

2025-27

Agricultural Water Quality Support Grant Application Guidance



OREGON
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Water Quality Program
503.986.4700

Oregon's Agricultural Water Quality Program works statewide with Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Watershed Councils, farmer, ranchers, rural landowners, local partners, and state agencies to implement Oregon's Agricultural Water Quality Program. The goals of Oregon's Agricultural Water Quality Program are to prevent and control water pollution from agricultural activities and soil erosion, and to achieve applicable water quality standards.

For the 2025-27 biennium, ODA's Agricultural Water Quality (AgWQ) Program will have an open solicitation for grants of \$20,000 to \$149,000 for Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) and Watershed Councils (WC). These grants are intended to provide support to meet the goals of the Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plans (Area Plans) and the SIA initiative.

Activities within selected proposals for the 2025-2027 biennium need to be completed by June 30, 2027. Proposals can begin a phase of work in 2025-2027; and then can reapply for the next phase of the project in the 2027-2029 biennium (dependent on availability of funds for future grant cycles).

The types of activities funded through this grant are: Agricultural Land Condition Assessments, Monitoring, Outreach and Engagement, and Technical Assistance.

****These funds cannot be used for implementation of on-the-ground restoration projects****

Submitted grant applications will be evaluated based on ODA's AgWQ Program criteria and guidelines outlined in this document. The ODA grant review team will review, rank, and recommend grants for award. Grants will be awarded based on the availability of funds for a given grant cycle. ODA will only reimburse for eligible expenses with invoices that are submitted to and approved by ODA.

Timeline

Grant application opens:
Jan. 8, 2025

Grant applications close:
March 5, 2025

Grant review:
March 6-May 1, 2025

Grant-ranking announcement:
May 8, 2025

Grant cycle for approved grants:
July 1, 2025-June 30, 2027

Interim check-in:
Aug. 12, 2026

Draft completion reports due:
June 15, 2027

Final completion report due:
Aug. 12, 2027

Application submission requirements

- Grant applications must be uploaded to our AgWQ Support Grant Website:
<https://files.oda.state.or.us/?login=AGWQSupportGrant>
- Application must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. March 5, 2025
- Supporting documents must be attached, or your application may be rejected. These items include: Racial and Ethnic Impact Statement, complete application, budget form, and liability insurance provider contact information, and Federal Employee Identification Number (FEIN) or current nonprofit tax ID status.
- IMPORTANT NOTE: All files must be submitted with the following file naming convention or they risk getting lost in the secure file server:
 - 2025AgWQ_[SWCD or WC NAME]_[TYPE OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENT]
 - Example: 2025AgWQ_LincolnSWCD_BudgetForm

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Goals for funding

The goal of the 2025-27 ODA AgWQ Support Grant is to provide support to SWCDs and WCs to conduct activities that help achieve the goals of the AgWQ Program, including Area Plans and Strategic Implementation Areas (existing or planned). Successful AgWQ Support Grant proposals will align with the goals and priorities stated below:

Ag Water Quality Program Goals:

- Prevent and control water pollution from agricultural activities and soil erosion
- Achieve applicable water quality standards, including those set by Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) and Groundwater Management Areas (GWMA)

Proposal should:

- Identify a goal that aligns with preventing water pollution or soil erosion from agricultural activities,
- Be a local high priority need for agricultural water quality, and
- Outline clear objectives to reach the proposal's goal

ELIGIBLE PROPOSAL TYPES

ODA will award grant funds for proposals that include any or all of these proposal types:

A. Agricultural Land Condition Assessments. Assess conditions on agricultural lands that contribute to water quality, such as presence/absence of riparian vegetation or groundcover, irrigation methods, fencing, livestock watering, manure management, etc. Eligible assessments track progress toward AgWQ Program goals or inform adaptive-management decisions, as outlined in your local Area Plan.

Completed assessments should also include a prioritization of next steps following the results of the assessment.

B. Monitoring. Create plans for and conduct monitoring specifically to address needs identified in applicable Area Plans or TMDLs. Eligible projects may evaluate current conditions, mid-management conditions, or long-term conditions. Proposals may fund AgWQ monitoring equipment and/or testing results.

