Landowner sign up opens to restore wetlands for road program

On January 8, 2018 the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) began accepting applications from landowners to restore wetlands that will be used to support the Local Government Road Wetland Replacement Program (LGRWRP).

Created in 1996, the program provides replacement for wetland impacts associated with the repair, rehabilitation, reconstruction, or replacement of currently serviceable public roads.

To date BWSR has provided approximately 4,200 compensatory mitigation credits to offset 2,800 acres of wetlands impacted throughout the state.

The program is widely supported by local road authorities because it allows them to focus their efforts on designing and constructing infrastructure improvement projects, while BWSR provides the wetland replacement under the Wetland Conservation Act and the Federal Clean Water Act.

The program relies on landowners who are interested in restoring drained or filled wetlands to their original condition.

Fall monitoring of shrub-carr and shallow marsh at a Wetland restoration site near Upper Red Lake, MN.

Restoration at a shallow marsh in Carver County.

Although the financial benefit from participation is often a driving factor for most landowners (BWSR provides a payment for establishment of a permanent conservation easement), many past participants appreciated the opportunity to restore less productive land to its previous condition and help improve wildlife habitat and water quality.

The current easement sign-up is seeking interested landowners in the Minnesota River watershed, the Rainy River watershed, the Upper Red River watershed, and the St. Croix River watershed.

If selected, BWSR will work with landowners and their local Soil and Water Conservation Districts to design and construct projects.

BWSR also takes responsibility for post-construction monitoring and management until the site has met performance standards.

General information about the program along with application materials can be found on the BWSR website. The easement sign-up period is open through March 9, 2018.

To learn more visit our website or click here.