

Plant Protection Division Phone: 651-201-6020

Noxious Weed and Invasive Plant Grant Proposal Application

A. Contact Information

County or Local Government Name		Job Title	
County Agricultural Inspector (CAI)? Yes No		If NO, have you reviewed application with your CAI? Yes No	
Project Leader First Name	Middle Initial	Last Name	
Mailing Address			
County	State	Zip	County
Office Number		Cell Number	
Email		Organization Website	

B. Project Focus (check all that apply)

Target Plant(s)

Listed Noxious Weed(s)

Palmer Amaranth

Prohibited – Eradicate Noxious Weed(s)

Prohibited – Control Noxious Weed(s)

Restricted Noxious Weed(s)

Specially Regulated Plant(s)

Non-regulated Terrestrial Invasive Plant(s)

Purpose – Must address on of the eight eligible purposes outlined in MS 18.90(a) listed below

(1) Applied Research to Solve Local Management Issues

(2) Innovative Control or Land Management Practices

(3) Support of Weed Management Areas

(4) Cropland or Rangeland Protection

(5) Protection of Wildlife and Fisheries Biodiversity

(6) Special Weed Control Problems – Not listed by MDA

(7) Monitoring and Surveillance

(8) Educational Activities

C. Project title

D. Requested Grant Amount

Indicate the amount requested* \$

**\$300,000 is available for this grant opportunity. Individual applicants can request funding up to \$30,000. MDA, in consultation with the Noxious Weed Advisory Committee (NWAC) will make the final decisions regarding all grant applications, including but not limited to which applications are awarded, potential collaborations and funding amounts.*

E. Justification

What is the problem this application seeks to address? If Non-regulated Terrestrial Invasive Plant please provide evidence why it should be prioritized for this grant appropriation.

What actions will you take to directly address the problem stated above?

What impacts will the proposed work have on the Noxious Weed(s) or Invasive Plant(s) and how will you measure them?

G. Project Narrative

Please give a concise explanation of the proposed work.

H. In-Kind

Per MS 18.90(b)(4) - List any federal or other non-state funds that will be used to complete this work.

I. Collaboration

If this is a collaborative project, provide a list of all collaborators.

J. The Applicant Certifies That

1. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the data in this application is true and correct and supporting documentation for the claims and assertions made within this application is available to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture for its review.
2. I understand that submitting false or misleading information in connection with this application may result in the applicant being found ineligible for financial assistance under the Noxious Weed and Invasive Plant Grant Program. I further understand that receiving public funds as a consequence of false representations constitutes an act of fraud.
3. I understand that MDA may conduct audits, check references, and conduct site inspections after grants are awarded and prior to dollars being disbursed.
4. I understand application data is private or nonpublic data until grant applications are awarded. Names, addresses and requested amounts then become public information. An entire application becomes public when an agency has completed negotiating the grant agreement with a grantee. Individual grant applications do not have to provide the information requested on the application form. However, if you do not, we will not be able to consider your grant request. The only persons who will have access to your data during the time that it is protected are those permitted access by law, by your written consent, by a court order, or by those department employees whose job duties require access.
5. I verify all information supplied in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Applicant's Signature (Required)

Date

Email Completed Application and Budget to: emilie.justen@state.mn.us

Or Mail Completed Application and Budget To: Minnesota Department of Agriculture
Noxious and Invasive Weed Program
Attn: Noxious Weed Grants
625 Robert Street North
St. Paul, MN 55155-2538

Competitive Priorities and Selection Criteria

This is a competitive grant program. Proposal applications will be scored using the following evaluation profile table and ranked on their relative merit in each category. Give special attention to the evaluation profile when answering the questions on the application. The review committee will determine priority for plants based on application and proposed work. County Noxious Weeds do not qualify.

Evaluation Item	2 points	4 Points	6 Points	8 Points	10 Points
Addresses Palmer or other Eradicate species	Does not address listed noxious weeds	Addresses Restricted Noxious Weeds and Specially Regulated Plants of lower priority	Addresses high priority Restricted Noxious Weeds and Specially Regulated Plants or Prohibited Control Species	Addresses High Priority Prohibited Control Species	Addresses Palmer amaranth and other Eradicate Species
Meets the eligible purposes and considerations listed in MS 18.90 (a) and (b)	Application does not meet any requirements in 18.90	Addresses issues in MS 18.90 that are not part of the funding language	Meets some requirements of 18.90, but does not address preferred species in funding language	Generally meets requirements of 18.90 and funding language preferences	Meets requirement of 18.90 and has specific purposes and considerations detailed throughout

