

WDNR Lake Grants Offer Wetland Project Funding Opportunities

Wetlands play a key role in the health and enjoyment of our lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater. They trap nutrients, sediments, and pollutants before they enter our waters. They store and slowly releasing rain and snow melt, helping to minimize flood damages. They provide critical fish and wildlife habitat, and generate fishing, hunting, and other recreational opportunities. They can even help buffer water level fluctuations. Add these wetland benefits up, and it is easy to see how wetlands are critically important to the health of our lakes, to public safety, and to local economies. This makes protecting and restoring wetlands a good investment for communities looking to improve their lakes *and* their quality of life.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) recognizes the connection between wetlands and healthy lakes too. In fact, wetland planning, protection, and restoration projects are eligible for funding under several WDNR Lake Grants, as long as the wetland project helps to improve lake quality or management. Eligibility requirements, application deadlines, and wetland project ideas for each of these grants are described below. Additional information and grant application forms can be found at:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/grants>



Photo: Gary Shackelford

Lake Protection Grants:

Up to \$100,000 may be awarded for wetland restoration projects (75% of project costs) that provide water quality improvement and fish and wildlife habitat benefits to a certain lake. Applicants must *clearly* demonstrate these anticipated benefits and document how the project will restore hydrology, establish native wetland plantings, and preserve adjacent upland buffers. Projects to protect or restore wetland areas identified as priorities in a local land use or land and water management plan may be eligible for a Wetland Incentive Grant which can fund up to \$10,000 of project costs with no required match.

Lake protection grant applications must be submitted by **May 1st**.

Large-Scale Lake Planning Grants:

Up to \$25,000 may be awarded for projects that improve the local understanding of how wetlands benefit lakes and watersheds. Successful projects will integrate a wetland component as part of a comprehensive lake and watershed assessment. Examples of wetland planning projects include: 1) wetland assessments to improve wetland mapping or to classify and map wetlands by the services they provide; 2) wetland valuation studies to measure the economic and social value of protecting and restoring certain wetlands; and 3) wetland modeling to analyze how specific wetland services benefit a lake and our communities.

Large-scale lake planning grant applications must be submitted by **February 1st** or **August 1st**.

Small-Scale Lake Planning Grants:

Up to \$3,000 may be awarded for wetland education and outreach projects (67% of project costs) if they are *strongly* tied to lake protection, restoration, or management. Grant applications will be significantly aided by having a lake association co-sponsor, participate in, and/or write a letter of support for the event. Grants could be used to launch formal lake and wetland planning and management projects. They could also be used to facilitate community-wide dialogue on challenges and opportunities to improve local lake and wetland education, restoration, and protection efforts. The Wisconsin Wetlands Association's (WWA) Wetland Summit events provide a useful template. More information on *How to Host a Wetland Summit* can be found at:

<http://www.wisconsinwetlands.org/summits.htm>

Small-scale lake planning grant applications must be submitted by **February 1st** or **August 1st**.



Photo: Thomas Meyer

Eligibility Requirements:

For all WDNR Lake Grants, eligible applicants include counties, towns, cities, villages, tribes, qualified lake associations, public inland lake districts, nonprofit conservation organizations, or town sanitary districts. If you are interested in pursuing a wetland project, contact your local WDNR Lake Coordinator (http://dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/cfa/grants/Forms/Lakes_Contacts.pdf).

WWA is also available to help think through wetland project ideas and applications for WDNR Lake Grant funding. Contact WWA's Policy Specialist, Kyle Magyera, at kyle.magyera@wisconsinwetlands.org or 608.250.9971 for assistance.

About Wisconsin Wetlands Association

WWA is dedicated to the protection, restoration, and enjoyment of wetlands and associated ecosystems through science-based programs, education, and advocacy. WWA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.



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