Lake Ripley Management District

N4450 County Hwy A, Cambridge WI 53523 ripley@oaklandtown.com 608-423-4537 www.lakeripley.org

Landowner Cost-Share Project Packet

Thank you for your interest in partnering with the Lake Ripley Management District in a project that will protect and improve the water quality of Lake Ripley.

We support projects that benefit the lake as a whole, such as protecting the shoreline from erosion, helping infiltrate stormwater run-off before it reaches the lake, and/or improving shoreline habitat for wildlife.

We will try to help you through the cost-share process as much as possible. We hope that the attached packet will provide you with a helpful "road map." Although the process as described here may look like a straight 1-2-3-step road, actual projects may encounter a certain number of "meanders" as unforeseen issues arise. We hope to help you at these times especially.

Lake Ripley Management District

Is your idea an eligible cost-share project?

This is what we look for when choosing a project for a cost share. The more yes answers, the higher the score, and the more likely we can partner with you.

Is the project listed as an eligible project? (See page 3.) If yes, keep reading. Will the project address active soil erosion?

Will the project collect, filter or infiltrate storm runoff before it reaches the lake?

Will the project help protect or enhance habitat quality?

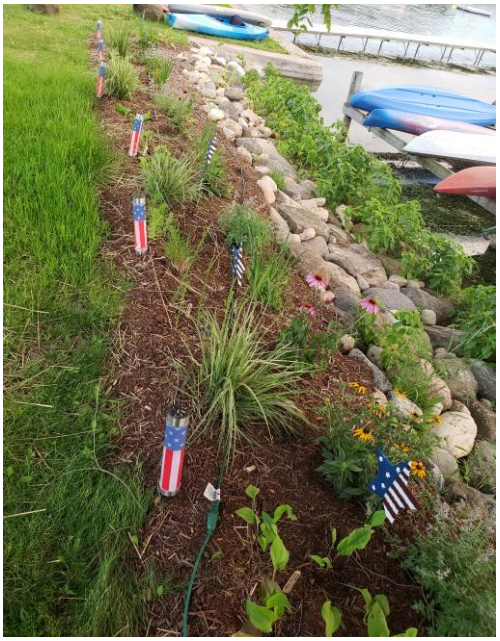
Will the project serve a public, lake management-related education benefit?

Will the project protect or improve ground/surface water quality?

Is the project scope/scale cost-effective?

Is the project needed to repair a prior cost-share effort due to circumstances beyond the control and contractual obligations of the landowner?

Are there unique aspects about the project that increase its strategic importance?



Why the emphasis on native plants?

The Lake District is committed to help projects that will protect the water quality of lake Ripley. We focus on efforts which reduce soil erosion and/or which will collect and absorb run-off before it reaches the Lake.

Native plants, including grasses, sedges and flowering plants, have huge root systems which reach deep into the ground (as deep as 20 feet!) Such root systems are capable of preventing soil erosion and absorbing storm waters. Native plants also provide food and shelter for native insects, which in turn are food for native birds and fishes.

Lawn grass and non-native flowering plants offer neither of these benefits. This is why our cost-share agreements specify the planting of native plants only.

Eligible Practices for Shoreline and/or Near Shoreline Properties – 50% Cost Sharing

Eligible Conservation Practice	Minimum Standards
Conservation Easements	Wetland and riparian properties; terms and conditions effective in perpetuity
Shoreline protection (i.e. bank shaping, rock riprap, bioengineering)	Clear evidence of soil erosion or risk of bank failure; 30 ft for shoreline; NRCS technical standards
Shoreline plantings	1000 sq ft planting area; 20-ft average planting depth from shore; shrub and herbaceous layers; LRMD-approved native species and planting densities
Aquatic plant re-establishment	50 sq ft; LRMD-approved native species and planting densities
Near-shore tree drops (for fish habitat and other wildlife use)	Tree must be dead, diseased, pose an obvious safety/property hazard, or be recommended for removal by a certified arborist
Rain Garden or other building site runoff controls (i.e. rain barrel infiltration basins, removal of water-impervious surfaces)	Rain garden: 100 sq ft; meets approved design standards (DNR Publication PUB-WT- 76 2003)
Public informational signage	Must be visible from publicly accessible areas; content of signage must advance LRMD goals
Wetland and prairie restorations (i.e. native planting/seeding, invasive species control)	.5 acre
Terraces on steep shoreline slopes to establish native planting to control erosion	NRCS technical standards
Native tree and shrub establishment	As fits property best, to infiltrate run-off in yard

Eligible Practices for Rural/Agricultural Properties in the Watershed – 50% Cost Share

