DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service, Commodity Credit Corporation

ACTION: NOTICE
Conservation Innovation Grants Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 Announcement for Program Funding

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 10.912

SUMMARY: The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency under the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is announcing availability of Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies. Applications will be accepted from all 50 States, the Caribbean Area (Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands), and the Pacific Islands Area (Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands). NRCS anticipates that the amount available for support of this program in FY 2013 will be up to **$25 million**. Applications are requested from eligible governmental or non-governmental organizations or individuals for competitive consideration of grant awards for projects between one and three years in duration.

Funds will be awarded through a two-phase nationwide competitive grants process that will include (1) a pre-proposal process and (2) a full proposal process. The full proposal process will only be open to applicants whose pre-proposal applications are selected by NRCS. Both phases are described in this announcement, but **only pre-proposals are being solicited at this time**.

This notice identifies the objectives, eligibility criteria, and application instructions for CIG projects. Applications will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice. Incomplete applications will be eliminated from competition, and notification of elimination will be mailed to the applicant. NRCS will request a full proposal package only from those applicants selected in the pre-proposal phase.

DATES: Applications for the pre-proposal phase must be received by NRCS before 4:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) on **March 22, 2013.** NRCS will announce selected pre-proposal applications by **April 15, 2013**. Selected applicants will then be required to submit a full proposal package to NRCS by 4:00 p.m. EDT on **May 13, 2013**.

ADDRESSES: Applications sent via express mail or overnight courier service must be sent to the following address: USDA-NRCS, CIG Program, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 0103-S, Washington, DC 20250. Applications sent via the United States Postal Service must be sent to the following address: USDA-NRCS, CIG Program, P.O. Box 2890, Room 0103-S, Washington, D.C. 20013-2890. Applications sent electronically must be sent through www.grants.gov or to nrcscig@wdc.usda.gov.

For more information contact:
Gregorio Cruz
National CIG Program Manager
1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 0103-S
Washington, D.C. 20250
Phone: (703) 235-8065
E-mail: gregorio.cruz@wdc.usda.gov

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority

The Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) program was authorized as part of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) [16 U.S.C. 3839aa-8] under Section 2509 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-246). The Secretary of Agriculture delegated the authority for the administration of EQIP and CIG to the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), who is Vice President of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC). EQIP is funded and administered by NRCS under the authorities of the CCC.

B. Overview

The purpose of CIG is to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies, while leveraging the Federal investment in environmental enhancement and protection in conjunction with agricultural production. CIG projects are expected to lead to the transfer of conservation technologies, management systems, and innovative approaches into NRCS policy, technical manuals, guides, and references, or to the private sector. **CIG does not fund research projects; Projects intended to test hypotheses do not qualify for a CIG award.** CIG is used to apply or demonstrate previously proven technology. It is a vehicle to stimulate development and adoption of conservation approaches or technologies that have been studied sufficiently to indicate a high likelihood of success, and that are candidates for eventual technology transfer or institutionalization. CIG promotes sharing of skills, knowledge, technologies, and facilities among communities, governments, and other institutions to ensure that scientific and technological developments are accessible to a wider range of users. CIG funds projects targeting innovative on-the-ground conservation, including pilot projects and field demonstrations.

NRCS will accept applications under this notice for single or multi-year projects, not to exceed three years, submitted by eligible entities from all 50 States, the Caribbean Area (Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands), and the Pacific Islands Area (Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands). Eligible entities include Federally recognized Indian tribes, State and local units of government, and non-governmental organizations and individuals.

A two-phase evaluation process will be utilized for applications submitted under this notice. The first phase requires the applicant to submit a pre-proposal application. Pre-proposal applications will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice. Incomplete applications will be eliminated from competition, and notification of elimination will be mailed to the applicant. NRCS staff will evaluate complete pre-proposal applications based on how they demonstrate the use of innovative technologies and/or approaches to address at least one of the topics provided in section I.D. of this notice.

<u>NRCS will only request a full proposal package from those applicants selected in the pre-proposal process</u>. Complete applications received by applicable deadlines will be evaluated by a technical peer review panel based on the Application Evaluation Criteria identified in the application instructions in section VI.B. Full proposal applications, along with their associated technical peer review, will then be forwarded to the Grants Review Board. The Grants Review

Board will make its recommendations for project approval to the NRCS Chief who will make the final selections.

C. Innovative Conservation Projects or Activities

For the purposes of CIG, the proposed innovative project or activity must encompass the development, field testing, evaluation, implementation, and monitoring of:

- Conservation adoption approaches or incentive systems; or
- Promising conservation technologies, practices, systems, procedures, or approaches; or
- Environmental soundness with goals of environmental protection and natural resource enhancement.

To be given priority consideration, the innovative project or activity must comply with all federal, state, and local regulations throughout the duration of the project and should:

- Make use of a proven technology or a technology that has been studied sufficiently to indicate a high probability of success;
- Demonstrate and verify environmental (e.g., soil, water, air, plants, energy, and animal) effectiveness, utility, affordability, and usability of conservation technology in the field;
- Adapt conservation technologies, management, practices, systems, procedures, approaches, and incentive systems to improve performance and encourage adoption;
- Introduce conservation systems, approaches, and procedures from another geographic area or agricultural sector; or
- Demonstrate transferability of knowledge.

D. National Component

1. National Category

For FY 2013, NRCS will consider National Category pre-proposals that demonstrate the use of innovative technologies and/or approaches to address at least one bulleted topic listed below. Pre-proposals must identify the most appropriate bulleted topic the innovation/technology is addressing. Additional topics (not listed below) may be considered at the Chief's discretion. If an additional topic is proposed for the Chief's consideration, it must be identified as such in the pre-proposal.

a) Program Outreach

- Technology transfer to individuals and entities including, but not limited to, Beginning Farmers or Ranchers, Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers, Limited Resource Farmers or Ranchers, Indian tribes, Land Grant Colleges and Universities, or Community-Based Organizations.
- Demonstration of new or novel technology that can easily and inexpensively be adopted by small-scale producers in order to address their natural resource concerns.
- Demonstration of new or novel technologies that lead to significant management efficiencies in farm resource management from a systems perspective, including technologies that lead to demonstrated benefits to multiple ecosystem services.
- Projects that assess resource conditions and land capabilities for traditionally underserved groups and communities.
- Projects that emphasize program outreach to underserved producers or landowners.

- Projects that enhance opportunities to work with universities and other institutions to develop technical training for Beginning Farmers or Ranchers, Limited Resource Farmers or Ranchers, Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers, and Indian tribes or entities servicing those landowners.

b) Nutrient Management

- Demonstrate and quantify the optimal combinations of nutrient source, application rate, placement, and application timing (4 Rs), as measured by impact on nutrient use efficiency and yield for one or more of the following: corn, soybeans, wheat, vegetables, hay/pasture, cotton, and/or rice. Demonstrations are encouraged that show how these optimal combinations change for one or more of the following comparisons: irrigated vs. non-irrigated management, tillage vs. reduced tillage systems, manure-amended vs. non manure-amended systems, and/or organic vs. conventional production systems.
- Demonstrate and quantify the effectiveness of bundling conservation measures to avoid, control, and trap nutrient losses from the field.
- Demonstrate and quantify the effectiveness of methods to capture dissolved phosphorus from field runoff and subsurface drainage.
- Demonstrate the applicability and utility of in-season nitrogen management tools for determining additional nutrient needs for a range of soils, climates and/or cropping systems.
- Demonstrate technologies that can improve cost efficiency of transporting manure nutrients from regions of dense populations of animal agriculture operations to areas with low densities of animal operations that have demand for manure nutrients.
- Demonstrate innovative techniques for keeping liquid manure applied via irrigation, surface application, or injection from entering subsurface drainage systems through macro pores.
- Demonstrate new alternatives to manure application to frozen or saturated soils.
- Demonstrate suite(s) of conservation practices and document the conditions for their optimal use in protecting surface and ground water quality if manure or nutrients were to be applied to frozen soil.

c) Energy Conservation

- Evaluate and demonstrate renewable energy systems (e.g., hydropower, solar, and/or wind) that displace fossil fuel energy and meet on-farm energy needs, while increasing energy efficiency and/or reducing environmental contaminants (e.g., greenhouse gas emissions, particulate matter).
- Develop and demonstrate innovative planning and decision aids to assess potential impacts of small on-farm renewable energy systems on wildlife and wildlife habitats and that can be used to identify appropriate sites to avoid or minimize potential adverse impacts.
- Develop and/or demonstrate innovative implementation systems to achieve greater use and quantify benefits of energy audits that address cropland, buildings, and equipment.

d) Soil Health

- Demonstrate and quantify the impacts of cover crops, crop rotations, tillage and/or soil amendments on soil chemical, physical, and/or biological properties and their relationships with nutrient cycling, soil water availability, and plant growth.

