



SOIL HEALTH COST SHARE GRANT APPLICATION

What is VLAWMO's Soil Health Grant?

The Soil Health Grant is a **reimbursement** grant program to inspire, assist, and enable residents to install small-scale watershed best management practices that improve water quality and native habitat within VLAWMO. Applicants may apply for up to \$750 in Soil Health Grant funding, with a 25% applicant project match (example: total applicable project cost is \$1,000, where \$750 would be available for grant funding, and the applicant is responsible for paying \$250 of the project cost). If a project is in either a Targeted Habitat or Volume Reduction Zone, the applicant may apply for up to \$1,000 in grant funding.

Eligible Projects include:

- Native plantings & pollinator gardens
- Pollinator-friendly yards or turf replacement
- Downspout or yard raingardens
- Native planting buffer strips
- Erosion control or stabilization with native species

Ineligible Projects include:

- Purely landscaping or decorative projects with no native plant incorporation
- Rock or block decorative retaining walls
- Surface water chemical treatment of nuisance vegetation

Soil Health Grant Process

Soil Health Grant funding is available to residents for projects on property within the VLAWMO watershed boundary, and the grant program funding is first-come, first-serve, with limited program funding available for 2022. If you are interested in applying for a grant, please contact Tyler Thompson to schedule a site visit on your property to discuss your proposed project and to ask and answer questions regarding the Soil Health Grant process. Applications must be submitted by the 4th Friday of the month for review of eligibility, and applications will be considered for funding at VLAWMO's monthly Technical Commission meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of each month on the Commission's Consent Agenda.

1. Please contact Tyler Thompson to schedule a site visit of your property to discuss your project *before* submitting a grant application
2. After discussing with VLAWMO staff, please move forward with completing your grant application, along with the required attachments
3. Staff will confirm receipt of your submitted application and will begin the review process, or will inform the applicant if more information or detail is needed
4. Staff will inform the applicant if their application has passed application scoring criteria and will be heard for approval at the next VLAWMO Technical Commission meeting on the 2nd Wednesday of the month

Funding Agreement

Each project selected and approved for funding must enter into an agreement with VLAWMO defining the obligations of the applicant and VLAWMO. This includes, but is not limited to, such items as terms of the agreement, use of funds, cost overruns, and cancellation. The agreement also allows VLAWMO access to the project area for evaluation and promotion of the project. Applicant is responsible for securing any and all permits for the work. This agreement must be signed by both parties prior to commencement of work on the project; funding will only cover work done after the agreement has been signed, and work that was included for funding in the VLAWMO-approved grant application. **Questions regarding the grant program and completed applications can be sent to:**

Nick Voss, Education and Outreach Coordinator

(651) 204-6070 Email: nick.voss@vlawmo.org

Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization

800 County Rd E East Vadnais Heights, MN 55127

Grant Program Details

- Eligible materials are those which stay on the property such as plants, erosion control blanket, mulch, and drainage infrastructure. Ineligible materials would include work gloves, shovels, tools and equipment used to implement the project but may be used again for future projects (rented equipment IS an eligible expense).
- Eligible labor costs must be those expenses associated with a qualified landscaper/contractor and are subject to approval by VLAWMO staff. Ineligible labor would include the use of friends or a volunteer group helping to implement the project. VLAWMO reserves the right to adjust costs submitted for reimbursement, based upon final receipts and invoices.
- For all projects, only plants and vegetation native to Minnesota are eligible towards grant reimbursement. Hybrids of native plants are not counted as native. You must provide a list of plants that will be used to allow for review and comment by VLAWMO staff. Native restoration projects must be 100% native species. Projects may incorporate non-native or cultivar plants or vegetation within their project, but they are not eligible towards grant funding.
- **Projects completed or in progress are not eligible for funding.** A grant application must be approved for funding and grant agreement must be signed by the applicant and VLAWMO prior to the commencement of work to be eligible for VLAWMO grant funds. However, the landowner may begin project site preparation before grant approval, but will not be reimbursed for any associated expenses.
- A site visit by VLAWMO staff is required once the project is complete, for final project inspection, before a reimbursement check is released to the Grantee.
- Grantee must complete project and request a closeout inspection within one (1) year from date of grant approval. All receipts and invoices for applicable grant expenses must be submitted to VLAWMO staff for audit and for the grant reimbursement request to begin. Grant reimbursement checks are approved and mailed monthly, after approval by the VLAWMO Technical Commission at their monthly meeting.
- **Grantee must agree to maintain the project area for a minimum of 5 years.** Common maintenance includes weeding, watering, removal of invasive species, replacement of plants, repair of inlets/outlets, and other duties. The site may be inspected by VLAWMO staff on an annual basis to ensure compliance. VLAWMO staff may provide technical assistance and resources for project maintenance.
- Property owners may receive one grant every 2 years, unless opting into education incentives (below). If wanting to apply over the course of multiple years to complete projects in phases, your current project must be complete prior to the approval of a subsequent grant.

