



# Community Forest Bonding Grants 2012-2014

## Guidelines and Information

### Purpose

Grants will be made for improvements on public land to:

- Remove and replace trees lost to forest pests
- Replace trees lost to storms
- Plant a more diverse and resilient community forest

Priority is given to grant requests to remove and replace ash trees infested with of [emerald ash borer \(EAB\)](#).

### Eligible Applicants

There is **NO MATCH REQUIREMENT** for these grant funds. However, applicants will be asked to complete all contractual obligations as stated in the **Components Required upon Project Completion** section of these guidelines. Proposals showing partial or full match with non-state cash or local in-kind contributions will be given greater consideration.

- **Planting for Diversity projects:** All cities, counties, and townships are eligible to apply, as well as Park and Recreation Boards in cities of the first class here on referred to as “Communities”. All plantings must occur on publicly owned land, parks, or streets. All trees planted using bonding funds must be listed in the [Approved Native Trees List](#). Maximum grant award for a tree planting project is \$25,000.
- **Forest Pest Removal and Replanting projects:** All cities, counties, and townships, as well as Park and Recreation Boards in cities of the first class are eligible who have identified emerald ash borer (EAB) infestations. All removals must occur on public lands. Priority will be given to cities with EAB infestation within their boundaries or have public lands within a **1-mile radius** of state-designated "known EAB infested areas." Maximum grant award for a tree removal and replanting project is \$150,000.
  - **Only Public Lands within the 1-mile buffer** of a known EAB infested area are eligible for ash removals and replacement plantings with these funds. See [Known EAB-Infested Areas Map](#).

*Note: Grant funds are not provided up front. Grantees must initially expend monies, which are then reimbursed under the terms of the grant agreement and listed contract requirements. **Grantees can receive partial payments of up to 90 percent of the grant funds requested. The remaining 10 percent or more of the grant funds will be paid after the project, final report and a final inspection have been completed. Grant expenses will not be reimbursed until all requirements are complete.***

### Eligible and Ineligible Costs

**A. Eligible Costs. Grant funds can be used for:**

- Professional contracts for technical assistance, administration or implementation of the grant project
- Removal and disposal or utilization of forest pest infested trees on public lands and rights-of-way
- Purchase of trees for planting on public lands and rights-of-way
- Equipment use as part of contractual work, NOT grantee-owned, leased or rented equipment use

**B. Ineligible Costs. Grant funds cannot be used for the following, but their cost directly associated with the project may be counted as match:**

- Tree inventories or surveys
- Tree disease or insect treatments, e.g. systemic injections
- Removal and disposal/utilization of storm-damaged or structurally defective trees, or trees dead for more than one year
- Survey or detection, e.g. pheromone trapping
- Pruning and other maintenance of trees, including those planted as part of the bonding grant project
- Grantee-owned, leased or rented equipment (includes hand held computers)
- Time of community employed personnel on project
- Production of programs and materials used to enlist citizen involvement or for public education
- Purchase and planting of trees that are NOT native to Minnesota – see [Approved Native Trees List](#), posted on the DNR Bonding Grants Web page.
- Purchase of plants other than trees, e.g. shrubs, ground covers and flowers
- Management of woody invasive species, e.g. buckthorn
- Development of tree nurseries, e.g. gravel bed systems

**Project Evaluation Criteria**

Projects will be evaluated according to how well they:

- Demonstrate commitment to long-term monitoring and management of the project
- Demonstrate the need for replacement plantings, based on a recently completed tree inventory or documented tree losses to forest pests, storm events beginning in January 2010, or both
- Increase the diversity of tree species within the community
- Develop and help sustain urban and community forestry programs
- Establish the means for ongoing public education on tree care and benefits
- Involve and train citizens and volunteers
- Document a local match. Though NOT required, priority will be given to projects that have a cash match from non-state sources.

The DNR Forestry staff will review, evaluate and prioritize grant proposals. The Community Forest Bonding Grants Steering Committee will then select which projects will be funded and the grant amounts. All applicants will be notified of the committee’s decisions by March 16, 2012.

