

Request for Application

Watershed Improvement Review Board

Applications are to be received by 4:00 p.m. Friday, February 22, 2008.

Eligibility for Funds:

A local watershed improvement committee, with a majority of the members representing the water quality resource concern or impairment of the specific watershed addressed by this project and recognized by the secretary of state as a nonprofit organization (<http://www.sos.state.ia.us/business/nonprofits/index.html> 515-281-5204), may submit an application. Soil and water conservation districts, public water supply utilities, county conservation boards, and cities are also eligible to apply for local watershed improvement grants.

Program explanation:

The Watershed Improvement Review Board (WIRB) was established within Chapter 466A. Annually, the WIRB is responsible for allocating appropriations from the legislature in grants for water quality improvement in Iowa. The stated purposes of those funds are:

- a. Enhancement of water quality in the state through a variety of locally directed watershed improvement projects that is impairment-based, but not restricted to the 303(d) Impaired Waters list.
- b. Positively affecting the management and use of water for the purposes of drinking, agriculture, recreation, sport, and/or economic development in the state.
- c. Ensuring public participation in the process of determining priorities related to water quality including but not limited to the following:
 1. agricultural runoff and drainage
 2. stream bank erosion
 3. municipal discharge
 4. storm water runoff
 5. unsewered communities
 6. industrial discharge
 7. livestock runoff
- d. The applicant shall coordinate with a local watershed improvement committee or a soil and water conservation district and shall include in the application a description of existing projects and any potential impacts the proposed project may have on existing or planned water quality improvement projects.

Each application is limited to \$500,000 of Watershed Improvement Fund money. No minimum amount is required. A local watershed improvement grant may be awarded for a period not to exceed three years. Applicants may submit as many applications as they desire, but not more than one application may be funded per applicant. Up to \$2.5 million is available to fund water quality improvement projects. Additional carryover funds may also be available. Because Watershed Improvement Funds are public funds, public contract and bidding procedures will be followed.

Project applications will consist of the following information:

- a) Application Summary Form
- b) Narrative of the proposed project and a timeline. See the assessment criteria for additional information to be included in the narrative. **This portion of the application will not exceed 6 pages single spaced, 12 point font, standard 1" inch margins.** The narrative shall explain the proposed project clearly and must not rely upon supplementary attached materials for the proposed project to be understood.
- c) If the applicant is a local watershed improvement committee entity, proof of legal designation as a state of Iowa nonprofit is required. List the members of the local watershed improvement committee. Indicate how this committee meets the code requirement for committee structure (Iowa Code 466A.4). The applicant may also be a soil and water conservation district, a public water supply utility, county conservation board, or city and does not need to meet the requirements of a local watershed improvement committee.

- d) Project Budget Form. Develop budgets on a calendar year basis starting in 2008. The Excel spreadsheet budget form supplied with this RFA **MUST** be used. Use one budget form per year and include one summary budget form summing all the years of the application.
- e) Letters of cash and in-kind support from partners and other funding sources **MUST** be included with the application. Cash and in-kind contributions to the project must be identified on the budget as to source and use.
- f) A map of the watershed showing its location within the county or counties and nearby cities and towns.
- g) Optional—relevant GIS maps, relevant data sets, vitas

Project Assessment Factors:

Applications will be assessed on the following factors. Project assessment factors can be written in any sequence that is logical for the individual application. However, all project assessment factors must be identified and addressed.