Eligible Conservation Practice	Minimum Standards
Grassed waterways	NRCS Technical Standards
Drainage ditch closure	Contact US Fish & Wildlife Service for possible grant assistance
High-capacity well closure	Completed by certified well driller; drilling logs submitted to DNR
Storm drain inlet protection	DNR#1060 Conservation Practice Standard
Nutrient/pesticide management planning	Refer to Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department for higher cost-share rate
Agricultural riparian buffers	Refer to Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department for higher cost-share rate
Barnyard runoff control system	Refer to Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department for higher cost-share rate
Manure storage system	Refer to NRCS' EQIP
Native Tree and shrub establishment	10 acres; approved plan by DNR forester
Stream bank/ditch bank protection (i.e. bank shaping, rock riprap, bioengineering, cattle fencing)	Clear evidence of soil erosion or risk of bank failure; refer to NRCS technical standards
Conservation farming practices (i.e. cover cropping, no-till)	Refer to Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department for higher cost-share rate – flat rate per acre up to maximum acreage
Terraces (agricultural based)	NRCS Technical Standards

Guidance for Landowners about the Cost-Share Process

Step 1. Landowner notifies District of their interest in the cost-share program and requests an on-site visit with the Lake Manager. Stop in the District office or phone: 608-423-4537 or email ripley@oaklandtown.com.

Step 2. District conducts preliminary site inspection and discusses project with Landowner (scope, options, cost-share eligibility, possible permitting requirements, landowner's authority if representing a larger group, etc.). Landowner receives packet outlining process.

Step 3. Landowner refines idea of project scope. When ready with an actual proposal, Landowner requests site visit by Cost-share Committee. Note: If project involves a group, like a Homeowners Association, Landowner(s) must demonstrate authorization of whole group (HOA President, or copy of HOA minutes showing vote.)

Step 4. District schedules on-site visit by the District Cost-share Committee to evaluate the project, at a time when Landowner can be present to ask or answer any questions and discuss their proposed project. Cost-share Committee may suggest plan improvements or modifications for consideration.

Step 5. Cost-share Committee meets to score the project. Project must demonstrate its being duly authorized by the collective's leadership, if applicable, (i.e. HOA President/copy of minutes showing vote), value to the lake as a whole, involve eligible practices, meet applicable design standards and score high enough to meet cost share funding consideration. Committee either preliminarily approves the project or sends it back to Landowner for additions which would increase chance of approval, or denies approval. If approved, Lake Manager informs Landowner that they may begin the process of obtaining three (3) contractor bids.

Step 6. Landowner has six (6) months to obtain these bids. Landowner may ask Lake Manager for assistance if needed.

Step 7. Landowner, when ready, requests to be put on the agenda for the next regular monthly Board meeting to present their project, with the 3 contractor bids, for full Board approval of the Cost-share project. The Board's approval is contingent upon the Cost-share Committee's recommendation and availability of District funds. **Note: The District cost-shares at 50% of the lowest responsible bid.** Landowner may choose a different bid, if that bid is fully eligible, and if Landowner is willing to make up the cost difference.

Step 8. If project is approved for funding, Landowner has one year to accomplish the project. Some projects may require work in different seasons (for example riprap work is typically winter work, followed by spring planting of buffer.) Delays due to weather may allow extensions of timing, and Landowner should request such. Landowner must notify Lake Manager at least 3 business days in advance of any contractor work to ensure proper oversight. All eligible expense receipts should be saved for reimbursement from the District. Permit-application fees are the responsibility of the Landowner and are not cost-share eligible.

Step 9. Landowner - Landowner signs Notice of Soil and Water Conservation Easement and Cost-share Agreement, and the Soil and Water Conservation Easement and Agreement with the District. Deed-recording fees are the responsibility of the Landowner and are not part of the cost-share. Landowner may request help from Lake Manager to navigate the permit and deed-recording process.

Step 10. Landowner – It is the responsibility of the Landowner to notify the Lake Manager if at any time during the process they decide to abandon the project. District can then free the funds for other projects.

