

Approved 6/27/2024

Rum River Watershed Partnership FY25 Watershed Based Implementation Fund (WBIF)



Work Plan

Watershed Based Implementation Funds

The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Watershed Based Implementation Fund (WBIF) is the primary funding source for plan implementation of water quality activities via the Rum River Partnership. WBIF grants are issued every other year and expire after three years. We anticipate the partnership will receive approximately \$1 Million to implement the plan biannually. An additional estimated \$500K is allocated to the Metro Portion of the watershed (Anoka County) to implement the Rum River Comprehensive Plan and other state approved and locally adopted comprehensive watershed management plans in the Anoka County portion of the watershed. The metro money is not included in the WBIF Work Plan here as it is managed by the Metro partners.

In FY23 the Rum River Partnership received \$1,011,327 and was awarded an additional \$268,721 of FY23 Supplemental funding. The money will expire on 12/31/2025. The approved work plan for FY23 can be found on the Rum River Watershed Partnership website.

In FY25 the Rum River Partnership will receive \$1,331,559, the money will expire on 12/31/2027. The Rum River Partnership Board will approve the work plan, sign the BWSR Grant agreement, guide program and project selection, and confirm expenditures.

FY25 WBIF Work Plan Summary:

For FY25, WBIF will primarily support the following Priority Issues, over two years, within the Rum River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan:

Priority Level	Issue	Example Actions
Level A	Outreach & Engagement	Type A Outreach: App. 655 hours (.1 FTE) of staff time to lead campaigns to support raising awareness and behavioral change. Type B Outreach: 1 FTE of staff time to lead Strategies to support community organizing and community buy-in.
Level A	Surface Water Restoration	Completion of Studies to prioritize projects, woodland stewardship plans, implementation of projects identified in prioritized studies (residential and agricultural), enhanced buffers of public and private ditches, Soil Health, forest management. Funding support for existing staff (up to 2,024 hours or ~.5 FTE) for Project Development and Technical Assistance AND up to .75 FTE to lead land protection efforts leading to implementation of conservation easements and forest management.
Level A	Surface Water Protection	
Level B	Groundwater & Drinking Water Quality	Well Sealing

While not explicitly called out, actions that obtain multiple benefits to other Level B and C priority issues, such as Natural Resources—Protection, Management, and Restoration of Upland Habitat, a Level B issue, will be given priority.

The completed work plan will result in the installation of a combination of up to 15 agricultural and residential Best Management Practices or a 64-pound reduction of total phosphorus to priority waters, 10 acres of wetland restorations, 100 acres of soil health practices, four sealed wells, five plans consisting of a combination of subwatershed assessments and woodland stewardship plans, and ten conservation easements completed or in-progress. Upon implementation, phosphorus reduction calculations will be made for each practice, where appropriate, to help determine overall progress toward restoration and protection.

Outreach and Engagement were identified as the key to the success of the entire Rum River Watershed Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (RRWCMP). Specifically, the RRWCMP

calls for hiring and maintaining the positions detailed in the outreach plan. The FY25 WBIF work plan continues the progress made with previous WBIF funding by 1) continuing funding to coordinate watershed-wide Type A outreach, raising awareness and behavioral change. Type A outreach will be completed by existing outreach staff from Isanti SWCD. 2) continuing efforts for Type-B outreach, community organizing, and buy-in by continuing to fund the Full-time Watershed Organizer employed by Mille Lacs SWCD. The SWCDs hosting Type A and B outreach will work across the basin with other parties to the Joint Powers Entity to provide outreach services. The project development line item includes outreach Type C (technical outreach). An outreach and education subcommittee will develop a detailed work plan that coordinates outreach and engagement activities based on priorities identified in this annual plan throughout the watershed.

Surface Water Restoration and Protection will focus on structural and non-structural projects targeted at all priority waters described in the RRWCMP. Due to the diverse nature of the watershed, members will implement an assorted set of practices, including agricultural structural and non-structural projects, urban/residential projects, and forestry and soil health practices. As part of planning for future years, this work plan also includes completing approximately five studies to prioritize locations and projects and woodland stewardship plans to help use funding wisely. The RRWP project policy document will be updated to guide the project selection process.

