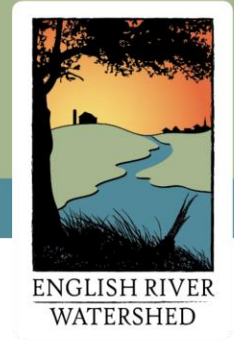


ENGLISH RIVER WATERSHED

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Thursday, October 19, 2017

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The questions and responses below were adapted from the Q&A event on September 25th, 2017, held by the Clear Creek Watershed regarding their engineering services procurement process. The Q&A from that event largely apply to the English River Watershed project, with a few exceptions.

Q1: What is the English River WMA's (ERWMA) budget for the cost share program?

Iowa County has been granted \$4.3 million in construction and engineering funds for these practices in the English River Watershed. Project funds will cover 100% of design and engineering, and 75% of construction costs. The landowners / partners will provide a 25% match for construction costs. A competitive bid process will be used for all construction activities funded through the project.

Q2: What is the project timeline?

The ERWMA will begin accepting applications in December of 2017. The project will end in September of 2021.

Q3: What practices are eligible for cost share programming?

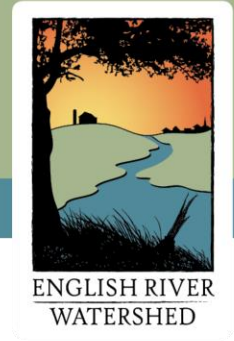
The following are the BMPs that the ERWMA will be promoting with cost share funding: Buffer Strips, Perennial Cover/Grass, Oxbow restoration, Floodplain Restoration, Ponds (small, medium or large), Sediment & Storm Water Detention Basins, Prairie STRIPS, Terraces, Bioreactors, Wetlands, Saturated Buffers, Grassed Waterways

Q4: What are the engineering consultant's primary obligations?

Consultants will be responsible for survey, design, construction oversight and checkout.

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Q5: Will all environmental issues will be addressed before design process?

There are separate environmental review requirements for the different parties involved in this process.

Iowa Watershed Approach project partners are completing the following tasks to meet HUD & CDBG requirements:

Emmons and Olivier Resources, Inc. (EOR) are completing a Phased Environmental Assessment (PEA) for each priority subwatershed (priority subwatersheds are those selected for targeted cost share partnerships in each of the watersheds participating in the IWA project). EOR is also completing National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) assessments of the subwatersheds for each potential individual project. The PEA will review what it can for each subwatershed and will detail how Phase II site reviews will be conducted. After the PEA is completed, it will be sent to the Lead County and the CDBG grant administrator (which is East Central Iowa Council of Governments – ECICOG), who will coordinate the FONSI/Request for Release of Funds (RROF) publication and the submittal of the RROF to IEDA. IEDA then reviews RROF, and once approved, a letter releasing funds is sent to the county.

Once specific sites are identified for projects (as landowners apply and desired sites identified), site-specific environmental reviews will be completed by the CDBG grant administrator, including site-specific Level 1 and (106) Archaeology reviews. Consultants have also been procured to assist with archaeology modeling, and will review site information to determine where site-specific Phase I is required or not. Once these site-specific reviews have been submitted to IEDA, the project can go out for bid.

This process satisfies Environmental Assessments as required for HUD and is expected to occur *concurrently* with project design.

Q6. What permitting is the *consultant* responsible for filing/obtaining?

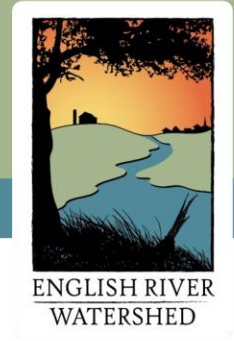
The engineering consultant will be responsible for determining need and obtaining permits for IDNR Construction / Storage, and USACE permits. ERWMA staff will assist consultants with obtaining landowner permissions for these processes, as needed. HUD is now included on the *Regional General Permit 33* which should cover most of the projects.

Q7: Who is responsible for stream & wetland delineations?

Answer: The engineering consultant are responsible.

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Q8. Is FSA or NRCS funding is part of this project?

No. However, practices must meet NRCS specifications (when applicable). Practices covered through the IWA cost share program, but which do not have NRCS specifications, include oxbow restoration and floodplain restoration.

Q9. Is there a conceptual model of desirable areas to be improved?

A4: IIHR and the Iowa Flood Center have built a hydrologic model of the watershed. Data from the model were utilized to identify priority subwatersheds for targeted implementation, along with input on disaster impacts and unmet recovery needs provided by Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Staff at IIHR/IFC are also currently working on an ACPF model for the watershed.

Q10: How are you measuring success? Number of practices?

The English River WMA was granted \$4.3 million in cost share funds. Success for this project means developing enough voluntary partnerships with watershed stakeholders to build \$4.3 million in best management practices in the watershed, and having those projects be concentrated in high priority subwatersheds. Baseline data were established during Phase I planning efforts in 2015. Existing hydrologic models and river gauges will provide future data needed to quantify changes.

Q11: Are landowners subject to a competitive process?

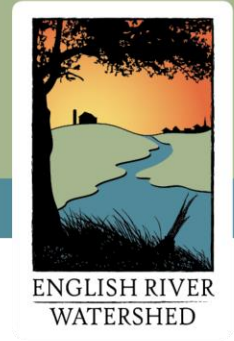
Applications will be subject to a ranking process. It is not anticipated that ranking will be a primary determinant of project eligibility, until and unless competition for funding rises to a point it becomes necessary (i.e. depleting funds). However, some eligible practices, such as grassed waterways will be capped to promote other available practices with higher storm water detention values.

Q12. Will NRCS be able to help with the checkout/construction?

Consultants will be working with staff from the ERWMA, which is separate from and independent of NRCS. ERWMA staff will be assisting consultants with communication and project coordination.

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Q13: Is there a competitive process for maintenance down the road?

No. The landowners will be responsible for maintenance per contracts they will sign with the ERWMA.

Q14: Can consultants bid on construction projects they designed?

No.

Q15: Who is responsible for the bid process?

This is a shared responsibility between the CDBG grant administrator (ECICOG) and engineering consultant.

- a) ECICOG will handle the administrative aspects of the bid process to ensure CDBG compliance, such as required language in the bid documents.
- b) The engineering consultant will be responsible for actual procedural documents, specifications and plans that potential bidders may be requesting. The consultant will also oversee construction management.
- c) ERWMA staff will organize construction projects into groups to be let out for bid. Bundling projects into smaller packages (i.e. 4 projects with a combined \$150,000 in estimated construction value) will increase chances that local contractors can compete for the work. We believe inclusivity of local contractors is important to securing landowner trust in the work to be done.

Q16: Are all areas in Iowa and Poweshiek Counties that are also in the English River Watershed eligible for projects or have the target areas been further narrowed using the HUC8 / HSPF RCHRES subbasin boundaries (or other means)?

Only select areas (HUC-12s) of Poweshiek and Iowa Counties are eligible for this program. In [this map](#), orange highlighted areas of Poweshiek and Iowa Counties are technically eligible for participation in the cost share program, as determined by HUD. However, we have narrowed the overlapping HUC-12s into two different tiers of priority. The HUC-12s outlined in purple are our highest priority target HUC-12s, and programmatic environmental reviews have already been completed for these. We may be expanding eligibility to the other eligible HUC-12s (those overlapping with the orange highlighted eligibility area, but not outlined in purple) depending on participation in the initial years of the program.