

Healthy Lakes & Rivers Partnership (HLRP)

Central Minnesota's lakes and rivers are among our greatest environmental, recreational and economic assets. At no time in state history have our surface waters been at greater risk than they are today. Intense development pressure, spread of invasive species, and untreated wastewater are the most critical concerns.

Historically, Minnesota has relied on its governmental agencies to manage these resources. But they can't do it alone. That's why the foundation has chosen to invest in lake and river associations, the members of which have a vested interest in good stewardship. HLRP works with these associations to develop strategic management plans, restore shorelines, upgrade septic systems, enhance habitat, and help local officials make informed choices.

PROGRAM >

HLRP aims to equip associations with the resources to evaluate their water conditions and enhance water quality by building bridges between nonprofits, agencies and local citizens. About 5-8 people from each participating lake or river association attend two leadership training sessions and champion efforts to identify opportunities and create an action plan. Recent results include:

- *Cost-sharing programs with property owners to encourage lake-friendly landscaping practices.*
- *Aquatic surveys and management plans for invasive exotic vegetation.*
- *2,000+ septic inspections and low-interest loans to replace or upgrade noncompliant systems.*

PROCESS >

Associations may receive up to \$2,000 in performance-based grants for completing four key milestones:

- *Attend two leadership training sessions to enhance small-group communication, summarize existing water conditions, develop a management plan and connect with resources.*
- *Host a community visioning session to identify opportunities, assets and projects, and then combine the conditions and visioning results into a strategic management plan.*
- *Implement high-priority items.*
- *Continue implementation of management plan and execute key activities that treat causes, not symptoms. (Each association is then eligible for \$5,000 in additional grant funds.)*

PARTICIPATE >

Selection to HLRP is highly competitive. The foundation will only consider joint-applications from 4-8 associations that are willing to work together in the same county or watershed.