- Demonstrate and quantify the rate of increase in available soil water holding capacity as a function of soil properties (e.g., particle size, mineralogy), management practices (e.g., tillage, amendments, cover crop or crop residue inputs), and/or climate.
- Development of optimal species mixes, seeding rates and seeding methods (e.g., inter-seeding, inter-cropping, frost-seeding) to enhance cover crop establishment/survival and increase soil organic matter.
- Quantify and demonstrate the impacts of Soil Health Management Systems on nutrient losses through surface and subsurface pathways for tile-drained and non-drained soils.
- Development of a decision support tool that incorporates the impacts of crop residue/cover crop quality parameters (e.g., cellulose, lignin, C/N) on decomposition and nutrient turnover for designing Soil Health Management Systems that optimize nutrient availability, control soil-born diseases, and increase available soil water holding capacity.
- Demonstrate and quantify the impacts of cover crop presence, species mix, and management (e.g., termination growth stage, tillage practice) on soil water content and subsequent crop yield across a range of climates and cropping systems.
- Demonstrate and quantify impacts of soil health promoting practices (e.g., no-tillage, cover crops, crop rotations) on yield, yield variability, and economics of crop production across a range of soils, cropping systems, and climates.
- Demonstrate and quantify the impacts of Soil Health Management Systems (e.g., cover crops, reduced tillage) on key soil health attributes (e.g., available water holding capacity, disease suppression, nutrient cycling) and determine the extent to which the rates of change are influenced by climate, organic input chemical composition/placement, and soil properties (e.g., particle size, mineralogy). This should be conducted across a range of inherent soil properties, cropping systems, and climates to develop a Decision Support Tool that promotes selection and design of the components of a Soil Health Management System.
- Demonstrate innovative approaches for adopting soil health promoting practices in relatively cool and/or wet climates (e.g., zone tillage, short season cultivars). Demonstrate and quantify at a watershed scale the water quality impacts of installing conservation systems that support and improve soil health.

e) Wildlife

- Develop planning and decision aids to assess and maximize wildlife habitat value on land used to grow biofuel crops.
- Demonstrate new techniques and/or technologies for monitoring and evaluating wildlife habitat both on-site and via remote sensing.
- Develop regional, crop-specific guidance providing the vegetative species, landforms, and necessary acreage to support appropriate populations of managed and wild pollinators per unit area of pollinated crops (e.g., describe the components of the landscape).
- Demonstrate and quantify the impacts of grazing as a habitat management tool.
- Develop and/or demonstrate fish screen, fish passage, and other fish related technology and criteria for native aquatic species of conservation concern.
- Demonstrate innovative approaches for restoring and reconnecting bottomland hardwood ecosystems that preserve hydrologic connectivity and aquatic organism passage.
- Develop metrics of measurable habitat improvement that could potentially be traded under a species-banking framework.

f) Economics

- Develop tool for measuring economic returns of conservation for landowners. The tool should be useful for analyzing and demonstrating the financial costs and potential returns of alternative conservation practices, taking into account such factors as land characteristics and production potential. The tool should adhere to the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association standards for estimating farm costs and returns, including estimating opportunity costs for operator labor and management, be easy to use and understand, and provide transparent calculations.
- Develop tool for assessing the economics of conservation that includes a defensible and acceptable valuation of environmental benefits and identification of knowledge gaps.
- Demonstrate, through coordinated case studies, how conservation efforts have benefited landowners and rural communities in different regions.
- Projects designed to stimulate the development of environmental markets. Projects may address market supply and demand, rules (e.g., crediting rates and verification systems), and infrastructure (e.g., registries, trading platforms).

g) Co-Management for Food Safety

- Demonstrate and quantify the effects of conservation practices (e.g., buffers) and/or systems of conservation practices for reducing manure-born zoonotic pathogen transport and survival for different climates and agricultural systems. This may include pathogens originating from animal production facilities or from wildlife.

h) CIG Projects Assessment

- Conduct an assessment of completed CIG projects on a given topic to identify and recommend those projects that should be adopted and the most fruitful and appropriate techniques for technology transfer and adoption.

2. Chesapeake Bay Watershed Category

The Chesapeake Bay watershed covers 64,000 square miles and includes the District of Columbia and parts of six States: New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia. For FY 2013, NRCS will consider Chesapeake Bay Watershed Category pre-proposals for projects that will be conducted within the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Chesapeake Bay pre-proposals must address one or more of the bulleted topics previously identified in the National Category or address one or more of the special emphasis topics listed below.

a) Special Emphasis Topics for Chesapeake Bay (in addition to those listed for the National category)

- On-farm demonstration and evaluation of recently revised P indices for use in nutrient management.
- Evaluation of the sociological/economic/farm management barriers to adoption and demonstration of ways to overcome those barriers for several conservation practices including: implementation of nutrient management plans, adoption of manure injection technologies, installation of stream bank fencing or riparian buffers, adoption of precision livestock feeding or precision grazing practices, manure redistribution, and/or other practices that landowners appear reluctant to adopt.
- On-farm evaluation and demonstration of filtration technologies for treating barnyard runoff.

- Demonstrate and quantify the efficacy of drainage management on the Coastal Plain including evaluation of nutrient trapping/filtration techniques for P removal or enhanced denitrification for N removal.
- Projects designed to stimulate the development of water quality trading markets in the Bay Watershed. Projects may address market supply and demand, rules (e.g., crediting rates and verification systems), and infrastructure (e.g., registries, trading platforms).

3. Mississippi River Basin Category

For FY 2013, NRCS will consider Mississippi River Basin Category pre-proposals for projects that will be conducted within the Mississippi River Basin. Areas of consideration include: Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Wisconsin within the Mississippi River Basin.

Mississippi River Basin pre-proposals must address (1) at least one bulleted topic specific to the Mississippi River Basin and (2) the Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative (MRBI) objectives to manage and optimize nutrient management, reduce downstream nutrient loads, maintain agricultural productivity, and enhance wildlife and other ecosystem services.

a) Program Outreach

- Create a MRBI demonstration and program outreach site that includes a combination of avoiding, controlling, and trapping practices to manage nutrients and quantifies nutrient load reductions with those practices. Establish on-farm water quality demonstrations, innovative pilot projects, and conduct producer outreach efforts with underserved communities to improve producer adoption of conservation practices/resource management systems and approaches to manage nutrients and reduce nutrient loadings while maintaining agricultural productivity.
- Develop and demonstrate use of, and provide needed support for, an effective communication network within MRBI for sharing successes, failures, innovative approaches, and monitoring efforts. Improve ability of NRCS and partners to adaptively manage MRBI to better manage/optimize nutrients, maintain agricultural productivity, and enhance wildlife.
- Demonstrate cooperative efforts to make high cost technology available to Beginning Farmers or Ranchers, Limited Resource Farmers or Ranchers, Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers, Indian tribes, Land Grant Colleges and Universities, and others needed for managing nutrients in MRBI watersheds that can be replicated and self-sustaining.
- Identify barriers to the adoption and implementation of core nutrient reduction practices (avoiding, controlling, and trapping), including nutrient management, and demonstrate solutions and approaches to the barriers. Demonstrate methods to increase adoption of nutrient reduction practices with traditionally low or non participating producers in high risk areas.
- Demonstrate the use of ecosystem services and environmental trading to advance economic viability of agriculture conservation systems.

b) Water Management

- Demonstrate innovative irrigation water management techniques documenting water quality improvements associated with irrigation systems in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Missouri
- Demonstrate treatment effectiveness and efficiency of removing nitrogen contaminants in runoff or drainage water using innovative practices including: (1) denitrifying bioreactors, (2) constructed wetlands, (3) drainage water management, (4) saturated flow through tree/shrub buffers/riparian areas, and (5) irrigation/tailwater recovery systems in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Missouri.
- Demonstrate innovative drainage water management for surface and/or sub-surface drainage systems improving acceptance and adoption by producers. Develop strategies to enhance intensive technical assistance in priority watersheds by documenting benefits to producers, increasing proportion of drained land that drainage water management is suitable for and incorporating drainage water management with other conservation practices for an effective system of nutrient and water management.
- Demonstrate effects of implementing drainage water management at watershed scale including management techniques to reduce nutrient loads to downstream receiving waters.
- Demonstrate and evaluate denitrifying bioreactors (size and types) to support development of conservation practice standards to address nitrogen removal in drainage tile lines.
- Demonstrate innovative field scale methods to assess drainage water management system performance, including nitrate-nitrogen concentrations and flow rates, with an emphasis on simple and cost effective tests and measurements within the capability of producers.
- Demonstrate a systems approach to drainage water management that includes the use of buffer practices as part of the drainage system.
- Demonstrate the advantages of constructing two stage drainage ditches on bank stability and water quality.
- Demonstrate innovative systems approaches for irrigation water management in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Missouri including improving soil health/moisture with use of vegetative practices such as cover crops, and incorporating new cultural practices that reduce water demand/use, improve soil health, and improve water quality.

