

**MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES - DIVISION OF FISHERIES AND
WILDLIFE**

AQUATIC HABITAT PROGRAM

BLOCK GRANT APPLICATION INFORMATION

Fiscal Years 2015 & 2016 (July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2016)

The purpose of the Aquatic Habitat Program is to expand the diversity and abundance of native aquatic and shoreland plants; improve and protect the quality of aquatic habitat; enhance and protect water quality; raise awareness of the value of native shoreline and aquatic vegetation. Aquatic Habitat Program Block Grants are to provide cost share funding to counties, cities, watershed districts, other local units of government, conservation groups and lake associations to conduct shoreline and watershed enhancement projects with native plants, with the goal of improving aquatic habitat and water quality for fish and wildlife.

Projects on private properties will have at least 75% of the frontage restored with an adjacent buffer zone that is at least 25 ft deep/wide. The focus of these projects must be on reestablishing habitat for fish and wildlife using locally native riparian and aquatic vegetation, wood and natural structures to provide in lake habitat, and/or fluvial geomorphology based restoration in streams. Projects that include the use of rock riprap instead of bioengineering for stabilization or permanent wave breaks will not be funded. Funds can be used for materials needed to reestablish aquatic habitat including: native trees, shrubs, plants and seeds, temporary biodegradable toe protection and erosion control fabric, mulch, herbicide to treat invasive species on site, labor to design, install and maintain project, labor to implement appropriately designed stream and river restorations, temporary biodegradable wave breaks and temporary fencing for keeping out foot traffic or herbivores (geese/muskrats) from the site. If projects are implemented in a manner different from the approved plan, without prior approval for the changes by the DNR Authorized Representative, the entire grant may be terminated and no future payments made.

Project Guidelines:

Grant Amount. Individual grant amounts will vary depending on the number, size and complexity of the projects. Preference will be given to projects that

- incorporate aquatic plants and native woody vegetation (shrubs and trees) in the project design. These plants should be known to have grown (or currently grow) within the project area or along undeveloped reference shorelines. There should also be a strong likelihood of aquatic plants surviving without major modifications to the shoreline.
- include geomorphology based habitat restoration for stream restoration projects
- include permanent protection of the restoration through deed restrictions, conservation easements, etc.

- are part of a long term plan to improve habitat and water quality for fish and other aquatic organisms.
- are located on aquatic resources that are managed for fishing and have a public access.

Local Match. At least a 3:1 (DNR: project partner) match is required. The match can be comprised of in-kind services, donated materials, and/or cash. Please see the Aquatic Habitat Financial Manual for specifics on what can be used for in-kind expenses.

Project Type & Size. Projects considered for funding will vary by type (see examples below) and size. For projects on private properties, at least 75% of the frontage should be restored with an adjacent buffer zone that is at least 25 ft deep/wide starting from the ordinary high water mark (OHW).

Vegetation. Projects should not destroy existing desirable habitat or native vegetation within the riparian zone. Only local native species may be included within the project area. No exotic species, cultivars or nursery-derived cultivars of natives may be used. Plants included in the project must be native to the county, from a local seed source and grow in natural reference sites in similar nearby ecosystems.

Agreements. Funded projects require a signed agreement stating that the site will be appropriately maintained for a period of at least 10 years. The agreement should also allow access to the site for project installation, maintenance and monitoring.

Project types vary, and may include efforts that:

- establish native vegetation buffer zones along lakes and rivers and within their watersheds,
- develop workshops and demonstration sites on restoring aquatic habitat,
- develop educational materials/forums to promote native riparian buffers and aquatic habitat
- design and implement geomorphology based habitat restoration in streams and rivers
- use woody material for toe protection and to provide near shore aquatic habitat

Projects selected based on criteria and a first-come, first served basis.

Send any questions to: info@pclia.com

Completed landowner agreement form should be mailed to:

PCLIA

PO Box 564

Deerwood MN 56444

