



Issue	Description
1. Goals	Equity Focused Strategic Opportunity Grants are uniquely positioned within EMSWCD’s grants program to support organizations helping to advance EMSWCD’s strategic goals by addressing economic and environmental disparities in areas such as access to land, access to nature, environmental education, or environmental health, and where barriers to current funding programs exist.
2. Outreach / Project Solicitation	Staff develops outreach strategies, materials, and messages to be included on the district website and shared via various communication outreach and engagement efforts. Board members have access to information to share the opportunity with community partners.
3. Transparency, Conflicts, and Disclosure	Board and staff members (including the Executive Director) reviewing and/or approving grant proposals will take actions as dictated by the State’s Ethics law and must abide by EMSWCD’s policy on Grant Disclosure and Bias (Policy 3.2.2).
4. Application Process	During the initial pilot phase of this program no open solicitation process is planned. Applications will be developed by EMSWCD staff. Proposals are submitted to the Grants Program Manager to review for completeness and eligibility. To reduce barriers to accessing these grants, staff may assist applicants in preparing and submitting proposals.
5. Application Materials	Completed EFSOG Proposal form.
6. Proposal Development and Presentation	Individual Board members, staff, and the Executive Director may identify project concepts; staff members may support potential grant recipients in proposal development and presentation through the review process.
7. Entity Eligibility	Applicant is a 501(c)(3), educational institution, Tribal entity, LLC, and/or has a fiscal sponsor that meets this criterion.
8. Project Eligibility	Proposals must satisfy all of the following eligibility criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project is located within the EMSWCD service area or serves its residents• Project shows a clear public benefit and advances District’s Strategic Plan (2023-2027)• Project doesn’t readily conform to other funding opportunities available through EMSWCD grant or cost-share programs• The applicant has demonstrated competency to support the needs of the community they propose to serve. This includes but is not limited to cultural competency, which may be



	demonstrated by one’s professional or volunteer experience and/or via one’s lived experience as a person who self-identifies as Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Hispanic or Latino, and Asian or Pacific Islander, LGBTQ+, recent immigrant/refugee, a person whose first language is other than English, a person with a disability and/or members of other historically marginalized groups.
9. Funding Level	Grant request: \$5,000 - \$50,000. The total budget for EFSOG is approved annually by the Board of Directors.
10. Program Duration	This new funding opportunity is designed as a pilot program. Staff will annually review the application process for improvements. A full analysis of the program – with a presentation and recommendation to the Board – will occur after 2-3 years implementation or after a meaningful number of projects have been funded and completed.
11. Project Evaluation Process	The Grants Program Manager will convene an ad-hoc staff group to review proposals including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Equity Team member• Leadership Team member• Staff member with relevant background and experience (may be the Leadership Team or Equity Team member)• Executive Director (or designee).
12. Funding Recommendations	The ad-hoc group convened by the Grants Program Manager recommends funding awards and assigns a Project Manager for recommended grant proposals.
13. Project Approval	EMSWCD’s Executive Director may directly approve EFSOG awards up to \$50,000. The Executive Director is responsible for informing the Board of funding awards and providing regular progress reports.
14. Project Duration	Project scope can be completed in 2–3-year timeframe (project may be broken into segments to meet this criterion).
15. Project Tracking, Reporting, and Follow up	Project reporting to be established by the Project Manager and included in the grant agreement at the time of grant award.