Applicant Landowner Information

Name:
Address of property where project will be implemented:
City, State, Zip:
Phone:
Email address:

Grant Specifics

ESTIMATED TOTAL COST OF YOUR PROJECT: \$ _____ AMOUNT OF GRANT REQUESTED: (\$750 MAXIMUM) \$ _____
(\$1,000 Maximum if within Targeted Priority Zone)

WHEN DO YOU PLAN TO COMPLETE YOUR PROJECT? _____

PROJECT TYPE:

Raingarden

Native Restoration/Pollinator Planting

Turf Replacement

Other

If other, please describe proposed project: _____

Project Background

Describe your property: Does your property connect to a lake, stream, ditch, or wetland in VLAWMO? What is the purpose of your project?

Describe how your project will support the goals of the Soil Health Grant Program (see guidance page for more information). Does your proposed project directly reduce, capture, or treat stormwater?

Please briefly describe anticipated maintenance activities of your project:

Project Specifications

In order to determine the water quality benefit of your project (amount of stormwater and pollutants captured), specific information is required for VLAWMO staff to perform the calculations. If you are working with a professional landscaper, they should be able to provide you with this information.

TOTAL PROPERTY AREA (Acres):	_____	TOTAL PROJECT SIZE (SQ.FT.):	_____
IMPERVIOUS AREA DRAINING TO PROJECT (SQ.FT.):	_____	PERVIOUS AREA DRAINING TO PROJECT (SQ.FT.):	_____

IF YOUR PROJECT **INCLUDES INFILTRATION**, PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

SOIL INFILTRATION RATE (INCHES/HR):	_____	DEPTH OF RAINGARDEN BASIN (INCHES):	_____
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Additional Required Attachments

To complete your application, please include:

- Detailed drawing or plan of the proposed project, drafted by either the landowner or a contractor.
- Detailed project budget estimate with clear cost and material breakouts that equate to your total project cost estimate.

****This information, along with the application, may be scanned and emailed to VLAWMO GIS Watershed Technician, Tyler Thompson (tyler.thompson@vlawmo.org)****

Opting in to the education incentives would allow reapplying for Soil Health Grant funds the consecutive year after being awarded grant funding. Incentives entail committing to three of the following four options for 2 years:

1. Documenting seasonal photos, organizing them, and sending them to VLAWMO via jump drive or email, to show the progress and growth of the project.
2. Provide a neighborhood spotlight article featuring a photo of participants posing in front of the project, as well as a mini-interview 1-2 years after the project was installed to speak to their experience in install, maintenance, any problems, and enjoyment for others to learn from.
3. Participate as a host site for VLAWMO’s annual neighborhood BMP tour working in conjunction with VLAWMO Master Water Stewards.
4. Help coordinate VLAWMO’s annual native plant swap with Master Water Stewards. This entails saving seeds, dividing and potting mature plants for sharing with other residents or public raingardens, or taking plants from the plant swap for the home project as needed.

Projects must be maintained for a minimum of 5 years, and applicants must be willing to participate in VLAWMO's Education & Outreach and project sharing efforts. The applicant is responsible for Project maintenance items referenced in the Soil Health Grant Guidance document for a 5 year period, after Project completion. VLAWMO is not responsible for completing maintenance activities, but will assist with staff guidance. A project may be visited and inspected by VLAWMO staff during the 5 year maintenance period. Please inform VLAWMO if you move within the 5 years of project implementation so we may provide the new owners with information and guidance on the Project.

Are you willing to commit to the following Soil Health Grant requirements?

- **Maintain the project for at least 5 years after its implementation?** **YES** **NO**

- **Participate in VLAWMO's outreach and project sharing efforts?** **YES** **NO**

- **Do you understand that your Project may be visited and inspected by a VLAWMO representative during the 5 year Project maintenance period?** **YES** **NO**

Please print and sign below to indicate that the above information and attachments are accurate and complete, and constitute a complete and submitted grant application. If approved by the VLAWMO Technical Commission or Board, a VLAWMO staff signature will constitute an executed grant agreement between the grantee and the Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization (VLAWMO).

APPLICANT/GRANTEE

Print Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

VLAWMO STAFF

Signature _____ Date _____