

**STATE GUIDELINES
FOR THE
AERI Wetland Restoration**

**Grant Period:
January 1, 2025 - June 30, 2029**

**Oklahoma Conservation Commission
in cooperation with
Oklahoma's 84 Conservation Districts**

I. GRANT PERIOD

The grant period may be extended to December 31, 2029, if needed.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for OCC's wetland restoration relating to the NFWF AERI Southern Great Plains Wetlands and Prairie Collaborative grant.

Please see the [Grant ID 83949 Full Proposal](#) for details.

III. ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

The total amount of funds allocated for wetland restoration is \$1,065,000.00. Funds that are dedicated to site specific restoration projects will be implemented as a cost share. OCC will reimburse landowners on a unit-cost basis for eligible practices at the rates specified in OCC Wetland Program Reimbursement Table. These rates were determined by OCC Wetlands Program based on 90% of the fair market value. Payment will be calculated by multiplying the approved quantity of completed practice units (e.g., acres, linear feet, or other applicable units) by the corresponding reimbursement rate.

Reimbursement rates may be periodically reviewed and updated to reflect changes in fair market value. Landowners can expect the reimbursement rates associated with their project to be identified during the Landowner Agreement process. The landowner will be required to implement all practices as described in a wetland design developed and approved by OCC's engineer.

IV. PROJECT SELECTION

General Applications are reviewed for AERI eligibility on a rolling basis. If the project is eligible, feasible, and sufficiently aligns with the program, the project will be prioritized based on the criteria described below. Eligible applicants will be contacted by an OCC Wetlands Team Member who will schedule a site visit. If not selected, applicants will receive notification of this decision. This notification is documented in OCC's Wetland Team: Technical Assistance Tracker.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Must be located in the map area below (North Canadian, Cimarron, or Arkansas River watersheds). Specific geographic boundaries may be provided to applicants upon request.

- ### Feasibility:

1. Is there concern with prior permitting?
2. Is the project able to be compliant with legal requirements, including but not limited to cultural resource identification, within a reasonable time and for a reasonable cost?
3. If project moves forward, is there a risk of flooding or other damage to neighboring properties?
4. Is it within 5 miles of an airport/will it require FAA consultation?
5. Will the project require a design beyond internal capacity?
6. Is wetland size a concern?
7. Is there any hydrological or soil concerns?
8. Are there any additional concerns?
9. Is the project cost effective?

Programmatic Alignment:

Wetlands staff will consider the following factors when assessing projects for programmatic alignment.

1. Does the landowner's project, design, and objectives align with OCC's Wetland Program goals of improving the quantity, quality, and biological diversity of wetlands in Oklahoma?
2. Does the landowner's project, design, and objectives align with *Grant ID 83949*. See *Grant ID 83949* for details.

Priority Criteria:

Wetlands staff will prioritize projects that are determined to be feasible and sufficiently align with program goals based on the following factors:

1. Maximum amount of acres
2. Date of submission (first come first served)
3. Programmatic alignment

V. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Landowner/Operator:

- Submit application
- Work with Wetlands Team to develop design
- Sign off on agreements
- If operator is applicant, both landowner and operator must sign consent form
- Hire contractors and complete work of the approved design
- Submit documentation for reimbursement

OCC Wetlands Team:

- Process application into database
- Review applications for eligibility
- Prioritize selected projects
- Notify applicants and document any decisions regarding application status in the OCC's Wetland Team: Technical Assistance Tracker.
- Facilitate agreements
- Facilitate project design
- Oversee project implementation to design specifications
- Review and approve project to design specifications
- Initiate reimbursement

- Provide contracting assistance or directly hire contractors

Districts:

- Complete the District Participation Form
- Advertise the program
- Assist with submitting applications
- Facilitate landowner reimbursements

Disclaimer:

Meeting minimum eligibility requirements does not guarantee funding. Final award decisions are within the discretion of OCC Wetlands staff based on a wholistic evaluation of all criteria. OCC Wetlands staff will make project funding decisions in the best interest of the grant program, with priority given to the projects that most closely align with its goals and intended outcomes. Any decision to reject an eligible project will be documented with clear reason for this decision.

No known officer or employee of OCC shall have any direct or indirect financial, pecuniary, or other personal interest in the funding of any particular application.

Any material modifications to these guidelines, including changes in total amount of available funding, change in cost share percentage, or changes in eligibility criteria must be approved by the Commission.

Date of Commission Approval: August 3, 2026