

NORTH DAKOTA STATE WATER COMMISSION

PROJECT FUNDING POLICY, PROCEDURE, AND GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The State Water Commission has adopted this policy to support local sponsors in development of sustainable water related projects in North Dakota. This policy reflects the State Water Commission's cost-share priorities and provides basic requirements for all projects considered for prioritization during the agency's budgeting process. Projects and studies that receive funding from the agency's appropriated funds are consistent with the public interest. The State Water Commission values and relies on local sponsors and their participation to assure on-the-ground support for projects and prudent expenditure of funding for evaluations and project construction. It is the policy of the State Water Commission that only the items described in this document will be eligible for cost-share upon approval by the State Water Commission, unless specifically authorized by State Water Commission action.

I. DEFINITIONS AND ELIGIBILITY

- A. CONSTRUCTION COSTS** include earthwork, concrete, mobilization and demobilization, dewatering, materials, seeding, rip-rap, crop damages, re-routing electrical transmission lines, moving storm and sanitary sewer system and other underground utilities and conveyance systems affected by construction, mitigation required by law related to the construction contract, irrigation supply works, and other items and services provided by the contractor. Construction costs are only eligible for cost-share if incurred after State Water Commission approval and if the local sponsor has complied with North Dakota Century Code (N.D.C.C.) in soliciting and awarding bids and contracts, and complied with all applicable federal, state, and local laws.
- B. COST-SHARE** means funds appropriated by the legislative assembly or otherwise transferred by the Commission to a local entity under commission policy as reimbursement for a percentage of the total approved cost of a project approved by the Commission.
- C. GRANT** means a one-time sum of money appropriated by the legislative assembly and transferred by the commission to a local entity for a particular purpose. A grant is not dependent on the local entity providing a particular percentage of the cost of the project.
- D. LOAN** means an amount of money lent to a sponsor of a project approved by the commission to assist with funding approved project components. A loan may be stand-alone financial assistance.
- E. WATER CONVEYANCE PROJECT** means any surface or subsurface drainage works, bank stabilization, or snagging and clearing of water bodies.

- F. ENGINEERING SERVICES** include pre-construction and construction engineering. Pre-construction engineering is the engineering necessary to develop plans and specifications for permitting and construction of a project including preliminary and final design, material testing, flood insurance studies, hydraulic models, and geotechnical investigations. Construction engineering is the engineering necessary to build the project designed in the pre-construction phase including construction contract management, and construction observation. Administrative and support services not specific to the approved project are not engineering services. Engineering services are eligible costs if incurred after State Water Commission approval. If the total anticipated cost share from the State Water Commission for a specific project is anticipated to be greater than \$1,000,000, the local sponsor must follow the engineering selection process in NDCC 54-44.7 and provide a copy of the selection committee report to the Chief Engineer. The local sponsor will be considered to have complied with this requirement if they have completed a selection process for a general engineering services agreement at least once every three years and have formally assigned work to a firm or firms under an agreement. The local sponsor must inform the Chief Engineer of any change in the provider of general engineering services.
- G. IMPROVEMENTS** are construction related projects that upgrade a facility to provide increased efficiency or capacity. Improvements do not include any activities that are maintenance, replacement, or reconstruction.
- H. INELIGIBLE ITEMS** excluded from cost-share include:
- 1 Administrative costs;
 - 2 Property acquisitions, easement acquisitions, property surveys, and legal expenses unless specifically identified as eligible within the Flood Recovery Property Acquisition Program, the Flood Protection Program, or the Water Retention Projects;
 - 3 Work and costs incurred prior to a cost-share approval date, except for emergencies as determined by the Chief Engineer;
 - 4 Project related operation and regular maintenance costs;
 - 5 Funding contributions provided by federal, other state, or other North Dakota state entities that supplant costs;
 - 6 Work incurred outside the scope of the approved study or project.
 - 7 The removal of vegetative material and sediment for water conveyance projects.
- I. EXPANSIONS** are construction related projects that increase the project area or users served. Expansions do not include maintenance, replacement, or reconstruction activities.
- J. LOCAL SPONSOR** is the entity submitting a cost-share application and must be a political subdivision, state entity, or commission legislatively granted North Dakota recognition that applies the necessary local share of funding to match State Water Commission cost-share. They provide direction for studies and projects, public point

of contact for communication on public benefits and local concerns, and acquire necessary permits and rights-of-way.

