

Mini-Grant Overview

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

Watershed Association Initiative

October 2008 to 2009

Who Qualifies:

1. Newly forming lake, stream or watershed associations/groups who need financial help with start-up costs and who are working with the WAI.
2. Established associations/groups who are working with the WAI to increase organizational capacity or to support the development of a District-wide network of lake, stream, or watershed associations.

Objectives:

The main objectives are to help citizens *form* effective citizen-led associations/groups focused on protecting and improving local waters. To support *water quality improvement projects* organized by citizen-led associations/groups. And finally to provide *financial support* for newly forming organizations or those looking to increase organizational capacity.

Approved Fund Use:

Funds must be...

- spent according to the association's/group's mission and vision
- used on waters within MCWD
- for citizen led efforts, engaged in forming an association/group
- for citizen led groups, working with Watershed Association Initiative (WAI)

Compensation:

Follow the directions on each application for submission. Once your application has been submitted you will receive an e-mail notification that your organization has either received the funds, the application is missing information, or it has been rejected. If your organization is accepted, a check will be written and sent to your organization from the MCWD.

The Mini-Grant dollars are divided into two funds, the **Seed Fund and the Membership Match Fund**. Each fund has its own applications and qualifying activities, see below for more details.

Newly incorporated citizen-led associations/groups will receive a one year **Minnesota Waters complimentary membership**. Request membership materials from the WAI contact, Eli Condon. Make sure these materials are submitted to Minnesota Waters within 2 months of starting to work with the WAI or your groups incorporation.

Membership benefits include:

- association website hosting
- quarterly newsletter for Board Members
- monthly electronic newsletter
- ongoing support from Minnesota Waters' staff
- discounted fees on MW trainings and workshops
- you will join a strong network of lake associations all across the state

Seed Fund (\$500):

Fund Description:

The Fund is to be used to support newly forming groups in activities or events that grow their organization, such as a Kick-off meeting.

The Fund provides \$500 for organizations who have approved or adopted articles of incorporation and bylaws **or** obtained a fiscal agent; and have a plan in place for the Charter/Kick-off meeting (or its equivalent). Associations are allowed to make only one application for the Seed Fund dollars.

Supporting Documentation:

The following information needs to be included in your submission:

- 1. Foundational Documents**
- 2. By-Laws for your Association**
- 3. Charter/ Kick-off Meeting Plan**
- 4. Seed Fund Dollars Budget plan**

Examples of how funds may be used for the Charter or Kick-off meeting:

- Marketing of event; member brochure or fliers
- Supplies for event; paper, food, group t-shirts

Membership Match Fund (up to \$1000):

Fund Description:

The Fund is to be used as an administrative supplement, to assist the Association in completing its mission and vision for the future.

The Fund is a 1:1 match for your new member dollars up to \$1000. Associations are allowed to make only one application for the Membership Match Fund dollars within 9 months of the Kick-off meeting date.

Supporting Documentation:

The following information needs to be included in your submission:

- 1. Charter/ Kick-Off Meeting Documentation**
- 2. Membership Spreadsheet**
- 3. Summary of Fund Use**

Examples of what funds may be used for:

- Meeting costs
- Newsletter/communications
- Annual Plan