Groundwater and Drinking Water Quality Members will address groundwater quality by sealing wells within the watershed boundary. This action was initiated with FY23 WBIF Supplemental funding. We anticipate sealing four wells and will continue seeking additional funding to keep the momentum.

Due to the lack of reliable local and state funding, funding for existing staff is also included in the work plan and is necessary for effective plan implementation.

Funding for staff includes:

- 1) Project Development: Technical staff (~388 hours) time to provide outreach leading to the development of water quality programs and implementation of projects (Project Development/Type C Outreach);
- 2) Technical assistance and engineering:
 - a. Technical staff time (~1,636 hours) for site assessment, surveys, preliminary analysis, and design construction supervision, installation, and inspection and completion of projects. and oversee project installation. Funds may be used to pay local SWCD (with appropriate JAA) or to contract with a third-party consultant or LGU engineer for technical/engineering assistance.
 - b. Funding to support one full-time position employed by the Isanti SWCD to implement portions of the plan targeted to implement conservation easements and forest management. This position was hired using FY23 WBIF Supplemental

funding works primarily in the Isanti and Mille Lacs portions of the watershed.;
and

- 3) Administration: 8% (4% per year) of the funding will be used to administer the plan and grant.

The FY25 WBIF Work Plan can be found in **Table 1**. Shifts of \leq \$50,000 do not require board approval.

The charts below, which show the FY23 WBIF work plan VS the FY 25 WBIF are included below as a reference only. NOTE: the FY25 WBIF work plan has increased funding for Technical/Engineering. This is primarily due to the addition of a staff person to implement conservation easements and forestry practices within the watershed. The increased implementation resulting from the new staff position is not easily reflected in the charts.

