



DUPAGE COUNTY



Water Quality Improvement Program Funding Application Guide

October 2020



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I. Introduction

DuPage County Stormwater Management is seeking proposals for the Water Quality Improvement Program (WQIP) grant for FY 2021 awards. Since 2000, DuPage County's WQIP has provided financial assistance for projects that provide a regional water quality benefit to DuPage County rivers and streams. Over 60 projects have been funded since the initiation of the program with a total of nearly \$4 million awarded to date.

DuPage County recognizes the financial burden that a property owner may face undertaking a project that improves regional water quality. Under the competitive WQIP grant, DuPage County will fund up to 25% of construction costs for projects that provide regional water quality benefits to local rivers and streams.

The purpose of the WQIP grant is to improve the quality of local waterways. The federal Clean Water Act requires states to identify impaired waters, which are waters not meeting water quality standards and designated uses. In Illinois, the Illinois Pollution Control Board adopts water quality standards and designates uses, including supporting of aquatic life, aesthetic quality, etc. DuPage County's three major river systems – Salt Creek, East Branch DuPage River and West Branch DuPage River – are all classified as impaired by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency in the Illinois Integrated Water Quality Report and Section 303(d) list. Current 303(d) information can be found at:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/water-quality/watershed-management/tmdls/Pages/303d-list.aspx>

To assist in attaining these uses on water bodies currently below the use standard, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) determinations. A TMDL is the sum of the allowable amount of a single pollutant, such as phosphorus, total suspended solids, chloride, etc., that a waterbody can receive from all contributing point and nonpoint sources and still meet water quality standards or designated uses. It also consists of an implementation plan that outlines the pollutant reductions needed to meet water quality standards and allocates the reductions throughout the watershed.

TMDLs for several pollutants have been established for the East Branch DuPage River, West Branch DuPage River and Salt Creek, as well as one of its tributaries. To download these reports, please refer to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's (IEPA) website at:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/water-quality/watershed-management/tmdls/Pages/default.aspx>

In an effort to achieve these goals, DuPage County Stormwater Management has developed watershed plans for Kress Creek, Klein Creek, Winfield Creek, St. Joseph Creek and Sawmill Creek (Trib. #1). In addition, the Lower Salt Creek Watershed Plan has recently been developed in partnership with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning. A Watershed Plan for the East Branch DuPage River is currently underway. The IEPA approved Watershed Plans for Impaired Waterways can be found at:

https://www.dupageco.org/EDP/Stormwater_Management/6597/

II. Eligibility

This manual describes the submittal requirements for WQIP grant funding assistance. Its primary objective is to discuss and clarify the funding and function of the grant program, not to serve as a water quality technical manual.

II.1 Eligible Projects

Projects must provide a regional water quality benefit, as well as pollutant load reduction. Estimates of load reductions must be determined using an IEPA or DuPage County approved methodology. Projects that are required to be implemented as part of a development permit are not eligible for funding assistance. However, if the applicant can demonstrate that a portion of the project exceeds permit requirements for water quality, then that portion of the project may be eligible for funding. Examples of eligible projects include:

- Stream Restoration Projects including:
 - Bank stabilization involving bioengineering practices (e.g. soil lifts, bank reshaping and planting, coconut fiber rolls, live fascines)
 - Channel rehabilitation (e.g. removal of concrete lining, daylighting a storm sewer or stream, remeandering a previously channelized section of a stream, installing pool-riffle complexes)
- Detention basin retrofit (e.g. convert an open water basin to a constructed wetland basin, planting native vegetation in place of turf grass)
- Lake or pond shoreline stabilization
- Native planting projects such as:
 - Added naturalized green space
 - Riparian buffer rehabilitation
 - Wetland or wetland buffer creation, restoration or enhancement
- “Green Building Technologies” that reduce/filter stormwater runoff, such as:
 - Green roofs
 - Rain gardens
 - Bioswales
 - Cisterns
 - Infiltration practices
 - Porous pavement
 - Dry wells
 - Urban planter boxes and tree wells that provide additional storage and treatment of runoff

The following are examples of projects or portions of projects that are not eligible for funding under this program:

- Projects that do not provide a reduction in pollutant loads from stormwater runoff.
- Maintenance or repair of an existing facility.
- Projects required under the DuPage County Countywide Stormwater and Floodplain Ordinance, Clean Water Act, National Discharge Pollutant Elimination System or other federal, State or local permit requirements.

- Routine maintenance or repair of existing water quality project or on-site infrastructure systems.
- Projects to protect primarily wildlife habitat, control flooding or protect infrastructure.
- Activities completed prior to signing an agreement or contract for WQIP grant assistance.

II.2 Eligible Recipients

DuPage County government agencies, organizations and individuals are eligible to receive funds under the WQIP grant. However, as noted above, the projects must provide a regional benefit. For that reason, individuals may consider collaborating with neighbors, homeowners associations or others to maximize the project benefit.

III. Funding Assistance

The WQIP grant funds eligible projects at a maximum of 25 percent of the total project costs associated with water quality improvements. These project costs can include labor, materials and construction costs. As this is a cost reimbursement program, applicants must have the ability to pay for project costs upfront. Invoices and supporting documentation for eligible costs are then submitted to the County for reimbursement. Portions of or whole projects constructed before entering a contract with DuPage County will not be eligible for reimbursement.

To be eligible for this funding, a grant application (as outlined in Section IV) is required. Using the grant application, each project is prioritized based on ranking criteria. Once approved by the Stormwater Management Planning Committee, funds are encumbered for the top ranked projects for that fiscal year.

