

Producer Led Watershed Protection Grants: Program Basics

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) will award grants for voluntary, producer-led activities to reduce nonpoint source pollution in the producers' watersheds through its new **Producer Led Watershed Protection Grant Program**.

GOAL: Improve Wisconsin's soil and water quality by encouraging producer led conservation decision making and solutions

WHO CAN APPLY?

- ✔ A group of at least 5 eligible producers working to improve water quality through non-point source abatement activities. The definition of an eligible producer can be found on our webpage.

WHEN?

- ✔ Applications will be accepted at least annually. Check the DATCP producer led webpage for Request for Proposals announcements and application deadlines.

REQUIREMENTS?

- ✔ Assist other agricultural producers in a watershed to voluntarily conduct water quality improvement efforts.
- ✔ Group must form a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a collaborator listed on the right.
- ✔ Grant funding must be accepted and administered by a producer led group that is a legal entity, or has a legal entity acting on behalf of the group. "Legal Entity" is defined in the Request for Proposals.

GRANT AWARDS?

- ✔ \$250,000 is available each year.
- ✔ Grants cannot exceed \$20,000 per group per year.
- ✔ Producer-led groups must contribute 50 percent matching funds (1:1 ratio).

COLLABORATORS

The following collaborating entities may provide technical or other assistance to producer led groups:

- ✔ DATCP
- ✔ DNR
- ✔ COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEES
- ✔ UW EXTENSION
- ✔ DISCOVERY FARMS
- ✔ NONPROFIT CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS

Webpage resources and all grant information:

http://datcp.wi.gov/Environment/Land_and_Water_Conservation/index.aspx?Id=237



Questions?

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Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

COSTS THAT MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING

Please note: These are not exhaustive lists. We encourage innovative ideas and highly recommend reaching out to the program coordinator to discuss the suitability of your project.

START-UP COSTS

- ✔ Work planning
- ✔ Mission statement development
- ✔ Goal setting

IMPLEMENTATION & OUTREACH

- ✔ Learning/field days
- ✔ Bringing in experts to discuss relevant topics such as soil health, nutrient management and existing water quality monitoring data
- ✔ Measuring and promoting the economic and environmental benefits of conservation practices
- ✔ Developing innovative approaches to manure storage/stacking or sharing conservation equipment to increase or identify economic and environmental benefits of these practices
- ✔ Outreach activities such as conferences, workshops or field days to increase voluntary producer and agribusiness participation in your watershed project
- ✔ On-farm research with your collaborator to identify economic and environmental benefits and opportunities for conservation practices
- ✔ Cost-effective edge-of-field or in-stream water quality monitoring
- ✔ Farm walkovers to evaluate farm, erosion control, manure and nutrient management practices and identify solutions to resource concerns



INCENTIVE PAYMENTS TO PRODUCERS

- ✔ Soil testing
- ✔ Cover crops
- ✔ Nutrient and manure management planning
- ✔ No-till
- ✔ Buffer strips
- ✔ Grassed waterways
- ✔ Manure composting
- ✔ Low-disturbance manure injection
- ✔ Other non-traditional conservation practices



STEPS TO SUCCESS

These steps have been critical to the success of existing producer led groups:

1. Identify your watershed's specific resource concerns.
2. Identify potential changes or improvements you'd like to make in your watershed to address those resource concerns.
3. Organize a leadership structure within your producer-led group.
4. Develop a vision, goals and work/watershed plan for your project.
5. Execute your plan through education, outreach, and conservation practices.
6. Track and reward progress, participation, and successes.

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