Monitoring projects should:

- Include stakeholder input
- Provide guidance to regional partners around AgWQ monitoring protocol or create a regional monitoring protocol

Please note: A monitoring plan, utilizing the ODA Monitoring Plan template, or an accepted alternative as determined by the ODA Monitoring Specialist, must be completed and approved prior to the beginning of monitoring efforts. Discuss options with your ODA RWQS. Unless otherwise approved by the ODA Monitoring Specialist, all water quality data need to have an approved SAP and QAPP and are expected to meet DEQ's "A" level quality criteria and must be submitted to DEQ AQMS database within one year of collection. Monitoring plans should briefly describe the following: partner(s) and SWCD role(s), parameters to monitor, frequency, and geographic scope.

C. Outreach and Engagement. Engage farmers, ranchers, rural landowners, and/or partners in workshops, tours, site visits, etc. related to reducing non-point source pollution from agricultural lands. Develop printed materials designed to inform and educate farmers, ranchers, rural landowners, and/or partners on non-point source pollution from agricultural lands.

Outreach and engagement projects should:

- Identify specific activities or deliverables to motivate engagement

Find your local Ag Water Quality Area Plan on our website:

<https://oda.direct/AgWQPlans>

If your Area Plan does not have any Measurable Objectives identified, talk with your Regional Water Quality Specialist about what is needed to develop them.

- Be related to riparian health, soil health, non-point sources of pollution, Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), Focus Areas (FAs), or Strategic Implementation Areas (SIAs), etc.
- Be directly related to the specific strategies and activities in the Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan (Area Plan)
- Clearly connect to any agricultural land condition assessments, monitoring efforts, and/or technical assistance projects included in the AgWQ Support Grant application

Activities allowed: Printed materials; workshops; displays; presentations; information about the Area Plan and Area Rules; newsletter articles; tutorials/videos; handbooks; demonstration projects/tours for agricultural landowners; and other activities directly related to agricultural water quality. Refer to Area Plan for additional activities.

Activities not allowed: youth activities/events; General outreach for SWCD or WCs (including mass mailings); purchase of plants for plant sale; rain gardens; backyard composting; weeds (if not part of riparian restoration); and pollinators.

D. Technical Assistance: Provide technical assistance to farmers, ranchers, and rural landowners in order to reduce non-point source pollution from agricultural activities and/or improve water quality.

Technical assistance projects should:

- Be directly related to the specific strategies and activities state in the applicable Area Plan or the Area Rules
- Lead to agricultural water quality implementation projects within a defined timeframe

Activities allowed: Consultations; site visits; conservation planning; project design; grant writing for agricultural landowner projects; staff time to implement landowner conservation practices; compliance site visits with ODA; and project management/inspection/verification not covered in other grant agreements. Project implementation must have a strong connection to agricultural water quality (e.g., riparian restoration and associated weed control, irrigation efficiency, pasture management, manure management, cover crops, soil health, post-fire erosion or riparian work on ag lands, low-tech process-based restoration, beaver restoration / beaver dam analogs); on-site training for volunteers who are helping with project implementation (e.g., riparian planting). Refer to Area Plan for additional activities.

Activities not allowed: Projects with no/weak connection to agricultural water quality (e.g., weed control that is on non-agricultural lands; fuels reduction; post-fire response on non-ag lands; alternative energy; non-ag rain gardens/rain harvesting; non-ag culvert replacement; and instream habitat enhancement that does not also improve water quality).

2023-27 ODA Ag Water Quality Support Grant Program Policies

1. *This grant is contingent on funding that the ODA AgWQ Program may receive from the legislature in the 2025-2027 budget. Confirmation of funding is expected by July 2025.*
2. ODA will not fund grant administration indirect costs that exceed 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs for the grant.
3. Match is not required.
4. Grant applications must identify specific proposal activities that will be accomplished by June 30, 2027.
5. Grant minimum is \$20,000; grant maximum is \$149,000, per grant or applicant.
6. Expenses can only be billed from the date of the grant award and must be incurred by June 30, 2027.
7. 2025-27 ODA AgWQ Support Grant applications will not be accepted after the due date. Clarification of information may be sought from the applicant during the evaluation process, but additional or new information may not be accepted after the application deadline.
8. ODA will review grant deliverables on an interim basis to ensure that identifiable results are being accomplished as part of the overall proposed objectives. Future project funding (after 2025-2027) will be subject to availability of funds, previous project performance, and priorities within each grant cycle.

