

114D.50 CLEAN WATER FUND.

Subdivision 1. **Establishment.** The clean water fund is established in the Minnesota Constitution, article XI, section 15. All money earned by the fund must be credited to the fund.

Subd. 2. **Sustainable drinking water account.** The sustainable drinking water account is established as an account in the clean water fund.

Subd. 3. **Purpose.** (a) The clean water fund may be spent only to protect, enhance, and restore water quality in lakes, rivers, and streams, to protect groundwater from degradation, and to protect drinking water sources by:

(1) providing grants, loans, and technical assistance to public agencies and others testing waters, identifying impaired waters, developing total maximum daily loads, implementing restoration plans for impaired waters, and evaluating the effectiveness of restoration;

(2) supporting measures to prevent surface waters from becoming impaired and to improve the quality of waters that are listed as impaired, but do not have an approved total maximum daily load addressing the impairment;

(3) providing grants and loans for wastewater and storm water treatment projects through the Public Facilities Authority;

(4) supporting measures to prevent the degradation of groundwater in accordance with the groundwater degradation prevention goal under section 103H.001; and

(5) providing funds to state agencies to carry out their responsibilities, including enhanced compliance and enforcement.

(b) Funds from the clean water fund must supplement traditional sources of funding for these purposes and may not be used as a substitute.

Subd. 4. **Expenditures; accountability.** (a) A project receiving funding from the clean water fund must meet or exceed the constitutional requirements to protect, enhance, and restore water quality in lakes, rivers, and streams and to protect groundwater and drinking water from degradation. Priority may be given to projects that meet more than one of these requirements. A project receiving funding from the clean water fund shall include measurable outcomes, as defined in section 3.303, subdivision 10, and a plan for measuring and evaluating the results. A project must be consistent with current science and incorporate state-of-the-art technology.

(b) Money from the clean water fund shall be expended to balance the benefits across all regions and residents of the state.

(c) All information for proposed and funded projects, including the proposed measurable outcomes, must be made available on the Web site required under section 3.303, subdivision 10, as soon as practicable. Information on the measured outcomes and evaluation must be posted as it becomes available. Information classified as not public under section 13D.05, subdivision 3, paragraph (d), is not required to be placed on the Web site.

(d) Grants funded by the clean water fund must be implemented according to section 16B.98 and must account for all expenditures. Proposals must specify a process for any regranteeing envisioned. Priority for grant proposals must be given to proposals involving grants that will be competitively awarded.

(e) Money from the clean water fund may only be spent on projects that benefit Minnesota waters.

Subd. 5. **Data availability.** Data collected by the projects funded with money from the clean water fund that have value for planning and management of natural resources, emergency preparedness, and infrastructure investments must conform to the enterprise information architecture developed by the Office of Enterprise Technology. Spatial data must conform to geographic information system guidelines and standards outlined in that architecture and adopted by the Minnesota Geographic Data Clearinghouse at the Minnesota Geospatial Information Office. A description of these data that adheres to the Office of Enterprise Technology geographic metadata standards must be submitted to the Minnesota Geospatial Information Office to be made available online through the clearinghouse and the data must be accessible and free to the public unless made private under chapter 13. To the extent practicable, summary data and results of projects funded with money from the clean water fund should be readily accessible on the Internet and identified as a clean water fund project.

Subd. 6. **Restoration evaluations.** Beginning July 1, 2011, the Board of Water and Soil Resources shall convene a technical evaluation panel comprised of five members, including one technical representative from the Board of Water and Soil Resources, one technical representative from the Department of Natural Resources, one technical expert from the University of Minnesota or the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, and two representatives with expertise related to the project being evaluated. The board may add a technical representative from a unit of federal or local government. The members of the technical evaluation panel may not be associated with the restoration, may vary depending upon the projects being reviewed, and shall avoid any potential conflicts of interest. Each year, the board shall assign a coordinator to identify a sample of up to ten habitat restoration projects completed with clean water funding. The coordinator shall secure the restoration plans for the projects specified and direct the technical evaluation panel to evaluate the restorations relative to the law, current science, and the stated goals and standards in the restoration plan and, when applicable, to the Board of Water and Soil Resources' native vegetation establishment and enhancement guidelines. The coordinator shall summarize the findings of the panel and provide a report to the chairs of the respective house of representatives and senate policy and finance committees with jurisdiction over natural resources and spending from the clean water fund. The report shall determine if the restorations are meeting planned goals, any problems with the implementation of restorations, and, if necessary, recommendations on improving restorations. The report shall be focused on improving future restorations. Up to one-tenth of one percent of forecasted receipts from the clean water fund may be used for restoration evaluations under this section.

History: 2008 c 363 art 5 s 23; 2009 c 101 art 2 s 107; 2009 c 172 art 5 s 7; 2010 c 361 art 1 s 9