

LANDOWNER INCENTIVE PROGRAM APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Before filling out your application, please thoroughly review the application instructions, project ranking criteria, and contact the LIP staff if at any time if you have questions or need clarification of a requirement or criteria.

A complete application must be submitted to the Landowner Incentive Program to be considered for funding. The complete application includes:

- Landowner Incentive Program Grant Application
- Additional attachments such as aerial photographs/maps, if not already submitted
- Approval from your project coordinator if your land is enrolled in MFL, EQIP, or the FWS's Partners Program

Application form: <http://dnr.wi.gov/files/PDF/forms/1700/1700-059.pdf>

Project Information

Project Title: Give a descriptive title that describes your project in 10 words or less. References to the local area or features are encouraged.

Examples

- Removal of Woody Invasives from a Remnant Goat Prairie
- Habitat Enhancement for lands within the Wyoming-Dodgeville COA
- Ridgeway Pines Savanna and Prairie Restoration

Pre-Proposal ID: This number will be provided to you when your pre-proposal is approved. You must have this number to submit your application online. Please contact the LIP coordinator if you cannot remember or find this number.

Landowner/Applicant Information

Landowner Information

This is the information for the person whose name is on the deed. For organizations, be sure that the name on the grant application is the organization's official name and list the party authorized to sign as landowner.

If there are multiple landowners participating, please e-mail or mail additional "Landowner Statements" BEFORE the submission deadline to have their participation count towards the proposal scoring.

Applicant Information

The applicant will be considered the cost-share recipient and the primary project contact only if the applicant holds a legal interest in the property¹. So, an applicant could be an organization

such as a local land trust working on behalf of the landowner(s). For projects with multiple landowners, please note which landowner will be the primary contact for the grant in this space. If an applicant is working on behalf of the landowner(s), they must demonstrate approval from each landowner through a signed statement accompanying the application (may be sent separately via e-mail or US post). This document can be attained on the LIP website or by contacting the LIP coordinator.

¹ If the application is submitted on behalf of a landowner, funds will be distributed to the landowner unless the applicant holds a legal interest in the property such as an easement, signed agreement transferring management authority, or other binding, documented agreement.

Project Location: Maps and/or air photos with the property boundary AND the proposed LIP project site clearly marked are helpful when reviewing your application and should be submitted by email or regular mail, if you have not done so already. Most county websites now offer easy-to-use mapping applications. The better the map quality, the easier it will be to evaluate your project application.

The legal description of the property along with tax parcel number(s) will be required if the project is funded, so providing it here will greatly decrease the administrative time between project approval and receiving the grant award.

Project Type: Are you restoring an area to a state that existed previously, or creating new habitat (planting native seeds in old ag field)?

LIP Project Acreage: Provide the acreage that you will be actively managing with the LIP grant. (Note that this may be different from the total acreage of the property, or the total acreage of the habitat that will ultimately benefit.)

Total Property Acreage: Provide the TOTAL acreage of the Landowner's property.

At-Risk Species: Identify the at-risk species that are found in the project area or found within ½ mile of the project area.

Additional information on rare species and their management needs can be found on the following sites:

Rare animals: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/EndangeredResources/Animals.asp>

Species of Greatest Conservation Need: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/WildlifeHabitat/profiles.asp>

Source of at-risk Species information: Please explain how species presence was determined, such as personal identification, surveys (include name of surveyor), published reports or documents (include title), etc.

Description of Project Site

By providing the relevant background information requested, reviewers of your application will more fully appreciate the history and landscape context of your land.

Current Land Use / Habitat: Describe the project site in its current state.

Examples: “The land is currently in agricultural production. Fifty-five acres are planted to soybeans and five acres are pastured.”

“The land is currently being managed for prairie and oak savanna type vegetation. Landowner harvests firewood in order to expand savanna habitat Site is mainly Oak woodland with scattered high quality Oak openings and prairie along old railroad right of way, of which provide refuge for listed plants and animals”

“This site features a remnant prairie and bur oak opening situated on broken, gravelly moraine. Scattered, large, open-grown bur oaks with white and black oak are interspersed with prairie-like openings. A moderate number of native prairie and savanna species have persisted, and those that are especially resistant to grazing can still be found. 7.82 acres are owned and managed by a land trust, 13 acres are privately owned, but under a conservation easement and managed by the land trust.”

