

GRANT FUNDING:

1. What is the actual percentage of these funds that will be used for administration versus on the ground projects?
  - \$3.6 million is the minimum amount available for grants and that is for on the ground activities.
  - Within the grants themselves, 10% in indirect costs will be allowed for administrative charges. If indirect charges are included then we don't expect to see additional hourly charges for administrative staff.
2. Where did the program funding originate?
  - The state general fund.
3. Is this funding being used to address other DNR, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, or DEQ staffing needs?
  - The entire \$3.6 million is for grants.
  - We received an additional \$1.4 million to address staffing needs. The DNR, DARD, and DEQ will use funds for external communication, outreach and education, some for a grants management position to provide assistance to all of you, and some for field staff that will be available to assist you with the grants.
4. Is there a cap on the grant? I see the minimum request is \$25,000.
  - The only cap on the grant is the amount of funds available (\$3.6 to \$5 million for 2014 applications).

WEBINAR:

5. Where online, specifically, is the first webinar? The state site is difficult to find anything. Please provide a web address directly to the webinar.
  - [http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-58225\\_69835-340655--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-58225_69835-340655--,00.html)
6. Will a copy of the second webinar presentation be available?
  - A copy of the October 27 webinar is available at [www.michigan.gov/invasivespecies](http://www.michigan.gov/invasivespecies) . The November 17 webinar is unavailable due to technical difficulties.

TECHNICAL:

7. There is a handbook being referenced. What is this handbook?
  - The 2014 Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program Handbook. This can be found at [www.michigan.gov/invasivespecies](http://www.michigan.gov/invasivespecies) , Invasive Species Grant Program, then the Applicant Information dropdown menu.
8. What is the acronym "CISMA"?
  - Please see Appendix A of the handbook (page 23) CISMA stands for Cooperative Invasive Species Management areas.
9. If I am from Jackson or Washtenaw County can I apply even though I am not in one of the Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMAs)?
  - Yes, while the focus is on these areas and development of these statewide areas is encouraged, we recognize that this won't always be the case. What is important is that there is a demonstrated collaborative. Try to get as many partners as you can. DNR can help draw together interested parties from the same area.

- This is the first year of the program. The intent is that if you are not successful this year we will provide advice to improve chances for success next year.
10. The Kalamazoo River Watershed is not represented on the map. What needs to be done to include them?
    - Follow up with Sue Tangora, [tangoras@michigan.gov](mailto:tangoras@michigan.gov).
    - A CISMA could be established for this area. Projects submitted for this area will be considered eligible.
  11. Can projects outside of the Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMAs) be funded?
    - Yes, the point is to have collaborative management throughout the state. There has to be a well-developed, strategic approach and you will need to have collaborators.
  12. How do the Cooperative Weed Management Area's (CWMAs) tie in and can you define them?
    - We've moved away from using CWMAs and started using Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMAs) to avoid confusion that this program is about managing noxious weeds, not all of which are invasive. We are using some CWMAs as CISMAs, but would like to see new CISMAs developed in areas where no cooperative arrangement exists.
  13. Can a CISMA be multiple townships?
    - Yes, partnerships that are collaborative and strategic in nature meet the intended goal. If a group of townships can accomplish eradication or management then they are encouraged to apply.
  14. A CISMA is being formed in Wexford, Missaukee, Mason, Lake and Osceola Counties. Our group has a one page MOU that indicates our partnership. Is this a type of agreement that would give higher points?
    - An MOU will be considered a formal working agreement for scoring purposes.
  15. The West Michigan Cluster is 1) a Cluster with the Stewardship Network 2) a CWMA with the USFS 3) and now I believe 3) a CISMA. How is a CISMA differentiated from the other two? Is there any defined or formal way?
    - Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMAs) is a term to refer to a number of local cooperative invasive species program including Cooperative Weed Management Areas, Invasive Species Coalitions, Invasive Species Networks, etc. For more information, go to [www.michiganinvasives.org](http://www.michiganinvasives.org).
  16. Must the grant be submitted by the CISMA lead agency? I'm in NE Michigan and Huron Pines appears to be the lead for my region.
    - Any eligible entity is eligible to apply for a grant however we are recommending that local partners work together to avoid duplication of effort.
  17. If a CISMA submits an application including multiple projects from various member associations will the DNR be approving or disapproving the whole CISMA application or perhaps selecting some of the governments' programs and perhaps denying the programs proposed by others in the CISMA?
    - The DNR reserves the right to reduce the grant amount requested. Applicants will be contacted regarding potential changes to the amount requested.
  18. Does a CISMA formed for the purposes of applying to this program need to be formally organized under formal agreement such as MOU?
    - Yes.
  19. Can a project have more than 1 focus area? If yes, how will these projects be scored and evaluated?
    - No, projects will be scored in a single focus area.
    - Additional applications should be submitted for each focus area.