- K. REGULAR MAINTENANCE COSTS** include normal repairs and general upkeep of facilities to allow facilities to continue proper operation and function. These maintenance items occur on a regular or annual basis. Regular maintenance activities simply help ensure the asset will remain serviceable throughout its originally predicted useful life.
- L. EXTRAORDINARY MAINTENANCE COSTS** include the repair or replacement of portions of facilities or components that extends the overall life of the system or components that are above and beyond regular or normal maintenance. Extraordinary maintenance activities extend the asset's useful life beyond its originally predicted useful life.
- M. SUSTAINABLE OPERATION, MAINTENANCE, AND REPLACEMENT PLAN** is a description of the anticipated operation, maintenance, and replacement costs with a statement that the operation, maintenance, and replacement of the project will be sustainable by the local sponsor. For water supply projects, a summary of the project sponsor's Capital Improvement Fund must also be included.
- N. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND** is money set aside using a portion of user fees for future asset replacement and a cost share application shall include documentation of the following:
 - 1. Current capital improvement fund balance
 - 2. Existing and new assets
 - 3. Replacement cost of assets
 - 4. Average life of assets
 - 5. Current and future monthly reserve per user

II. COST-SHARE APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCEDURES

The State Water Commission will not consider any cost-share applications unless the local sponsor first makes an application to the Chief Engineer. No funds will be used in violation of Article X, § 18 of the North Dakota Constitution (Anti-Gift Clause).

- A. APPLICATION REQUIRED.** An application for cost-share is required in all cases and must be submitted by the local sponsor on the State Water Commission Cost-Share Application form. Applications for cost-share are accepted at any time. Applications received less than 30 days before a State Water Commission meeting will not be considered at that meeting and will be held for consideration at a future meeting. The application form is maintained and updated by the Chief Engineer and must include the following:
 - 1 Category of cost-share activity
 - 2 Location of the proposed project or study area shown on a map
 - 3 Description, purpose, goal, objective, narrative of the proposed activities

- 4 Delineation of costs
- 5 Anticipated timeline of project from preliminary study through final closeout
- 6 Potential federal, other state, or other North Dakota state entity participation
- 7 Documentation of an engineering selection process if cost-share is anticipated to be greater than \$1,000,000
- 8 Engineering plans, if applicable
- 9 Status of required permitting
- 10 Potential territorial service area conflicts or service area agreements, if applicable
- 11 Sustainable operation, maintenance, and replacement plan for projects
- 12 Additional information as deemed appropriate by the Chief Engineer

Applications for cost-share are separate and distinct from the State Water Commission biennial project information collection effort that is part of the budgeting process and published as the State Water Plan. All local sponsors are encouraged to submit project financial needs for the State Water Plan. Projects not submitted as part of the State Water Plan development process may be held until action can be taken on those that were included during budgeting, unless determined to be an emergency that directly impacts human health and safety or that are a direct result of a natural disaster.

B. PRE-APPLICATION. A pre-application process is allowed for cost-share of assessment projects. This process will require the local sponsor to submit a brief narrative of the project, preliminary designs, and a delineation of costs. The Chief Engineer will then review the material presented, make a determination of project eligibility, and estimate the cost-share funding the project may anticipate receiving. A project eligibility letter will then be sent to the local sponsor noting the percent of cost-share assistance that may be expected on eligible items as well as listing those items that are not considered to be eligible costs. In addition, the project eligibility letter will state that the Chief Engineer will recommend approval when all cost-share requirements are addressed. The local sponsor may use the project eligibility letter to develop a project budget for use in the assessment voting process. Upon completion of the assessment vote and all other requirements an application for cost-share can be submitted.

