

Heritage Enhancement Grant Administrative Requirements

Insurance: Grantees working on WMA's must provide evidence of liability insurance prior to the work beginning. Grantees are liable for activities of contractors working under their contract and it is strongly suggested that they obtain evidence of contractor liability insurance before any contractors begin work. This will protect both the Grantee and the State. See Grant Insurance Requirements on the HE Grant website for details, <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/habitat/heritage.html>

Volunteers: All chapter volunteers and/or Grantee employees will be required to sign volunteer agreements before working on WMAs. This will cover them with Workers Compensation insurance for any work site accidents as well as any accidents while operating DNR vehicles. Volunteer hours must be reported on an annual basis. Volunteers may not be paid. Additional details below.

Pesticide Application: Non-restricted or restricted use pesticides applied to WMAs will be done by or under the direct supervision of a licensed non-commercial pesticide applicator certified for "General Ground" and "Rights-of-Way" or by a licensed commercial applicator. A completed Pesticide Application form must be turned into the Area Wildlife Manager within 30 days of final annual application.

Prescribed Fire: See Requirements for Contract Personnel Burning on State Lands, next page.

Archaeological Review: Projects that will displace more than one or two cubic yards of topsoil must have an archaeological review before beginning. Reviews will be done to standards needed for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Reviews will be coordinated by DNR Area staff.

Permits: All permits and approvals for projects on WMAs will be the responsibility of the DNR Area staff. Work may not begin until all permits and approvals have been acquired.

Use of DNR Equipment: Grantee may use DNR equipment at the Area Wildlife Supervisors discretion. Grantee must sign a DNR "Permit To Use Equipment" agreement before using.

Seed/Plant Approval: All seed must be clean and certified. Seed mix and plant lists must be approved by the Area Wildlife Manager before purchasing.

Requirements For Contract Personnel Conducting Prescribed Burns on State Lands

1. Contractors must coordinate with the local Area Wildlife Manager to follow the specific regulations outlined in *MN DNR Operational Order 47* at <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/rxfire/index.html>. This includes having an approved burn plan written by DNR staff. All burns must be conducted according to this plan and within prescription window
2. All contract personnel will have a minimum of S-130/190 and the annual safety refresher. Proof that personnel meet these requirements must be provided to the local Area Wildlife Manager prior to the burn.
3. All contract personnel will meet the training and experience requirements for their prescribed burn position and burn complexity. Proof that personnel meet these requirements must be provided to the local Area Wildlife Manager prior to the burn.
4. All contract personnel will have the required Personal Protective Equipment.
5. Radios and other communication equipment used by contract personnel will be programmed to the radio frequency used by local Wildlife staff, including contingency resources and emergency channels.
6. A DNR Burn Boss will be on site for all burns, except as follows: Contract personnel may burn independently with prior approval of the Regional Wildlife Manager. A Special Use Permit giving this approval will be issued to the contractor prior to the burn.
7. A contractor burning independently will notify the local Area Wildlife Manager before the burn begins, on the day before or the day of the burn.

MINNESOTA DNR VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

General Definition A volunteer project is a non-compensated activity or assistance provided by an individual or a group of individuals to accomplish a DNR-identified need.

Allowable Projects

1. Volunteers may be used in all parts of DNR projects management and operation.
2. All levels and types of skills may be used. A volunteer may perform any type of non-restricted work provided it is work which supplements--not supplants--paid staff; and provided it is work which:
 - a. would not get done at the time because of funding and/or personnel limitations.
 - b. Creates new projects or service.
 - c. Fills gaps in existing projects or services.
 - d. Does not cause a layoff, or shorten an employee's work hours.
3. The DNR Bureau of Human Resources should be consulted when questions arise regarding labor relations.

Restricted Projects

1. No volunteer should be required to perform any type of work which he/she does not feel comfortable doing, or does not willingly agree to do.
2. No volunteer should be assigned to work for which he/she is not physically capable.
3. Volunteers may assist in certain law monitoring and regulation functions (i.e. reporting poachers, violations, etc.) but must not be assigned duties, which would place them in a life-threatening situation. Volunteers may not issue citations or carry firearms.

Registering a Volunteer:

To register a person as a DNR Volunteer you need to follow these steps:

1. Have person complete and sign a Minnesota DNR Volunteer Application.
2. Staff needs to complete the Minnesota DNR Volunteer Agreement form. Review duties, expectations, and terms of agreement with volunteer.
3. Provide the "Notice of Enrollment in a Certified Managed Care Plan for Workers' Compensation Injuries and Illness" for volunteer to read.
4. Volunteer must sign agreement (if under 18 years of age, a parent or guardian must also sign.)
5. Staff needs to file the application and agreement forms at their location. Keep these originals to verify the person as a DNR Volunteer and for future reference in case of injury or changes to the agreement.
6. Large groups of volunteers **do not** need to fill out individual applications and agreements. Use the Minnesota DNR Group Volunteer Registration & Report form to list everyone. This one form acts as the application, agreement, and time record to register everyone as a DNR Volunteer and report their hours.
7. A copy of volunteer applications should be sent to the DNR Volunteer Programs Office **only if** the volunteer wants to be included on the mailing list for the DNR Volunteer Opportunities newsletter. The newsletter is also available on the website at www.dnr.state.mn.us
8. Staff needs to keep track of the numbers of people and the hours donated by DNR volunteers. This information is collected each fall at the end of the fiscal year and is used to track volunteer trends and needs within the DNR.

