



**NONSTRUCTURAL LAND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (NLMP)
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN REQUEST FORM
FY 2019 CONSERVATION COST SHARE BASE GRANT
(Period of July 1, 2018 through December 31, 2021)
For The Erosion Control and Water Management Program**

SWCD: SWIFT

Contact: ANDY ALBERTSEN

Briefly describe the District's proposed local policy and implementation plan for incorporating nonstructural land management practices into your conservation cost share program by answering the following questions. A maximum of three pages, not including the signature page is allowed for your answers.

1. What prioritized, targeted and measurable actions have been taken to insure that there is a direct erosion control and water quality connection to an identified large scale plan?

The promotion and implementation of cover crops and reduced tillage practices are outlined in the Chippewa River WRAPS, Pomme de Terre WRAPS Implementation Plan (p. 18), and the Swift County Water Plan (Goals and Objectives 1.D.4, p. 3-8). Each of these plans mentions a focus on reducing excess sediment and nutrient runoff. Within the Pomme de Terre and Chippewa River Watersheds, there are numerous impairments to water quality and biology. Aiding parts of the county that would benefit from NLMP's would fulfill recommendations made in each of the plans stated. Due to the prominence of the goal of improving soil health within each of the plans listed, Swift SWCD plans to implement a program whereas most agricultural fields within Swift County will qualify for funding through the NLMP Plan. Fields that were planted to soybeans, peas, corn silage, or any other crop whereupon after harvesting the field and soil is left in a vulnerable state that will be prone to sheet and/or rill erosion, will receive priority funding. Land classified as Highly Erodible or Potentially Highly Erodible by USDA-NRCS and/or land located adjacent to other watercourses (streams, rivers, private and public ditches, etc.) as outlined in the county's other waters resolution, will be categorized as high priority.

2. How and what technical assistance will be provided to land occupier to insure a whole farm or field scale conservation plan is developed and implemented?

A qualified SWCD representative will work with the landowner to address concerns surrounding sheet/rill erosion, surface water runoff, nutrient loss and application, compaction, and/or infiltration. Eligible practices include filter strips and cover crops. All practices will be designed to follow NRCS practice standards as described in the Field Office Technical Guide. In most cases a Swift SWCD Board designated SWCD representative will perform a field verification check to observe the resource concern that the landowner wishes to address. During this field visit, the SWCD representative will record any notes that are pertinent to the reason for the field check, as well as note any other resource concerns observed. Staff will also discuss the farming operation as it pertains to improving soil health, with the idea of sharing methods the landowner/operator can use to better achieve their goals and objectives. IET will be used to determine inadequacies. BMP recommendations will be made and funding sources identified at the conclusion of the meetings to assist with implementation. The Swift SWCD Board designated SWCD representative will develop plans for cover crops. Once written, the completed plans will be approved by an individual with the necessary Job Approval Authority, either from the West Central Technical Service Area or a neighboring SWCD/NRCS employee or Certified Crop Adviser. Finally, the landowner will be encouraged to participate in the Minnesota Ag Water Quality Certification Program to address whole farm conservation planning.

3. List the types of nonstructural land management practices that will be eligible for financial assistance. What specific FOTG standards will be used for these practices? What will be the effective life of these practices?

O&M procedures will require establishment of cover crop each year for 3 or 5 years based on University of Minnesota and/or Midwest Cover Crop Council Guidelines, and/or the MN Cover Crop Design Worksheet, and/or the NRCS FOTG. At this time there are no expected changes planned for a modified operation, maintenance, and site inspection program for non-structural land management practices based on the plan to include cover crops as a practice.

Cover crops (340) – single or multiple species, 3 or 5 years, different fields are allowed if the same number of acres that were initially agreed to, are planted each year. Producers will be expected to establish a cover crop each year of their contract, with full payment after establishment of a cover crop after the first year. Spot checks of contracted acres will be made after each year's establishment.

Filter Strip (393) – 10-year contract, see Swift SWCD Erosion Control and Water Management Policy.

4. What will be proposed flat rates **OR** the maximum percentage based on invoices and receipts for the listed practices and, if flat rates are being proposed, how did you determine the feasibility of these rates? Will there be any other program funding being paid on these practices?

Flat rates will be used. By utilizing flat rates, the landowner/occupier cannot utilize any other forms of state or federal cost share funds for the practice being installed. See flat rates below:

Filter Strip (393) - One-time flat rate \$300 per acre payment for >1 ac, or a prorated \$300/ac payment for <1 ac, minimum of \$200 (see Swift SWCD's ECWMP)

Cover Crops (340) - Single or Multiple Species for 3 or 5-year annual installation. Flat rates payments will be 75% of the EQIP payment rates for cover crops for the year the cost share contract is signed. For 2018, the rates are:

\$31.17 single species per acre per year for 3 or 5 years

\$36.58 multiple species per acre per year for 3 or 5 years

Rates are based on 75% of current 2018 NRCS EQIP Cost List. Swift SWCDs ECWMP Policy lists this to be the source of cost share rates and will be updated annually. No other local, state, or federal program funding will be paid on these practices. The maximum for any individual cost share contract for NLMP practices is not to exceed \$7,500.

