

# Interrelated Water Management Plan Program

\* \* \* \* \*

## Revised Guidelines and Limitations

Approved November 19, 2009

### Guidelines

The Natural Resources Commission (Commission) has developed guidelines, not formal rules for application ranking and disbursement of funds.

The guidelines are reviewed annually by the Commission at its November meeting.

The award of grants and subsequent distributions are subject to continued funding and appropriation levels for the program by the Legislature.

### Local Match Requirement

Only NRDs that agree to provide a minimum local revenue match of at least 20% of the local project cost, either cash or in-kind services, are eligible to receive funding. For purposes of these guidelines, in-kind services means providing additional funds to your existing budget to hire staff or buy supplies necessary for implementing activities described in a grant application to the Interrelated Water Management Program. These funds and activities must be described in the grant application.

Local match is based on that portion of local project cost which is defined as the total cost that the sponsor would ultimately have to provide if financial assistance from the IWMPPF was not available. All other sources of federal and state funding must be subtracted from total project costs to arrive at local project cost.

The funds will be awarded to NRDs that are involved with the processes defined in Neb. Rev. Stat §§ 46-712, 46-715 or 46-739 or in studies to determine the need for a management plan.

### Targets for Distributing Funds

The Commission does not set hard caps on how the funds are to be distributed among the NRDs, but the Commission will give preference when distributing the funds to NRDs that have no designated fully-appropriated or over-appropriated areas and that therefore cannot take advantage of the special 3-year levy authorized by Section 2-3225(1)(c).

Projects previously funded by the Program, but not yet complete, will have priority over new projects if projects are progressing approximately on schedule and accomplishing stated objectives.

It is expected that all project costs will be incurred and all reimbursement requests submitted to the Department of Natural Resources within the fiscal year the funds are awarded or by the contract expiration date whichever is later.

### Eligible Projects

1. **Technical studies** needed to make wise decisions on how to manage hydrologically connected surface water and ground water to achieve the purposes of water management planning, such

# Interrelated Water Management Plan Program

\* \* \* \* \*

## Revised Guidelines and Limitations

Approved November 19, 2009

as studies that will:

- a. Increase understandings of the connection between surface and ground water.
  - b. Analyze the economic environmental and/or social impacts of management options.
2. **Projects to implement water management actions**—that will enhance the benefits derived from available water supplies, including but not limited to:
- a. Augmentation and associated flow retiming projects.
  - b. Intentional recharge or conjunctive use projects.
  - c. Assistance in implementing innovative incentive programs, except that no funds shall be expended for the retirement of irrigated acres.

### Project Durations

Projects may be for up to three years, but actual funding will be provided on a year-by-year basis, subject to continued funding by the Legislature.

### Sponsor Reimbursements

Grant awards will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis in accordance with individually developed contracts.

### Application Process

Proposals for new projects must be submitted to DNR by March 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

Applications need not be re-submitted on multi-year projects for which second- or third-year funding is being requested. In these cases, subsequent to a progress meeting with Department staff, the project sponsors will submit a letter requesting continued funding. If changes from the original funding request are needed, the letter must provide specific reasons for cost increases.

When applicable, DNR will convene a technical review committee to evaluate the technical merits of the project.

The technical review committee may include technical experts from the DNR, the NRDs, the University of Nebraska and other governmental entities such as but not limited to the USGS, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, or DEQ as appropriate. DNR should provide the technical review committee with an opportunity to comment on whether the proposal should be classified as “very sound,” “sound,” or “deficient.”

DNR will provide an initial ranking of the projects to the Commission’s Program Committee at the first meeting after April 30<sup>th</sup>.

The Program Committee will make the final recommendations of which projects should be funded at what level to the Commission.

The Natural Resources Commission will make the final decisions.

# Interrelated Water Management Plan Program

\* \* \* \* \*

## Revised Guidelines and Limitations

Approved November 19, 2009

### Ranking

In the initial ranking by DNR, points will be given to each project to assist in ranking the projects, but the final assignment of points is to be used only as a guide for developing the final project ranking list.

Point assignments:

Project Purposes:	
• Technical Studies	20 points
• Implementation Projects	5 points
Technical Attributes:	
• very sound - using widely accepted, field proven methods and procedures	15 points
• sound - using generally accepted, possibly exploratory, methods and procedures	10 points
• deficient - using technically inadequate methods and procedures that can be corrected prior to executing the contract	5 points
Multiple governmental or private entities involved in the project	5 points
Sponsor(s) obtained funding for the project from sources other than Nebraska tax dollars, state or local	5 points

Once points are assigned, they will be added to determine a final score.

### Status Reporting

Semi-annual reports for the periods ending on December 31 and June 30 must be submitted to the Department of Natural Resources by January 31 and July 31 respectively.

DNR technical staff may assess status of project activities annually and coordinate with project sponsor to report findings to the Natural Resources Commission.

### Additional Issues

There will be no cap on the amount of money funded to a given NRD or project.

DNR will develop record keeping and reporting requirements and a contract to be signed by the DNR and the NRD.