c) Soil Health

- Demonstrate and quantify the impacts of cover crops, crop rotations, tillage and/or soil amendments on soil chemical, physical, and/or biological properties and their relationships with nutrient cycling, soil water availability, and plant growth.
- Demonstrate and quantify the rate of increase in available soil water holding capacity as a function of soil properties (e.g., particle size, mineralogy), management practices (e.g., tillage, amendments, cover crop or crop residue inputs), and/or climate.
- Development of optimal species mixes, seeding rates and seeding methods (e.g., inter-seeding, inter-cropping, frost-seeding) to enhance cover crop establishment/survival and increase soil organic matter.
- Quantify and demonstrate the impacts of Soil Health Management Systems on nutrient losses through surface and subsurface pathways for tile-drained and non-drained soils.
- Development of a decision support tool that incorporates the impacts of crop residue/cover crop quality parameters (e.g., cellulose, lignin, C/N) on decomposition and

nutrient turnover for designing Soil Health Management Systems that optimize nutrient availability, control soil-born diseases, and increase available soil water holding capacity.

- Demonstrate and quantify the impacts of cover crop presence, species mix, and management (e.g., termination growth stage, tillage practice) on soil water content and subsequent crop yield across a range of climates and cropping systems.
- Demonstrate and quantify impacts of soil health promoting practices (e.g., no-tillage, cover crops, crop rotations) on yield, yield variability, and economics of crop production across a range of soils, cropping systems, and climates.
- Demonstrate and quantify the impacts of Soil Health Management Systems (e.g., cover crops, reduced tillage) on key soil health attributes (e.g., available water holding capacity, disease suppression, nutrient cycling) and determine the extent to which the rates of change are influenced by climate, organic input chemical composition/placement, and soil properties (e.g., particle size, mineralogy). This should be conducted across a range of inherent soil properties, cropping systems, and climates to develop a Decision Support Tool that promotes selection and design of the components of a Soil Health Management System.
- Demonstrate innovative approaches for adopting soil health promoting practices in relatively cool and/or wet climates (e.g., zone tillage, short season cultivars, etc.).
- Demonstrate and quantify at a watershed scale the water quality impacts of installing conservation systems that support and improve soil health.

d) Vegetative Practices

- Demonstrate and document nutrient reductions (cost per pound) achieved through the use of constructed, created, enhanced, or restored wetlands or through winter flooding of croplands for the primary purpose of reducing nutrient loads while enhancing wildlife and other ecosystem services.
- Demonstrate and field evaluate a methodology for assessing buffer or filter width needs based on field slopes, erodibility, tillage, and crop rotations.
- Demonstrate an optimization approach to incorporate permanent vegetative practices to address critical nutrient management problems that fit within producer's productivity objectives and decisions at the field level.
- Demonstrate the efficacy of reconnecting subsurface drainage to interflow through herbaceous and riparian buffers, for enhanced denitrification of shallow ground water.
- Demonstrate how landscape-scale placement of perennial vegetation can bolster nutrient management and other ecosystem services.
- Demonstrate conservation crop rotation alternatives to corn and soybeans rotations that address edge-of-field nutrient loss concerns.

e) Nutrient Management

- Demonstrate and quantify the optimal combinations of nutrient source, application rate, placement, and application timing (4 Rs), as measured by impact on nutrient use efficiency and yield for one or more of the following: corn, soybeans, wheat, vegetables, hay/pasture, cotton, and/or rice. Demonstrations are encouraged that show how these optimal combinations change for one or more of the following comparisons: irrigated vs. non-irrigated management, tillage vs. reduced tillage systems, manure-amended vs. non manure-amended systems, and/or organic vs. conventional production systems.

- Demonstrate suite(s) of conservation practices and document the conditions for their optimal use in protecting surface and ground water quality if manure or nutrients were to be applied to frozen soil.
- Demonstrate and quantify the effectiveness of bundling conservation measures to avoid, control, and trap nutrient losses from the field.
- Demonstrate and quantify the effectiveness of methods to capture dissolved phosphorus from field runoff and subsurface drainage.
- Demonstrate the applicability and utility of in-season nitrogen management tools for determining additional nutrient needs for a range of soils, climates and/or cropping systems.
- Demonstrate technologies that can improve cost efficiency of transporting manure nutrients from regions of dense populations of animal agriculture operations to areas with low densities of animal operations that have demand for manure nutrients.
- Demonstrate and quantify the nutrient reductions that can be achieved by incorporating a range of strategies that avoid, control, and trap nutrients for states with waters draining into the Gulf of Mexico. Emphasis is placed on a regional approach, with different regions coordinating their projects to demonstrate systems most applicable to their soils, crops, climate, drainage characteristics, etc.
- Demonstrate innovative techniques for keeping liquid manure applied via irrigation, surface application, or injection from entering subsurface drainage systems through macro pores.
- Demonstrate new alternatives to manure application to frozen or saturated soils.

f) Adaptive Management

- Utilize innovative approaches to increase adoption rate of emerging nutrient management and load reduction practices such as cover crops, drainage water management, and bioreactors.
- Demonstrate innovative and efficient use of appropriate risk assessment technology tools (N-Index, P-Index, RUSLE2, WEPS, APEX (NTT), SWAT, NLEAP, etc.) to help producers apply conservation practices where most needed for water quality improvement.
- Utilize innovative, participatory approaches to achieve MRBI objectives on the HUC 12 scale to promote and increase adoption of adaptive nutrient management.
- Demonstrate use of simple, inexpensive, and reliable science-based tools or models to evaluate the effects of MRBI initiated systems and practices for managing nutrients at field and watershed scales and reporting outcomes.
- Demonstrate innovative field scale methods to monitor drainage water management system performance, including nitrate-nitrogen concentrations and flow rates, with an emphasis on simple and cost effective tests and measurements within the capability of producers.
- Utilize innovative approaches to develop recommendations for ensuring the right practices are applied in the right locations and achieving desire results for water quality improvement.
- Assimilate monitoring and modeling results in MRBI watersheds to develop guidance for developing high quality MRBI proposals/plans.
- Demonstrate innovative methods for building producer capacity to adopt adaptive management techniques.

II. FUNDING AVAILABILITY

NRCS anticipates that the amount available for support of this program in FY 2013 will be up to **$25 million**. Up to **$5 million** of this will be available to support and address the Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative (MRBI).

CIG will fund single and multi-year projects, not to exceed three years (anticipated project start date of **September 1, 2013**). Funds will be awarded through a nationwide competitive grants process. The maximum award amount for any project will not exceed **$1 million** in FY 2013.

III. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION

A. Applicant Eligibility

CIG applicants must be a Federally recognized Indian tribe, State or local unit of government, non-governmental organization, or individual.

B. Project Eligibility

To be eligible for CIG, projects must involve landowners who meet the EQIP eligibility requirements set forth in 16 USC 3839aa-1. Additional information regarding EQIP eligibility requirements can be found at: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/eqip. Participating producers are not required to have an EQIP contract.

C. Matching Funds Requirements

Selected applicants may receive CIG grants of up to 50 percent of their total project cost not to exceed $1 million. CIG recipients must match the USDA funds awarded on a dollar-for-dollar basis from non-Federal sources with cash and in-kind contributions. Of the applicant's required match (50 percent), a minimum of 25 percent of the total project cost must come from cash sources; the remaining 25 percent may come from in-kind contributions.

The 25 percent limit on in-kind contributions does not apply to projects carried out by a Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher, Federally recognized Indian tribes, members of Federally recognized Indian tribes, or a community-based organization comprised of or representing them). Instead, up to 37.5 percent of their total project cost may derive from in-kind contributions. This exception is intended to help these individuals and entities meet the statutory requirements for receiving a CIG. The remaining 12.5 percent match must be provided in cash.

Matching funds must be secured at time of application. Applications should include written verification of commitments of matching support (including both cash and in-kind contributions) from third parties. Additional information about matching funds can be found at 2 CFR 215.

D. EQIP Payment Limitation and Duplicate Payments

Subject to limited exception, section 1240G of the Food Security Act of 1985, 16 U.S.C. 3839aa-7, imposes a $300,000 limitation for all cost-share or incentive payments disbursed to individuals or entities under an EQIP contract between fiscal years 2008 and 2014.

