



STATE FUNDING TARGETED TOWARD NATIVE BUFFERS

Native grass buffers around waterways are good ideas. It takes careful planning, however, to turn those good ideas into great results.

A new Minnesota cost share program offers incentive funds for the installation of high quality native buffers in environmentally strategic locations for a period of at least 15 years. Some of the provisions included in eligibility guidelines require the best possible native grass seed types for the particular sites. Another guideline calls for at least a minimum standard for native grass diversity.

The program could provide cost share funds of up to 75% to establish and manage the enrolled area. Eligible land that could be enrolled includes: cropland, pasture, and land already in an easement such as the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Program. The land must then be managed for a period of at least 15 years.

The Native grass and forbs component aims to insure native buffer success is prairie grass diversity. All projects that receive cost share funds must be planned with a goal for at least 25 different plant species within the project sites. Increasing the diversity of existing Reinvest In Minnesota easements is an acceptable use of cost shares funds as long as the goal is to have at least 25 species.

Practices that can be supported through the cost share include site preparation, seed collection, seed, seeding, vegetation management, invasive species control, disking, haying, landscaping, and management of original remnant prairies.

There are eligibility requirements and in order to provide the best information to the landowners it is important that they come into our office and discuss their individual land area.