 1 multipurpose drainage management plan, and 2 streambank stabilization projects. Additional outreach efforts will help educate watershed residents on priority concerns regarding groundwater, surface water, excess water and our land, and the availability of assistance.

Total Grant: \$1,121,292.00

Grant Match: \$112,129.20 (minimum)

Grant Period: May 20, 2026 to December 31, 2028

GUIDELINES:

1. All projects will be ranked through the Scoring and Ranking Worksheet – with a point value of **45** and above eligible for encumbrance. This will be reviewed annually, or as often as needed to determine minimum point eligibility.

2. Administration and Coordination: Funds will be distributed to Redwood-Cottonwood Rivers Control Area (RCRCA) for completion of Plan administration, coordination, grant reporting and financial responsibilities.
3. **Numbering System for grant: 26-RRW-(First 3 Letters of County)-(Project # beginning with 001)**
Each county will number their own contracts starting with -001 and submitted consecutively in numerical order.
4. Any cost share project expected to exceed the cost-share maximums (\$100,000) must be recommended by the Technical Committee prior to approval by the RCRCA Board.
5. For cost share projects with combined state and non-state funding, the maximum cost-share rate shall not exceed 95% (see following table for percentage maximums). Any project seeking 100% cost-share must be recommended by the Technical Committee prior to RCRCA Board consideration. The Technical Committee shall review the cost-benefit ratio and make sure the proposed project aligns with Plan priorities.
6. Should a land occupier fail to maintain the contract during the practice effective life, the land occupier is liable to the Partnership for up to 100% of the amount of financial assistance received for a percentage based or flat rate contract.
7. Payment for a completed project will be presented to RCRCA for final payment. All applicable paperwork must be submitted to RCRCA before payments are made. Requests for partial payments will be considered by RCRCA on a case-by-case basis. Any partial payment requests for structural projects must be recommended by the Technical Committee for approval from the Policy Committee. Payments for non-structural management practices will be made after practice completion/certification.
8. All projects will be consistent with the USDA NRCS FOTG or be a professionally engineered or ecological practice.
9. All projects will have technical approval authority sign-off by credentialed staff, staff with NRCS Job Approval Authority, or a Technical Service Area/private engineer.
10. For all projects designed by the NRCS, local staff must provide RCRCA with a design signed by the technician/engineer with the appropriate Job Approval Authority and a CPA-052 form before projects can be approved. After project completion, local staff must provide RCRCA with signed as-built forms and the ENG-50 or other certification form for voucher approval. If these forms are not obtained, the local partner is responsible for providing cost-share to the landowner for the project. RCRCA must inform the BWSR Board Conservationist of all NRCS designed projects seeking cost-share.
11. Only technical and engineering requests for WBIF-funded projects are eligible for funding. Exceptions can be made for Capital Improvement Projects. TSAs and professional engineering firms can directly invoice RCRCA. All Technical and Engineering invoices must indicate which project/s are being billed for.
12. All project contracts will be completed through the Cost-Share Contract Workbook approved by RCRCA (Percent or Flat Rate).
13. The required installation date will be December 31, 2028 unless a grant amendment has been completed and approved by the RCRCA Board.
14. For structural and nonstructural projects, if the land occupier is different from the landowner, both must sign on the cost-share applications. A landowner signature is **NOT** required for one-year non-structural contracts – the land occupier signature only is acceptable.
15. Any structural cost-share contract providing \$100,000 or more of cost-share assistance from this grant or any project receiving 100% cost-share shall be recorded onto the property deed by the landowner and/or SWCD. The recorded document shall be provided prior to final payment.