9. Awarded grants will be subject to review by the ODA AgWQ Program as follows: For all grants, ODA may request verification of reports, documents, receipts and invoices submitted for related activities.
10. After a grant agreement has been signed between grantee and ODA, any changes to the original submitted proposal must be approved by ODA and amendments to the agreement may be required.
11. Applicant understands that information submitted with this proposal is subject to laws pertaining to public records.
12. The length of the funded project will follow the timeline for awards not extending past June 30, 2027. Interim reports for grants will be due August 12, 2026, a draft final report outlining the project's outcomes will be submitted to ODA no later than June 15, 2027, and the final report must be submitted to ODA no later than August 12, 2027.

Eligible Applicants

A grant applicant must be one of these legal entities: State of Oregon Soil and Water Conservation District, recognized Watershed Council or their fiscal sponsor. The applicant also must carry appropriate liability insurance and have a Federal Employee Identification Number (FEIN) or current non-profit tax ID status.

Please direct questions on the 2025-2027 ODA Ag Water Quality Support Grant Application or proposal development to Amanda Robinson: amanda.robinson@oda.oregon.gov, 503.551.8448.

Proposal Development Assistance

ODA Regional Water Quality Specialists (RWQSs) are available to assist you in developing your proposal before you submit an application. Consultation with a RWQS prior to submission is a criteria point considered during the application review process. Applicants that collaborate with their RWQS and clearly incorporate feedback/suggestions will be given greater priority in the selection process. See staff contact information at: <https://oda.direct/AgWQManagementMap>.

2025-27 ODA AG Water Quality Support Grant Application Instructions

Applicant

This should be the individual who receives all correspondence about the proposal, except as noted below.

Project Manager

Provide the name of the person who should be contacted on behalf of the applicant about the technical aspects of the proposal during application review and proposal implementation.

Payee

This should be the person and/or organization who will be responsible for tracking, accounting for project funds, and compliance with the grant agreement conditions.

PROPOSAL INFORMATION

1. Did you consult with regional ODA Agriculture Water Quality Staff to help develop your proposal? If yes, who?

2. Does your proposal meet one or more of the following? Check all that apply

A. Agricultural Land Condition Assessments.

B. Monitoring.

C. Outreach and Engagement.

D. Technical Assistance.

3. Summary

The summary provides important reference information for the proposal and will be the first place ODA staff and technical reviewers look to understand the location and components of the proposed activities. In writing your summary, be clear and concise, and keep your description of the proposed activities succinct. Summary should be up to 215 words and/or 1,800 characters (with spaces) and address all four main parts listed: project location, problem statement, proposed work, and project partners.

4. Project location

Describe the general geographic area (e.g. name of Management Area Plan, watersheds [HUCs], region, etc.) for which the applicant plans to conduct activities for this grant.

5. Elaborate on the Area Plan Problem briefly stated in the Proposal Summary

Briefly describe the challenge this proposal seeks to address and how it will make progress toward achieving Area Plan goals. Refer to Chapter 3 of the Area Plan for goals and Measurable Objectives.

For example:

- The agricultural land assessment will identify XXX agricultural water quality concerns
- Outreach and engagement workshop series will teach best management practices to address agricultural water quality and soil health concerns
- Monitoring plan will establish current conditions in order to address Area Plan and TMDL listings with future technical assistance or outreach efforts

6. Proposed work

Briefly describe the specific proposed activities that will support the problem statement. Explain the proposals goals, objectives, and measurable results.

Goal – Goal statements should articulate the desired outcomes and the AgWQ benefit. A goal is a broad statement of what you wish to accomplish. For the Ag Water Quality program, the primary goals are to:

- Prevent and control water pollution from agricultural activities and soil erosion
- Achieve applicable water quality standards, including those set by TMDLs and GWMA

Your stated goal for this grant application should address one or both of these Ag Water Quality program goals. Please summarize your goal(s) in a few sentences.

