

# FUNDING AND ADMINISTRATION FAQs



## WISCONSIN'S HEALTHY LAKES IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (Plan)

goal is to protect and improve the health of our lakes by increasing lakeshore property owner participation in habitat restoration and runoff and erosion control projects. This Factsheet answers frequently asked questions about funding and administering a Healthy Lakes project.



### **1. Is there funding available to implement the Plan?**

Yes, the Department of Natural Resources created a Lake Protection – Plan Implementation sub-category for Healthy Lakes Grants. The gateway to seek the funding requires an eligible sponsor to adopt the Plan by resolution or integrate it into a complimentary planning effort, like lake management or comprehensive planning.

There may be alternative (i.e. non-Healthy Lakes Grant) funding available through your county's land and water conservation department.

Please note, Healthy Lakes grant funding is not available for regulatory compliance purposes, including shoreland mitigation projects.

### **2. Who are eligible sponsors?**

Eligible Healthy Lakes Grant sponsors include qualified lake associations, lake districts, qualified non-profit conservation organizations, and local governmental units like counties, cities, villages, and towns. Individual property owners are not eligible grant sponsors, but any of the eligible partner groups could apply on their behalf. Lakeshore property owners participating in a Healthy Lake Grant project do not have to be on the same lake.

### **3. How does a sponsor adopt the Plan?**

There are several ways an eligible sponsor may adopt the Plan in order to be eligible for Healthy Lakes Grant funding. The simplest way is to do so by resolution of the sponsor's board. Alternatively, a sponsor may choose to integrate the Plan and its best practices into a more sophisticated planning effort like lake management or comprehensive planning. Or, a sponsor may choose to do lakeshore-specific project that includes activities like shoreline assessment, sociological work (e.g. surveys or focus groups) to better understand their local target audience, and then customize Wisconsin's Healthy Lakes Implementation Plan for the given lake(s).

### **4. How does the Healthy Lakes funding work?**

The maximum state grant award is capped at \$25,000 and requires a 75/25 state/sponsor match. The individual Healthy Lakes best practices are capped at \$1000/each. The grant sponsor has the flexibility to design their own cost-share rates at a local scale, provided the total state award and practice caps are not exceeded. Please note the Healthy Lakes Grants are reimbursement grants, which means the state does not provide an advance payment for project start-up expenses.

### **5. What about technical assistance and grant administration?**

Up to 10% of the state share of the total grant award is available for technical assistance and grant administration. Please note the 10% is not calculated on a per practice basis. Technical assistance and grant administration does not include best practice installation costs, including labor, plants, and transportation. The sponsor match can include technical assistance and grant administration beyond the 10% state share.



**6. Can county cost-share through Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) be used as match to Healthy Lakes Grant funding?**

Probably not. The Healthy Lakes best practices and funding are intended for relatively simple and inexpensive projects on typical lakeshore properties. They are not intended for sites that may require engineering design and review. Furthermore, the Healthy Lakes 350 ft<sup>2</sup> native plantings are not meant to be full-on traditional shoreline restorations that DATCP requires but rather a first, small step towards full shoreline restoration. The Lake Protection – Shoreland Habitat Restoration or Plan Implementation Grants may be a better option to match DATCP projects.

**7. What is the timeline for the Healthy Lakes funding?**

Grant applications are due February 1 of each year, beginning in 2015. The funding is designed to encourage committed property owners with shovel-ready projects. Therefore, each grant has a standard timeline with an April 15 start date and June 30 end date a little more than 2 years later.

**8. Are Healthy Lakes Grants competitive, and, if so, how will they be reviewed and prioritized for funding?**

Yes, the Healthy Lakes Grants are competitive. A team, including DNR staff and county and UW-Extension partners, will review the applications for completeness and consider the following:

- Water quality, habitat, and natural beauty protection or improvement potential
- Public access and public use of the lake
- Complimentary management efforts and partners
- Likelihood of a successful project, including level of property owner commitment, neighbors participating together, diversity and appropriateness of best practices, costs, and ability to measure success

**9. What is the individual property owner commitment?**

Lakeshore property owners with a strong interest in completing a Healthy Lakes project may sign a commitment pledge upon grant application. The review team will consider the level of commitment when it prioritizes projects. Project funding requires the property owner to sign a standard 10-year conservation contract, which describes that the best practice(s) must remain in place for that timeframe. Self-reporting and/or monitoring may occur along with the operation and maintenance plan to ensure project success. Please note that local shoreland zoning may require that 350 ft<sup>2</sup> native plantings remain in place indefinitely.

**10. Are there any other strings attached?**

Some of the best practices have specific requirements if Healthy Lakes Grant-funded. These include:

- Property owners participating in Fish Sticks projects must commit to leaving a 350 ft<sup>2</sup> no-mow zone or installing a 350 ft<sup>2</sup> native planting if their property's shoreland vegetation protection area (i.e. buffer) does not comply with the local shoreland zoning ordinance.
- 350 ft<sup>2</sup> native plantings must be planted at least 10 feet wide either perpendicular or parallel to shore, in a contiguous area rather than patches, and watering will be required.
- Only one 350 ft<sup>2</sup> native planting may be installed per property per year.

**11. What's in it for you?**

If you own lakeshore property, you will be able to directly control the availability and integrity of fish and wildlife habitat in and along your lakeshore and redirect, capture, and clean the runoff water that may otherwise enter the lake. Furthermore, you can eliminate or prevent erosion that harms your private property and the public resource (i.e. lake). If you are a grant sponsor, you can build a sense of community and commitment for our lakes through planning and partnership. Implementing the suggested best practices over time may eventually add up to significant success and healthier lakes for current and future generations.

**LINKS:**

Healthy Lakes website – <http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/UWEXLakes/Pages/healthylakes>

DNR Lake Protection Grants – <http://dnr.wi.gov/aid/lakeclassificationprotection.html>

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