C. REVIEW. Upon receiving an application for cost-share, the Chief Engineer will review the application and accompanying information. If the Chief Engineer is satisfied that the proposal meets all requirements, the local sponsor will be asked to present the application, and the Chief Engineer will provide a recommendation to the State Water Commission for its action. The Chief Engineer's review of the application will include the following items and any other considerations that the Chief Engineer deems necessary and appropriate.

- 1 Applicable engineering plans;
- 2 Field inspection, if deemed necessary by the Chief Engineer;
- 3 The percent and limit of proposed cost-share determined by category of cost-share activity and eligible expenses;
- 4 Assurance of sustainable operation, maintenance, and replacement of project facilities by the local sponsor;
- 5 Status of permitting and service area agreements;
- 6 Available funding in the State Water Commission budget, if in the State Water Plan, and a priority ranking when appropriate.

For cost-share applications over \$100 million, additional information requested by the State Water Commission will be used to determine cost-share.

The Chief Engineer is authorized to approve cost-share up to \$75,000 and also approve cost overruns up to \$75,000 without State Water Commission action.

- D. **NOTICE.** The Chief Engineer will give notice to local sponsors when their application for cost-share is placed on the tentative agenda of the State Water Commission's next meeting.
- E. **AGREEMENT AND DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.** No funds will be disbursed until the State Water Commission and local sponsor have entered into an agreement for cost-share participation. No agreement for construction funding will be entered into until all required State Engineer permits have been acquired.

For construction projects, the agreement will address indemnification and vicarious liability language. The local sponsor must require that the local sponsor and the state be made an additional insured on the contractor's commercial general liability policy including any excess policies, to the extent applicable. The levels and types of insurance required in any contract must be reviewed and agreed to by the Chief Engineer. The local sponsor may not agree to any provision that indemnifies or limits the liability of a contractor.

For any property acquisition, the agreement will specify that if the property is later sold, the local sponsor is required to reimburse the Commission the percent of sale price equal to the percent of original cost-share.

The Chief Engineer may make partial payment of cost-sharing funds as deemed appropriate. Upon notice by the local sponsor that all work or construction has been completed, the Chief Engineer may conduct a final field inspection. If the Chief Engineer is satisfied that the work has been completed in accordance with the agreement, the final payment will be disbursed to the local sponsor, less any partial payment previously made.

The project sponsor must provide a progress report to the Commission at least once every four years if the term of the project exceeds four years. If a progress report is not received in a timely fashion or, if after a review of the progress report the Commission determines the project has not made sufficient progress, the Commission may terminate the agreement for project funding. The project sponsor may submit a new application to the Commission for funding for a project for which the Commission previously terminated funding.

- F. **LITIGATION.** If a project submitted for cost-share is the subject of litigation, the application may be deferred until the litigation is resolved. If a project approved for cost-share becomes the subject of litigation before all funds have been disbursed, the Chief Engineer may withhold funds until the litigation is resolved. Litigation for this policy is defined as legal action that would materially affect the ability of the local sponsor to construct the project; that would delay construction such that the

authorized funds could not be spent; or is between political subdivisions related to the project.

III. COST-SHARE CATEGORIES

The State Water Commission supports the following categories of projects for cost-share. Engineering expenses related to construction are cost-shared at the same percent as the construction costs when approved by the State Water Commission.

A. PRE-CONSTRUCTION EXPENSES. The State Water Commission supports local sponsor development of feasibility studies, engineering designs, and mapping as part of pre-construction activities to develop support for projects within this cost-share policy. The following projects and studies are eligible.

- 1 Feasibility studies to identify water related problems, evaluate options to solve or alleviate the problems based on technical and financial feasibility, and provide recommendation and cost estimate, of the best option to pursue.
- 2 Engineering design to develop plans and specifications for permitting and construction of a project, including associated cultural resource and archeological studies.
- 3 Mapping and surveying to gather data for a specific task such as flood insurance studies and flood plain mapping, LiDAR acquisition, and flood imagery attainment, which are valuable to managing water resources.

