



Sherburne County AIS Cost-Share & Incentive Grant Program *Request for Proposals*

With the passing of Minnesota's Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention Aid program (MN Statutes 477A.19), counties are distributed funds annually to develop AIS Prevention Programs. Sherburne SWCD oversees AIS activity for Sherburne County. This request for proposal (RFP) is being offered to assist with projects that are consistent with the goals and priorities outlined in [Sherburne County's AIS Work Plan](#).

Who May Apply?

Applications will only be considered if submitted by an active* lake association or lake improvement district, city, township or other government agency. Additionally, applications will be accepted from schools on behalf of an instructor or instructor supervised student group. Projects must be conducted on waters at least partially within Sherburne County.

Grant Program Categories

The purpose of this grant program is to provide local entities with financial assistance in creating or reaching AIS management and prevention goals. Projects may fall in the following categories:

- **AIS Management Planning:** This category is intended to partially fund strategic planning processes or AIS monitoring. AIS-Early Detection and Rapid Response plans, Lake Management Plans, and Lake Vegetation Management Plans are good examples of strategic planning projects. AIS monitoring for the purposes of determining management action effectiveness may be applicable as well.
- **AIS Control:** This includes direct management or control of AIS through Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) approved guidelines / practices. It is highly recommended that AIS control follow guidelines set forth by an applicant's strategic planning document (lake management plan, etc.). Funds may be used to support herbicide control, professional hand harvesting of AIS, or other DNR approved methods.
- **AIS Volunteer Incentive:** This category is intended to incentivize active participation within the DNR's AIS Volunteer program amongst Sherburne County lake groups by providing a monetary award to groups that coordinate AIS volunteer activities. Awards will be dependent upon volunteer effort and can be sought in either of two categories:

AIS Volunteer Education: Following DNR protocols, AIS volunteers spend time at a lake or river public access educating watercraft users about AIS. For more information visit https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/natural_resources/invasives/ais_volunteer_handbook.pdf.

AIS Volunteer Engagement (NEW IN 2021): This category is intended to support creative initiatives that work to increase AIS education, prevention, or prevalence in a lake or stream. Funds can be used for equipment purchase and incentivize volunteer time in developing educational materials, hosting informative speakers, or organizing volunteers to conduct AIS surveillance or mitigation (including hand-pulling of AIS but not herbicide application).

Project Ranking Criteria and Notification

Projects will be ranked by Sherburne SWCD staff based upon pre-determined criteria (see Criteria Ranking Sheet on Sherburne SWCD website). The highest ranked projects will be funded first until

*An active lake association should hold regular meetings and have a common interest in lake protection



Sherburne County AIS Cost-Share & Incentive Grant Program *Request for Proposals*

grant program allocated funds are exhausted. In the event of proposals receiving a tie-score, remaining funds will be split evenly between bottom-tier tied proposals. Projects will be reviewed and ranked during February with notifications occurring in March.

Cost-Share and Acceptable Expenses

The grant program will provide cost-sharing to the applicant as described in the “Funds and Distribution” section below. Acceptable expenses include consulting fees, staff time, materials, supplies, volunteer labor, printing and promotions. Costs must be approved by Sherburne SWCD.

Funds and Distribution

This program intends to offer the following cost-sharing and maximum fund opportunities:

- AIS Management Planning: 75% cost sharing, \$2,500 maximum.
- AIS Control: 75% cost sharing, \$2,000 maximum.
- AIS Volunteer Incentive: Award dependent on level of effort - see table below.

For “AIS Management Planning” and “AIS Control” grants, a 75% cost share is being offered. Payment will consist of 75% of award total in March 2021 following Sherburne SWCD Board of Supervisors approval, with the remaining 25% paid following submission of project deliverables.

“AIS Volunteer Incentive” grants will be awarded a 75% award payment at the beginning of the season and remaining 25% following submission of project deliverables. For 2021, the following incentive awards will be offered:

AIS Volunteer Education:

50 hour commitment = \$500 incentive

75 hour commitment = \$825 incentive

100 hour commitment = \$1,200 incentive

AIS Volunteer Engagement (\$500 cap):

Project expenses - 100% reimbursement as approved by SWCD

Volunteer labor - \$10 / hour incentive

An applicant may not be compensated for the same work or materials twice (through more than one grant program). Applicants may submit an application to this program as well as others and request that their award be adjusted should the proposal be funded through two opportunities.

Reporting Requirements

Each successful applicant must enter into a formal contract with Sherburne SWCD. Following completion of the project, a single report must be submitted which should include invoices/receipts, applicable permits, and a written summary of activities.

This is an annual grant program with deliverables to be turned into Sherburne SWCD by **December 1, 2021**. Project extensions may be granted following approval by Sherburne SWCD. Failure to produce deliverables by the approved deadline will jeopardize future awards.

**An active lake association should hold regular meetings and have a common interest in lake protection*



Sherburne County AIS Cost-Share & Incentive Grant Program *Request for Proposals*

Note on COVID-19

At the time of the RFP development, much is unknown regarding COVID-19 and how it will impact our area in 2021. Sherburne SWCD intends to promote and honor this program in 2021 the best we can, however we reserve the right to modify projects as needed to ensure public safety with COVID-19. As in 2020, the Sherburne SWCD will also exercise understanding and flexibility with project applicants and utilize grant amendments and/or extensions as necessary.

Applicants will be required to develop a COVID-19 safety plan and submit with their 2021 project that ensures a safe AIS experience for all consultants, volunteers, and the general public. The plan may simply identify any potential COVID-19 risks and outline steps taken to address them. As each project differs greatly from the other, some may have more risk elements than others. Applicants may work with the Sherburne SWCD before and after application submission to modify the COVID-19 safety plan as necessary.

Application Submission

All proposals must be submitted (sent via email, hand-delivered or mail postmarked) by **4:00pm on January 29, 2021**. Applicants are encouraged to discuss projects with Sherburne SWCD prior to applying.

Applications and questions may be directed to:

Dan Cibulka
Sherburne SWCD
425 Jackson Ave NW
Elk River, MN 55330
dcibulka@sherburneswcd.org
(763)-220-3434 x103