



Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District 2012 Agricultural & Rural Best Management Incentive/Cost- Share Program Criteria & Guidelines

1. Eligibility

Incentive payment and cost-share funding is available to assist landowners and land occupiers (renters) located within the CLFLWD to incorporate water quality improvement practices into their land management activities including farming, grazing, haying, etc.. The land owner/occupier must have land that is located in the CLFLWD to be eligible. Renters of land must be able to demonstrate that they have control over the rented land where practices will be implemented for three years.

2. Technical Assistance

The District will provide for 100% of the technical assistance that is required to survey, design, collect soil samples, and develop plans prior to the application for cost-share or incentive payment by a landowner/occupier. Technical assistance will be provided by the Chisago SWCD, the Washington CD, NRCS certified Technical Service Providers (TSP), or a Certified Crop Consultant (CCC). Reimbursement rates will be set by contract and will be based on current contract rates that exist with the Conservation Districts, and NRCS rates for contracts with Technical Service Providers and Crop Consultants. Landowners/occupiers are under no obligation to apply for cost-share and/or incentive practices after receiving technical assistance.

3. Application

Landowners/occupier applying for cost-sharing of a structural practice or a financial incentive for non-structural practices will be required to use the BWSR's State Cost Share Application Form including having the SWCD, NRCS, TSP, or CCC complete the Technical Assessment and Cost Estimate section of the form. Land Occupiers applying for incentive payments will be required to show that they have control of the land for the contract/agreement period.

4. Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation of applications will initially be completed by the SWCD, NRCS, TSP, or CCC as part of the technical assessment portion of the cost-share application. The technical assessment will evaluate:

- If the project demonstrates a reduction in runoff volume or identified pollutants.
- Is designed consistent with established agronomic and engineering practices.
- The number of resource concerns addressed, which include:
 - Excess sediment leaving an ag field/sheet, rill, or gully erosion.
 - Improve water quality by filtering runoff before it enters surface water.
 - Excess nutrients in ground and surface water.
 - Inadequate/inefficient forage for livestock production

5. Approval Process

Approval of a project will include project ranking by the District's Cost-Share Committee after the initial technical assessment and recommendation by the SWCD, NRCS, TSP, or CCC. Final approval of a project will be by the CLFLWD Board of Managers. Final payment for structural practices will be made only after being certified as complete by either the SWCD, or NRCS. Incentive payments will be made on an annual basis for up to 3 years. Certification of landowner compliance with the approved management plan will be done on an annual basis prior to making the incentive payment.

6. Landowner/occupier Agreements

Each landowner/land occupier will be required to enter into a separate agreement, including an operation and maintenance plan, with the District.

7. Approved Practices and Rates

Resource Concern – Excess sediment leaving an ag field/sheet, rill, or gully erosion

NRCS Practice Standard 412 - Grassed Waterway

Purpose: Reduce gully erosion; improve water quality; or convey water from diversions or other water concentrations running through a field without causing erosion or flooding

Payment: Follow practice standards and rates outlined in current MN EQIP Payment Schedule. If applied in conjunction with approved EQIP contract, shall not exceed 100% of practice costs.

NRCS Practice Standard 638 - Water and Sediment Control Basin

Purpose: Reduce gully erosion and provide a stable outlet in a concentrated area by creating an earthen embankment or a combination ridge and channel to form a sediment trap and water detention basin.

Payment: Follow practice standards and rates outlined in current MN EQIP Payment Schedule. If applied in conjunction with approved EQIP contract, shall not exceed 100% of practice costs.

Residue and Tillage Management, No Fall Tillage/Minimum Tillage

Purpose: Minimize tillage passes and/or no tillage in the fall to reduce sheet and rill erosion, reduce wind erosion, reduce soil particulate emissions, improve soil condition, and increase plant-available moisture.

Payment: \$25/acre up to 250 acres. Fields must not be tilled in the fall and maintain 30% residue after planting.

Resource Concern – Improve water quality by filtering runoff before it enters surface water

NRCS Practice Standard 386 - Field Border

Purpose: Reduce erosion from wind and water; protect soil and water quality; manage harmful insect populations; provide wildlife food and cover.

Payment: Follow practice standards and rates outlined in current MN EQIP Payment Schedule. If applied in conjunction with approved EQIP contract, shall not exceed 100% of practice costs.

NRCS Practice Standard 393 - Filter Strip

Purpose: Reduce suspended solids and dissolved materials and pathogens in runoff to environmentally sensitive areas. These areas include perennial and intermittent streams, lakes, and wetlands, wells, drainage ditches, grassed waterways, sinkholes, crevices, springs, surface tile inlets, surface water side inlets and other surface inlets which deliver surface runoff to ground water or surface water.

Payment: Follow practice standards and rates outlined in current MN EQIP Payment Schedule. If applied in conjunction with approved EQIP contract, shall not exceed 100% of practice costs.

NRCS Practice Standard 657 – Wetland Restoration

Purpose: Restoring partially drained wetlands back to their original wetland state.

Payment: Follow practice standards and rates outlined in current MN EQIP Payment Schedule. If applied in conjunction with approved EQIP contract, shall not exceed 100% of practice costs.

Resource Concern – Excess nutrients in ground and surface water

NRCS Practice Standard 590 – Nutrient Management

Purpose: Managing the amount, source, placement, form and timing of the applications of plant nutrients and soil amendments.

Payment: Follow practice standards, planning guides, and rates outlined in current MN EQIP Payment Schedule for basic or enhanced nutrient management options. Producer will use an approved Technical Service Provider (TSP) to write plans. CLFLWD will cover the cost of the TSP to write the plan.

NRCS Practice 102 – Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan

Purpose: Develop a comprehensive plan that addresses nutrient management, handling, storage and land application of manure and wastewater; evaluates facilities and outside lots; and assesses other environmental qualities.

Payment: Follow practice standards, planning guides, and rates outlined in current MN EQIP Payment Schedule for basic or enhanced nutrient management options. Producer will use an approved Technical Service Provider (TSP) to write plans. CLFLWD will cover the cost of the TSP to write the plan.

Resource Concern – Inadequate/inefficient forage for livestock production

NRCS Practice Standard 528 – Prescribed Grazing

Purpose: Manage the impacts overgrazing and/or grazing sensitive areas by converting continuous grazing to rotational grazing. Supporting practices not limited to 382-Fence, 516-Pipeline, 614-Watering Facility, and 512-Forage and Biomass Planting are eligible.

Payment: Follow practice standards, planning guides, and rates outlined in current MN EQIP Payment Schedule. If applied in conjunction with approved EQIP contract, shall not exceed 100% of practice costs.

If the participant's EQIP application is not selected for funding, participant is still eligible for CLFL funding at rates outlined in current MN EQIP Payment Schedule. Provisions and standards will still follow EQIP practice standards.

8. Timetable

Annual funding of the program will be done by the Board of Managers as part of its annual work plan and budget. Projects will be accepted and considered for funding on an ongoing basis. Submittal of an application for funding, regardless of availability, does not in any way guarantee acceptance into the program.