“Small high-quality prairie remnants (old road right-of-ways) never grazed or plowed. Fallow/not-in use old field last plowed 25-30 years ago, currently becoming quality barrens and prairie. Oak uplands not grazed since 1950's. Both habitats are recovering from the existing seed bank and reseeding efforts.”

Adjacent Land Use / Habitat: Describe the landscape directly surrounding the LIP project site (i.e. within a few miles). Include any active management programs such as CRP.

Examples: “Cattle grazing, pasture, deer hunting, recreational wild oak woods and grassland, wetland, and a quarry are located adjacent to the property. A Class A trout stream runs through property. DNR trout management areas are w/in 2 miles. Neighbors across the road are working with USFW Partners in Wildlife on prairie restoration.

“To the west, Emmons Creek Barrens State Natural Area with one of Wisconsin's highest density KBB populations; to the North and Northwest, Hartman Creek State Park with its mature mixed oak-pine forest; to the North and Northeast and East, Waupaca Field Station and its 15-year old sand prairie and oak savanna restoration; and to the South, Emmons Creek Fisheries Area, with a mixed oak-pine forest.”

“Owner to the east has large CRP acreage with planted trees and some prairie. The border of our lands is primarily wooded bluffs. Owner to the west has a 350-acre diverse landscape, some of which is in pasture and farm field.

Current Site Activities: Describe any activities that currently occur on the proposed project site. This could include hunting, educational programs, farming, grazing, research, etc. This needs to also include ongoing restoration work funded by other programs, or work required

during their maintenance period.

Examples: “Site activities include restoration, nature study, and field trips. Birds, small mammals, herptiles and plants are regularly monitored. A few dead and live trees are harvested annually for use as lumber and fuel and in accordance with MFL, site restoration goals, and the property stewardship plan. Deer and turkey hunting.”

“Gun/bow season deer hunting occur. Occasionally insects are collected as part of a study. USFW Partners in Wildlife assist in burning, seeding, and thinning oaks.”

“The sites are used primarily for aesthetic appreciation, gathering wild edibles, and for hunting whitetail deer, turkey, and squirrels. At some point in the future, trees may be harvested for timber on a very small portion of the project sites.”

“Land use hiking and nature observation. The Prairie Enthusiasts have been actively managing the site for the past year, which includes prescribed burning and educational field trips for public education.”

Current Level of Protection: Please select the option which most closely applies to the legal status of the LIP site. If the project site currently has no legal agreement or protection such as a conservation easement held by a land trust, select “Site currently not protected”. Please indicate whether the LIP project site is currently or has been enrolled in other conservation programs. If the LIP site is currently under an agreement through one of these programs or others, please specify the type and the number of years remaining. “Years Remaining” includes any described “maintenance period” requiring follow-up activities to be undertaken by the landowner.

**Please note that if your land is currently enrolled in MFL, EQIP, or the FWS's Partners Program, you must forward an email showing approval from the local project coordinator in order to receive LIP funding.

Examples: Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Managed Forest Law (MFL), Partners for Fish and Wildlife (PFW), Turkey Stamp, Pheasant Stamp or Duck Stamp projects, Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), The Prairie Enthusiasts Management Plans

If there is a permanent easement in place on the property, select “Permanent easement” and identify the easement holder.

Within a Project Boundary: If the LIP site is located WITHIN a Conservation Opportunity Area (COA) or a public or private conservation or project boundary, please specify these in the space provided. Townships included in COAs are listed in Appendix A. You can learn more about specific COAs here: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/WildlifeHabitat/ActionPlan.html>

Examples: Southwest Grassland and Streams Conservation Opportunity Area, Wyoming/Dodgeville COA, Lower Chippewa River COA, Snow Bottom COA/SNA, TNC Baraboo Hills Project, Rush Creek SNA, Madison Audubon Society Goose Pond Sanctuary, Within Mississippi Valley Conservancy project boundary, Military Ridge

Prairie Heritage Area

Adjacent Project Boundary: If you know of public or private conservation lands or project boundary within ½ mile of the LIP site, please specify these in the space provided. Or check “I don’t know”.