20. Can you submit two different grant applications for the same focus area?
- Yes.
21. Would a project focusing on methods for enhancing current sea lamprey control efforts basin-wide fall under Focus Area 1 or Focus Area 6?
- Focus area 6.
22. The description for focus area 1 indicates that geographical focus areas should be land-based; although the RFA indicates that aquatic species are encouraged, what if the geographical focus area is in multiple Great Lakes?
- Describe the focus area as accurately as possible, the regional focus is not meant to follow any ecological boundaries.
23. What if there are proposals from different entities within 1 Focus Area, maybe one on aquatics and one on terrestrial plants. Should the CWMA "endorse" each project with a letter as long as they are complementary?
- Yes, more than one project may be endorsed.
24. Can we provide cross state border treatments where we share waterways?
- In general, you cannot treat waters in other states, however, it may be considered if significant match is provided from the other jurisdiction.
  - Michigan waters are the side of the lake that can be treated with these grant funds. If bordering with another entity we would need to see that entity's contribution in order for the application to be competitive. We don't want to discourage, but we would look for the other states contribution to the project. A letter of commitment from the other state or local government indicating the work to be completed and level of matching funds should be submitted with the application.
25. Is a phragmites elimination project on a small inland lake eligible?
- Yes, especially as part of a larger strategic action. We are encouraging collaborative regional efforts for prioritized management under Focus Area 1.
26. Is Starry Stonewort considered an invasive species?
- Yes, it could be a project under the aquatic invasive species area or one of the larger focus areas.
27. Is Chinese Elm considered an invasive species?
- No.
28. Is Burning Bush considered an invasive species?
- Yes.
29. Do permits need to be obtained prior to application?
- No, but please make sure you understand the parameters of the permitting process for your project. You may want to contact the regulatory agency to get a general idea if the permits are likely to be issued.
30. If awarded would we be allowed time to obtain the necessary permits to begin the project?
- While you are not required to obtain permits prior to application, it is helpful to know what is needed in advance and the timelines so your project can be completed according to the timeline.
31. Can the funding be used on state land?
- Yes.

32. When describing collaborator's experience and education should individuals be singled out or should it be a summary for each organization?
- It is up to the applicant how they want to convey the depth and capacity of experience with addressing the issues.
  - A one page resume is used for some of the other grants and that is a perfectly acceptable format.
33. Do we get more points for including all aspects of prevention, detection, eradication and control for each species?
- Yes, an application covering all aspects as indicated should theoretically score well. Please refer to the third scoring criteria on page 9.
34. If the grant application is for \$500,000 but if you can't/won't fund it fully, would you fund it at a smaller amount?
- The DNR reserves the right to fund projects at lower amounts than requested. Applicants may be contacted prior to award to discuss the possibility of a reduced award amount.
35. How many partners would be a good amount for a funded project?
- As many as is needed to get the project done.
36. What is the expected length of the project narrative?
- We did not establish a page maximum, but please submit only what is needed to sufficiently address the elements in the narrative guidelines.
37. Are there statewide projects available that we can look at partnering with?
- Go to the Invasive Species Website ([www.michigan.gov/invasivespecies](http://www.michigan.gov/invasivespecies)) and look at a few of the Management Plans there. Then contact the person in charge of the focus area you are interested in for more information.
38. Would proposals that compliment and expand upon current DNR/DEQ outreach efforts be favored over new and unique efforts?
- Applicants are not limited to existing programs but should show how work is not duplicative but enhances current efforts.
39. Can an individual government agency submit two or more separate projects?
- Yes.
40. Do organizations need to reside within MI?
- No, but the project needs to be within Michigan.
41. Should quarters for the work plan be on the state fiscal year? Yes, please see the schedule on page 1 of the handbook for various due dates. Quarters should be as follows:
- October 1 – December 31; January 1 – March 31; April 1 – June 30; July 1 – September 30
  - If you need additional budget quarters for the application, please print out an additional budget page from the application and add it to your package or create something in excel or word and attach it to the application.
42. Are new investigators considered more favorably than established investigators?
- No.

