

Request for Application

Watershed Improvement Review Board

Applications are to be received by 4:00 p.m. Friday, August 5, 2011.

Program explanation:

The Watershed Improvement Review Board (WIRB) is established within [Chapter 466A](#). The WIRB is responsible for allocating appropriations from the Iowa Legislature in grants for water quality improvement and flood prevention in Iowa, on a watershed basis.

Each application is limited to a maximum of \$500,000 of Watershed Improvement Fund money. A watershed improvement grant may be awarded for a period not to exceed five years. Applicants may submit multiple proposals, but the WIRB will not award more than one grant to an applicant from each appropriation to the WIRB. Between \$746,000 and \$1.2 million is available to fund eligible projects, depending upon State Fiscal Year 2012 state appropriation (unknown at the time of the release of this RFA).

Eligible applicants:

Soil and water conservation districts, public water supply utilities, counties, county conservation boards, cities and local watershed improvement committees are the **only** entities eligible to apply for watershed improvement grants. A local watershed improvement committee is an organization formed to address watershed problems. A majority of the committee members must represent the water quality resource concern or impairment of the specific watershed addressed by the proposed project and the watershed committee must be recognized by the Secretary of State as a nonprofit organization (<http://www.sos.state.ia.us/business/nonprofits/index.html> 515-281-5204).

Eligible expenses:

Examples of eligible expenses include construction costs and everything directly related to the construction of water quality or flood prevention practices, engineering costs to design these practices, public bidding and contracting expenses, salary and benefits for personnel implementing the project and purchasing of easements.

Ineligible expenses:

Examples of ineligible expenses include contingencies and indirect costs.

Additional information can be obtained from the supporting document entitled ‘Sample Expense Categories’ found along with the RFA.

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) Assessment—a comprehensive watershed assessment has been completed. The water quality impairments are clearly identified and prioritized. Supporting data is supplied.
- 2) Goals—goals of the project are clearly outlined and target the source(s) of the identified impairment(s) as identified in the assessment.
- 3) 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.
- 4) Collaboration and 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.

- 5) Leveraging and Cost Effective—the project area has been identified as a local priority and other sources of support are available to address water quality or flood prevention. Methods described are a cost effective means to accomplish the outlined goals.
- 6) Project Management and Accountability—mechanisms are in place for evaluation of results of this project and there is flexibility to implement changes necessary for a successful project; demonstrates financial responsibility. Please note that the WIRB will withhold 10% of the total grant award until the final comprehensive report is accepted by the WIRB.
- 7) Public Outreach—methods for communicating with the public before, during and after the project are apparent; information is transferable to other potential projects.
- 8) Innovation—implementing new practices, methods, or reduction of costs, to improve water quality that may be replicated in other projects.

Required 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 must not exceed 6 pages single spaced, Arial 11 font, standard 1” inch margins.** The narrative shall explain the proposed project clearly and must not rely upon supporting attached materials for the proposed project to be understood.
- c) Sixteen copies of the complete application packet with each copy stapled in the upper left-hand corner as well as a compact disk (CD) of the complete application must be submitted.
- d) 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 (*A majority of the members of the committee shall represent a cause for the impairment of the watershed, [Iowa Code 466A.4](#)*).
- e) Project Budget Form. Develop budgets on a calendar year basis starting in 2012. 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.
- f) Letters of contribution from project funders and partners confirming cash and in-kind support **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. Applications with missing letters of contribution will be removed from further consideration.
- g) A map of the watershed showing its location within the county or counties and nearby cities and towns.
- h) Optional—relevant GIS maps, relevant data sets, vitas

PLEASE MAIL OR DELIVER A COMPLETE APPLICATION PACKET ON A COMPACT DISK (CD) AND SIXTEEN (16) COPIES TO BE RECEIVED BY 4:00 p.m. Friday, August 5, 2011 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@iowaagriculture.gov .

Applications approved for funding:

Consideration will be given to all qualified applications. Applications selected for funding will be required to enter into a grant agreement with the Watershed Improvement Review Board. This grant agreement will list the required work products, administrative requirements and other information necessary to successfully implement the funded project. These work products, administrative requirements and other information include:

- A project-length plan of work to be prepared and approved by the WIRB not to exceed five years.
- Progress reporting requirements
- The WIRB will withhold 10% of the total grant award until the final comprehensive report is accepted by the WIRB.
- Public contract and bidding procedures will be used
- Ensure practices installed comply with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Standards and Specifications (http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/efotg_locator.aspx?map=IA), the Stormwater Management Manual (<http://www.intrans.iastate.edu/pubs/stormwater/index.cfm>) Standards or follow sound engineering principles and practices if an NRCS or Stormwater Management Manual standard is not available.

Improving your application:

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

- Use the Watershed Project Planning Protocol found on the website at: <http://www.iowadnr.gov/water/watershed/files/protocolguide.pdf> to help you develop your application.
- Obtain assistance from the Regional Basin Coordinator for your area.
- Consult with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Watershed Monitoring and Assessment Section (Roger Bruner, supervisor, 319-560-6128) for assistance in developing any water quality monitoring plan for 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 a cause for the impairment in the watershed.
- The purpose of this grant program is to implement water quality improvement and flood prevention projects. Quantification of improvements in the application will increase the likelihood your proposal will be selected.
- Check the website for updates at: <http://www.iowaagriculture.gov/IWIRB.asp>. The date of the last update for each RFA document is listed next to the document. Check the website before submitting your application for any changes in the RFA. Review the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on the website.
- Complete the following final checklist and ensure all instructions are followed and materials included.

Final checklist—minimum criteria

(Please note that applications not meeting the following minimum criteria will not be reviewed or considered for funding by the WIRB)

- _____ The Application Narrative Summary Form is completed and attached.
- _____ The application is watershed-based and addresses major water quality impairment(s) (not limited to the impairments or waters listed on the 303(d) list) or flood prevention in the watershed.
- _____ The proposal narrative does not exceed six pages with 12 font and 1-inch margins 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.
- _____ A Local Watershed Improvement Committee lists the members of the committee and how these members represent a cause for the impairment of the watershed.
- _____ A commitment letter for monetary or in-kind support is received from each funding source contributing to this project.
- _____ The monetary or in-kind support of each contributor is shown on the Project Budget Form.
- _____ Submit sixteen (16) paper copies of the application.
- _____ Submit an electronic copy of the entire application on a compact disk (CD).
- _____ Ensure the entire application is received by 4:00 p.m. Friday, August 5, 2011.