

Environmental Quality Incentives Program
At-risk Species Habitat Conservation
2007 Request for Proposals

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) has five National Priorities, one of which is promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation. This announces a state wide Request for Proposals (RFP) for **group projects** that will have significant benefits to at-risk species habitats. Individual projects benefiting at-risk species habitats should apply under the EQIP Wildlife Individual Fund Pool.

The Wildlife Subcommittee of the State Technical Committee, which includes representatives from NRCS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR), Utah State University Extension Service, Farm Bureau and Environmental Defense, will meet to rank and select applications received through this RFP. Up to \$1,000,000 dollars in funding is available for these projects. Applicants must visit their local USDA Service Center before submitting a proposal to complete a form NRCS-CPA-1200 Conservation Program Application and other eligibility documentation. Applications and proposals must be completed by **January 19, 2007**. All proposals will be reviewed by the local USDA Service Center to ensure person and land eligibility requirements are met.

Applicants are encouraged to work with the regional teams of the Utah Partners for Conservation and Development and/or the Sage Grouse Local Work Group in their area when developing proposals. NRCS and partner personnel in local service centers may assist with conservation planning related to the proposal, but may **not** write proposals for applicants. Submit completed proposals to the local USDA Service Center to be forwarded to the NRCS State Office for ranking by the Wildlife Subcommittee. Proposals must be received in the State Office by **February 2, 2007**. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their proposal by **February 16, 2007** (tentative).

To be eligible to participate in EQIP, each applicant in the group proposal must be an individual, entity or joint operation and meet all of the following eligibility criteria:

- Be an agricultural producer that is engaged in livestock or agricultural production as defined in this section.
- Have an interest in the farming operation associated with the land being offered for enrollment in EQIP.
- Have control of the land for the term of the proposed contract. For structural practices, the applicant must submit a written concurrence by the landowner at the time of the application.
- Be in compliance with the provisions for protecting the interests of tenants and sharecroppers, including the provisions for sharing EQIP payments on a fair and equitable basis.

- Be in compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation compliance provisions.
- Be within appropriate payment limitation requirements.
- Be in compliance with Adjusted Gross Income requirements.

Note: Federal and State governments and political subdivisions thereof are not eligible applicants, but may be partners contributing to the overall project.

In general, the term “eligible land” means land on which agricultural commodities or livestock are produced. This includes:

- Cropland
- Rangeland
- Grassland
- Pasture land
- Private, non-industrial forestland

Eligible land may be:

- Privately owned.
- Publicly owned land where all of the following apply:
 - The land is under private control for the contract period and included in the participant’s operating unit.
 - Installation of conservation practices will contribute to an improvement in the identified natural resource concern.
 - The conservation practices will directly benefit agricultural land owned by the participant.
 - The participant has written authorization from the Government landowner to apply the conservation practices.
- Tribal, allotted, ceded, or Indian land.

Include the following information in the proposal. Proposals will be ranked according to criteria posted on the Utah NRCS Programs Web Site under EQIP:

<http://www.ut.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/EQIP/index.html>

- 1. General Information:** Provide a copy of Form NRCS-CPA-1200 and the name, address, and phone number of the main contact person and the person who wrote the proposal (if different).
- 2. Promotion of At-risk Species Habitat Conservation:** Describe how the treatments to be implemented will promote the conservation of at-risk species habitat.
- 3. Partner Contribution:** List partners involved in the project that will contribute land, money, equipment, supplies or monitoring and research. State what each partners’ contribution will be and the dollar value of that contribution. State whether each partners’ commitment is in writing or verbal and attach written documentation if available. Also, include the total cost of the project with partnership contributions itemized.

3. **Map:** Identify the location of the project area and others areas managed for wildlife within a 1 mile radius. Describe how the project's location benefits the targeted species. Is the project located in occupied range of or in important or essential habitat for the priority species? Does the species currently inhabit the project site or project vicinity? Describe the management and ownership of adjacent of nearby lands for wildlife. Are they in public ownership? Are they in easements? If so, what type of easements? Are adjacent lands enrolled in wildlife programs or otherwise being managed for wildlife?

