Mississippi Watershed Management Organization

NEWS RELEASE

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MWMO EXPANDS STEWARDSHIP FUND GRANT PROGRAM

Increased Grant Funding Supports Community-Led Environmental Projects

MINNEAPOLIS — The Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (MWMO) Board of Commissioners has approved a significant expansion of its Stewardship Fund grant program, increasing annual funding from $350,000 to $500,000 to support community-led projects that improve water quality, habitat and natural resources within the MWMO watershed.

Approved on November 10, 2026, the changes increase the maximum award amounts for two of the program's grant opportunities. Planning Grants, which help applicants develop plans for water quality and habitat improvement projects, will increase from $20,000 to $25,000. Action Grants, which support the implementation of larger-scale projects, will increase from $50,000 to $75,000.

The expansion represents a 43 percent increase in the program's annual budget, providing additional resources to help community organizations and partners bring meaningful environmental improvements to life.

The changes follow a comprehensive evaluation of the Stewardship Fund program, including an analysis of past projects, conversations with current and former grant recipients, and feedback from MWMO staff, community partners and the organization's Community Advisory Committee.

The review also considered rising labor and material costs, which have increased the financial resources needed to plan and implement environmental improvement projects. Planning Grant funding limits were last adjusted in 2022, while Action Grant funding limits have remained unchanged since the program's establishment in 2008.

Through the Stewardship Fund, the MWMO supports community-led efforts to manage stormwater, reduce pollution, and improve water quality and habitat. The program empowers local organizations to develop creative solutions, build community knowledge, and bring meaningful environmental improvements to life. Increased funding will help strengthen these efforts and expand opportunities for communities to contribute to a healthier Mississippi River.

The updated funding levels will allow grant recipients to pursue projects with greater financial support while continuing to advance the MWMO's mission of revitalizing the Mississippi River through collective action.

The next Stewardship Fund grant application deadline is **Friday, February 12, 2027, at 4:30 p.m.** Interested applicants are encouraged to review eligibility requirements and learn more about available grant opportunities at https://www.mwmo.org/get-involved/stewardship-fund-grants/.

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About the MWMO

The MWMO is a public organization that partners to protect and improve water and habitat in our urban watershed. We invest in people and infrastructure to support clean water, and provide knowledge, scientific data and expertise to help manage our vital water resources.
mwmo.org