

Date Updated: December 20, 2019

## Changes to Coastal Program Grant Projects

You have entered into a grant agreement with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). This agreement is a legally binding document that includes the terms and conditions of the award, the work plan (tasks and products), and the approved budget.

During the grant period, it may be necessary to make changes to the original terms of the grant agreement. Generally, these modifications could include changes to the grant timeframe, to the total budget or budget category, or to the scope of work. Should a situation arise that requires any changes to the project, it is the responsibility of the Grantee to communicate immediately with the Grants Specialist.

These instructions provide guidance to submit a change request for your Minnesota's Lake Superior Coastal Program grant funded project; however, it will not be able to address all issues and potential requests. For questions regarding the grant agreement, amendments, or change requests, contact your assigned Grants Specialist.

### Grants Specialist

Cynthia Poyhonen

[Cynthia.Poyhonen@state.mn.us](mailto:Cynthia.Poyhonen@state.mn.us)

(218) 834-1447

### Identify the Need

Contact the Grants Specialist before submitting a request to confirm if the request is necessary; to determine if the modification is a major or minor change; and identify what follow-up is required.

### Extensions

Grantees who cannot complete project activities before the expiration date in the grant agreement may request a no-cost extension. Before the DNR can approve an extension, they must first request and receive an extension on the federal award that funds your project. Grantees should communicate with the Coastal Program well in advance of agreement expiration if an extension is likely.

The length of the extension may vary but cannot extend beyond the federal award. Generally, requests are three to six months; however, a longer timeframe may be necessary to accommodate an additional field season.

## Change in Scope

Changes to a project that vary from the Grant Agreement require written approval from the Coastal Program. This includes, but is not limited to out of state travel; change in indirect cost rates; change to a data management plan; or changes to the work plan and products as described in Attachment B.

## Change in Budget

In Attachment B of the grant agreement, the “Task Funding” section is the approved budget.

Your approved budget includes grant and local match amounts distributed between predefined categories (e.g., salary, fringe, travel). Each request for reimbursement draws down funds from each category individually. The Grantee may move up to 10% of the total grant amount between approved categories without permission.

Beyond this 10% threshold, the Grantee should communicate any changes to the project budget to the Coastal Program. The program must approve all changes before they occur. Costs incurred by Grantees without approval may not be reimbursable and are at the risk of the Grantee.

### *Other possible budget changes*

- **Change in local match funds:** The Grantee must provide and document local (non-federal) commitment of funds; the amount varies based on grant (see Section 4 of the agreement). The Grantee should contact the Coastal program if they anticipate any changes to the proposed match, including but not limited to source, cost category, or amount.
- **Decrease in total grant funds:** If a Grantee does not anticipate expending the entire grant amount, notify the Coastal Program as soon as possible.
- **Increase in total grant funds:** Any change to the overall grant amount requires a written amendment to the original agreement and is at the discretion of the Coastal Program.

## Submit the request

Grantees must submit requests in writing to the Coastal Program. Grantees may submit requests by either mail or email. **Email is the preferred method** ([mlscp.dnr@state.mn.us](mailto:mlscp.dnr@state.mn.us)). Mail requests must be on organization letterhead and be addressed to the DNR, Minnesota’s Lake Superior Coastal Program, 1568 Highway 2, Two Harbors, MN 55616.

The Grantee’s authorized representative should send the request or be copied on the email to ensure compliance with the grant agreement (Section 6).

## For an extension

Include project accomplishments to date, explain reasons why the project has not adhered to the timeline or other justification for the extension request, and detail activities for project completion in the time requested. The Coastal Program will judge extension requests on individual merit; the DNR reserves the right to deny any request for extension.

The grantee should submit extension requests a minimum of 75 days prior to project expiration.

### For a change in scope

Describe the change and any modifications to the budget and/or activities, including products.

Grantees should submit requests before the activities would occur, recommended 30 days. Grantees should not proceed with the work in the request until approved by the Coastal Program. Any work done without approval is at the Grantee's risk and may not be reimbursable.

A major modification may require NOAA approval; during which time, work may be suspended. The NOAA review may take 60-120 days. The Grantee should plan accordingly.

Depending on review and project changes, it may be difficult to complete the project within the federal award timeframes. Because of this, the Coastal Program may not approve major modifications to project activities.

### For a budget change

Provide a brief narrative explanation of the changes proposed. Indicate the amount of funds reduced and the amount added to each budget category. Explain why each change is needed as it relates to the outcomes.

It is the Grantee's responsibility to submit budget requests in writing, before approval is required.

#### Example

We are requesting funds be moved from the Supply Category to Personnel (Salary and Fringe).

We are requesting this change because we need more staff time to accomplish Outcome 1. To pay for these costs, we are able to borrow the supplies needed for Outcome 2 from XYZ rather than purchase them.

Category	Approved Budget	Revised Budget (mm/dd/yyyy)	Amount Spent	Balance
Salary	\$10,000	\$12,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
Fringe	\$2,000	\$2,500	\$1,250	\$1,250
Supplies	\$4,500	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$1,000

## Receive Approval

### Minor Changes

Minor modifications generally involve changes to the budget categories or small changes to the project activities. The Coastal Program will approve minor modifications through email correspondence. The Grantee must save the email as a record, per the retention requirements. We will not mail a letter unless requested.

## Major Changes

A major modification, such as an extension or significant change in scope, requires an amendment to the grant agreement. The Grantee and DNR will process an amendment to the original Grant Agreement upon the approval of the request. The Grantee will be required to sign the amendment. After the DNR signs the amendment and returns an executed amendment to the Grantee, the Grantee may proceed with project work.

**Both the Grantee and DNR must sign the amendment prior to project expiration.**

## Changes not permitted

You may not add dirt-moving activities to Task 306 or STAR projects.

Contact the Grants Specialist to determine eligibility.