The limitation applies to CIG in the following manner:

- CIG funds are awarded through grant agreements. These grant agreements are not EQIP contracts; thus, CIG awards in and of themselves are not limited by the payment limitation.
- Direct or indirect payments made to an individual or entity using funds from a CIG award to carry out structural, vegetative, or management practices count toward each individual's or entity's EQIP payment limitation. Through project progress reports, CIG grantees are responsible for certifying that individuals or entities involved in CIG projects do not exceed the payment limitation. All direct and indirect payments made to individuals or entities using CIG funds must be reported to the NRCS CIG program manager in the semi-annual report. Direct or indirect payments cannot be made for a practice for which the individuals or entities has already received funds, or is contracted to receive funds through any USDA programs (EQIP, Agricultural Management Assistance, Conservation Security Program, Conservation Stewardship Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program, etc.) because that would be a duplicate payment. Further, all individuals or entities receiving direct or indirect payments through participation in a CIG project must also meet the EQIP eligibility requirements.

To participate in EQIP financial assistance, an individual or entity must meet the eligibility requirements in 7 C.F.R. 1466.8, which include the following:

Criteria	**Potential Verification Documentation***
Be in compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions (7 C.F.R. Part 12)	Documentation of their compliance status can be obtained by the producer at their local USDA Service Center or through the USDA customer service on-line portal
Have an interest in the agricultural operation as defined in 7 C.F.R. Part 1400	Documentation of their farm interest can be obtained by the producer at their local USDA Service Center or through the USDA customer service on-line portal showing that the producer has farm records established
Have control of the land for the term of the proposed contract period	Documentation can be provided in the form of a deed, lease, or other documents which show the producer has adequate control for the term of the proposed contract period
The average adjusted gross income of the individual, joint operation, or legal entity may not exceed $1,000,000, unless not less than 66.66 percent of the average adjusted gross income of the person, joint operation, or legal entity is average adjusted gross farm income (7 C.F.R. Part 1400)	If using FY 2009-2012 CIG funding, documentation of a producer's AGI eligibility status can be obtained by the producer at their local USDA Service Center, or through the USDA customer service on-line portal.

*Many of the verification documents will require that the producer have current records established with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) or require that the producer establish new records.

E. Beginning or Limited Resource Farmers or Ranchers or Federally Recognized Indian Tribes or Members of Federally Recognized Indian Tribes

For the FY 2013 CIG award process, up to 10 percent of the total funds available for CIG may be set-aside for applications from Beginning Farmer or Ranchers, Limited Resource Farmers or Ranchers, Federally recognized Indian tribes, members of Federally recognized Indian tribes, or community-based organizations comprised of or representing these persons or entities.

To compete for these set-aside funds, the applicant must make a declaration in the application as described in Part IV.B.9 of this notice. Applications that are unsuccessful in the set-aside competition will automatically be placed in the general application pool for consideration. Funds not used in the set-aside pool will revert back into the general funding pool. Below are the regulatory definitions of a Beginning Farmer or Rancher and a Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher, which are found at 7 CFR 1466.3:

Beginning Farmer or Rancher **-** a person or legal entity who:

- Has not operated a farm or ranch, or who has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years. This requirement applies to all members of an entity who will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch;
- In the case of a contract with an individual, individually, or with the immediate family, material and substantial participation requires that the individual provide substantial day-to-day labor and management of the farm or ranch consistent with the practices in the county or State where the farm is located; and
- In the case of a contract with an entity or joint operation, all members must materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch. Material and substantial participation requires that each of the members provide some amount of the management or labor and management necessary for day-to-day activities, such that if each of the members did not provide these inputs, operation of the farm or ranch would be seriously impaired.

Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher

- A person with direct or indirect gross farm sales not more than $155,200 in each of the previous 2 years (adjusted for inflation using Prices Paid by Farmer Index as compiled by National Agricultural Statistical Service); and
- Has a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four, or less than 50 percent of county median household income in each of the previous 2 years (to be determined annually using Department of Commerce data).

F. Activities Limitation and Implementation

Technologies and approaches that are eligible for funding in a project's geographic area through EQIP are ineligible for CIG funding except where the use of those technologies and approaches demonstrates clear innovation. The burden falls on the applicant to sufficiently describe the innovative features of the proposed technology or approach. Applicants should reference the appropriate State's EQIP Eligible Practices List by contacting the NRCS State office.

The grantee is responsible for providing the technical assistance required to successfully implement and complete the project. NRCS will designate a Program Contact, Administrative Contact, and Technical Contact to provide oversight for each project receiving an award.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION FOR PRE-PROPOSALS

All Office of Management and Budget standard forms necessary for CIG submission are posted on the following web site: Grants.gov - Forms Repository.

A. How to Obtain Materials

The announcement for this CIG funding opportunity can be found on the following web sites: www.grants.gov and http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/cig/index.html.

B. Content and Format

Applications must contain the content, format, and information set forth below in order to receive consideration for funding. Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of NRCS or others as to the relative merits of the project described in their application. Applicants must submit only one original copy of the application in the following format:

- Each page must be on numbered 8½" x 11" white paper that has one-inch margins; and
- The text of the application must be typed single spaced in a font no smaller than 12-point.

Applications that fail to comply with the required content and format will not be considered for funding. If submitting applications for more than one project, submit a separate application for each project. Material exceeding stated page limits will not be considered.

1) **Application Form**: (Standard Form 424 Application for Federal Assistance) Applicants must use this document as the cover sheet for each project application. Standard Form 424 can be downloaded from Grants.gov - Forms Repository.
2) **Project Summary**: (Two to three pages, with a three-(3) page maximum) Applicants must submit a description including the information below.
   a) Project title;
   b) Primary area for consideration (refer to page 4);
   c) Project duration (anticipated project start date of **September 1, 2013,** not to exceed three years);
   d) Project director name, and contact information (including e-mail);
   e) Names and affiliations of project collaborators;
   f) Project purpose;
   g) Project area/location;
   h) Project summary;
   i) Project deliverables/products; and
   j) Description of EQIP eligible producer involvement. Applicants must include a statement indicating that the proposed project will involve EQIP eligible producers and describe and certify their level of involvement in the project. Projects that do not involve EQIP eligible producers are ineligible for a CIG award.
3) **Budget Information:** (Standard Form 424A Budget Information Non-Construction Programs).
   a) Fill in all spaces as appropriate. Section B, Item 6, column 1 should reflect the NRCS funds and Column 2 should reflect the cost share. If your cost share is from multiple sources you may show that in the remaining columns of Item 6. Applicants must prepare this document to identify budget needs. The SF-424A is available at: Grants.gov - Forms Repository
   b) A one page narrative describing the budget needs and justifying why the budget is appropriate should also be included. This is limited to a one-page maximum.

Note: Please note that we understand these are preliminary figures at this point. If the application is approved for full submission there may be differences once the full details of the budget are developed. Please include $3,000 in the project budget for grantee's travel to NRCS designated events. These funds are required and can be part of the federal portion, your cost share, or both.

C. How to Submit an Application

Applicants may submit applications electronically through Grants.gov or to the e-mail address listed below. Alternatively, applications may be submitted via express mail, overnight courier service, or U.S. Postal Service to the addresses listed below. Applications must contain all of the elements of a complete package and meet the requirements described above. Instructions for electronically submitting the required standard forms, and instructions for adding attachments are posted on Grants.gov. Grants.gov provides date and time stamps on applications submitted through its website. All applications regardless of how they are submitted must be received by NRCS before 4:00 p.m. EDT on **March 22, 2013**.

Note: NRCS is not responsible for any technical malfunctions or web site problems related to Grants.gov or e-mailed submissions. Applicants should begin the Grants.gov process or send their e-mail in advance of the submission deadline to avoid problems.

The address for submitting an application by e-mail is nrcscig@wdc.usda.gov

The address for submitting an application via express mail or overnight courier service is:
USDA-NRCS, CIG Program
1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 0103-S
Washington, D.C. 20250

The address for submitting applications via the United States Postal Service is:
USDA-NRCS, CIG Program
P.O. Box 2890, Room 0103-S
Washington, D.C. 20013-2890

Note: Applicants must submit only one signed original copy of each project application. Applications submitted by fax will not be considered. The use of Federal Government postage-paid envelopes, e-mail and/or equipment in filing applications is a violation of federal law and will disqualify you from consideration.

D. Due Date

Applications must be received by 4:00 p.m. EDT on **March 22, 2013**. The applicant assumes the risk of any delays in application delivery. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit completed applications early via e-mail to ensure timely receipt by NRCS.