5. How will the District implement contracts with Land Occupiers for technical assessments, conservation planning, practice implementation and technical certification, payment schedule within the timelines of the grant agreement and practice noncompliance issues?

The Midwest Cover Crop selector tool will be used in conjunction with the NRCS Cover Crop (340) practice standard to select species to be used. The NRCS Cover Crop practice standard will also be used for termination guidelines. A one-time payment will be made after successful seeding of the first-year cover crop with the requirement to establish a cover crop on the acreage amount listed in the contract for 3 or 5 consecutive years. Swift SWCD will be entering into a 3 or 5-year state cost share contract with the land owner and will be subject to yearly inspections. Inspections will note compliance with the individual's operation and maintenance plan and address noncompliance with the practice. Non-

compliance with the program will follow BWSR's Grants Administration Manual (GAM) guidelines with the goal of bringing the land occupier into compliance. If there is a failure to maintain compliance, the land occupier is liable to the SWCD for up to 150% of the flat-rate payment received.

6. What are your proposed O&M procedures and policy to ensure these practices are incorporated into the farming operation? Will this result in a modified operation, maintenance and site inspection program for nonstructural land management practices as per BWSR GAM policy? And, if yes, what are those modifications.

We plan to use the standard BWSR Practice Site Inspection Form from the BWSR website on follow-up inspections. Operation and Maintenance procedures will follow the NRCS cover crop (340) standard such that an operator: 1.) should control growth of the cover crop to reduce competition from volunteer plants and shading, 2.) control weeds in the cover crop by mowing or herbicide application, 3.) control soil moisture depletion by selecting water efficient plant species and terminating the cover crop before excessive transpiration, 4.) evaluate the cover crop to determine if the cover crop is meeting the planned purposes(s), 5.) if the cover crop is not meeting the purpose(s) adjust the management, change the species of cover crop, or choose a different technology.

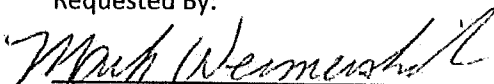
O&M procedures will require establishment of cover crop each year for 3 or 5 years based on U of M and/or Midwest Cover Crop Council Guidelines, the MN Cover Crop Design Worksheet, and yearly inspections by SWCD staff. At this time there are no expected changes planned for a modified operation, maintenance, and site inspection program for non-structural land management practices based on the plan to include cover crops as a practice. The District will use the site inspection form provided the BWSR Grants Administration Manual.

7. Is there any other information you would like to provide at this time?
- **Some flexibility will be granted to land occupiers allowing them to rotate the cover crop fields to fit the crop rotation on a given farm. Total acres of cover crop planted per year will need to equal the contracted acres to maintain compliance.**
 - **Prioritization will be given to those who haven't tried cover crops or who are trying a new method.**
 - **An individual landowner/occupier will be limited to a maximum of 100 acres and a minimum of 10 acres to enroll, but they can be subdivided into different tracts. Maps will need to be submitted that indicate where contracted cover crop acres are to be planted for each year of the contract.**
 - **As this program is meant to be an incentive program, an individual landowner/occupier is limited to one 3 or 5-year contract for cover crop per practice, or one 10-year contract for filter strip within a 10-year period.**
 - **If an individual has received funding from other local, state, or federal sources in the form of incentive payments for cover crops in the past, they will not be eligible for this NLMP program, unless a landowner or operator will be trying a new cover crop species or planting the cover crop on a field that hasn't been planted with a cover crop previously or implementing a new method.**

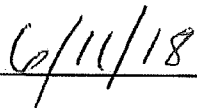
- An individual would be able to apply for district cost share funds for a non-NLMP project if they are already in a contract for a NLMP practice.
- Seed tags will need to be provided after seeding each year.
- Cover crops will not be required to overwinter.
- Landowner will not be restricted from grazing the cover crop, however, all expenses for establishing a grazing system are not eligible for funding through this program. If grazed, they will be encouraged to work with a qualified representative to develop a grazing management plan.
- To be eligible for funding, a landowner or operator will have to be trying a new cover crop or planting the cover crop on a field that hasn't been planted with a cover crop previously or implementing a new method. This will be at the discretion of the SWCD Board.
- Applications will be approved as they are submitted. Applications will be approved based on available funding.

SIGNATURE PAGE

Requested By:

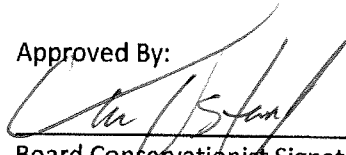


SWCD Chair Signature

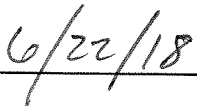


Date

Approved By:



Board Conservationist Signature



Date

Please submit this request to your Board Conservationist on or before **June 30, 2018.**

BCs must attach a copy of the approved request form under the Attachments Tab of the grant record in eLINK.