

The Soil Health Grant Program is a reimbursement program to help landowners install small-scale practices that improve water quality and soil health within Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization (VLAWMO). Applicants may apply for 75% of the project cost, up to a maximum of \$750. An applicant may apply for up to \$1,000 if located in a [VLAWMO priority area](#).

Eligible Projects:

- Native plantings & pollinator gardens
- Turf grass replacement and pollinator-friendly yards (i.e. bee lawns)
- Downspout or small-scale yard raingardens
- Buffer strips
- Erosion control or stabilization

Ineligible Projects:

- Non-native plant landscaping, decorative, or recreational projects
- Retaining walls
- Chemical treatment of aquatic vegetation
- Projects that have received funding from other VLAWMO grant programs in the same year
- Maintenance of awarded grant projects

Soil Health Grant Process

Soil Health Grant funding is available to landowners within the VLAWMO boundary. The grant program operates on a first-come, first-served basis. Applications must be submitted by the 4th Friday of the month for review and potential consideration at VLAWMO's Technical Commission meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of each month.

1. Contact staff to schedule a site visit of your property before submittal of a grant application to discuss your proposed project
2. Complete a grant application (see page 3) and submit to staff listed on the grant application
3. VLAWMO will review application and confirm completeness
4. Complete applications will be presented at the next VLAWMO Technical Commission meeting per its [meeting schedule](#).
5. VLAWMO will notify applicant of application status and next steps

Grant Program Details

- **Projects started prior to VLAWMO approval are not eligible.** A grant application must be approved for funding, and the grant agreement must be signed by the applicant and VLAWMO prior to the start of work to be eligible for funding.

- Eligible project costs are those only directly related to installing the proposed project such as plants, erosion control materials, mulch, drainage structures, and rented equipment. Purchased tools and equipment are not eligible. Eligibility of materials is subject to VLAWMO approval.
- Eligible labor costs must be those expenses associated with a qualified landscaper/contractor and are subject to approval by VLAWMO staff. Landowner labor may apply towards the project match at a rate of \$20/hr. VLAWMO reserves the right to adjust costs submitted for reimbursement based on final paid receipts and invoices. Reimbursement will not exceed the cost of eligible materials and labor.
- Erosion control activities must utilize natural erosion control material, such as non-plastic netting.
- For all projects, only plants native to Minnesota are eligible for grant reimbursement. Hybrids/cultivars of native plants are not eligible for reimbursement unless otherwise noted on *[insert resource sheet name & link here]*. Bee lawns must be specially marked bee lawn mixes. A list of proposed plants must be included with the application for VLAWMO review and approval.
- **Changes to the project after grant approval may not be made without approval by VLAWMO.**
- Grant awards will expire within one year of grant approval unless the project is extended with VLAWMO approval.
- Grantee must agree to maintain the project for a minimum of **5 years**. The site may be inspected by VLAWMO staff to ensure compliance.
- Grantee must participate in VLAWMO's education and outreach efforts by:
 - Providing pictures of project progress, including one year after project completion; OR
 - Providing a posed picture with completed project & short quote about what was enjoyable about the project or lessons learned.
- Landowners are limited to one grant application every other year unless a single project must be completed in consecutive phases and approved by VLAWMO.

Reimbursement Steps:

1. Execute grant agreement with VLAWMO (see page 5).
2. After project completion, contact VLAWMO staff to request a final inspection of the project for verification it meets the approved plans. This must occur within one year from the date of grant approval.
3. Submit all **paid** invoices and receipts of project expenses for VLAWMO review. Plant expenses must show species on proof of payment or via grantee's annotations or supplemental spreadsheet. Final grant award amounts will be based on the completed work and total paid project amount.
4. If the above steps are completed and approved by staff, VLAWMO will mail a reimbursement check per the VLAWMO Technical Commission's monthly meeting schedule.



SOIL HEALTH GRANT APPLICATION

Submit Completed Application to:
 Lauren Sampedro
lauren.sampedro@vlawmo.org

Applicant Information

Name:
Address:
City/Township, State, Zip:
Phone:
Email:

Project Summary

ESTIMATED TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$ _____ AMOUNT REQUESTED: (\$750 MAX or \$1,000 in Priority Area) \$ _____

EXPECTED PROJECT COMPLETION (Month, Year): _____

PROJECT TYPE:

- Downspout / Small Raingarden Native Restoration/Pollinator Garden Turf Grass 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 policy).

Briefly describe planned installation and maintenance activities for your project.

Project Specifications

Provide the following information to assist VLAWMO staff in determining the water quality benefits of your project:

TOTAL PROPERTY AREA
(Acres): _____

TOTAL PROJECT SIZE (SQ.FT.): _____

IF APPLICABLE]
DEPTH OF RAINGARDEN BASIN:
(INCHES): _____

Required Attachments

- Detailed drawing or plan of the proposed project.
- Detailed project budget estimate with itemized costs and materials that equal your total estimated cost.

VLAWMO SOIL HEALTH GRANT AGREEMENT

It is understood that:

1. The grantee is responsible for maintaining the project for at least 5 years after its installation. VLAWMO is not responsible for completing maintenance activities.
2. The grantee will participate in VLAWMO's outreach and project sharing efforts.
3. A project may be visited and inspected by a VLAWMO representative during the 5-year maintenance period.
4. Grant awards will expire within one year of grant approval unless the project is extended with VLAWMO approval.

The applicant's signature indicates their agreement to the above terms and certifies the grant application information is true and accurate. A VLAWMO staff signature will constitute an approved and executed grant agreement between the grantee and the VLAWMO.

APPLICANT/GRANTEE

Signature _____ Date _____

VLAWMO STAFF

Signature _____ Date _____