E. Acknowledgement of Submission

NRCS will acknowledge receipt of timely applications via e-mail. An applicant who does not receive such an e-mail acknowledgement within 30 days of their submission but believes he/she submitted a timely application must contact the NRCS program contact below within 30 days. Failure to do so will result in the application not being considered.

CIG Program Contact:
Gregorio Cruz
National CIG Program Manager
1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 0103-S
Washington, D.C. 20250
Phone: (703) 235-8065
E-mail: gregorio.cruz@wdc.usda.gov

F. Withdrawal

Applicants or their authorized representative may withdraw an application by written notice at any time before selections are made.

G. Review

Applications will be evaluated by NRCS, federal partner, and non-federal partner agency staff under the bulleted topic identified by the applicant. Each application will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice, including EQIP payment limitations. Incomplete applications will be eliminated from competition and notification of elimination will be mailed to the applicant.

H. Anticipated Notification

Applicants will be notified via e-mail by **April 15, 2013**. Applicants selected for full proposals will be required to submit a full proposal package by **May 13, 2013.**

V. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION FOR FULL PROPOSALS (only for those applicants notified at the end of the pre-proposal review process that their application has been identified for further evaluation).

All Office of Management and Budget standard forms necessary for CIG submission are posted on the following web site: Grants.gov - Forms Repository.

A. Content and Format

Applications must contain the content, format, and information set forth below in order to receive consideration for funding. Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of NRCS or others as to the relative merits of the project described in their application. Applicants must submit only one original copy of the application in the following format:

- Each page must be on numbered 8½" x 11" white paper that has one-inch margins; and
- The text of the application must be typed single spaced in a font no smaller than 12-point.

Applications that fail to comply with the required content and format will not be considered for funding. Material exceeding stated page limits will not be considered. Applications must include all required forms and narrative sections described below. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

1) **Application Form:** (Standard Form 424 Application for Federal Assistance) Applicants must use this document as the cover sheet for each project application. Standard Form 424 can be downloaded from Grants.gov - Forms Repository.

2) **Project Executive Summary**—in one page or less, describe in non-technical language the project's objectives, methods, funding requested, participating partners, and deliverables.
3) **Project Description:** The description must include the following information and is limited to 15 pages in length Pages in excess of the 15-page limit will be discarded and not evaluated.
   a) Project background: Describe the issue or problem, and the history of, and need for, the proposed innovation. Provide evidence that the proposed innovation has been studied sufficiently to indicate a good probability for success of the project.
   b) Project objectives: Be specific using qualitative and quantitative measures, if possible, to describe the project's purpose and goals. Describe how the project is innovative.
   c) Project methods: Describe clearly the methodology of the project and the tools or processes that will be used to implement the project.
   d) Location and size of project or project area: Describe the location of the project and the relative size and scope (e.g., acres, farm types, demographics, etc.) of the project area. Provide a map, if possible.
   e) EQIP eligible producer participation: Estimate the number of EQIP eligible producers involved in the project, and describe the extent of their involvement (Note: Producers receiving direct or indirect payments through participation in a CIG project must also meet the EQIP eligibility requirements).
   f) Project action plan and timeline: Provide a table listing project actions, timeframes, and associated milestones through project completion. Anticipated project start date of **September 1, 2013**.
   g) Project management: Give a detailed description of how the project will be organized and managed. Include a list of key project personnel, their relevant education or experience, and their anticipated contributions to the project. Explain the level of participation required in the project by government and non-government entities. Identify who will participate in monitoring and evaluating the project.
   h) Project deliverables/products: Provide a list of specific deliverables and products that will allow NRCS to monitor project progress and payment. The proposal shall include a set of technical deliverables designed to evaluate the performance and broader applicability of the project being proposed for implementation. In addition to project-specific deliverables, selected applicants will be required to provide the following:
      1) Semi-annual reports;
      2) Supplemental narratives that explain and support payment requests;
      3) A final report;
      4) Performance items specific to the project that indicate progress
      5) A new technology and innovative approach fact sheet; and
      6) Participation in at least one NRCS sponsored event during the grant period.
   i) Benefits or results expected and transferability: Identify the results and benefits to be derived from the proposed project activities, and explain how the results will be measured. Identify project beneficiaries, i.e., agricultural producers by type, region, or sector; rural communities; and municipalities. Explain how these entities will benefit. In addition, describe how results will be communicated to others via outreach activities.
   j) Project evaluation: Describe the methodology or procedures to be followed to evaluate the project, determine technical feasibility, and quantify the results of the

project for the final report. Grant recipients will be required to provide a semi-annual progress report, quarterly financial reports, and a final project report to NRCS. Instructions for submitting quarterly reports will be detailed in the grant agreement.

4) **Assessment of Environmental and Social Impacts:** Describe and assess the potential environmental and social impacts of the proposed project. The description of the potential environmental and social impacts must address all potential beneficial and adverse impacts of the proposed action. A full description and assessment of the potential impacts to all environmental resources must be disclosed. The length of the analysis should be commensurate with the complexity of the project proposed and the environmental resources impacted directly, indirectly, or cumulatively. Where possible, information on environmental impacts should be quantified, such as number of acres of wetlands impacted, amount of carbon sequestration estimated, etc. Environmental resources include soil, water, air, plants, and animals, as well as other resources protected by law, regulation, Executive Order, and agency policy. In addition to describing impacts, applicants are required to assess the significance or degree of potential environmental impact of the proposed project on environmental resources.

   Note: Please be aware that applications for projects with potentially adverse impacts may need to be modified in order to achieve acceptable and beneficial levels of environmental impact. NRCS may choose not to select projects that cannot be modified.

5) **Budget Information:** The budget portion of the application consists of the three parts described below. The budget information must include the following information and is limited to 12 pages in length.
   a. Standard Form (SF) 424A Budget Information- Non-Construction Programs: Fill in all spaces as appropriate. Section B, Item 6, column 1 should reflect the NRCS funds and Column 2 should reflect the cost share funds. If your cost share is from multiple sources you may show that in the remaining columns of Item 6. This form is the summary budget for the project.
   b. Detailed Budget Description: A specific item-by-item breakdown of the totals provided in Item 6 of the SF-424A should be provided. This detail should show what individual costs were added together to arrive at the totals presented in each of Object Class Categories on the SF-424. The format of this information, which can be in a chart, spreadsheet, table, etc., should be readable in 8 ½" by 11" printable pages. The information needs to be presented in such a way that the evaluators and NRCS can readily understand what expenses will be incurred to support the project. The breakdown of the federal share and the cost share should be shown separately as in the SF-424A, not combined. This may be in separate documents or in different sections of the same one. Items provided to NRCS in the budget details should include, but are not limited to, the following:
      6a. Personnel; A list of personnel, their salary, hourly rate, hours, % time.
      6b. Fringe Benefits: % of salary, differing rates for different staff.
      6c. Travel: basis for airfare, mileage rate (NTE Federal govt. rate), per diem, hotel, car rental, how many trips, how many days, number of staff.
      6d. Equipment: type of equipment, cost per item, per batch, per load, quantity.
      6e. Supplies: type of supplies, cost per item, per batch, per load, quantity (a general statement such as "office supplies $3,000" is not acceptable).

6f. Contractual; Cost of each subcontract – the total of all subcontracts should be shown on the SF-424, but an itemized budget should be provided for each potential subcontract. The budgets for the subcontracts should follow this same format and be submitted with your proposal.

6g. Construction: N/A.

6h. Other: Cost per item, per batch, per load, quantity.

Note: Please include $3,000 in the project budget for travel designated by NRCS. These funds are required and can be part of the federal portion, the cost share, or both.

c. Budget Narrative: Provide a detailed narrative in support of the budget for the project, broken down by each project year. Discuss how the budget specifically supports the proposed activities. Explain how budget items are essential to achieving project objectives. Justify the project cost effectiveness and include justification for personnel and consultant salaries with a description of duties. In addition to the information above, any subcontractors and consultants must also submit a statement of work. The budget narrative should support the federal funds requested and the cost share.

6) Indirect Costs

a. Applicants wishing to claim indirect costs must have a federally approved indirect cost rate. The approved indirect cost rate must be included in the application package.

b. An indirect cost rate not to exceed 15 percent may be approved for applicants without a federally approved indirect cost rate. To be considered for an indirect cost rate not to exceed 15 percent, applicants must submit an indirect cost rate proposal with the application which includes:

1) Applicant's written policy for allocating and identifying direct and indirect costs
2) Contact person information regarding who prepared proposal
3) Breakdown of indirect salaries by position title and amount.
4) Line item expenditure description and how the costs are being allocated between direct and indirect.
5) Applicant's tax identification number.
6) Signed certification that certify all costs in proposal are allowable under OMB cost principles; costs treated as indirect have not been claimed as direct; and similar types of costs have been accounted for consistently and the Federal government will e notified of any account changed that would affect the rate. Signature should be of approving official for applicant or applicant's chief financial officer.

c. If applicant does not have a federally approved indirect cost rate, it is at the agency's (NRCS) discretion whether to allow indirect cost.