**Components Required upon Project Completion**

By the end of the project, grant recipients must demonstrate their commitment to on-going community forest management by submitting the following two required documents and providing one of the accompanying documents as well:

**Required Documents:**

- Updated Community Forestry or Shade Tree Ordinance
- Annual Maintenance Plan for public trees

**One of the following must accompany the two required documents:**

- Community EAB Preparedness Plan  
OR
- Community Forest Management Plan, including EAB preparedness, annual tree maintenance and public education components

## Award of Funds

Announcement of funding approvals will follow the review and selection process. All proposals will be reviewed by DNR Forestry staff. Final selection of projects and award amounts will be set by the Community Forest Bonding Grants Steering Committee.

- All applicants will receive written notification regarding their request by **Friday, March 16, 2012**.
- Projects cannot begin until all final documentation has been submitted and a fully executed grant agreement is on file with DNR Forestry.
- Any project costs incurred prior to the start date of the grant agreement will not be eligible for reimbursement.
- Grant funds are not provided up front.
- Grantees must initially expend monies, which are then reimbursed under the terms of the grant agreement. Partial payments can be made, during the implementation of the project, of up to 90 percent of the grant funds awarded. The remaining 10 percent or more of the grant funds will be paid after completion of the [Final Report and Invoice form](#), including a Compliance Check by a DNR Forester.

## Project Timeline

- **Application deadline:** Friday, February 17, 2012 at 4:30 pm.
- **Written notice of selection and award amount:** by March 16, 2012
- **Project authorization:** March 2012 to June 2012
  - A grant agreement will be sent for the applicant to review and sign. The agreement must be returned to the DNR for processing and signatures in order to be fully executed.
  - Additional documents required for the grant agreement will be requested at this time, including:
    - A **Certification of Bond-financed Public Property** for grant project work within road, highway, utility or transit corridors. Certifications will be signed by the grantee and need to include a list of addresses or a map with streets highlighted where project work is planned.
    - A **Declaration of Bond-Financed Public Property**, for all public properties included in the project that are **not** in road, highway, utility or transit corridors (e.g. public parks). Declarations must include a recordable legal description for each of these properties.
  - **ANY WORK started before the grantee receives their fully executed grant agreement, will NOT be eligible for reimbursement.**
- **Written notice of fully executed contract on file with the DNR:** March 2012 to June 2012.
- **Project implementation:** March 2012 to May 2014, after grantee receives a fully executed Grant Agreement.
- **Project Final Report and Compliance Check:**
  - Upon completion of the project, or if a **partial reimbursement** is needed, the grantee must notify their designated DNR Forester to schedule a compliance check (see [Final Report & Invoice form](#)). The DNR Forester should be notified one month prior to completion of the grant project.
  - Final Certification and/or Declaration forms. If project locations have been modified, the grantee must include revised attachments (address list, street map or legal descriptions) to their original Certification or Declaration documents with their Final Report & Invoice.
  - All documents and invoices must be attached to the Final Report & Invoice form and provide to the DNR forester at the time of the compliance check.
- **Project completion:** Projects must be completed by Friday, June 6, 2014.

## **Program Funding**

As the name implies, these grant projects will be financed using state general obligation bond dollars, authorized by the 2010 Minnesota State Legislature. This appropriation provides \$3 million for a four-year period ending in June, 2014. The use of these funds is specifically restricted to activities of a capital nature and must be conducted on publicly owned land or rights-of-way. Consult with those in your organization who are familiar with these requirements, such as the City Attorney, Engineer, Administrator or Finance Director. See [Minnesota Statutes chapter 16A.695](#) for details.

## **QUESTIONS?**

We expect that these new Guidelines and the more restricted use of state bonding funds will raise questions. In order to answer your questions promptly, **PLEASE CHECK THE GRANT PROGRAM WEB PAGE for information or answers to frequently asked questions, before calling or e-mailing DNR Forestry staff.** See [www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/forestmgmt/commforestbonding.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/forestmgmt/commforestbonding.html).

Answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) will be posted and updated regularly. If you do not obtain an answer online, contact a DNR Community Forestry Team member at **651-259-5300**, and ask to be transferred to the first available Community Forestry Team member:

Ken Holman  
Program Coordinator

Jennifer Teegarden  
Forestry Information Specialist

Jean Mouelle  
Central Region Forestry