ADMINISTRATIVE:

43. There is a handbook being referenced. What is this handbook?
- The 2014 Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program Handbook. This can be found at [www.michigan.gov/invasivespecies](http://www.michigan.gov/invasivespecies) in the Applicant Information dropdown menu.
44. Exactly what entities are eligible to apply?
- Local, federal, tribal, non-profit organizations and universities. Those are folks serving as the fiduciary units.
  - We recognize that partners of the collaborative may be for profit entities and that will have to come through the subcontracting process. Please review contracting and procurement requirements on page 17-18 of the handbook.
45. Is the grant application available for profit companies? Or is it limited to the three entities listed on page 2?
- Only eligible grant applicants on page 2 of the handbook may apply.
46. I know you said where to find the sub-grantee form, but missed it - can you say this again?
- There is no sub-grantee form. If you are looking for an example of a formal working agreement between collaborators please reach out to one of the Invasive Species Grant contacts for examples.
47. Are pass-through grants allowed with a weighted RFP process?
- No.
48. Is the state looking at entering into cooperative agreements with experienced consultants?
- Labor will be handled through the granting process. The state may hire more staff for technical assistance to grantees but “boots on the ground” will be accomplished through the grant process.
49. As long as a project is competitively bid can subcontractors be hired?
- Yes.
50. If a for-profit business has assisted us with the proposal, are they still eligible to bid on the project (if the grant is awarded)?
- Yes.
51. If the grant is being applied for with a consortium and each partner is responsible for a particular part of a grant, can those funds be provided for without a bidding process?
- To paraphrase the question, can you get a grant and subgrant it out to collaborative partners? Yes, however, all partners are subject to the reporting/recordkeeping requirements of the grant and must be eligible applicants themselves. The main applicant is responsible for submitting materials for reimbursement and DNR will only make payment to the applicant. A collaborator agreement will need to be in place between the primary applicant and the collaborators.
52. Does our local lake improvement board qualify as a collaborator?
- Yes, if the local regulatory agency is a collaborator with other agencies and not the fiduciary then, yes, they can be a collaborator. If they are the fiduciary then the local control board can be considered a local government entity.
53. Are early career faculty eligible to apply?
- Yes, if you are able to act as a fiduciary and accept funds on behalf of a University.
  - If you cannot accept funds on behalf of the University, then you might consider collaborating with another faculty member.