7) **Matching:** Applications must include written verification of commitments of matching support (including both cash and in-kind contributions) from non-federal third parties.

Cash Match

For any third party cash contributions, a separate pledge agreement is required for each contribution, signed by the authorized organizational representative of the contributing organization and the applicant organization, which must include: (1) the name, address, and telephone number of the contributor, (2) the name of the applicant organization, (3)

the title of the project for which the contribution is made, (4) the dollar amount of the cash contribution, and (5) a statement that the contributor will pay the cash contribution during the grant period.

In-Kind Match

"In-kind" refers to non-cash contributions of goods or services made by third-party individuals or organizations to support projects. Examples of "in-kind" contributions include work done by unpaid volunteers and donations of supplies, facilities, or equipment. In-kind contributions must be necessary to accomplish program activities and verifiable.

For any third-party in-kind contributions, a separate pledge agreement is required for each contribution, signed by the authorized organizational representatives of the contributing organization and the applicant, which must include: (1) the name, address, and telephone number of the contributor, (2) the name of the applicant's organization, (3) the title of the project for which the contribution is made, (4) a good faith estimate of the current fair market value of the third-party in-kind contribution, and (5) a statement that the contributor will make the contribution during the grant period.

The sources and amounts of all matching support from non-applicants must be summarized on a separate page and placed in the application immediately following the summary of matching support (matching support means a budget narrative broken down by year).

The value of applicant contributions to the project will be established in accordance with the applicable cost principles. Applicants should refer to OMB Circulars and Cost Principles for additional guidance and other requirements relating to matching and allowable costs.

8) **Declaration of Previous CIG Projects Involvement:** Identify any previously awarded CIG projects related to this proposal and any of their principal investigators. Detail the purpose, outcomes to date, and how this new proposal relates to the previous award.

9) **Declaration of Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher, or Federally Recognized Indian Tribe:** If an applicant wishes to compete in the 10 percent set-aside funding pool, applicants must make a declaration in writing of their status as a Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher, Federally recognized Indian tribe, member of a Federally recognized Indian tribe, or a community-based organization comprised of or representing these individuals or entities. This declaration is also required in order to be eligible for the in-kind contribution exception. (Refer to Part III B that describes the provision of a set-aside pool of funding for Beginning or Limited Farmers or Ranchers and Federally recognized Indian tribes.)

10) **Declaration of EQIP Eligible Producer Eligibility and Involvement:** Applicants must include a statement indicating that the proposed project will involve EQIP eligible producers and describe and certify their level of involvement in the project. Proposals that do not involve EQIP eligible producers are ineligible for a CIG award.

11) **State Conservationist Review:** Applicants must include documentation showing that the application was sent to the appropriate State Conservationist(s) for review by 4:00 pm EDT on **May 3, 2013**. If a project is multi-State in scope, all State Conservationists in the project area must be sent the application for review. A list of State office addresses and phone numbers is included at the end of this notice. Applicants are encouraged to consult with the appropriate State Conservationist(s) during application development.

12) **Certifications:** Standard Form (SF) 424B - Assurances, Non-construction Programs. All applications must include this document. The SF-424B may be found at: Grants.gov - Forms Repository or by contacting the State office. In addition, applicants, by signing and submitting an application, assure and certify that they are in compliance with the following federal regulations:
    a) 2 CFR Part 417, Government wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement)
    b) 7 CFR Part 3018, New Restrictions on Lobbying
    c) 2 CFR Part 421, Government wide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)

13) **DUNS Number:** A Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and keeping track of over 70 million businesses worldwide. CIG applicants must obtain a DUNS Number. Information on how to obtain a DUNS number can be found at: http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform or by calling 1-866-705-5711. Please note that the registration may take up to 14 business days to complete.

14) **Central Contractor Registry (CCR) Registration:** The CCR is a database that serves as the primary government repository for contractor information required to conduct business with the Federal Government. This database is also used as a central location for maintaining organizational information for individuals or entities seeking and receiving Federal grants. CIG applicants must register with the CCR. To register, go to: https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/ Please allow a minimum of 5 days to complete the CCR registration.

15) **Appropriations Restrictions:** Awards made under this solicitation are subject to the provisions contained in the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2012 (P.L. No. 112-55), Division A, Sections 738 and 739, regarding corporate felony convictions and corporate federal tax delinquencies.

B. How to Submit an Application

Applicants may submit applications electronically through Grants.gov or to the e-mail address listed below. Alternatively, applications may be submitted via express mail, overnight courier service, or U.S. Postal Service to the addresses listed below. All applications must contain all of the elements of a complete package and meet the requirements described above. Instructions for electronically submitting the required standard forms, and instructions for adding attachments are posted on Grants.gov. Grants.gov provides date and time stamps on applications submitted through its website. All applications regardless of how they are submitted must be received on **May 3, 2013**. E-mailed applications must be received by NRCS before the submission deadline.

Note: NRCS is not responsible for any technical malfunctions or web site problems related to Grants.gov or e-mailed submissions. Applicants should begin the Grants.gov process or send their e-mail in advance of the submission deadline to avoid problems.

The address for submitting an application by e-mail is nrcscig@wdc.usda.gov

The address for submitting an application via express mail or overnight courier service is:
USDA-NRCS, CIG Program
1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 0103-S
Washington, D.C. 20250

The address for submitting applications via the United States Postal Service is:
USDA-NRCS, CIG Program
P.O. Box 2890, Room 0103-S
Washington, D.C. 20013-2890

Note: Applicants must submit only one signed original copy of each project application. Applications submitted by fax will not be considered. The use of Federal Government postage-paid envelopes, e-mail and/or equipment in filing applications is a violation of federal law and will disqualify you from consideration.

C. Due Date

Applications must be received in 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 0103-S, Washington, D.C. 20250 by 4:00 p.m. EDT on **May 3, 2013**. The applicant assumes the risk of any delays in application delivery. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit completed applications early e-mail to ensure timely receipt by NRCS.

D. Acknowledgement of Submission

NRCS will acknowledge receipt of timely applications via e-mail. An applicant who does not receive such an e-mail acknowledgement within 30 days of their submission but believes he/she submitted a timely application must contact the NRCS program contact below within 30 days. Failure to do so will result in the application not being considered.

CIG Program Contact:
Gregorio Cruz
National CIG Program Manager
1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 0103-S
Washington, D.C. 20250
Phone: (703) 235-8065
E-mail: gregorio.cruz@wdc.usda.gov

E. Withdrawal

Applications may be withdrawn by written notice at any time before selections are made. Applications may be withdrawn by the applicant, or by an authorized representative.

F. Funding Restrictions

Awardees may not use unrecovered indirect costs as part of their matching funds.

CIG funds may not be used to pay any of the following costs unless otherwise permitted by law, or approved in writing by the Authorized Departmental Officer in advance of incurring such costs:

1. Costs above the amount of funds authorized for the project;
2. Costs incurred prior to the effective date of the grant;
3. Costs which lie outside the scope of the approved project and any amendments thereto;
4. Entertainment costs, regardless of their apparent relationship to project objectives;
5. Compensation for injuries to persons, or damage to property arising out of project activities;
6. Consulting services performed by a Federal employee during official duty hours when such consulting services result in the payment of additional compensation to the employee; and,
7. Renovation or refurbishment of research or related spaces, the purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such spaces, and the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.

This list is not exhaustive. Questions regarding the allowances of particular items of cost should be directed to the administrative contact person listed on Part VI.

G. Review

Applications will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice. Incomplete applications will be eliminated from competition, and notification of elimination will be mailed to the applicant. Complete applications will be evaluated by a technical peer review panel based on the Application Evaluation Criteria identified in the application instructions in section V.B.

Applications, along with their technically-based recommendations from the peer review groups, will then be forwarded to the Grants Review Board. The Grants Review Board will make its recommendations for project approval to the NRCS Chief who will make the final selections.

H. Patents and Inventions

Allocation of rights to patents and inventions shall be in accordance with 7 CFR §3019.36. USDA receives a royalty-free license for Federal Government use, reserves the right to require the patentee to license others in certain circumstances, and requires that anyone exclusively licensed to sell the invention in the United States must normally manufacture it domestically.