1. Accountability—demonstrated financial responsibility
2. Assessment—a comprehensive watershed assessment has been completed. The water quality impairments are clearly identified and prioritized. Supporting data is supplied.
3. Goals—goals of the project are clearly outlined and target the source(s) of the identified impairment(s) as identified in the assessment.
4. Results—the project scope is appropriate for the size of this watershed, uses appropriate technology and the goals can be realistically accomplished within the timeline. The quantitative or qualitative measurements of water quality improvement are clearly outlined and appropriate, and should be expected to reduce the identified impairment of the watershed.
5. Collaboration & Local Leadership—inclusion of a diverse group of partners necessary to provide technical and other expertise. Local leadership has been identified and there is demonstrated involvement with those that affect and are affected by the watershed.
6. Leveraging & Cost Effective—the project area has been identified as a local priority and other sources of support are available to address water quality. Methods described are a cost effective means to accomplish the outlined goals.
7. Project Monitoring—mechanisms are in place for evaluation of results of this project and there is flexibility to implement changes necessary for a successful project.
8. Public Outreach—methods for communicating with the public before, during and after the project are apparent; information is transferable to other potential projects.
9. Innovation—implementing new practices, methods, or reduction of costs, to improve water quality that may be replicated in other projects.

Application Acceptance or Rejection:

Consideration will be given to all qualified applications. A grant agreement will be executed between the Watershed Improvement Review Board and those awarded grants. The agreement will specify reporting requirements and the funding schedule.

PLEASE MAIL OR DELIVER A COMPLETE APPLICATION PACKET ON A COMPACT DISK (CD) AND MAIL OR DELIVER ONE ORIGINAL AND 15 COPIES (total of 16) TO BE RECEIVED BY 4:00 p.m. February 22, 2008 to:

Watershed Improvement Review Board
 IDALS-Division of Soil Conservation
 502 E 9th St
 Des Moines IA 50319

Questions: Call Jerry Neppel at 515-281-3599, or via email at: jerry.neppel@idals.state.ia.us

Improving Your Application:

The Watershed Improvement Review Board offers these suggestions to improve your application.

- Use the Watershed Project Protocol found on the website at: www.agriculture.state.ia.us/IWIRB.htm to help you develop your application.
- Consult with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Water Monitoring Section staff for assistance in developing the monitoring plan component of your application.
- Develop your project using a watershed-based approach. Information on your proposed project watershed can be obtained as follows:
Go to: <http://www.iowadnr.com/>
 - Then click on 'Mapping (GIS Interactive)' in the left-hand column near the bottom of the webpage
 - Then click on 'Iowa Watershed Initiative' in the left-hand column near the top of the webpage
 - Then click on the map of Iowa in the area of your proposed project watershed. Get the Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) name and 8-digit number. This is the HUC-8 name and number in which your proposed project watershed is located. Please note all of the useful electronic hyperlinks to watershed and water quality information related to this watershed on this and other webpages.
- Ensure your application is easy to read. Appropriate use of underlining and bolding for headings and subheadings is helpful to the reviewer.
- If your group is a Local Watershed Improvement Committee, be sure to list the committee members and how they relate to the project and the impairment being addressed.
- The purpose of this grant program is to implement water quality improvement projects where water quality improvements in the watershed can be quantified. Applications meeting this purpose will rank well in the evaluation process.
- Check the website for updates at: www.agriculture.state.ia.us/IWIRB.htm . The date of the last update for each webpage will be listed on the bottom of each webpage. Check the website before submitting your application for any changes in the RFA.
- Complete the following final checklist and ensure all instructions are followed and materials are included.

Final Checklist

- _____ The Application Narrative Summary Form is completed and attached.
- _____ The application is watershed-based and addresses major water quality impairment(s) identified in the watershed.
- _____ The proposal Narrative does not exceed six pages and explains the project without supplemental information.
- _____ A Local Watershed Improvement Committee provides a copy of the Secretary of State Certificate of Standing showing the nonprofit organization corporation number, lists the members of the Local Watershed Improvement Committee and how these members represent a cause of the water quality impairment being addressed by the application.
- _____ A letter of monetary support is received from each funding source contributing to this project.
- _____ The monetary support of each contributor is shown on the Project Budget Form.
- _____ Submit one (1) signed original and fifteen (15) copies of the application.
- _____ Submit the entire application on a compact disk (CD).
- _____ Ensure the entire application is received by 4:00 p.m. February 22, 2008.