Evaluation Item	1 point	2 Points	3 Points	4 Points	5 Points
Completeness of application	Not complete	Not legible, hard to read and / or understand	Everything filled out and readable	General description of plans, costs and indirects provided	Detailed description of plans, itemized costs and indirects provided
Demonstrated Knowledge	Application lacks demonstrated knowledge of subject plant's impacts, biology, and/or management	Limited knowledge demonstrated of subject plant's impacts, biology, and/or management	Demonstrates sufficient knowledge of subject plant's impacts, biology and/or management	Demonstrates some knowledge and expertise to successfully implement proposed activities	Clearly demonstrates knowledge and expertise to successfully implement proposed activities
In-kind Contributions and Utilization of Local Resources	No data provided	Additional Resources up to 20% of requested amount	Additional Resources are 21-50% of requested amount	Additional Resources are 51-70% of requested amount	Additional Resources are 71% or above requested amount
Budget/Cost Evaluation	Sufficient budget/cost information lacking	Budget/cost are not reasonable for proposed work	Provided budget/costs – unsure if appropriate	Budget/cost appropriate for work proposed	Detailed and appropriate budget/cost provided

Collaboration

Projects that propose multiple-organization involvement are not necessary, but are encouraged. If an applicant proposes to work with multiple-organizations, the applicant must be the project lead and be responsible for coordinating all efforts among project partners to make the project successful and complete. The MDA is only responsible for the grant contract executed with the successful applicant and has no responsibility thereafter.

Proposal Application Questions

Questions may be submitted by phone or email to Emilie Justen at 651-201-6360 / emilie.justen@state.mn.us . Answers to questions will be posted for all applicants to review on the MDA's Noxious Weed and Invasive Plant webpage within 48 hours of being received by the MDA: www.mda.state.mn.us/weedgrant

Application Submission

All application must be received no later than 4:30 PM Central Time, on January 12, 2018. If applications are mailed, they must be postmarked by January 12, 2018. Late applications will not be considered. MDA is not responsible for any emailed or mailed applications that are not received by the agency prior to the deadline. The applicant will incur all costs incurred in applying to this RFP.

Applications should be submitted via email, but can also be sent by U.S. mail to: Emilie Justen
MDA Noxious Weed Program Advisor
Plant Protection Division
625 Robert Street North
St. Paul, MN 55155-2538
emilie.justen@state.mn.us
651-201-6360

Review Process and Timeline

The review committee will evaluate all eligible and complete applications received by the deadline. MDA, in cooperation with NWAC, will review all committee recommendations and is responsible for final award decisions. The award decisions of MDA are final and not subject to appeal.

Review Process	Date
Application posted on the Noxious Weed Program Website: www.mda.state.mn.us/weedgrant	November 20, 2017
Questions due no later than 4:30 PM CDT	December 20, 2017
Applications due no later than 4:30 PM CDT	January 12, 2018
Committee begins review of application	January 22, 2018
Committee recommendations submitted to commissioner for approval	February 19, 2018
Selected grantees announced; grant agreements completed	March 12, 2018
Work plans approved and grant begins	April 2, 2018
Final Grant Report Due	November 16, 2018

Conflicts of Interest

We will take steps to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers per Minn.Stat.§16B.98 and Conflict of Interest Policy for State Grant-Making.

- Organizational conflict of interests occur when:
- A grantee or applicant is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice to the MDA due to competing duties or loyalties.

A grantee's or applicant's objectivity in carrying out the grant is or might be otherwise impaired due to competing duties or loyalties.

In cases where a conflict of interest is suspected, disclosed, or discovered, the applicants or grantees will be notified and actions may be pursued, including but limited to disqualification from eligibility for the grant award or termination of the grant agreement.

Public Data

Per Minn. Stat.§13.599

- Names and addresses of grant applicants will be public data once proposal responses are opened.
- All remaining data in proposal responses (except trade secret data as defined and classified in §13.37) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed (for the purposes of this grant, when all grant agreements have been fully executed).
- All data created or maintained by MDA as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret data as defined and classified in §13.37) will be public data after evaluation process is completed (for the purposes of this grant, when all grant agreements have been fully executed).

Grant Provisions

Any applicant participating with this RFP must consider the specific provisions in the appropriation language and the Noxious Weed and Invasive Plant Species Assistance Account below.