Objectives – Objectives support and refine goals by breaking them down into tangible steps. Each objective should be SMART: “Specific, Measurable, achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound” If applicable, list the specific Measurable Objectives and/or Adaptive Management Goals from the local Ag Water Quality Area Management Plan that will be addressed by this proposal (see Area Plans). Keep the following in mind when preparing your objectives:

- State your objectives in quantifiable time-bound terms.
- Objectives should be stated as tangible actions or change.
- Objectives should identify the target audience; community being served or natural resource benefit.
- Objectives need to be realistic and capable of being achieved within the grant period.
- Objectives must be worded in a specific, measurable manner demonstrating progress toward achieving the proposals goals.

Outcomes – These are the specific, measurable results or changes that occur as a direct consequence of the project. Outcomes are important for the success of the project.

- State your outcomes in quantifiable time-bound terms.
- Do not need to be achieved within a grant period.
- Broader implications of the project.
- Should be a direct product of achieving the goal.

Deliverables – These are quantifiable goods or services that are developed at various stages of a project and help to keep projects on track. Deliverables can include monitoring reports, count of people trained, survey responses, workshop materials developed, etc.

Example 1: Proposed Work

Goal: Improved water quality of Mill Creek by increasing shade on stream

Objective 1: Engage 10 interested landowners in developing 50 ft stream buffer to provide shade to Mill Creek by June 30, 2027

Outcome 1: Develop restoration planting projects to establish riparian vegetation with 7 landowners by 2030

Deliverable: Planting plans for 50 ft riparian buffer for 7 landowners

Objective 2: Deploy 15 hobo monitors at 15 sites along Mill Creek by June 30, 2026

Outcome 2: SWCD or WC has established baseline data to assess the impact of riparian planting

Deliverable: Temperature monitoring data submitted with annual report

Example 2: Proposed Work

Goal: Gain better understanding of the current condition of the Huron Watershed to more effectively implement water quality restoration grants

Objective 1: Acquire new riparian survey data on 60+ miles of tributaries in the Huron Watershed. Contact eight local groups in the next year that have engaged in riparian surveys on 60+ miles of tributaries in the Huron Watershed. Acquire and then compile all existing datasets.

Outcome 1: Produce an assessment with datasets gathered from local groups to help meet the riparian vegetation Management Area-wide Measurable Objective outlined in the Area Plan

Deliverable 1: Survey completion completed in early spring 2027

Deliverable 2: Assessment report by June 30, 2027

7. To accomplish goals identified in this proposal, will other grant programs be utilized? If yes, briefly describe the other proposal(s). **Which elements of the proposal will ODA funds be used for?** Be specific to activity and specific timing of the activity.

8. If you have an existing SIA, describe how these grant funds will be used differently than, or in addition to, what you are already committed to doing with existing SIA grant funds? How will these funds augment or enhance your SIA efforts? (This question only applies to where there is an existing SIA.)

9. Are there additional partners? Who are the additional partners and what are their roles and responsibilities supporting this proposal? Please note any collaborations with Tribal nations and minority groups (including, but not limited to women, people with disabilities, people of color, LGBTQIA+ individuals).

10. Will the proposal be addressing an agricultural water quality issue in a Groundwater Management Area? If yes, which one?

11. Will the proposal be addressing an agricultural water quality Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)? If yes, which one?

12. Describe any aspects of the proposed work that may relate to climate change mitigation or adaptation. Example of climate-related benefits: creating complex habitats and shade for aquatic species seeking refuge from hotter summer temperatures and slowing and spreading water in the floodplain, helping to minimize flood risk in downstream communities. In addition to providing stream shade, the restored riparian area will sequester carbon, as we are providing for 5 years of plant establishment activities to ensure good vegetation survival.

13. Insurance information. If applicable, select all the activities that are part of your proposal. Below activities will require additional insurance.

- Applicant, staff or volunteers are working with kids related to this project
- Applicant staff or contractors transporting volunteers on water
- Applicant, staff or contractor will be using Drone/Unmanned Aircraft Systems for survey

Attachments

All uploads/attachments must be in PDF format. Consolidate all documents into one PDF. Include only relevant documents, choose optional attachments below if it supports your proposal. Reviewers have limited time to read large documents, but links may be provided if desired so reviewers can access additional information if they have questions. Supporting documents must be attached, or your application may be rejected.