I. Environmental Review Requirements

The Council on Environmental Quality's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations at 40 CFR parts 1500-1508 and the NRCS regulation that implements NEPA at 7 CFR part 650 require that an environmental review be prepared for actions where the agency has discretion and control. Accordingly, NRCS financial assistance under the CIG program requires compliance with these regulations. As part of the application packet, applicants are required to provide environmental information pertaining to their project to help NRCS

determine the appropriate documentation required to comply with NEPA and NRCS regulations. If the application is selected for funding, the NRCS Program Contact and NRCS Environmental Liaison will coordinate with the selected applicant concerning documentation for compliance with NEPA. The selected applicant will be required to prepare and pay for the preparation of the appropriate NEPA document (e.g., Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement if required for NEPA compliance). Grant funding cannot be approved until the environmental review requirements demonstrating compliance with NEPA are met.

VI. APPLICATION REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION INFORMATION

A. Review and Selection Process

A two-phase evaluation and review process will be utilized for applications submitted under this notice. The first phase requires the applicant to submit a pre-proposal application. Pre-proposal applications will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice. Incomplete applications will be eliminated from competition, and notification of elimination will be mailed to the applicant. NRCS staff will evaluate complete pre-proposal applications based on how they demonstrate the use of innovative technologies and/or approaches to address at least one of the topics provided in section I.D. of this notice.

NRCS will only request a full proposal package from those applicants selected in the pre-proposal process. There are three steps in evaluating full CIG proposals. First, proposals will be divided among technical peer review groups and then will be reviewed by a Technical Peer Review Panel. The Technical Peer Review Panel consists of NRCS national technical specialists, and technical specialists from other appropriately related Federal agencies, and non-Federal agencies. Applications will be reviewed based on the CIG Technical Evaluation Criteria listed in Part VI.B below.

The Technical Peer Review Panel will forward their recommendations and the proposals to a Grants Review Board, which will certify the peer review panels' recommendations and ensure that the application evaluations are consistent with program objectives. The CIG Grants Review Board consists of five members of NRCS leadership, specifically the Deputy Chief for Science and Technology (Chair), the Deputy Chief for Soil Science and Resource Assessment, the Deputy Chief for Financial Assistance and Community Development, one Regional Conservationist, one State Conservationist, and the Director of the Office of Outreach and Advocacy. The Grants Review Board will forward its recommendations to the NRCS Chief for final review and selection.

B. Application Evaluation Criteria

The Technical Peer Review Panels will use the following criteria to evaluate project proposals:

1) Purpose, Approach, and Goals
   - Design and implementation of project based on sound methodology and demonstrated technology.
   - Promotes environmental enhancement and protection in conjunction with agricultural production.
   - Project outcome is clearly measurable.
   - Potential for successful completion.

- Both beneficial and adverse impacts are considered and an acceptably significant level of improvement will be achieved.

2) Innovative Technology or Approach
   - Project is innovative (national, regionally, and/or local in nature).
   - Project conforms to description of innovative projects or activities in proposal request announcement.
3) Project Management
   - Timeline and milestones are clear and reasonable.
   - Project staff has technical expertise needed.
   - Budget is adequately explained and justified.
   - Experience and capacity to partner with and gain the support of other organizations, institutions and agencies.
4) Transferability
   - Potential for producers and landowners to use the innovative technology or technologies.
   - Potential to transfer the approach or technology nationally or to a broader audience or other geographic or socio-economic areas, including limited resource, socially disadvantaged and other historically underserved producers and communities.
   - Potential for NRCS to successfully use the innovative approach or methods.
   - Project will result in the development of technical or related technology transfer materials (technical standards, technical notes, guide sheets, handbooks, software, etc.).

C. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

NRCS anticipates announcing CIG selections by **August 1, 2013**, and awarding all grants by **September 1, 2013**. However, NRCS will not distribute any funds, and grantees cannot begin work until the parties execute an appropriate CIG agreement.

Applicants should plan their projects based on a project start date of **September 1, 2013**.

VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Award Notification

Applicants who have been selected for funding will receive a letter of official notification from National Headquarters. However, all selections are contingent upon successful completion of the environmental review process and financial review. NRCS reserves the right to have grant award(s) administered by a third party. In the event that a third party administers the grant award(s), the applicant/recipient will be notified in writing.

B. Grant Agreement

The CCC, through NRCS, will use a grant agreement with selected applicants to document participation in the CIG component of EQIP.

C. Environmental Review Requirements

Upon notification of selection, the applicant must contact the NRCS Environmental Liaison to determine the scope and level of NEPA documentation required for the project. The environmental documentation prepared to meet NEPA requirements must be prepared prior to award of grant funds.

Selected applicants may be required to prepare and pay for the preparation of the appropriate NEPA document(s) if an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement is needed. Grant funds cannot be awarded until the environmental review requirements demonstrating compliance with NEPA are met.

D. Reporting Requirements

Selected applicants will be required to submit a SF-425, Federal Financial Report, no later than 30 days after the end of each quarter and 90 days after completion of project. In addition, every six months the selected applicant must submit a written performance progress report to the NRCS program contact and the NRCS technical contact. This report is distinct from the quarterly financial report described above. Each progress report shall cover work performed during the previous 6-month period, including any funded or unfunded time extensions, a comparison of actual accomplishments to project goals, and a statement of work projected to be completed in the next 6-month period. The final report is due 90 days after completion of the project. This report is distinct from the performance progress reports described above. The final report will summarize the project and describe methods, quality control, findings, and recommendations. Additional information, forms, and templates can be found at http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/programs/financial/cig/?cid=stelprdb1045412

To satisfy the requirements of EQIP (7 CFR 1466) compliance measures, the selected applicant is required to submit as a component of the semi-annual progress report:

- A list of producers, identified by name and social security number, of all EQIP-eligible producers or entities involved in the project.
- The dollar amount of direct and indirect payment made to each individual producer or entity for any structural, vegetative, or management practices. Both quarterly and cumulative payment amounts must be submitted.
- A self-certification indicating that each individual or entity receiving a direct or indirect payment through this grant is in compliance with the EQIP Payment Limitation, AGI, HEL, and Wetlands Conservation Compliance Farm Bill provisions.

E. Freedom of Information and Privacy Act

Applicants should be aware that part or all of the information submitted in their application may become a matter of public record and therefore may be subject to public disclosure through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. Applicants are advised to mark confidential information, such as proprietary information, to prevent disclosure.

VIII. AGENCY CONTACTS

A. CIG Program Contact

Gregorio Cruz
National CIG Program Manager
USDA-NRCS
1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 0103-S
Washington, D.C. 20250
Phone: (703) 235-8065
E-mail: gregorio.cruz@wdc.usda.gov

B. CIG Administrative Contact

Shelia Leonard
Grants and Agreements, Team Leader
USDA-NRCS
1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 5224-S
Washington, D.C. 20250
Phone: (202) 720-4102
E-mail: sheila.leonard@wdc.usda.gov

Additional information about CIG, including fact sheets and frequently asked questions, is available on the CIG web page at: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/cig/index.html.

Attachments

IX. OTHER INFORMATION

CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANTS
FISCAL YEAR 2013 PRE-PROPOSAL PACKAGE CHECK LIST

Important: Applications Missing Any of These Required Items Will Not Be Considered

☐ **1. Application Form:** Submit Standard Form 424 Application for Federal Assistance

☐ **2. Project Summary:** Submit a description including the information below (Three (3) pages maximum in length).

a) Project title;
b) Primary area for consideration (refer to page 4);
c) Project duration (anticipated project start date of **September 1, 2013,** not to exceed three years);
d) Project director name, and contact information (including e-mail);
e) Names and affiliations of project collaborators;
f) Project purpose;
g) Project area/location;
h) Project summary;
i) Project deliverables/products; and
j) Description of EQIP eligible producer involvement

☐ **3. Budget Information:** Submit Standard Form 424A Budget Information Non-Construction Programs.

a) Complete SF-424A, and
b) One page narrative

CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANTS
FISCAL YEAR 2013 FULL APPLICATION PACKAGE CHECK LIST

Important: Applications Missing Any of These Required Items Will Not Be Considered

☐ **1. Application Form:** Submit Standard Form 424 Application for Federal Assistance

☐ **2. Project Description:** (15 pages maximum, single-spaced, single-sided, 12 point font)
a) Project background
b) Project objectives
c) Project methods
d) Location and size of project area (include a map if possible)
e) EQIP eligible producer participation (Note: Producers receiving direct or indirect payments through participation in a CIG project must also meet the EQIP eligibility requirements)
f) Project action plan and timeline
g) Project management
h) Project deliverables/products
i) Benefits or results expected and transferability
j) Project evaluation

☐ **3. Assessment of Environmental and Social Impacts**

☐ **4. Budget Information:** Submit a completed Standard Form 424A (SF-424A) Budget Information-Non-Construction Programs.
a) Complete SF-424A
b) Detailed budget description
c) Budget narrative

☐ **5. Indirect Cost**

☐ **6. Matching Information**

☐ **7. Declaration of Previous CIG Projects Involvement.**

☐ **8. Declaration of Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Limited Farmer or Rancher, or Federally Recognized Indian tribe (Special Provisions):** If an applicant wishes to compete in the 10 percent set-aside funding pool, applicants must make a declaration in writing of their status as a Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher, or Federally recognized Indian tribe or members of a Federally recognized Indian tribe or a community-based organization comprised of or representing these entities.

