



Comfort Lake – Forest Lake Watershed District 2021 Plant Grant Program

The Comfort Lake – Forest Lake Watershed District (CLFLWD or District) offers grants for projects that improve water quality and/or decrease stormwater runoff. Such projects not only improve water quality, but also preserve native plant and wildlife communities affected by lakes, rivers and wetlands. Potential projects include shoreline and stream bank restoration/stabilization, raingardens, erosion control projects and native plantings. Highest priority is given to collaborative projects resulting in measurable reductions in stormwater and nutrient loadings to receiving water resources and those with opportunities for public education.

➤ Eligibility

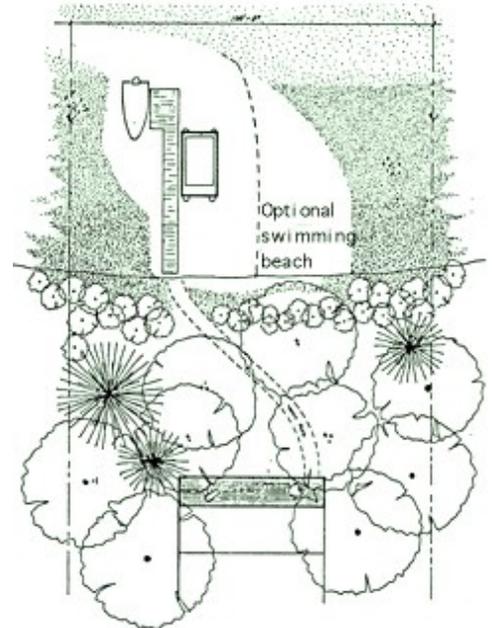
CLFLWD BMP grants are available for all CLFLWD residents, non-profit organizations, government agencies, businesses and corporations located within CLFLWD, and public and private schools located within the CLFLWD. Applications are accepted at any time. However, funds are limited and awarded on a first-come first-serve basis.

➤ Application and Project Approval Process

For general questions about the program please call Jason Kuennen with CLFLWD at 651-395-5853. For technical questions regarding potential projects please contact the appropriate county conservation district. For projects within Washington County, please contact Andy Novak with the Washington Conservation District (WCD) at 651-330-8220 ext. 28 or ANovak@mnwcd.org. For projects within Chisago County please contact Casey Thiel with the Chisago Soil and Water Conservation District (Chisago SWCD) at 651-674-2333 or casey.thiel@mn.nacdn.net. A site visit and/or pre-proposal meeting will be scheduled by CLFLWD and/or conservation district (CD) staff to determine whether the site is a suitable candidate for a plant grant project.

If staff determines that the site is a candidate for the grant program, they will help the applicant by providing a concept map of the site and project cost estimates. The applicant must then complete a CLFLWD grant application and submit it to the CLFLWD office at 44 Lake Street South, Suite A, Forest Lake, MN 55025 or jason.kuennen@clflwd.org. Applications can be downloaded from the District’s website at <https://www.clflwd.org/cost-share-program.php> or can be requested by calling the CLFLWD office at 651-395-5853.

The application will be reviewed by the CLFLWD. If approved, CLFLWD and conservation district staff will give the applicant permission to move forward with project construction.



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➤ Available Funds

The CLFLWD will only be offering Native Plant Grants in 2021. Plant grants fund the cost of Minnesota native plants up to \$500 for eligible projects. Below is an outline of the Native Plant Grant program:

- 1) Plant grant projects will involve a 100% landowner reimbursement for Minnesota native plant purchases up to \$500 and will be able to take the form of shoreline restoration projects or non-shoreline (e.g. raingarden) native planting projects.
- 2) Plants which are not native to Minnesota will not be covered by the plant grant program, nor will other project materials such as mulch, rock, or edging.
- 3) District staff and/or CD staff will provide technical assistance for plant selection. Plant selections must be approved by the District to receive cost-share funding. Technical assistance will be provided free of charge. Technical assistance will be defined as onsite technical guidance and additional communication as needed. Construction labor is not included under technical assistance.
- 4) CD staff will not create full designs for “plant grant” projects but will create concept maps for landowner use.
- 5) Plant grants will not cover installation and maintenance costs. Plant grant recipients are responsible to either complete project maintenance themselves or hire a contractor to complete the maintenance on their behalf.
- 6) Plant grant recipients will not be required to sign a maintenance agreement. Neither District staff nor CD staff will perform follow-up inspections on “plant grant” projects.

➤ Reimbursement of Funds

Upon completion of the project, CLFLWD and CD staff will conduct a final site inspection for final approval of the installation. Grant funding agreed to by the CLFLWD cost-share selection subcommittee (and not to exceed original estimate), will be granted to the applicant only after the project installation has been approved and all receipts for the project have been received. Reimbursement checks may be received within an estimated 30-45 days, based on the dates of receipt submittal and subcommittee approval.

➤ Project Maintenance

Recipients of plant grant funds will not be required to sign a maintenance agreement, though regular project maintenance is recommended. Maintenance is especially crucial in the first three years after project completion while plants are in the establishment phase. Landowners or hired contractors are encouraged to refer to the provided operations and maintenance guidelines for more information including maintenance schedules and can always inquire with CLFLWD or CD staff.

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