

Clean Water Council Scoring Rubric

Purpose and Prioritization: The Clean Water Council’s scoring rubric is a tool to help the Council formally and consistently evaluate proposals using clear, shared criteria. While the rubric provides a structured evaluation framework, the Clean Water Council may prioritize proposals for funding based on its collective judgment, regardless of score, so long as it is consistent with [Minnesota Statutes 114D.50 Subd. 3](#).

Criteria	Criteria Description	Points Available
Water Quality Impact	Water quality is the top priority , with a focus on measurable improvements to surface water, groundwater, or drinking water . Prioritizes implementation of proven or innovative practices, with monitoring, assessment, research, strategy development, or planning included if it directly supports implementation. May also provide co-benefits that address other environmental concerns, including water quantity.*	0-15 _____
Measurable Outcomes, Progress & Feasibility	Defines clear, outcome-based goals and measurable indicators ; shows historical progress or a feasible path to long-term systems change . May include research, monitoring, or planning activities that support measurable outcomes.	0-10 _____
Alignment with CWC Strategic Plan	Aligns with Clean Water Council Strategic Plan and state-approved water plans ; coordinates effectively across local, state, and federal initiatives.	0-10 _____
Financial Leverage & Sustainability	Supplements vs supplants; potential for leveraging local or partner support; if partially funded, program is scalable	0-5 _____
Engagement and Community Value	Engages landowners, local communities, and underserved groups ; addresses environmental justice and equity considerations; direct community support is evident.	0-5 _____
Communications	Clear plan on communicating outcomes ; includes outreach strategies; has a plan or has demonstrated how to raise awareness of CWF through this program (e.g., Logo displayed, CWF mentioned)	0-5 _____

Total Points Received: _____ /50

Scoring Rubric Guide for Council Members

The scoring rubric provides a clear, consistent framework for evaluating proposals in alignment with the Clean Water Council's strategic priorities. Here are a few guiding steps to help with the scoring process:

1. **Review Each Proposal Thoroughly**

Read each proposal carefully and assess how it addresses each rubric criterion.

2. **Score Each Section Independently**

Assign a score within the specified range for each section, based on how strongly the proposal meets that criteria.

3. **Be Consistent**

Use a consistent scoring approach across all proposals you review. For example, if you tend to score conservatively, apply that same approach for each program.

4. **Provide Comments and Questions**

Where possible, include comments or questions for each section. These notes are valuable for agencies and the Interagency Coordination Team to address during or after presentations. This is especially helpful when reviewing multiple proposals over time, as it provides context for Council discussion and follow-up.

5. **Maintain Flexibility**

The rubric is a decision-making tool, not an automatic approval or denial mechanism. Final funding recommendations reflect both rubric scores and the Council's collective judgment.

* Key Considerations for Water Quality Impact:

- **Water Quantity:** While water quality is the top priority, proposals may provide co-benefits for water quantity, such as improving water availability, storage, or flow conditions within a watershed.
- **Other Environmental Concerns:** Additional environmental co-benefits may include habitat restoration, biodiversity, climate resiliency, or protection of natural resources that directly support water quality and quantity goals.