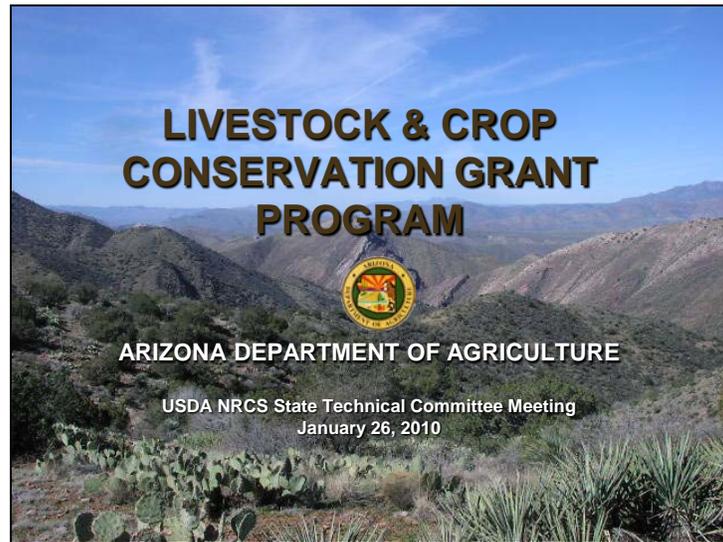


Slide 1

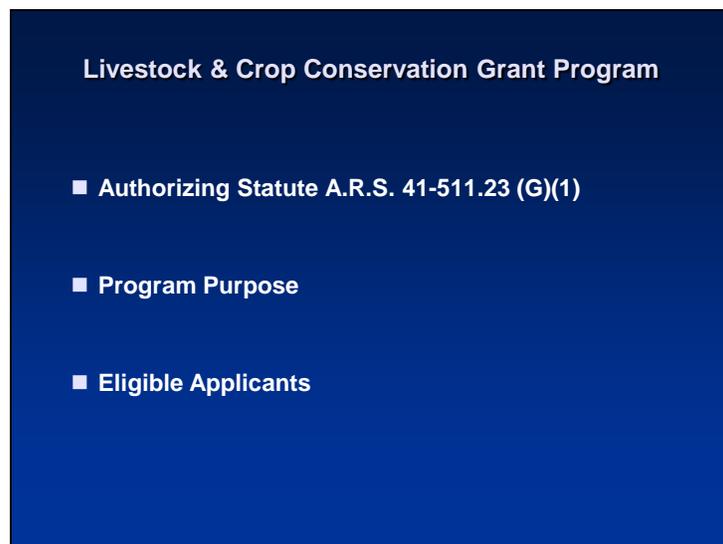


Good Morning

My name is Kathleen Ryan and I am the Arizona Department of Agriculture Livestock & Crop Conservation Grant Program Coordinator.

I am here today to give you a brief overview of the Livestock & Crop Conservation Grant Program and look at the future direction of the grant program.

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The Livestock & Crop Conservation Grant Program is authorized by Arizona Revised Statute 41-511.23 (G)(1). The authorizing statute states that the grant funds are to be used for the exclusive purpose of granting monies to individual landowners and grazing and agricultural lessees of state or federal land who contract with the Arizona department of agriculture to implement conservation based management alternatives using livestock or crop

production practices, or reduce livestock or crop production, to provide wildlife habitat or other public benefits that preserve open space. The Arizona Department of Agriculture is responsible for developing, implementing and managing this grant program.

Beginning in State Fiscal Year 2004, the Department is appropriated \$2 million a year through State Fiscal Year 2011 for program implementation and administration. Since the grant program did not function during FY 2004, the Department will have approximately \$3.8 million to grant out during the upcoming cycle.

It is the intent of this program to reduce the fragmentation of open spaces in rural areas. As the public continues to demand more benefits from open spaces in rural areas, the pressure for ranching families to sell privately held land to a multitude of buyers can eventually become their most feasible option for financial relief. The LCCGP is designed to offer some relief to this pressure by assisting ranching families with the implementation of conservation practices that enhance ranch productivity, and therefore reduce the pressure to develop private properties.

Per the grant program authorizing statute, eligible applicants for these grant funds include individual landowners and grazing and agricultural lessees of state or federal land that wish to implement conservation practices using livestock or crop production or reduction.

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**Livestock & Crop Conservation Grant Program**

**Funding can be used for:**

- **Source of Matching Funds to other grant agreements**
- **On the Ground Project Funding**
- **Deferment expenses related to conservation management practices**



The Department is proposing that the FY 2005 Livestock & Crop Conservation Funds be utilized in the following ways:

LCCGP may be used as a source of matching funds to state, federal and/or private conservation grant agreements in which the applicant is currently participating in or plans to apply for within the next year. For example, if the applicant is negotiating or participating in an EQIP project, LCCGP funds may be awarded for use as matching funds to the USDA NRCS agreement.

Livestock & Crop Conservation Grant Program (LCCGP) funds may be used for on the ground projects related to conservation management of the ranch. Ranch is defined as all private and public land holdings managed by the applicant. For example, if a rancher wants to implement a riparian area fencing or water pipeline installation project that would allow the rancher to improve the overall conservation management of the ranch, the funds could be used for this purpose.

LCCGP funds may be used as an incentive for cattle deferment related to the conservation management of the ranch. For example, if a rancher chooses to rest a particular pasture of the ranch in order to implement a prescribed

burn that is part of a ranch conservation management plan, LCCGP funds could be used to offset costs associated with resting the pasture.