Examples: Kinnickinnic River Land Trust focus area, Natural Bridge State Park and SNA, a Nature Conservancy preserve, Ducks Unlimited waterfowl production area, county conservation park, NRCS Wetland Reserve Program, Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area, Wisconsin Land Legacy Site.

Adjacent Land Use Agreement: If the LIP site is adjacent to or within ½ mile of lands under a land use agreement such as Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) or Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), please specify this information here. Or check “I don’t know”.

Examples: Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Turkey Stamp, Pheasant Stamp or Duck Stamp projects, “My property across the road is in a permanent easement with Driftless Land Trust”, “My neighbors have recently planted 80 acres into CRP”, “My neighbor has a stream easement on his property.”

Other Information: In relation to the ranking criteria, please include any other information about the site which may help the reviewers to understand the landscape context, ongoing conservation efforts, or history of the property. If other programs are currently or have been active in the project area in the past (ex. MFL, FWS, EQIP, CRP, etc.), please detail the nature of the agreement, time remaining, and work agreed to be completed during the maintenance period if applicable. Please note that non-compliance with prior agreements through other programs, or proposal of management activities which conflict with pre-existing agreements may be grounds for proposal disqualification.

Examples: “We are currently talking with the USFWS about funding other conservation practices on the easement. The Waukesha Environmental Action League has multiple workdays on the site each year and a continued partnership with them will continue. Ron Kurowski, naturalist for the Kettle Moraine State Forest Southern Unit, has helped us on this site with prescribed burns in the past. We work with adjacent landowners on what they can do to manage their prairie areas.”

“We are long-term members of the Prairie Enthusiasts, and attend many of their conferences as well as those of the Wisconsin Woodland Owners. We host visits by members of these groups, as well as by a group of Iowa County landowners who arrange reciprocal tours each summer; we are members of the Driftless Area Land Conservancy, and attend many of their functions and tours, as well as hosting them on our site. We are currently completing TSI with the assistance of an EQIP grant from the Iowa County NRCS.”

“Although not currently protected, a permanent conservation easement will be placed on the site and the valley to the west and southwest. The easement holder has not yet been determined. Also, site has had FWS partners and NRCS EQIP funding in the past.”

Project Goals and Objectives

Please describe what you propose to accomplish with LIP funds and why the project should be undertaken. Please describe goals and objectives as they apply to the proposed LIP project, do NOT defer to the overarching goals or efforts as described in the management plan.

Project Goal: In 1-2 sentences, identify what you expect to be the ultimate outcome of the project and **what benefit it will provide for at-risk species.**

Examples: “The goal of this project is to increase the available oak barrens and sand prairie habitat for the recovery of the Karner blue butterfly (KBB) and other associated rare barrens plant and animal species within the Emmons Creek/Hartman Creek/Welch Complex.”

“The goal of this project is to increase the quality of the oak savanna habitat behind the cabin to improve habitat for red-headed woodpecker, and extend this area beyond current boundary (4 - 6 acres).”

“To enhance and restore native prairie and oak savanna-type vegetation, with a special emphasis on providing quality habitat for grassland birds. To reconnect other existing prairie remnants present in valley.”

Quantifiable Project Objectives: Describe specifically what you hope to accomplish with LIP funds during the period of the project. The objectives should be measurable, address the benefit to at-risk species, and be able to be assessed in the final report and monitoring plan for the project.

Examples: “1. Secure seed for 60 acres: at least 50 species will be planted using local and southern Wisconsin genotypes (5 lbs of seed per acre = 300 lbs of seed for 60 acres), 2. Plant 60 acres of prairie, 3. Mow the plantings two times the first growing season”

“1. Decrease the herbaceous and woody invasives by 50-70 percent over a 3 year period, 2. Conduct Prescribed Burns, 3. Seed with a no till drill and inter-seed by hand with seeds both collected and purchased mow 1st year depending on where birds are nesting.