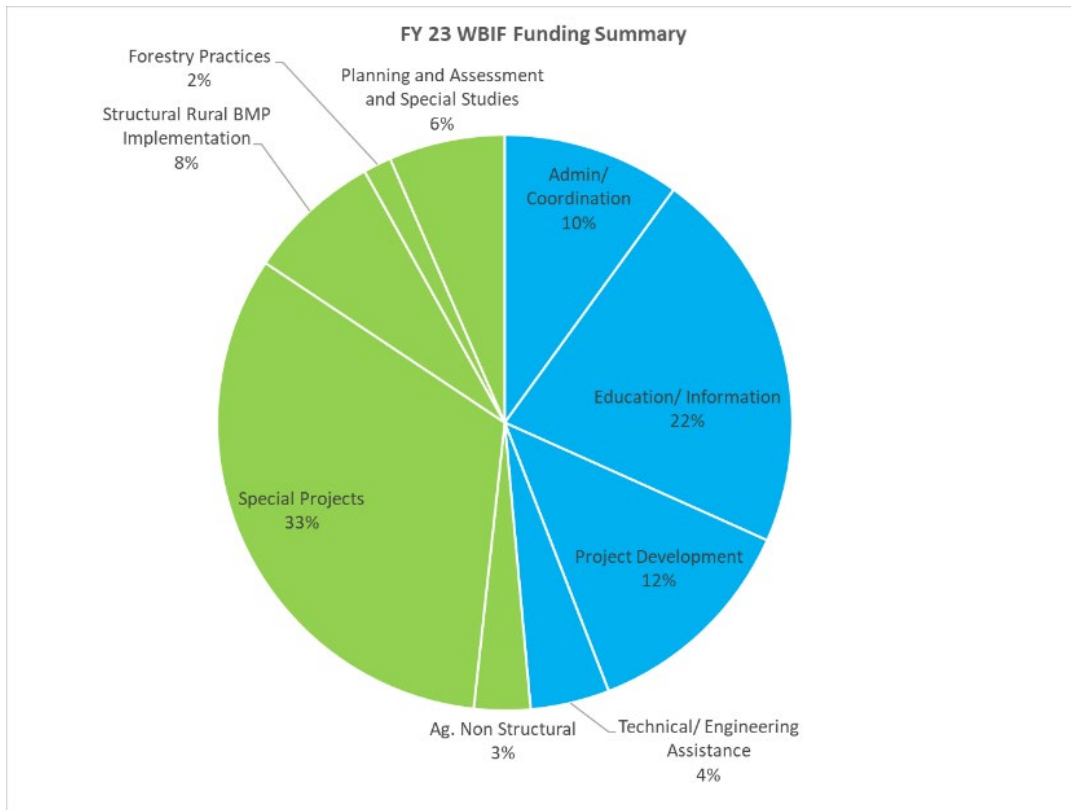


Figure 1. FY23 WBIF Funding. The Green color depicts Projects/programs & blue staffing expenses.

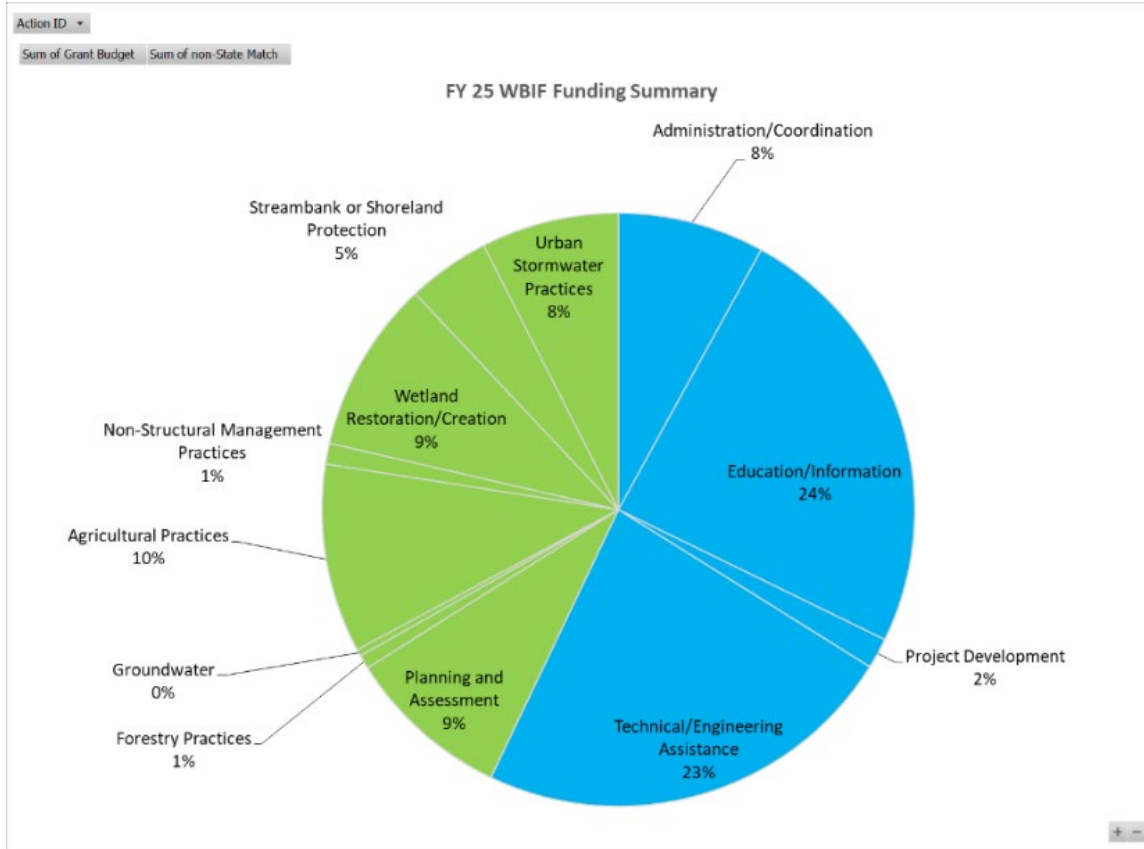


Figure 2. FY25 WBIF Funding. The Green color depicts Projects/programs & blue staffing expenses.