- Grant applications must be uploaded to our AgWQ Support Grant Website:
<https://files.oda.state.or.us/?login=AGWQSupportGrant>
- Application must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. March 5, 2025
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** All files must be submitted with the following file naming convention, or they risk getting lost in the secure file server:
 - 2025AgWQ_[SWCD or WC NAME]_[TYPE OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENT]
 - Example: 2025AgWQ_LincolnSWCD_BudgetForm
- **Budget Form (required).**
- **Maps (optional).** Attach at least one-color area location map for any/all proposal types including watershed assessments, where outreach and engagement will be delivered, or monitoring plans. Minimum requirements for maps: author of map, date, scale, north arrow, HUC boundaries of the area and what delineation was used (e.g. HUC's, management areas, SWCD's, WC's, and/or etc.), associated Area Plan name, identifiers that help demonstrate location (e.g. major highways, major towns, county lines). Additional detailed maps of the proposed site(s) showing different proposal components help reviewers understand the whole story.
- **Photos (optional).** Provide photographs to support area descriptions as needed. Ideally attach a compilation of photos with two photos on each page. Label each photo and note what it illustrates, including a GPS location for each photo if needed.
- **Charts, Figures, and Tables (optional).** Figures and tables may be provided to support further understanding of the Problem Statement and Proposed Solution uploaded as a PDF.
- **Support Letters (preferred).** Provide letters from key partners, participating private landowners, or others.

Appendix A: Allowable Expenses

Examples of Allowable Costs for 2025-27 ODA Ag Water Quality Support Grants: An expense tracking sheet and request for release of funds will need to be turned in for payment/reimbursement.

Salaries, wages and benefits

- Salaries, wages and benefits
- In-house staff of grantee
- Hours worked for this proposal
- Gross wages, payroll taxes, health insurance, retirement benefits
- Accrued leave liability
- Workers compensation insurance

Contracted services:

- Non-grantee employee and their travel
- Contracted bookkeeping (for the tracking of this grant)
- Contracted drone-related expenses
- Engineering and technical consulting
- Proposal specific website development

Materials and supplies (consumable items- used up during the grant, anything less than \$500):

- General office supplies (e.g., paper, pens, printing costs, etc.)
- Postage
- First aid kits and refills
- Promotional items (flyers, newspaper articles, brochures, etc.)
- Monitoring materials (cost under \$500; e.g., temperature logger, soil moisture probe, stakes, etc.)
- Food, room rental, remote meeting equipment and software

Travel: A travel log will need to be turned in if a line item is more than \$250

- Mileage, lodging, per diem, parking,

Monitoring Equipment (has to be owned by the District or WC)(cannot be a contractor cost)

- Cost of \$500 or more per item, e.g., SONDE

Other:

- Meeting refreshments, meeting room rental
- Insurance (workers comp belongs in salaries)
- Social media or newspaper advertisements

Appendix B: Drone use

A “drone” is as an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) and all equipment attached to it for safe and efficient operation. The combination of UAV and equipment is also known as an unmanned aerial system (UAS).

Drones are a recognized method for surveying restoration project locations, planning restoration projects, tracking progress during implementation, and monitoring results post-implementation. ODA 2025-27 Ag Water Quality Support Grant funds are eligible for drone related expenses. Funds cannot be used for the purchase of a drone, but for related expenses.

Applicants/grantees must include a justification for drone-related expenses when applying. This includes explaining why the applicant/grantee needs drone-related expenses to enhance the project and the reason why contracting drone expenses was chosen.

Agreements, Notifications, and Rules

Language must be included in landowner agreements or public land agreements for projects involving drones. Landowner agreements are required for any landowner or public land whose property is being directly flown over and/or recorded. The agreement shall demonstrate that the landowner/public land manager and grantee mutually agree when a drone may be flown over the property and record images; shall include a description of where resulting photos, videos, or other products will be stored; and shall include how this data will be used.

Flight Path Notification

Grantees should consider notifying landowners who may be able to see the drone while in flight. This consideration is different from a landowner agreement. This refers to notifying landowners who will likely be able to see the drone at times during its flight path, although their property will not be directly flown over and/or recorded during the flight. For example, a notification may include, but is not limited to, speaking to landowners, distributing handouts/postcards, and/or posting information on a website or in a newspaper.

Federal Aviation Administration Rules

Grantees using ODA 2025-27 AgWQ Support Grant funds are required to follow the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Part 107 rules and regulations. Grantees must also comply with any state, county, local, or tribal laws and regulations related to the use of drones.