SIA RESTORATION GRANT PROGRAM

OVERVIEW AND GUIDANCE

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

Introduction

The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), Agricultural Water Quality Program, is leading the Strategic Implementation Area (SIA) initiative for agricultural areas. Strategic Implementation Areas are an interagency coordinated approach to improving water quality for fish, wildlife, and drinking water in small watersheds.

OWEB and ODA staff collaborate to provide OWEB funding to partners to support restoration activities that address identified agricultural water quality issues within the SIA geographies. Beginning in the 2023-2025 biennium, the OWEB Board has included funding for restoration projects in SIAs in its biennial board adopted spending plan.

Program Structure

The purpose of SIA Restoration grants is to support SIA partners in implementing restoration projects that address ecological and agricultural water quality issues identified through the SIA assessment process.

Eligible Applicants: SIA Lead organizations who received an OWEB SIA Technical Assistance grant between 2017-2025. Other organizations may be able to apply if the SIA Lead organizations email OWEB and ODA granting permission for the other entity to apply for the SIA restoration funds.

Maximum Ask Amount: $30,000/application. Applicants may submit more than one project per grant cycle.

Match: A 25% match (cash/in-kind) is **required.** Match is defined as any contribution to a project that is non-Board funds, and OAR 695-005-0030(2) requires all applications to demonstrate a matching contribution is being sought at the time of application. Match may be cash or an in-kind contribution. At the time an application is submitted, match funding does not have to be secured. Applications must show that at least 25% match has been sought. Prior to any payment of grant funds, the grantee must provide proof that 25% match has been secured.

Project Requirements:

- Project area (property) must have been evaluated in SIA assessment to be eligible.
- Applications must demonstrate how the proposed project addresses ag water quality concerns identified in the SIA assessment.
- Application must demonstrate how the project will implement specific conservation strategies identified in the local Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan.
- Application must describe how the proposed project addresses any 303(d) listed streams or TMDLs in the watershed.
- Each application must have a clear water quality benefit *on its own*, not contingent on other grant applications. Meaning, each application submitted for this grant application cycle must be eligible on its own merit and not linked to another application submitted within the same grant application cycle.
- Multiple applications may be submitted for a single property/landowner but they must be distinct with their own clear watershed benefit and not dependent on another application submitted within the same cycle.
- Cultural resources will not be required.

Application Requirements

Specific and measurable actions are required. Applicants **must provide metrics** of current site conditions and proposed site conditions (ex. length and width of existing and proposed riparian buffer, stream miles/feet of existing and proposed fencing, # of acres treated, etc.).

Required Application Uploads:

- Project map

- Project photos
- Project designs, if applicable
- Planting plan, if applicable

OWEB strongly recommends that applicants submit their grant applications at least 24 hours prior to the application deadline. OWEB's online grant applications include a verification step that will flag missing and incomplete information in the application. Verifying and submitting your grant application at least 24 hours in advance allows time for applicants to correct errors that are found during verification. All applications must be successfully submitted through OWEB's online grant application system by 5 p.m. on the application deadline. No exceptions will be made.

Applicants should carefully review all guidance and information (**including iButtons**) in the online grant applications. This review will help applicants confirm before submission of their application that all questions are answered completely, based on the guidelines included in the application, and all **required uploads** are provided.

Grant Application Evaluation Process

Evaluation of grant applications will be based upon the OWEB Restoration Grants evaluation criteria per OAR 695-010-0060. Within that evaluation framework, grant applications will be assessed to ensure proposed activities align with the following expectations:

- Proposed project/property was identified as a priority for restoration in the SIA assessment
- Proposed project is addressing concerns identified in the SIA assessment
- Proposed project will address 303d listed streams or TMDLs in the watershed.
- Proposed project will implement specific conservation strategies identified in the local Ag Water Quality Management Area Plan.

Grant applications will be reviewed by a technical review team comprised of interagency staff who consisting of OWEB, ODA, DEQ and ODFW. This team will coordinate with agency representatives in the project area(s) to ensure understanding of local needs.

Additional Resources for Applicants

For additional information about applying for OWEB grants, see OWEB's Online Application Guidance at https://apps.wrd.state.or.us/apps/oweb/oa/Images/Online_Application_GuidanceV3.5.pdf.

For information about grant budgets, getting access to OWEB's Grant Management System, understanding insurance requirements, or using OWEB's online applications, see the video resources at https://www.oregon.gov/oweb/manage-grant/Pages/videos-training.aspx or OWEB's grant budgets guidance at GoBIG.pdf.

For eligibility questions, or other questions about OWEB's SIA Restoration Grant Program, please contact Heidi Hartman, Federal Programs Specialist, heidi.hartman@oweb.oregon.gov, 971-707-0226 or Amanda Robinson, ODA SIA Specialist, amanda.robinson@oda.oregon.gov, 503-551-8448.