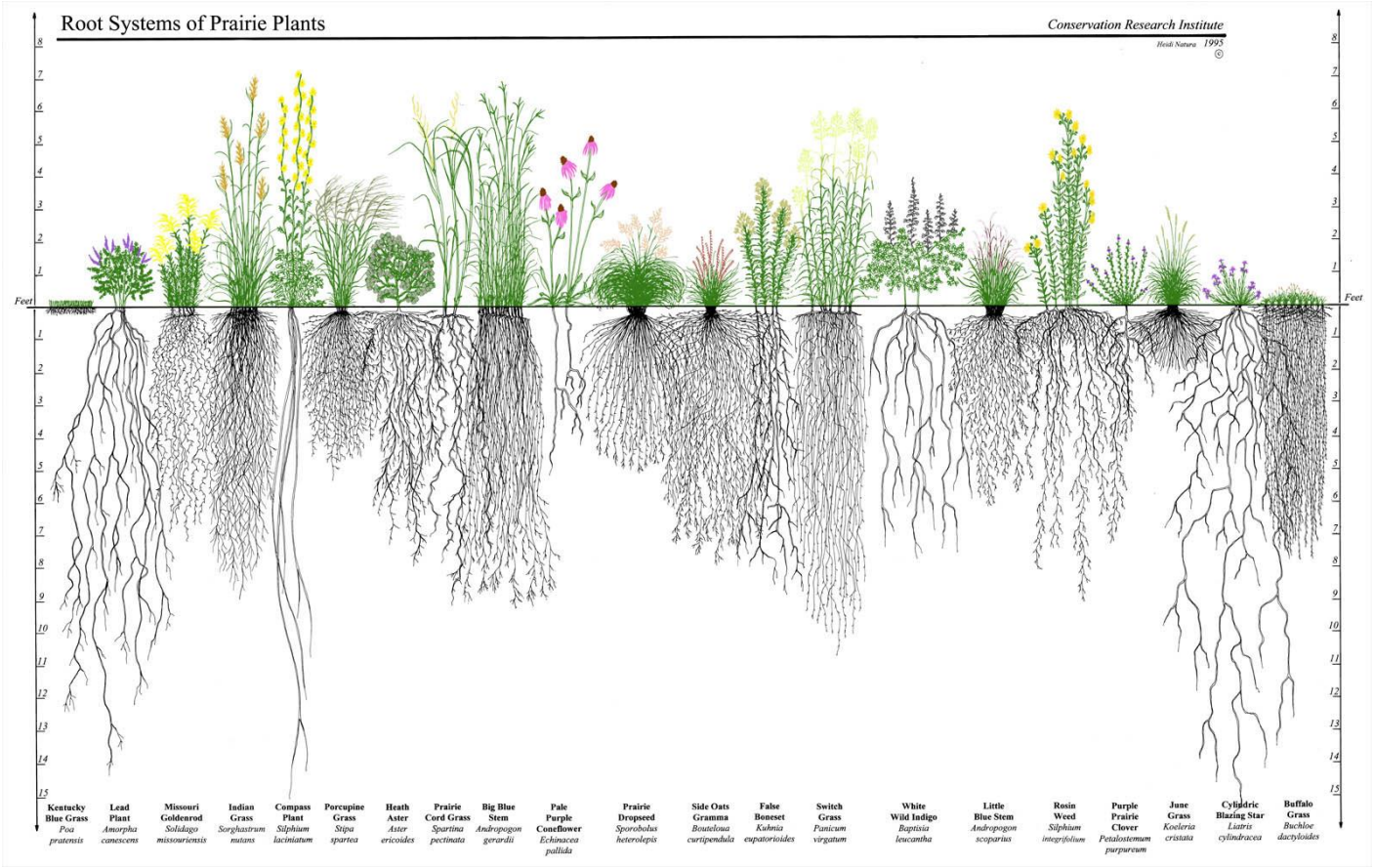
Step 11. District – Upon project completion, Lake Manager will perform a final site inspection to verify that all required specifications have been met. Funds will not be disbursed without signed contracts between the District and Landowner.

Step 12. Landowner – If project passes inspection, Landowner pays any remaining balance owed, and receives a receipt or proof-of-payment from the contractor. Landowner then presents the document to the District for reimbursement. **Note: Cost-share grants are treated as "other income" by the IRS for tax-reporting purposes, requiring the issuance of 1099 forms to the Landowner.**

Step 13. Landowner is legally obligated to maintain the project for the duration specified in the contract, usually 10 years.

Why Plant Native Plants?

The Lake District recommends planting native plants on lakefront and nearby, and insists on planting them for cost-share projects. Why are we insistent?



What is a native plant? In the Lake Ripley watershed, native plants are species that evolved here naturally. Natives have a long history of surviving Wisconsin's seasons and climate. Native plants co-evolved with the native insect, bird and animal species, who depend on them for food and shelter.

Why plant natives? Native plants typically have deep fibrous root systems, from 5-20 feet deep! Natives planted in a shoreline buffer will hold the soil in place and prevent erosion. They will also help the soil infiltrate 80-90% of run-off, so it doesn't reach the lake. Lawn grass typically infiltrates less than 20% of run-off, barely better than an impervious surface like the concrete of a sidewalk or driveway. Thus, native plants are also highly beneficial on any slope or in any rain garden.

Native plants are the original habitat for our local insects, birds and animals. They need each other. They depend on each other. Native plants along the shore, or in buffers, rain gardens and other lake-improving plantings, restore much needed places for animals and birds to find food, rest and shelter.

Are natives going to cope with the weather changes we're seeing? Native prairie plants are as good, and sometimes better than, trees at capturing carbon dioxide from the air and sequestering (storing) it in their roots deep underground. They are accustomed to weather fluctuations, and are being widely used to help lessen the problems of climate change.