“1. Remove all woody invasives including red cedar, buckthorn, honeysuckle and prickly ash from 15 acres to open up the understory to expose prairie sod and allow for regeneration of oak, 2. Use herbicide to treat cut woody invasive stumps to prevent regrowth, 3. Enhance prairie diversity in cleared areas by sowing seeds collected from adjacent prairie remnants, 4. Where appropriate, reintroduce at-risk species using local genotype seeds from local remnants.”

Work Timeline: Describe what is going to be done, who will do it, and a date or season range when it will be completed. Include specific procedures, methods, timelines and how partners or volunteers will be involved if applicable. Do not plan to begin work before the earliest start date

defined in the application guidelines as the paperwork for starting your grant may not be ready before that date. Likewise, do not include follow up work to be completed after the duration of the LIP grant (a section will follow for this information).

**If your project is selected, LIP will review this work schedule to assure that it will not cause incidental take of at-risk species. In some cases, revisions may be made to assure work is conducted in compliance with the Endangered Species Act.

Example:

November 2014 - March 2015: Remove larger canopy trees, including box elder, elm, maple, and some red/black oaks and burning slash piles (landowner, volunteers)

Mid Summer and October or November 2014: Mow fire breaks (landowner).

April 2015: Prescribed burn of project area followed by inter-seeding (contractor).

April-May 2015: Follow-up burn with spot-treating invasive species (landowner).

Follow-up and Monitoring

Future Maintenance: This information will help indicate the project's likelihood of long-term success. Describe any maintenance or activities that will be conducted following the project completion or how the project will fit into the larger plan for the project site. Possible questions to consider include "Do you expect additional grant funding will be needed? Are you pursuing long term protection?"

Examples: "The restoration will be burned every three years by volunteers as conditions permit. Invasive species will be searched for and removed each summer by summer interns and volunteers."

"The landowner will continue to spray, pull, cut, and treat invasive species. Landowner will also continue to inter-seed with prairie/savanna species and will try to increase the populations of hill's thistle, purple milkweed, and cream gentian. Prescribed burns"

"Future management will continue in a similar cycle until black locust management decreases to a point where we are just canvassing the project area, and treating any resprouts or new seedlings that are found; if possible, we will then expand management to adjacent properties with cooperation from our neighbors."

"Fire break trails will be maintained by twice-annual mowing (spring and late summer). Prescribed burns will be conducted as needed, presumably every 2 to 5 years depending on conditions and regrowth. Monitoring as described above will be done annually. Brush clearing - done primarily by hired labor under the supervision of applicant, using applicant's equipment."

Monitoring: How will you measure success or failure, in terms of both habitat and at-risk species? How will this information guide your future restoration efforts? All landowners should include some type of monitoring in the project. Describe how the project's success will be monitored and evaluated following completion of the project. The evaluation of the project's success will be reported to the Department in the final report.

Examples: "Stewardship Plan for Conservation Easement requires monitoring every 10 years for entire property including bluff. Re-run invasives mapping and line- transects every 5-10 years. Annual breeding bird and small mammal live-trapping surveys every 3-5 years."

"Landowner will continue to monitor success of management regime on the native plant and animal communities and adjust activities, as needed. Landowner will compile list of animals using the property throughout the year and will continue to track vegetation changes and animal usage of habitats from established photo points. Landowner will continue to pursue a conservation easement for long-term protection."

Budget Overview

LIP can only pay for costs that represent an actual expenditure of funds (i.e. LIP cannot pay you to conduct management on your land or for use of your own equipment). Landowners may donate labor or work with volunteers who are donating labor, which may count towards match along with the use of their own equipment.

Project budgets are evaluated based on LIP cost per acre (= LIP funds / LIP Project acreage), percent match, and overall cost effectiveness of each item (example, amount spent on supplies, contractor estimate, etc). It is in your best interest to find a good deal on purchased goods and services. While cost assessments will differ at every site, LIP staff can help guide you in determining if the quoted price is reasonable for your project.

The overall budget provides the same information and also shows how the match will be met. Project costs are divided into three categories: LIP funds, landowner/partner funds contributed (cash), and in-kind match (labor, supplies, and/or equipment match). Enter your projected costs for each category. Most projects will not have costs in all categories.