4. **Targeted Habitat Type(s) Benefited:** List the acres of each Targeted Habitat Type from the NRCS Utah Fish and Wildlife Action Plan (see Table attached) that will benefit from implementation of the project. Describe how the habitat will be restored or enhanced. Describe current condition of the existing habitat along with the expected condition of habitat after the project is completed.

5. **Species Benefited:** List the Priority Species from the NRCS Utah Fish and Wildlife Action Plan (see Table attached) that the proposed project is targeting for habitat improvement. Identify the limiting life history or habitat requirements of the targeted species and explain how the proposed project will address the limiting factor(s) that the project will address. What is the anticipated response of the target species population if the project is completed?

6. **Coordination/Other Planning Efforts:** Describe how the project fits in to any larger planning effort, such as Utah Partners for Conservation and Development (UPCD) focus areas or existing Areawide Resource Management Plan, Endangered Species Recovery Plan, DWR Management Plan, Sage Grouse Local Work Group plan etc. Is the project in an area that is covered by an approved areawide plan as defined in the National Planning Procedures Handbook? Include information on any Cultural Resources, Threatened and Endangered Species reviews, or other Environmental Evaluations that have been initiated or completed.

7. **Invasive Species Control:** Will the project address control of an invasive species identified by the state, county, or local government or by a local Cooperative Weed Management Area as a noxious species? Describe the species to be addressed and how control will be achieved.

8. **Practices Planned:** Provide a detailed list of the conservation practices from Section IV of the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) [Available at: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/efotg/>] that will be applied. Practice extents are important (acres, feet, numbers, etc.) Be very specific on acres that will actually have conditions changed by practice application. Include management practices that will be applied and the number of years they will be applied. Attach a copy of the conservation plan developed with the local NRCS Field Office, if available.

Targeted Habitat Types and Priority Species

Habitat Type	Priority 1 Species	Priority 2 Species	Priority 3 Species
Lowland Riparian	Bald Eagle, Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Virgin Spinedace, Virgin River Chub	Arizona Toad, Lewis's Woodpecker, Allen's Big-eared Bat, Big Free-tailed Bat, Western Red Bat, Cornsnake, Western Threadsnake	Canyon Treefrog, Abert's Towhee, Bell's Vireo, Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Lucy's Warbler, Northern River Otter, Yuma Myotis, Cornsnake
Wetland	Columbia Spotted Frog, Least Chub, fat-whorled pondsnail, Kanab ambersnail	Western Toad, Short-eared Owl	Northern Leopard Frog, American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt
Mountain Riparian	Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, Bluehead Sucker, Bonneville Cutthroat Trout, Colorado River Cutthroat Trout	Western Toad, Leatherside Chub, Smooth Greensnake	Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Northern River Otter
Shrubsteppe	Gunnison Sage-grouse	Ferruginous Hawk, Greater Sage-grouse, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Pygmy Rabbit	Brewer's Sparrow, Sage Sparrow, Sage Thrasher, Mule Deer
Flowing Water (Lotic)	Bluehead Sucker, Bonneville Cutthroat Trout, Bonytail, Colorado Pikeminnow, Colorado River Cutthroat Trout, Flannelmouth Sucker, June Sucker, Humpback Chub, Razorback Sucker, Roundtail Chub, Virgin Spinedace, Virgin River Chub, Woundfin	Desert Sucker, Leatherside Chub	Canyon Treefrog
Wet Meadow	Columbia Spotted Frog	Bobolink, Smooth Greensnake	
Grassland	Utah Prairie-dog	Burrowing Owl, Grasshopper Sparrow, Long-billed Curlew, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Short-eared Owl, Gunnison's Prairie-dog, White-tailed Prairie-dog	Great Plains Toad