2017 Laws of Minnesota; Article 1, Section 2; Subdivision 2(j)

\$300,000 the first year and \$300,000 the second year are for transfer to the noxious weed and invasive plant species assistance account in the agricultural fund to award grants to local units of government under Minnesota Statutes, section 18.90, with preference given to local units of government responding to Palmer amaranth or other weeds on the eradicate list. These are onetime transfers.

Minnesota Statute 18.90

- (a) From funds available in the noxious weed and invasive plant species assistance account established in section 18.89, the commissioner shall administer a grant program to assist counties and municipalities and other weed management entities in the cost of implementing and maintaining noxious weed control programs and in addressing special weed control problems. The commissioner shall receive applications by counties, municipalities, weed management areas, and weed management entities for assistance under this section and, in consultation with the Noxious Weed Advisory Committee, award grants for any of the following eligible purposes:
- (1) to conduct applied research to solve locally significant weed management problems;
 - (2) to demonstrate innovative control methods or land management practices which have the potential to reduce landowner costs to control noxious weeds or improve the effectiveness of noxious weed control;
 - (3) to encourage the ongoing support of weed management areas;
 - (4) to respond to introductions or infestations of invasive plants that threaten or potentially threaten the productivity of cropland and rangeland over a wide area;
 - (5) to respond to introductions or infestations of invasive plant species that threaten or potentially threaten the productivity of biodiversity of wildlife and fishery habitats on public and private lands;
 - (6) to respond to special weed control problems involving weeds not included in the list of noxious weeds published and distributed by the commissioner;
 - (7) to conduct monitoring or surveillance activities to detect, map, or determine the distribution of invasive plant species and to determine susceptible locations for the introduction or spread of invasive plant species; and
 - (8) to conduct educational activities.
- (b) The commissioner shall select and prioritize applications for assistance under this section based on the following considerations:
- (1) the seriousness of the noxious weed or invasive plant problem or potential problem addressed by the project;
 - (2) the ability of the project to provide timely intervention to save current and future costs of control and eradication; (3) the likelihood that the project will prevent or resolve the problem or increase knowledge about resolving similar problems in the future;
 - (4) the extent to which the project will leverage federal funds and other non-state funds;
 - (5) the extent to which the applicant has made progress in addressing noxious weed or invasive plant problems; (6) the extent to which the project will provide a comprehensive approach to the control or eradication of noxious weeds;
 - (7) the extent to which the project will reduce the total population or area of infestation of a noxious weed;
 - (8) the extent to which the project uses the principles of integrated vegetation management and sound science; and
 - (9) other factors that the commissioner determines to be relevant.
- (c) Nothing in this section may be construed to relieve a person of the duty or responsibility to control the spread of noxious weeds on lands owned and controlled by the person.

Eligible expenses include expenses encumbered by the applicant to address the eight purposes outlined in Minnesota Statute 18.90(a).

Ineligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- Applicant or partner agency overhead or administrative costs not related to the grant.
- Fundraising
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services
- Lobbyists, political contributions
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, or contingency funds
- Parking or traffic violations
- Out of state transportation and travel expenses (Minnesota will be considered the home state for determining whether travel is out of state).

Accountability and Reporting

All successful applicants must complete a grant agreement with MDA prior to establishing the grant period and beginning work on the project. The grant agreement will specify the grant period, work plan, duties, time line of activities, and consideration of payment among other contractual details.

All projects must submit a final report to MDA no later than October 12, 2018 in order to receive the final grant disbursement. The final report should include:

- Plants targeted
- Activities completed
- Itemized list of how, what, and where funds were spent
- Impacts that work provided to lessen the threat of noxious weeds and invasive plants in Minnesota
- Accomplishments

Grant Payments

Per State Policy on Grant Payments, reimbursement is the preferred method for making grant payments. All grantee requests for reimbursement must correspond to the approved grant budget. The State shall review each request for reimbursement against the approved grant budget, grant expenditures to-date and the latest grant progress report before approving payment. Grant payments shall not be made on grants with past due progress reports unless MDA has given the grantee a written extension.

Audits

Per Minn.Stat.§16B.98 Subdivision 8, the grantee’s books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee or other party that are relevant to the grant or transaction are subject to examination by the granting agency and either the legislative auditor or the state auditor, as appropriate. This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant agreement end date, receipt, and approval of all final reports, or the required period of time to satisfy all state and program retention requirements, whichever is later.

Contact Information

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