All projects will be ranked upon individual project merit as determined by the criteria presented in Section V. It is likely that those projects with the broadest amount of stakeholder support will provide the greatest water quality benefit; thus, receive the highest ranking. While projects of all size are considered, there may be some benefit to soliciting participation from neighboring stakeholders.

IV. Grant Application Requirements

IV.1 Application Requirements

All applications are to contain:

- Location map showing the approximate location of the proposed work;
- A conceptual design plan;
- Photographs of the existing conditions;
- Narrative of the condition of the existing site, and which local waterway/ watershed will benefit from the project;
- Narrative of the proposed solution(s), and methodology (how the benefits will be achieved), including statement of eligibility;
- Itemized cost estimates for eligible construction expenses for the project;
- Preliminary planting plan, if applicable, for vegetated aspects of the project;
- A short and long-term maintenance and monitoring plan to ensure continued functionality;
- An educational component, such as student programs, public access with signage, printed outreach materials, etc.;

- A plan for signage onsite identifying project funding sources, including DuPage County Stormwater Management;
- Contact information for the project manager, including name, phone number, e-mail and other pertinent information;
- Estimated timeframe for permitting and construction aspects of the project. Project schedule should specify completion of project within two (2) years of funding award;
- Breakdown of all funding sources including recipient share and the amount of funding being requested under this grant opportunity;
- List of all project stakeholders; and
- Estimate of pollutant load reduction (lbs/yr) that will result from the proposed project. A copy of the model worksheets must be submitted. This should be determined by a DuPage County and/or IEPA approved methodology.

These are the minimum items required for consideration of the WQIP grant. DuPage County reserves the right to disqualify a project from consideration should any of the above not be included in the final submittal.

Application packet should be limited to 20 pages

IV.2 Submission Requirements

Each applicant will be required to submit a grant application. The Application Checklist must also be completed and submitted along with each application. Submit one (1) electronic copy of the entire application packet to:

Water.Quality@dupageco.org

Applicants will receive a confirmation email once applications have been received.

V. Project Prioritization

V.1 Project Evaluation

DuPage County staff will review the submitted applications and prioritize them based on the funding evaluation criteria detailed below. All projects will be ranked on individual project merit. Exceptions will not be made for small or large projects during the prioritization stage, although regional water quality benefits of the project are considered.

V.2 Funding Evaluation Criteria

V.2.1 Water Quality Benefits

- 50% of Total Score
- Reduces a pollutant identified as a cause of impairment for waterways on the 303(d) list.
- Reduces pollutant loads to impaired DuPage County waterways.
- Project is identified specifically or conceptually in an IEPA approved Watershed Plan or TMDL Implementation Plan.
- Restores pre-development hydrology and/or reduces stormwater runoff from the site.

V.2.2 Public Education

- 30% of Total Score

- Educates the public about the water quality benefits of the project by providing signage, presentations, community outreach opportunities, etc. that highlight the project and the benefits provided.

V.2.3 Feasibility/ Readiness to Proceed

- 10% of Total Score
- Project has completed design and permitting aspects and listed all dedicated sources of funding including grants, local shares and requested funds expected.

V.2.4 Long Term Maintenance/ Stewardship Designation

- 10% of Total Score
- Project has a designated plan for long-term maintenance to ensure continued functionality and assurance regarding the permanence of the project.

VI. Funding Timetable

The application deadline for Fiscal Year 2021 WQIP grant funding is January 8, 2021.

Once applications have been evaluated, selected applicants will be notified of grant funding and the amount of the award. Dedicated funding amounts are dependent on the project costs outlined within the application, as well as total funds available for grants. Applicants approved for grant funding must enter into an agreement with DuPage County Stormwater Management in order to receive reimbursement for actual expenditures. This agreement will include a provision granting DuPage County the right to access the project site for inspections, photos and monitoring the effectiveness of the proposed best management practices (BMP).

Upon DuPage County approval of the reimbursement contract with the applicant, it is anticipated that the project applicant should have enough time to acquire any necessary land rights and hire a contractor to do the specified work within that fiscal year. Please be certain to indicate on your application the status of project design and permit receipt (where applicable), as additional points will be awarded, during the evaluation process, to those projects that have completed these measures. The intent of the grant program is to award funding to those projects deemed to provide the greatest water quality benefit and most prepared for immediate construction.

VII. Application Checklist

Location map showing the approximate location of the proposed work.	
Plan view of a conceptual design plan at a maximum 1"=100' scale.	
Photographs of the existing condition(s).	
Narrative of the condition of the existing site, and which local waterway/ watershed will benefit from the project.	
Narrative of the proposed solution(s), and methodology (how the benefits will be achieved), including statement of eligibility.	
Itemized cost estimates for eligible construction expenses for the project.	
Preliminary planting plan, if applicable, for vegetated aspects of the project.	
A short and long-term maintenance and monitoring plan to ensure continued functionality.	

An educational component such as student programs, public access with signage, printed outreach materials.	
A plan for signage onsite identifying project funding sources, including DuPage County Stormwater Management.	
Contact information for the project manager, including name, phone number, e-mail, and other pertinent information.	
Estimated timeframe for permitting and construction aspects of the project. Project schedule should specify completion of project within two (2) years of funding award.	
Breakdown of all funding sources including recipient share.	
The amount of funding being requested under this grant opportunity.	
List of all project stakeholders.	
Estimate of pollutant load reduction (lbs/yr) that will result from the proposed project. A copy of the model worksheets must be provided. Load reductions should be determined by a DuPage and/or IEPA approved methodology.	