PROJECT BUDGET	Contract Type	State + Non-State Funding %	State Funding Alone %	Maximum Cost-Share Per Project	GRANT	MATCH	BUDGET TOTAL
Agricultural Practices	PERCENTAGE Based	95% Not to exceed 100% with recommendation from Tech Committee and RCRC A approval. WBIF will <u>not</u> exceed 85% of the total project costs.	Up to 85% May be exceeded if applicable, see policy	Projects proposed at 100% must align with Plan priorities and the cost-benefit ratio. Must be RCRC A approved.			
WASCOBs, filter strips, grassed waterways, grade stabilizations, side water inlets, terraces, diversions, or other practice as listed in NRCS FOTG.	Applicable NRCS FOTG Practice Standard or professionally-engineered practice	Install by Grant Agreement end date	Life of Practice (Yrs): as listed in NRCS guidelines	\$100,000 Cost-share greater than \$100,000 must be recommended by the Technical Committee and RCRC A approved.	\$501,292	\$65,462.53	\$566,754.53
Non-Structural Management Practices	FLAT RATE (Annual payments for 329 & 340)	Payment after planting/certification. Maps & acres (round down to whole number) are required for each contract.		W-9 & Tennessean Warning Notice required. 1099 will be issued. 320-acre cap for all cover crop and tillage management practice contracts. 40-acre cap for Pasture and Hay Planting *Donated acres must be documented at the bottom of the contract			
Cover Crops	NRCS FOTG Standard 340 (Up to 3-year contract)	Install by Grant Agreement end date	Life of Practice (Yrs): Cover Crops – 1	\$60/ac/yr	\$200,000	*Donated acres <u>WILL</u> count as match	\$200,000
Residue & Tillage Management	NRCS FOTG Standard 329 (Up to 3-year contract)	Install by Grant Agreement end date	Life of Practice (Yrs): No Till or Strip Till – 1	\$35/acre/year			
Pasture and Hay Planting	NRCS FOTG Standard 512 – (5-year contract)	Install by Grant Agreement end date	Life of Practice (Yrs): Pasture and Hay Planting - 5	\$450/acre one-time payment			
Groundwater Practices	PERCENTAGE Based	50%	50%	Wells that <u>HAVE</u> received a letter of violation from the MDH are <u>NOT</u> eligible for cost-share			
Well Decommissioning of unused or abandoned wells	MN Statutes Chapter 103i	Install by Grant Agreement end date	Life of Practice (Yrs): Decommissioning - 20	Up to \$1,000 per well	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$60,000
Streambank or Shoreline Protection	PERCENTAGE Based	Not to exceed 100% cost-share.	Up to 75%	\$30,000 maximum WBIF cost-share per project			
Critical area and native vegetation planting, riparian buffers, floodplain for community forestry, and streambank stabilization	NRCS FOTG or professionally-engineered conservation or ecological practice	Install by Grant Agreement end date	Life of Practice (Yrs): 390 Rip Herb Cover –10 342 Crit Area Plant -- 10 580 S/S Protect – 20 or other practices listed in NRCS FOTG	\$30,000 maximum WBIF cost-share per project	\$50,000	\$16,666.67	\$66,666.67

