

Status of the State Lands ILF Mitigation Grant Program

A Report from the WDNR to the Wisconsin State Legislature



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Cover photo: The Kreyer Creek West wetland mitigation bank in Monroe County in 2022.

Purpose of the Report

This report is submitted to the Legislature to fulfill the requirements of [s. 281.37\(8\) Wis. Stats.](#), which requires the Department of Natural Resources (Department or DNR) to submit “a report analyzing the effectiveness of the first 5 years of the mitigation program and making recommendations for changes to the program.” The report provides background and current status of the program as well as recommendations for changes to the program.

Program Background

The State Lands In-Lieu Fee (ILF) Mitigation Grant Program was promulgated from the 2017 Act 183. The Act required that a grant program be established to award grants to nonprofit organizations to conduct ILF mitigation projects on Department lands.

Under [s. 281.37\(3\) Wis. Stats.](#), in 2018 the Department was required to identify state lands that are appropriate to include in this program. The Department completed this in late 2018. A GIS layer was created showing appropriate state lands. The layer, named “Potential WWCT State Land Grant Sites” is available on the DNR’s [Surface Water Data Viewer](#) website.

Under [s. 281.37\(4\)\(a\) Wis. Stats.](#), also in 2018 the Department was required to issue a request for proposals (RFP) from nonprofit organizations for grants to conduct ILF wetland mitigation projects on Department lands. The ILF Program opened the first State Lands Grant RFP in 2018. This State Lands Grant RFP is available in conjunction with the “standard” ILF Program RFP. The State Lands Grant RFP differs from the “standard” ILF Program RFP in that it is only available to nonprofit organizations for potential projects located only on Department lands. Both RFPs are updated quarterly and are open as adequate funding is available in different service areas across the state.

Program Status

To date, no applications have been received under the State Lands Grant Program RFP and no projects have been selected, funded, or implemented.

Recommendations for Changes to the Program

Implementation of successful ILF Mitigation projects requires specialized experience. This experience is often possessed by private environmental consulting firms and not by nonprofit organizations. Because this grant program is only open to nonprofits who often don’t have the capacity to complete ILF mitigation projects, it is not surprising that no projects have ever been implemented from this grant program. Allowing private companies to also be eligible for this grant program could increase interest and use of the grant program.