Workers' Compensation

1. A person accepted as a volunteer for the Department of Natural Resources is considered an "employee" for Workers' Compensation.
2. See Minnesota Statutes 84.089 on "Volunteers in Natural Resources Program" and MS 176.011, Subdivision 9, for exact wording on Workers' Compensation.

3. Each unit using volunteers is financially responsible for its own Workers' Compensation claims.
4. "Notice of Enrollment in a Certified Managed Care Plan for Workers' Compensation Injuries and Illness" will be provided to each volunteer to read.

Court Ordered Community Service

Individuals working under the Sentence to Service (STS) Program or court ordered community service programs are NOT considered DNR volunteers. The MN Department of Corrections is responsible for these people's Workers Compensation. Contact your DNR Region Administrator for the name of your regional STS Coordinator.

Campground Hosts

1. Campground Host programs are administered separately by the Divisions of Forestry, and Parks and Recreation. See their joint application form for details.
2. Individuals accepted as Campground Hosts are considered DNR volunteers.

Criminal Background Checks:

Criminal background checks are required on all volunteers who meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Volunteer will be working with youth or vulnerable adults.
- Volunteer will be working in a remote setting with one or more other volunteers and/or members of the public including youth or vulnerable adults.
- Volunteer will be working with funds and/or valuable equipment.
- Background checks will not be done on minors.
- State Parks requires that a criminal background check be done on all prospective Campground Hosts and Volunteer Naturalists.
- Enforcement will continue to do background checks on their own volunteers.
- Each division/bureau may decide for itself if it feels a background check is necessary for a certain volunteer position.

Volunteers and the volunteer's supervisor must complete and sign an "Informed Consent Form for Criminal Background Check - Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources." This form must be hand delivered or faxed to the DNR Human Resources Bureau at 651/296-6494 for the check to be done. Please refer to the "Minnesota DNR Criminal Background Check Policy & Guidelines, January 2002" for details.

Safety

1. Volunteers must observe the same safety precautions and use the same safety equipment as employees.
2. Volunteers must not be assigned to hazardous work conditions unless the particular volunteer has special training and qualifications to perform such work.

Vehicles

When authorized by a supervisor, volunteers may drive state vehicles, while on state business, provided they have a valid driver's license. Volunteers may operate state equipment under the same rules and conditions as employees. Volunteers operating or riding in any vehicle, while on state business, are subject to the same seat belt requirements as are employees.

When driving state-owned vehicles, gasoline must be obtained from self-serve gasoline pumps at stations which will accept state credit cards.

Volunteers using their own personal vehicle on state business must have a valid driver's license and carry their own personal auto insurance.

Equipment

Volunteers assigned to operate machinery or equipment (such as chain saws, power tools, specialized equipment or vehicles) must have first demonstrated their proficiency in

operation of that equipment to the satisfaction of the responsible supervisor. All applicable age and licensing restrictions and regulations related to the operation of machinery or equipment must be adhered to.

Use of Personal Property

Volunteers should use state-owned equipment and property in volunteer work, rather than their own personal property.

Reimbursement

Reimbursing the expenses of volunteers (meals, mileage, lodging, etc.) is at the discretion of the division/bureau based on their budget. Reimbursement conditions should be discussed with the volunteer.

Harassment:

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has adopted a statement of policy against harassment. The policy includes the procedures for reporting and resolving issues brought to the attention of the DNR. This policy statement can be found in the Minnesota DNR Affirmative Action Plan.

Intellectual Property Rights:

All right, title, and interest in all intellectual property which may be conceived or originate, either individually or jointly by others, and which arises out of the performance of volunteer activities with the DNR, will be the property of the State of Minnesota and are hereby assigned to the State. A volunteer must also agree, upon request of the State to execute all papers and perform all other acts necessary to assist the State to obtain and register copyrights and patents on such materials. Works of authorship created by a volunteer in the performance of his/her activities with the DNR shall be considered "works made for hire" as defined in the U.S. Copyright Act. Volunteers must sign an agreement form in order to assign these rights to the state.

Recognition:

Recognition items are no longer available from the DNR Volunteer Programs office due to budget constraints. Staff may purchase their own volunteer recognition items following MS 84.027, subdivision 12 outlining the authority to give gifts or incentives.

Questions

Persons with questions on volunteer-related matters should consult DNR Volunteer Programs, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4036
651-259-5249 or 651-297-7388 (fax)