54. How flexible is match commitment? We have a significant amount of collaborators that are looking to provide match, what happens if budgets are changed and the money is long longer available or a board doesn't approve money as anticipated after the application date?
- The applicant is responsible for all match commitments provided on the application. The match may originate from the applicant or collaborators but if 50% match is committed, that is what will be required. Letters of commitment are required for all match. It is very important to make sure the amount of match claimed is secured. This is a reimbursement program, thus if 50% match is claimed, then only 50% of all eligible expenses received will be reimbursed.
55. For determining the project total for purposes of the 10% match, does the match need to total 10% of the project budget before or after the indirect charges are applied? E.g., If our reimbursable costs total \$600,000 and we ask for 10% indirect, our project budget before match will be \$660,000. Would the 10% match required by 10% of \$600,000 (\$60,000), or 10% of \$660,000 (\$66,600)? Can 10% indirect be applied to match totals, then used towards match? E.g., if we have \$50,000 in match, can that actually equal \$55,000 total match, assuming we would have been able to charge \$5,000 of indirect on the \$50,000 if we were claiming it as a reimbursable expense?
- Total project cost is the total estimated amount it will take to complete the project. This amount should equal the total of grant amount requested plus local match.
56. Can DNR technical staff liaison as a project coordinator in any way to reduce administrative costs?
- State agencies cannot receive funds from this grant but can act as collaborators. State agency staff cannot receive funds for doing the work. State agency time cannot be used for match.
57. Can funds from a Michigan Economic Development Corporation grant be used as match?
- No, the MEDC is funded by the state and state funds cannot be used to match other state funds.
58. Will unrecovered Facilities and Administrative costs (indirect costs) be eligible for the match requirement?  
Ex: if an entity usually charges indirect costs at a rate of 40% and we are only allowing 10% can the remaining 30% be used toward the match requirement?
- No.
59. Several partners are working together to implement our project. Some of them are requesting indirect costs but can those costs be more than \$10,000 which is the bidding limit?
- Partners must all be eligible applicants under the grant. Contractual services must be bid at \$10,000 or more, they are not limited to \$10,000, and must be approved by DNR. Please see pages 17 and 18 of the handbook for additional contracting and procurement information. Indirect costs for the entire grant, including the applicant, partners, and contractual services cannot exceed 10% of the grant amount. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that grant requirements are met by all partners and contractors.
60. Is the 10% limitation on indirect costs also required for subgrantees?
- The 10% limitation on indirect costs is for the entire grant amount including subgrantees.
61. Could a subgrantee's budget include more than 10% indirect, as long as indirect on the total project budget does not exceed 10%?
- No, each subgrantee is held to the same terms as the applicant. No more than 10% of their budget may be indirect costs.
62. To clarify, indirect costs of grantee and subawardees may only add up to 10% of grant total?
- Correct.

63. Is there a salary limit requirement? For example, some grants request that administrative salaries do not exceed 12% of total budget, 8-10% administrative salaries.
- Administrative salaries/indirect/overhead costs may not exceed 10% of the grant, page 4 of the handbook.
64. Why is the mileage rate so low?
- The mileage rate is being changed to \$.56/mile.
65. Why is the mileage rate below the federal mileage rate?
- The mileage rate is being changed to \$.56/mile.
66. Can unrecovered mileage be used as match, e.g., if mileage rate our organization usually uses in \$.56/mile, but this grant only reimburses for \$.39/mile, can the \$.17/mile difference be considered match?
- No, the mileage rate is being raised to \$.56/mile. Any differences in rates cannot be considered match.
67. We have collaborators that will be developing outreach materials and providing training for the project. Can match include salary for time spent developing these materials, as well as providing the training, from these collaborators? If they are highly trained, can it be above minimum wage?
- Collaborators must be eligible grant applicants themselves. Salary time is not limited to minimum wage. Please note that a commitment letter must be provided by the donor.
  - Please also review page 20 of the handbook regarding reimbursement of salary and wages.
68. Are meals and lodging for employees only considered ineligible expenses when they are incurred while traveling to attend conferences? Or are all meals and lodging considered ineligible, even when the expenses are incurred as a result of participating in field work or project planning meetings?
- Meals and lodging are only ineligible when incurred while traveling to attend conferences.
69. Are volunteer travel expenses allowable or can it be used as matching funds?
- Lodging and mileage for volunteers is ineligible and cannot be used as match.
70. Are the eligible costs listed on page 4 of the handbook the only items eligible for reimbursement through the grant? We're specifically wondering if these items would be considered eligible expenses:
- Salaries/wages for compensated workers' time spent traveling to and presenting at conferences; we see that meals, lodging and conference fees are ineligible, but don't see a mentioned about an employee's actual time.
    - Salary, meals, lodging, conference fees and speaker fees for compensated workers at conferences are all ineligible.
  - Use of a rental vehicle, and fuel for that vehicle. Can the costs either 1) be directly reimbursed or 2) be reimbursed at the \$.39/mile mileage rate (even though it's not technically a personal vehicle)?
    - Use of rental vehicles is eligible. You can either charge 1) for the direct cost of the rental vehicle and direct cost of the mileage or 2) be reimbursed at \$.56/mile.
  - Tuition for graduate students?
    - Tuition for graduate students working on the project is eligible.
71. Is salary for university employees who don't usually keep detailed timesheets eligible, such as:
- Annual salary for graduate students or postdocs dedicated to the project?
    - Yes, it is an eligible expense, you must follow guidelines in the handbook related to salaries/wages and indirect costs/overhead on page 4 and timesheet/payroll requirements as indicated on page 20 of the handbook. If salary is being used for match a letter of commitment is required from the university.