All costs associated with the project should be described in the budget, including details on how the minimum 25% landowner share of the project cost will be met. From looking at the budget information, we should be able to understand how LIP funding will be spent, how match will be accrued, and how much money will be spent for each part of the project (for example: site preparation, seed purchase, planting, mowing, herbicide treatment, removal of invasive and woody species, etc.).

Eligible grant costs may include, but are not limited to: Wages of personnel directly engaged in the project scope, the purchase of supplies and equipment; Costs of leased equipment; Costs of contracts or subcontracts to qualified vendors to perform project activities; Monitoring-related

activities and donated labor are eligible as match only.

Ineligible costs include, but are not limited to: fines and penalties due to failure to comply with federal, state or local regulations; Ordinary operating expenses of agencies that are not directly related to the project scope; Costs for which payment has been or will be received from any other funding source; and indirect costs that are administrative in nature or incurred for a common or joint purpose including utilities, administrative salaries, secretarial services and postage.

Budget Line Descriptions

Salaries: Most projects will use “Contracted Services” as opposed to salaries, which would be for a crew, interns, etc. who are hired by the applicant and placed on their payroll. Typically, this is not the type of labor that results in invoice billing. Please note that general grant maintenance such as grant reporting and accounting are not eligible for reimbursement. Monitoring activities are not eligible to receive LIP funds, but may be included as match.

Contracted Services: This should include all costs associated with hiring a business or individual to complete the assigned task that are typically included in an invoice. If the contractor is completing more than one project work item (for example: brush removal, burning, and seeding), specify the by-task breakdown in the budget. (Example: brush removal: \$800, burning: \$3000, seed: \$300). All aspects of the contractor work should be lumped into this line, do not break out supplies or labor that are included in the contractor estimate.

Other Purchased Services: Use this line as needed and if it seems appropriate

Supplies: Specify the supplies that will be purchased or donated to the project. Do not include contractor-used supplies on this line unless they are acquired separately and not included in the estimate on the contracting services line. The value of donated supplies is calculated at the fair-market rate. In the space provided, break out the total cost by item (Example: seed: \$250, herbicide: \$100).

For many projects, LIP may be able to help secure seed or other services or supplies to meet the goals of your project. For seed, LIP only pays for purchasing pure live seed that has been tested for purity and germination to ensure that the seed is viable. We also require that projects use local genotype plants and seeds. In addition, LIP will pay for or count as volunteer time seed collecting and processing and may prefer this approach to procuring seed if it is readily available on-site or in the immediate area.

Equipment Rental Charges: This may be equipment that is rented in order to complete the project, or it may be landowner or partner-owned equipment that is being provided for use. The value of rented equipment is reimbursable to the landowner or eligible for match at the full rental rate. If the use of the equipment is being donated to the project, the equipment is valued by hour of use at the standard LIP rate (See Appendix B). If you are using a piece of equipment that is not included in the list, contact the LIP coordinator for the calculated value.

Other: Use this line as needed and if it seems appropriate

Donated Labor: This is labor on the project that does not result in actual expenditure by the applicant/landowner. In general, donated labor is valued at \$12/hour. Donated labor should contribute towards meeting the goals and objectives of the project and may include monitoring activities. Please note that standard grant maintenance activities such as grant reporting and filling out payment request forms may not be included.

Partial Funding: Designate if you will be willing to accept a partial award and to how much. A partial award may be assigned to one or more components of the project or may require project revisions. In the case of a partial award, the required match will also be reduced to the % of the awarded amount.

Additional Notes on Budget:

Compiling a project budget can be unfamiliar territory for some applicants. Remember that LIP staff are available to assist you in putting this or other parts of the application together. No project may receive more than \$25,000. All costs associated with the program require documentation that meets both state and federal standards. This is applicable to costs submitted for reimbursement by the program and costs used as part of the minimum 25% landowner match. Program staff will provide specific guidance to landowners on how to meet these requirements if their projects are funded. Examples of documentation include invoices, time sheets, or payroll records.