Copies of the deliverables must be provided to the Chief Engineer upon completion. The Chief Engineer will determine the payment schedule and interim progress report requirements.

B. WATER SUPPLY

1 **WATER SUPPLY PROJECT.** The State Water Commission supports water supply efforts. The local sponsor may apply for funding, and the application will be reviewed to determine project priority. Projects within category (1) may be considered for cost-share funding up to 75 percent. Projects in category (2) may be considered for cost-share funding up to 60 percent. Cost-share funding within category (3) will be on a case-by-case basis. All projects may be considered for loan funding.

(1) In most cases a 75 percent cost-share is intended to address improvements to meet primary drinking water standards or expansion into new rural water service areas or connection of communities to the regional system.

(2) Up to a 60 percent cost-share is intended for projects to support improvements or connection of new customers within the existing service area of a municipal water system or other improvements to rural water systems. Population growth and affordability may be used in prioritizing projects in this category.

(3) Water treatment improvements that address impacts from other State Water Commission projects. Funding is based on level of impact as determined by the State Water Commission.

Debt per capita, either actual or anticipated, may be used as an additional determinant of financial need.

Water Depots for industrial use receiving water from facilities constructed using State Water Commission funding or loans have the following additional requirements:

- a) Domestic water supply has priority over industrial water supply in times of shortage. This must be explicit in the water service contracts with industrial users.
- b) If water service will be contracted, public notice of availability of water service contracts is required when the depot becomes operational.
- c) A portion of the water supply at any depot must be available on a non-contracted basis for public access.

2 MUNICIPAL, RURAL, AND INDUSTRIAL WATER SUPPLY PROGRAM. The Municipal, Rural, and Industrial Water Supply Program, which uses federal funds, is administered according to North Dakota Administrative Code Article 89-12.

3 DROUGHT DISASTER LIVESTOCK WATER SUPPLY PROJECT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM. This program is to provide assistance with water supply for livestock impacted during drought declarations and is administered according to North Dakota Administrative Code Article 89-11.

C. FLOOD CONTROL. The State Water Commission may provide cost-share for eligible items of flood control projects protecting communities from flooding and may include the repair of dams that provide a flood control benefit.

1 FLOOD RECOVERY PROPERTY ACQUISITION PROGRAM. This program is used to assist local sponsors with flood recovery expenses that provide long term flood damage reduction benefits through purchase and removal of structures in areas where flood damage has occurred. All contracted costs directly associated with the acquisition will be considered eligible for cost-share. Contracted costs may include: appraisals, legal fees (title and abstract search or update, etc.), property survey, closing costs, hazardous materials abatement needs (asbestos, lead paint, etc.), and site restoration.

The State Water Commission may provide cost-share of the eligible costs of approved flood recovery expenses that provide long term flood reduction benefits based on the following criteria and priority order:

- a) Local Sponsor has flood damage and property may be needed for construction of temporary or long-term flood control projects, may be cost-shared up to 75 percent.
- b) Local Sponsor has flood damage and property would increase conveyance or provide other flood control benefits, may be cost-shared up to 60 percent.

Prior to applying for assistance, the local sponsor must adopt and provide to the Chief Engineer an acquisition plan (similar to plans required by Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)) that includes the description and map of properties to be acquired, the estimated cost of property acquisition including contract costs, removal of structures, the benefit of acquiring the properties, and information regarding the ineligibility for HMGP funding. Property eligible for HMGP funding is not eligible for this program. The acquisition plan must also include a description of how the local sponsor will insure there is not a duplication of benefits.

Over the long-term development of a flood control project following a voluntary acquisition program, the local sponsor's governing body must officially adopt a flood risk reduction plan or proposal including the flow to be mitigated. The flow used to develop the flood risk reduction plan must be included in zoning discussions to limit new development on other flood-prone property. An excerpt of the meeting minutes documenting the local sponsor's official action must be provided to the Chief Engineer.

Local sponsor must fund the local share for acquisitions; this requirement will not be waived. Federal funds are considered "local" for this program if they are entirely under the authority and control of the local sponsor.