- Summer salary for university faculty? (In this instance, the faculty member would not ask for reimbursement for time spent working on the project during the nine-month academic school year, he would only ask for reimbursement for summer salary paid to him in the summer months when he is not paid by the university for teaching. I suspect it is not typical in these sorts of cases for faculty members to keep detailed timesheets/records of days and hours worked, since they are paid by the month not the hour.)
    - Yes, it is an eligible expense, you must follow guidelines in the handbook related to salaries/wages and indirect costs/overhead on page 4 and timesheet/payroll requirements as indicated on page 20 of the handbook. If salary is being used for match a letter of commitment is required from the university.
72. Are boats and vehicles considered equipment, in that purchasing a boat or vehicle that costs more than \$2,499 would be an ineligible expense?
- Correct, boats, vehicles and other equipment over \$2,499 are ineligible expenses.
73. Are publication fees charged in order to publish scientific papers about project results in academic journals an eligible cost?
- No.
74. Are conference call fees (for planning and coordination calls between project partners) considered eligible reimbursable expenses?
- Yes.
75. Is required insurance related to equipment rental an eligible expense?
- Yes.
76. Is the rental of office space for employees an eligible expense?
- Not directly. This would be a cost covered by the indirect charges.
77. Is fuel for a boat that is rented from an outside vendor considered an eligible cost?
- Yes.
78. Are SCUBA training classes for workers who will need to dive eligible as part of the project?
- No.
79. How long do you anticipate project expense reimbursements to take and what documentation will be required to qualify for reimbursements?
- The DNR has 45 days from the date of receipt of a complete reimbursement package to make payments. Documentation requirements can be found beginning on page 19 of the handbook. Contract and procurement requirements over \$2,500 must be preapproved as outlined on pages 17-18 of the handbook.
80. Do we need to officially notify the DNR that we will be submitting a proposal?
- No, complete application packets are the only official notification that will be considered.
81. Is there a way to add lines to the application? If I create a separate sheet can I do that in excel or word as long as I am consistent with the headings on the DNR application?
- Unfortunately, you cannot add lines to the application. You may add or create sheets in excel or word as long as the headings are consistent with the DNR application.

82. Should quarters for the work plan be on the state fiscal year? Yes, please see the schedule on page 1 of the handbook for various due dates. Quarters should be as follows:
- October 1 – December 31; January 1 – March 31; April 1 – June 30; July 1 – September 30
  - If you need additional budget quarters for the application, please print out an additional budget page from the application and add it to your package or create something in excel or word and attach it to the application.
83. Where should costs for a subaward go in the project budget, under “Contractual Items,” or “Other”?
- If the subaward is going to a contractor it should go under contractual items.
  - If the subaward is going to a collaborator the items should be broken down by budget category with some indication of the collaborator it is assigned to (personnel, travel, etc.).
  - Please be clear on subaward recipients, projects, and amounts. Attach additional word or excel sheets if necessary.
84. Is the application form an electronic submission or does it have to be scanned and emailed after completed?
- The application itself is a fillable form, however, it does require a signature so it will need to be scanned and sent as an email attachment (along with the other required documents) to the address at the bottom of the application form. Alternately, an electronic signature can be inserted onto the form.
85. The handbook states that a final audit will be required. Is this with DNR staff or is it an outside financial audit that's required?
- This is a DNR audit that will look for items under Project Completion and Final Report on page 22 of the handbook.
86. Regarding "Expenditure Documentation Requirements", can another documentation method for credit card purchases be used if our organization does not receive traditional invoices or credit card statements for our organization-issued credit cards, or pay these invoices via paper checks? Our organization works directly with the bank to process credit card charges and payments electronically.
- Yes, we will accept ACH documentation or bank statements.