

Cost Share Program Process

To clarify the cost share program process, the following checklist has been developed. Some landowners may have different scenarios but the majority will follow this process. Prior to Step #11, the landowner can choose to drop out of the program at any time.

The specific responsibilities of the landowner are highlighted.

1. A District employee makes an initial site visit and writes a conservation plan.
2. Once the conservation plan is complete and approved by the Board, the District employee will review the plan with the landowner. **The landowner will sign the conservation plan.**
3. **If the landowner is eligible for the cost-share program and wants to participate, the landowner will sign and submit Form I and a W-9.**
4. A cost effective solution will be devised based on the practice for the landowner (this may take several visits to the property and thorough discussion). Estimated costs, cost-share, and potential tax-credit are pulled together for the practice. Once all information is collected, the practice will be presented to the Technical Review Committee (TRC) for review.
5. The Technical Review Committee (TRC) reviews the practice. The practice will be evaluated amongst other cost-share practices submitted that month. If funding is available and the practice scores high on the evaluation, the TRC can submit the practice to the Board (BOD) for final approval.
 - *The TRC and Board meet about once a month*
6. Once the practice is approved by the BOD, installation of the practice can begin.
7. **The landowner is responsible for installing, or finding and paying a contractor to install, the practice. The District will provide technical assistance throughout the process.**
 - *If the estimated costs for one of the components is greater than \$30,000, the landowner is responsible for obtaining 3 bids from different contractors (i.e. if the estimated cost for installing just the buffer fencing is greater than \$30,000, the landowner would need 3 bids)*
8. **Itemized and dated bills must be kept for all the expenses incurred for the practice. These bills must be submitted to the District at the completion of the practice for review. If the landowner will be installing the practice, then the landowner needs to keep track of his/her time (hours) of labor.**
9. Upon practice completion, District employees will visit the site to certify that the practice has been installed to specifications.
10. If the practice passes certification, payment is made based upon itemized bills and approved cost-share. If the final costs exceed the estimate and has a valid reason for being higher than expected, the District employee can request additional funding from the Board. Additional funding is never guaranteed. Additional funding cannot exceed the caps set forth by the cost-share program.
 - *Depending on the practice, a tax credit certificate may also be issued for 25% of the landowner's expenditures for the installation of the practice.*
11. **The check is given to the landowner who will sign Part III of the contract, committing to maintain the practice for its lifespan.**
 - *For most practices, the lifespan starts January 1 of the following year. (i.e. if a 10 year practice is finished on March 1, 2018, the lifespan starts Jan 1, 2019 and must be maintained until Dec. 31, 2029.)*
12. **The owner is responsible for maintenance of the full system and allowing access to District personnel for random spot checks for the lifespan of the practice.**