Urban Stormwater Management Practices	PERCENTAGE Based	85%	Up to 85%				
Rain gardens, vegetated swales, sediment basins, stormwater ponds and other vegetative practices.	NRCS FOTG or professionally-engineered cons. or eco. practice	Install by Grant Agreement end date	Life of Practice (Yrs) Urban Practices – 10 or follow NRCS guidelines – min. 10	\$0			\$0
Livestock Waste Management	PERCENTAGE Based	85%	85%				
Closure of Livestock Waste Impoundments and other practices indicated on the BWSR 4.0 Guidance Chart of Practices.	Applicable NRCS FOTG Practice Standard or professionally-engineered practice	Install by Grant Agreement end date	Based on individual practice standards.	\$0			\$0
PROJECT BUDGET					GRANT	CASH MATCH	BUDGET TOTAL
Administration			Invoices will be submitted according to hours worked, billable rates, and description of services.		\$120,000	\$0	\$120,000
Technical/Engineering Assistance	Technical site assessment, surveys, preliminary analysis and design, final design, construction supervision, installation, inspection and completion of projects. Technical approval authority sign-off by credentialed staff, staff with NRCS Job Approval Authority, or TSA/private engineer.		Invoices will be submitted according to hours worked, billable rates, and description of services.		\$100,000	\$0	\$100,000
Project Development	Project support activities such civic engagement, public outreach, initial contacts, actions and activities with landowners and/or partners; preliminary information gathering, conservation marketing or other activities. Emphasize MAWQCP. Staff time can be utilized for project and educational material development.		Invoices will be submitted according to hours worked, billable rates, and description of services.		\$50,000	\$0	\$50,000
Planning/Assessment	Development of specific plans or special studies such as nutrient management plans, farm planning/ certification, LIDAR analysis, subwatershed assessment, feedlot inspection and compliance plans, and *Multipurpose Drainage Management Plans. (*See Policy Below) Staff time can be utilized for assistance with Planning/Assessment activities.	1 plan	Invoices will be submitted according to hours worked, billable rates, description of services, and for products produced.		\$50,000	\$0	\$50,000
Education/Information	Funding for field days, educational displays, direct mailings, postage and other media as requested. Staff time can be utilized for development of educational materials.		Invoices will be submitted according to hours worked, billable rates, description of services, and for products produced including mailings, brochures, and other educational efforts.		\$20,000	\$0	\$20,000
TOTAL					\$1,121,292	\$ 112,129.20	\$1,233,421.20

Multipurpose Drainage Management (MDM) Plans – Expectations of Deliverables – Approved by the RCRC Board on May 7, 2026

The purpose of a MDM Plan is to identify multiple on-system and off-system best management practices (BMPs). Identified practices or activities will reduce downstream peak flows and flooding, reduce erosion and sedimentation, protect drainage system efficiency, reduce drainage system maintenance, improve water quality, and improve aquatic & terrestrial habitat.

Approximately 30% of the study/report should focus on the drainage system as basic infrastructure.

1. Determine the current state/condition of tiles and open ditch.
 - a. Is the system failing or faulty?
 - b. How much money has been spent on repairs over the past 10 years?
2. Identify the drainage watershed of system.
 - a. Identify erosion, sedimentation and frequent maintenance areas including, but not limited to, drowned out spots, sloughing, depression areas, concentrated flow through ditch banks, etc.
 - b. Identify potential storage locations.
 - c. Identify sensitive natural resources (lakes, natural watercourses, fens, etc.).
3. Include a rough estimate of tile needs and cost to obtain the appropriate drainage coefficient.
 - a. Many systems are undersized for the modern type, size, and amount of tile within a system.

Approximately 70% of the study/report should focus on documented system concerns (storage, sediment, erosion, and water quality), the location of conservation practices within the system, and how the practices can help the drainage system meet the purpose.

1. Identify conservation practices to assist with the documented concerns and locations best suited to address the concerns.
 - a. Projects include, but are not limited to, grade stabilization structures, water and sediment control basins, bank stabilization, filter strip, grassed waterways, constructed wetlands, wetland restorations, drainage water management, saturated buffers, denitrifying bioreactors, cover crops, residue management, water storage, and conservation cover.
2. If any BMPs are currently installed in the drainage system area, determine condition and effectiveness.
 - a. If BMPs are in poor condition, evaluate the condition and best means of correction
3. Identify BMPs both within 1 rod of ditch line (tile or open ditch) and outside of the 1 rod.
 - a. Drainage Authority has say within one rod (16.5 feet) of the open ditch
 - b. Landowners have say when more than one rod (16.5 feet) from the open ditch (Opportunity to partner with landowners for projects)
4. Determine operation and maintenance needs of the practice or activity. Determine the responsible party for the operation and maintenance (Drainage Authority, Landowner, etc.).
5. Identify water quality benefits.
6. Identify water storage needs to address water volume and rate reduction.

Minnesota Statutory requirements:

- 103E.015 subpart 4 - adequacy of outlet (as well as the rest of 103E)
- MN Governing Rule 8420 – be mindful of wetlands when planning projects