

MINI GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Rice Creek Watershed District actively engages and funds private water quality improvement projects through the Mini-Grant Program. This program provides multiple benefits, including targeting sediment and nutrient removals from stormwater runoff and fostering a culture of land stewardship. Mini Grants are awarded on a rolling basis starting January 1st until the annual budget runs out. **Eligible applicants can receive up to \$500 for project costs.** This grant program is a reimbursement program and grantees will receive their approved funding upon completion and approval of their project. Grantees are limited to one application per year and can reapply for additional projects every other year, however a higher priority and consideration will go towards new applicants.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Applicant Information

All landowners within RCWD boundaries are eligible to apply to the Mini Grant Program. This includes residents, schools, houses of faith, communities, and businesses. Prior to applying, applicants are encouraged to ensure the project location is within district boundaries which can be done at <https://www.ricecreek.org/the-watershed/are-you-in-the-rcwd/>.

Project Information

All projects applying for the Mini Grant Program must not begin any work eligible under the grant until the grant is awarded. Grantees must complete their project and submit a reimbursement request by December 1st.

Eligible projects for grant funds include:

- Native Plants and native seed
- Shoreline buffers
- Turf alternatives
- Raingardens
- Rain Barrels
- Targeted water education, information, or outreach activities.

Please see reverse page for grant program participation requirements, the reimbursement process outline, specific eligible project costs.

PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information or questions, please contact RCWD Outreach and Grants Technician, Molly Nelson at mnelson@ricecreek.org OR fill out a contact request form at <https://www.ricecreek.org/contact/>

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PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Projects must be maintained for a minimum of 5 years, and applicants must be willing to participate in RCWD's outreach and project sharing efforts. The applicant is responsible for maintenance during the 5-year period. The RCWD does not complete the maintenance activities. A project may be visited and inspected by RCWD staff during the 5-year maintenance period. Please inform RCWD if you move within the 5 years of project implementation

GRANT REIMBURSEMENT

When an application is approved, a fillable reimbursement request form will be provided to the grantee and a DropBox link towards the grantee's secure portal to submit their reimbursement documents. Upon completion of the project, submit the reimbursement request form, all paid receipts towards eligible project expenses (scans preferred, photos are acceptable), and photos of the project (before photos of project location encouraged). The program manager will review and approve reimbursement documents and provide information the the grantee on delivery timing of the reimbursement check based on the RCWD Board meeting schedule.

ELIGIBLE AND NON-ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Eligible Expenses

- Minnesota native plants and seed that are insecticide/neonicotinoid free, including flowers/forbs, grasses, sedges, trees, shrubs and seeds
- Biodegradable weed suppression mulch (non-dyed preferred)
- Fencing or materials to protect plants from herbivores
- Equipment rental fees and delivery fees
- Rain barrels and downspout connection materials
- Targeted water education and/or outreach materials

Non-Eligible Projects and Expenses

- Landscaping or purely decorative activities
- Non-native plantings and cultivars
- Rip-rap
- Retaining walls
- Applicant/Contractor labor or time
- Projects that have received funding from other RCWD cost- share programs this year

INFORMATIVE RESOURCES

For more information regarding RCWD's Mini Grant Program, please visit <https://www.ricecreek.org/grants/mini-grants/>.