The local sponsor must include a perpetual restrictive covenant similar to the restrictions required by the federal HMGP funding with the additional exceptions being that the property may be utilized for flood control structures and related infrastructure, paved surfaces, and bridges. These covenants must be recorded either in the deed or in a restrictive covenant that would apply to multiple deeds.

The local sponsor must provide justification, acceptable to the Chief Engineer, describing the property's ineligibility to receive federal HMGP funding. This is not meant to require submission and rejection by the federal government, but rather an explanation of why the property would not be eligible for federal funding. Example explanations include: permanent flood control structures may be built on the property; project will not achieve required benefit-cost analysis to support HMGP eligibility; or lack of available HMGP funding. If inability to receive federal funding is not shown to the satisfaction of the Chief Engineer, following consultation with the North Dakota Department of Emergency Services, the cost-share application will be returned to the local sponsor for submittal for federal funding prior to use of these funds.

- 2 FLOOD PROTECTION PROGRAM.** This program supports local sponsor efforts to prevent future property damage due to flood events. The State Water Commission may provide cost-share up to 60 percent of eligible costs. For

projects with federal participation, the cost-share may be up to 50 percent of eligible non-federal costs. The State Water Commission may consider a greater level of cost participation for projects involving a total cost greater than \$100 million and having a basin wide or regional benefit.

Local share must be provided on a timely basis. The State Water Commission may lend a portion of the local share based on demonstrated financial need.

Property acquisition costs limited to the purchase price of the property that is not eligible for HMGP funding and within the footprint of a project may be eligible under this program. The local sponsor must include a perpetual restrictive covenant on any properties purchased under this program similar to the restrictions required by the federal HMGP funding with the additional exceptions being that the property may be utilized for flood control structures and related infrastructure, paved surfaces, and bridges. These covenants must be recorded either in the deed or in a restrictive covenant that would apply to multiple deeds.

Costs for property acquired, by easement or fee title, to preserve the existing conveyance of a breakout corridor recognized as essential to FEMA system accreditation may be eligible under this program.

The cost-share application must include the return interval or design flow for which the structure will provide protection. The Commission will calculate the amount of its financial assistance, based on the needs for protection against:

1. One-hundred year flood event as determined by a federal agency;
2. The national economic development alternative; or
3. The local sponsor's preferred alternative if the Commission first determines the historical flood prevention costs and flood damages and the risk of future flood prevention costs and flood damages, warrant protection to the level of the local sponsor's preferred alternative.

Storm water management is not an eligible cost-share category. In order to differentiate between a flood control project and storm water management, the Commission may reduce the cost-share provided by the percentage of the contributing watershed that is located within the community's corporate limits as calculated on an acreage basis

- 3 FEMA LEVEE SYSTEM ACCREDITATION PROGRAM.** The State Water Commission may provide cost-share up to 60 percent for eligible services for FEMA 44 CFR 65.10 flood control or reduction levee system certification analysis. The analysis is required for FEMA to accredit the levee system for flood insurance mapping purposes. Typical eligible costs include site visits and field surveys to include travel expenses, hydraulic evaluations, closure evaluations, geotechnical evaluations, embankment protection, soils investigations, interior drainage evaluations, internal drainage hydrology and hydraulic reports, system modifications, break-out flows and all other engineering services required by

FEMA. The analysis will result in a comprehensive report to be submitted to FEMA and the Chief Engineer.

Administrative costs to gather existing information or to recreate required documents, maintenance and operations plans and updates, and emergency warning systems implementation are not eligible.

- 4 **DAM SAFETY AND EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS.** The State Water Commission supports dam safety including repairs and removals, as well as emergency action plans. The State Water Commission may provide cost-share for up to 75 percent of the eligible items for dam safety repair projects and dam breach or removal projects. Dam safety repair projects that are funded with federal or other agency funds may be cost-shared up to 75 percent of the eligible non-federal costs. The intent of these projects is to return the dam to a state of being safe from the condition of failure, damage, error, accidents, harm or other events that are considered a threat to public safety. The State Water Commission may lend a portion of the local share based on demonstrated financial need.

