

**571—22.13 (456A,483A) Application procedures.** Applications will be accepted only from those eligible pursuant to rule 571—22.12(456A,483A).

**22.13(1) Applications.** Applications must be submitted on forms furnished by the department. Applications and agreements must be received by June 1 to provide adequate time for signage on the property and to ensure that the public is aware the area is open to public hunting. However, at the department's discretion and dependent upon the availability of funds, the application period may be extended. Landowners will be notified in writing within 30 days of submission of an application whether they have been accepted into the program.

**22.13(2) Availability of funds.** Funds available for this program are provided through a Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program Grant awarded to the department by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as well as from wildlife habitat fees.

*a.* Funds available for assisting landowners shall be in the department's budget in accordance with legislative appropriations. Funds will be made available during a fiscal year of July 1 to June 30.

*b.* To maximize the amount of wildlife habitat actually established, the department may accept contributions from any governmental agency or private conservation group to support habitat practices designed to implement the habitat and public access program. Department funds may also be used to match other funding sources or incentive programs.

**22.13(3) Project review and selection.**

*a.* Projects will be reviewed by the site's regional department wildlife biologist, who, based on the ranking criteria listed in paragraph 22.13(3) "b," will recommend that the commission enter into an agreement with successful applicants.

*b.* Projects will be selected based on the ranked scoring criteria in the application, which prioritize sites with the greatest chance of benefitting wildlife populations and providing adequate recreational hunting opportunities. The criteria include, but are not necessarily limited to: the site's habitat potential; site suitability; priority locations; and other relevant habitat and hunting access factors.