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**Livestock & Crop Conservation Grant Program**

**Grant Program Rating Criteria**

- Conservation Management
- Livestock Management
- Crop Management
- Wildlife and Habitat
- Open Space Preservation
- Partnerships



The following are highlights of the proposed rating criteria:

Reference criteria sheet.

Mention that draft guidelines and criteria are available on handout table.

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**Livestock & Crop Conservation Grant Program**

**2007 Grant Cycle Statistics**

- More than 4.4 million dollars were awarded during the 2007 Grant Cycle.
- The average grant awarded in 2007 was \$63,553.
- 70 grants were awarded in 2007, out of 93 applications.
- Many grants are ongoing projects, lasting 1-5 years.

The following is a brief history on how the Livestock & Crop Conservation Grant Program came into existence:

In 1998, the Arizona voters passed Proposition 303, the Growing Smarter Act, which appropriates \$20 million a year during State FY 2001 – FY 2011 to the Land Conservation Fund for the purpose of funding grants that conserve open spaces in or near urban areas and other areas experiencing high growth pressures. The Arizona State Parks Department was tasked with implementing the grant program authorized by the Growing Smarter Act, and as a result developed the Growing Smarter Land Acquisition Grant Program.

In 2000, House Bill 2361 became law and amended the Growing Smarter Act to include language that provided for up to 10% of the Land Conservation Fund monies to be spent on grants to individual landowners or grazing or agricultural lessees that contract with the Arizona State Parks Board to implement conservation based management alternatives utilizing livestock or crop production or reduction to provide wildlife habitat or other public benefits that preserve open space.

In 2001, Arizona State Parks and the Arizona Department of Agriculture entered into an Interagency Service Agreement for the Arizona Department of Agriculture to administer the new grant program created by the 2000 amendment to the Growing Smarter Act. The new program was titled the Growing Smarter Open Space Reserve Grant Program. Arizona Department of Agriculture and Arizona State Parks staff formulated grant program criteria approved by the Conservation Acquisition Board and the Arizona State Parks Board. In May 2002, the Arizona State Parks Board awarded over \$1.8 million in Growing Smarter Open Space Reserve grants.

In late 2002, the Arizona State Parks Board received a Petition for a Rule Making Policy from a private citizen requesting that the Growing Smarter Open Space Reserve Grant Program undergo Arizona's official rulemaking process in order to establish rules for the grant program eligibility criteria. As a result, the Arizona State Parks Board suspended the program until official rules could be established.

In September of 2003, HB 1071 became law and amended the Growing Smarter Act a second time. The amended statute officially moved the authority over the grant program from the Arizona State Parks Board to the Arizona Department of Agriculture and created the Livestock & Crop Conservation Fund. The amended statute also added the requirement that the annual grant program guidelines and criteria be subject to a 60 day public comment period including public hearings.

Since the grant program has moved to the Arizona Department of Agriculture, the Department created a Grant Program Coordinator position to develop, implement and manage the newly titled Livestock & Crop Conservation Grant Program. Through research and meetings with various stakeholder groups, the Department has drafted grant program guidelines and criteria that are currently subject to the statutorily required public comment period.

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## **Livestock & Crop Conservation Grant Program**

### **2007 Grant Cycle Statistics**

- 34 of the 70 awarded grants were matching funds for USDA NRCS EQIP and WHIP agreements.
- \$3,182,462 was awarded as matching funds to NRCS EQIP and WHIP agreements.

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**Livestock & Crop Conservation Grant Program**

**Grant Funding was awarded in 2007 for the following projects:**

- 3 Erosion Control Projects
- 33 Fencing Projects
- 14 Grassland Restoration Projects
- 62 Water Development Projects



The slide features three small images illustrating grant-funded projects. The top-left image shows a fence line in a field. The top-right image shows solar panels installed on a structure. The bottom-right image shows a water development structure, possibly a well or pump, in a field.

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**Livestock & Crop Conservation Grant Program**

**2009 Grant Cycle Statistics**

- More than 4.0 million dollars were awarded during the 2009 Grant Cycle.
- The average grant awarded in 2009 was \$64,758.
- 63 grants were awarded in 2009, out of 116 applications.
- Many grants are ongoing projects, lasting 1-5 years.

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**Livestock & Crop Conservation Grant Program**

**2009 Grant Cycle Statistics**

- 22 of the 63 awarded grants were matching funds for USDA NRCS EQIP and WHIP agreements.
- \$4,240,040 was awarded as matching funds to NRCS EQIP agreements.

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**Livestock & Crop Conservation Grant Program**

**Grant Funding was awarded in 2009 for the following projects:**

- 6 Erosion Control Projects
- 31 Fencing Projects
- 8 Grassland Restoration Projects
- 56 Water Development Projects



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**Livestock & Crop Conservation Grant Program**

**Tentative 2010 Grant Cycle Timeline**

- **Public Comment Period**
  - April 5, 2010 to June 4, 2010
- **Manual finalized and printed**
  - June 2010
- **Application Period**
  - June 28, 2010 to August 26, 2010

Mention hearing schedule on handout table.

Once public comment period ends, Department will finalize the grant guidelines and criteria, select a grant evaluation team, publish a manual and announce an application deadline.

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**Livestock & Crop Conservation Grant Program**

**For additional information, contact:**

Karol Brill  
Livestock & Crop Conservation Grant Program Coordinators  
Arizona Department of Agriculture  
1688 West Adams Street  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007  
Phone: 602-542-0972  
Toll Free: 800-294-0308  
Fax: 602-364-0830  
Email: [kbrill@azda.gov](mailto:kbrill@azda.gov)



Contact Info

Any Questions??