The State Water Commission may provide cost-share up to 80 percent, for emergency action plans (EAPs) of each dam classified as high or medium/significant hazard. The cost of a dam break model is only eligible for reimbursement for dams classified as a high hazard.

- 5 **WATER RETENTION PROJECTS.** The goal of water retention projects is to reduce flood damages by storing floodwater upstream of areas prone to flood damage. The State Water Commission may provide cost-share up to 60 percent of eligible costs for water retention projects including purchase price of the property. For projects with federal participation, the cost-share may be up to 50 percent. Water retention structures constructed with State Water Commission cost-share must meet state dam safety requirements, including the potential of cascade failure. A hydrologic analysis including an operation plan and a quantification of the flood reduction benefits for 25, 50, and 100-year events must be submitted with the cost-share application.

- 6 **INDIVIDUAL RURAL AND FARMSTEAD RING DIKE PROGRAM.** This program is intended to protect individual rural homes and farmsteads through ring dike programs established by water resource districts. All ring dikes within the program are subject to the Commission's Individual Rural and Farmstead Ring Dike Criteria provided in Attachment A. Protection of a city, community or development area does not fall under this program, but may be eligible for the flood control program. The State Water Commission may provide up to 60 percent cost-share of eligible items for ring dikes up to a limit of \$55,000 per ring dike.

Landowners enrolled in the Natural Resource Conservation Service's (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) who intend to construct rural or farmstead ring dikes that meet the State Water Commission's elevation design criteria are eligible for a cost-share reimbursement of 20 percent of the NRCS construction payment, limited to a combined NRCS and State Water Commission contribution of 80 percent of project costs.

D. WATER CONVEYANCE.

- 1 **RURAL FLOOD CONTROL.** These projects are intended to improve the drainage and management of runoff from agricultural sources. The State Water Commission may provide cost-share up to 45 percent of the eligible items for the construction of drains, channels, or diversion ditches. Construction costs for public road crossings that are integral to the project are eligible for cost-share as defined in N.D.C.C. § 61-21-31 and 61-21-32. If an assessment-based rural flood control project involves multiple districts, each district involved must join in the cost-share application.

Cost-share applications for rural assessment drains will only be processed after the assessment vote has passed, the final design is complete, and a drain permit has been obtained. If the local sponsor wishes to submit a cost-share application prior to completion of the aforementioned steps, a pre-application process will be followed.

A sediment analysis must be provided with any application for cost-share assistance for reconstruction of an existing drain. The analysis must be completed by a qualified professional engineer and must clearly indicate the percentage volume of sediment removal involved in the project. The cost of that removal must be deducted from the total for which cost-share assistance is being requested.

- 2 **BANK STABILIZATION.** The State Water Commission may provide cost-share up to 50 percent of eligible items for bank stabilization projects on public lands or those lands under easement by federal, state, or political subdivisions. Bank stabilization projects are intended to stabilize the banks of lakes or watercourses, as defined in N.D.C.C § 61-01-06, with the purpose of protecting public facilities. Drop structures and outlets are not considered for funding as bank stabilization projects, but may be eligible under other cost-share program categories. Bank stabilization projects typically consist of a rock or vegetative design and are intended to prevent damage to public facilities including utilities, roads, or buildings adjacent to a lake or watercourse
- 3 **SNAGGING AND CLEARING.** These projects are ineligible for State Water Commission funding.

E. RECREATION. The State Water Commission may provide cost-share up to 40 percent for projects intended to provide water-based recreation. Typical projects provide or complement water-based recreation associated with dams.

F. IRRIGATION. The State Water Commission may provide cost-share for up to 50 percent of the eligible items for irrigation projects. The items eligible for cost-share are those associated with new central supply works, including water storage facilities, intake structures, wells, pumps, power units, primary water conveyance facilities, and electrical transmission and control facilities. The Commission will only enter into cost

share agreements with political subdivisions, including irrigation districts, and not with individual producers.

