

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 7, 2020

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Yahara WINS now accepting grant applications for innovative phosphorus reduction projects

Applications accepted through May 27

MADISON, WI – The Yahara Watershed Improvement Network, or Yahara WINS, is now accepting grant applications from area organizations for innovative, low-cost projects that will help reduce the amount of phosphorus in local waterways. Excessive phosphorus can cause dangerous and unsightly algae blooms in local lakes, rivers and streams, reduce water quality and harm aquatic life.

“Improving the quality of our local waterways through phosphorus reduction requires collaborative, adaptive and innovative approaches,” says Martye Griffin, president, Yahara WINS executive committee. “Our Innovation Grant Program is designed to encourage big-picture thinking to help reduce phosphorus pollution by minimizing the risks and costs associated with testing and implementing new ideas.”

Yahara WINS seeks to invest \$50,000 in its Innovation Grant Project. Proposed projects can target either agricultural runoff or urban stormwater, the two primary contributors of phosphorus to waterways. The maximum award for a single project is \$10,000.

Projects should be relatively new or untested and have compelling value as a test case. The projects are not required to take place in the Yahara watershed as long as the lessons learned can be applied in the watershed. Recent examples include demonstration projects on new agricultural practices, improved and innovative leaf management techniques, and whole pond alum treatment.

Yahara WINS has offered grants since 2013 as part of an effort to reduce phosphorus through low-cost methods. Since inception, the grant program has awarded approximately \$338,500 and kept an estimated 66,000 pounds of phosphorus out of local waters. One pound of phosphorus can potentially create up to 500 pounds of blue-green algae.

Yahara WINS is comprised of partners across more than 30 area municipal and county entities, farm groups, water stakeholder organizations and other local entities. Yahara WINS partners pool their resources and provide funding for practices that reduce all sources of phosphorus runoff as part of a 20-year project to achieve water quality goals for the Yahara Watershed.

For questions about the innovation grants or to submit materials, email Kathy Lake, Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District pollution prevention manager, at KathyL@madsewer.org. Applications will be accepted until May 27, 2020. For grant details, visit www.madsewer.org and search “Yahara WINS.”

ABOUT YAHARA WINS

The Yahara Watershed Improvement Network, known as Yahara WINS, is a groundbreaking initiative to achieve clean water goals for the Yahara Watershed. In this effort, community partners, led by Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District, are collaborating on a strategy called watershed adaptive management in which all sources of phosphorus in the watershed work together to reduce nutrient runoff. The work began in 2012, and following a four-year pilot effort, has transitioned to the full-scale implementation.