☐ **9. Declaration of EQIP Eligible Producer Eligibility and Involvement.** Applicants must include a statement indicating that the proposed project will involve EQIP eligible producers and describe and certify their level of involvement in the project.

☐ **10. State Conservationist Letter of Review:** Include documentation showing that the proposal was sent to the State Conservationist(s).

☐ **11. Certifications:** Complete Standard Form 424B (SF-424B) Assurances-Non-Construction Programs.

☐ **12. DUNS Number:** For information about how to obtain a DUNS number, go to http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform or call 1-866-705-5711. Please note that the registration may take up to 14 business days to complete.

☐ **13. Central Contractor Registry (CCR):** To register, visit https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/. Allow a minimum of 5 days to complete the CCR registration.

☐ **14. Appropriations Restrictions:** Awards made under this solicitation are subject to the provisions contained in the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2012 (P.L. No. 112-55), Division A, Sections 738 and 739 regarding corporate felony convictions and corporate federal tax delinquencies.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE STATE CONSERVATIONISTS
East Region

AL – William Puckett
3381 Skyway Drive
P.O. Box 311
Auburn, Alabama 36830
Phone: 334/887-4500
Fax: 334/887-4552
william.puckett@al.usda.gov

CT – Lisa Coverdale
344 Merrow Road, Suite A
Tolland, Connecticut 06084
Phone: 860/871-4011
Fax: 860/871-4054
lisa.coverdale@ct.usda.gov

DE – Russell Morgan
1221 College Park Drive, Suite 100
Dover, Delaware 19904-8713
Phone: 302/678-4160
Fax: 302/678-0843
russell.morgan@de.usda.gov

FL –Roney Gutierrez, Acting
2614 N.W. 43rd Street
Gainesville, Florida 32606-6611 or
P.O. Box 141510, Gainesville, FL 32614
Phone: 352/338-9500
Fax: 352-338-9574
roney.gutierrez@fl.usda.gov

GA – James E. Tillman, Sr.
Federal Building, Stop 200
355 East Hancock Avenue
Athens, Georgia 30601-2769
Phone: 706/546-2272
Fax: 706/546-2120
james.tillman@ga.usda.gov

KY – Karen Woodrich
771 Corporate Drive, Suite 210
Lexington, Kentucky 40503-5479
Phone: 859/224-7350
Fax: 859/224-7399
karen.woodrich@ky.usda.gov

MA – Christine Clarke
451 West Street
Amherst, Massachusetts 01002-2995
Phone: 413/253-4351
Fax: 413/253-4375
christine.clarke@ma.usda.gov

MD – Thomas Morgart
John Hanson Business Center
339 Busch's Frontage Road, Suite 301
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-5534
Phone: 410/757-0861 x315
Fax: 10/757-0687
thomas.morgart@md.usda.gov

ME –Juan Hernandez
967 Illinois Avenue
Suite #3
Bangor, Maine 04401
Phone: 207/990-9100, x3
Fax: 207/990-9599
juan.hernandez@me.usda.gov

MS –Homer Wilkes
Suite 1321, Federal Building
100 West Capitol Street
Jackson, Mississippi 39269-1399
Phone: 601/965-5205 x140
Fax: 601/965-4940
homer.wilkes@ms.usda.gov

NC – Terrence Rudolf, Acting
4407 Bland Road, Suite 117
Raleigh, North Carolina 27609-6293
Phone: 919/873-2102
Fax: 919/873-2156
terrance.rudolph@tn.usda.gov

NH – Richard Ellsmore
Federal Building
2 Madbury Road
Durham, New Hampshire 03824-2043
Phone: 603/868-7581 x 105
Fax: 603/868-5301
richard.ellsmore@nh.usda.gov

NJ –Carrie Mosley
220 Davidson Ave
Somerset NJ, 08873
Phone: 732/537-6042
Fax: 732/537-6095
carrie.mosley@nj.usda.gov

NY – Donald Pettit
441 South Salina Street
Suite 354
Syracuse, New York 13202-2450
Phone: 315/477-6504
Fax: 315/477-6550
donald.pettit@ny.usda.gov

OH – Terry Cosby
200 North High Street, Room 522
Columbus, Ohio 43215-2478
Phone: 614/255-2472
Fax: 614/255-2548
terry.cosby@oh.usda.gov

PA- Denise Coleman
1 Credit Union Place, Suite 340
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17110-2993
Phone: 717/237-2103
Fax: 717/237-2238
denise.coleman@pa.usda.gov

PR-Edwin Almodovar
IBM Building, Suite 604
654 Munoz Rivera Avenue
Hato Rey, Puerto Rico 00918-4123
Phone: 787/766-5206, x237
Fax: 787/766-6563
edwin.almodovar@pr.usda.gov

RI- Richard "Pooh" Vongkhamdy
60 Quaker Lane, Suite 46
Warwick, Rhode Island 02886-0111
Phone: 401/828-1300
Fax: 401/828-0433
pooh.vongkhamdy@ri.usda.gov

SC- Ann English
Strom Thurmond Federal Building
1835 Assembly Street, Room 950
Columbia, South Carolina 29201-2489
Phone: 803/253-3935
Fax: 803/253-3670
ann.english@sc.usda.gov

TN – John Rissler, Acting
675 U.S. Courthouse
801 Broadway
Nashville, Tennessee 37203-3878
Phone: 615/277-2531
Fax: 615/277-2578
john.rissler@tn.usda.gov

VA – Jack Bricker
Culpeper Building, Suite 209
1606 Santa Rosa Road
Richmond, Virginia 23229-5014
Phone: 804/287-1691
Fax: 804/287-1737
jack.bricker@va.usda.gov

VT – Vicky Drew
356 Mountain View Drive, Suite 105
Colchester, Vermont 05446
Phone: 802/951-6796
Fax: 802/951-6327
vicky.drew@vt.usda.gov

WV—Kevin Wickey
West Virginia State Office
1550 Earl Core Road, Suite 200
Morgantown, West Virginia 26505
Phone: 304/284-7540
Fax: 304/284-4839
kevin.wickey@wv.usda.gov

Central Region

AR – Doris Washington, Acting
Federal Building, Room 3416
700 West Capitol Avenue
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201-3228
Phone: 501/301-3100
Fax: 50l/301-3194
doris.washington@ar.usda.gov

IA – Jay Mar
210 Walnut Street
Room 693
Des Moines, Iowa 50309-2180
Phone: 515/284-6655
Fax: 515/284-4394
jay mar@ia.usda.gov

IL –Ivan Dozier
2118 W. Park Court
Champaign, Illinois 61821
Phone: 217/353-6600
Fax: 217/353-6676
ivan.dozier@il.usda.gov

IN – Kimberly Neumann, Acting
6013 Lakeside Blvd.
Indianapolis, Indiana 46278-2933
Phone: 317/290-3200
Fax: 317/290-3225
kimberly.neumann@in.usda.gov

KS - Eric Banks
760 South Broadway
Salina, Kansas 67401-4642
Phone: 785/823-4565
Fax: 785/452-3369
eric.banks@ks.usda.gov

LA – Kevin Norton
3737 Government Street
Alexandria, Louisiana 71302
Phone: 318/473-7756
Fax: 318/473-7626
kevin.norton@la.usda.gov

MI – Garry Lee
3001 Coolidge Road, Suite 250
East Lansing, Michigan 48823-6321
Phone: 517/324-5270
Fax: 517/324-5171
garry.lee@mi.usda.gov

MN – Don Baloun
375 Jackson Street
Suite 600
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1854
Phone: 651/602-7900
Fax: 651/602-7913 or 7914
don.baloun@mn.usda.gov

MO – Karen Brinkman, Acting
Parkade Center, Suite 250
601 Business Loop 70 West
Columbia, Missouri 65203-2546
Phone: 573/876-0909
Fax: 573/876-9439
karen.brinkman@mo.usda.gov

ND – Mary Podoll
220 E. Rosser Avenue, Room 278
P.O. Box 1458
Bismarck, North Dakota 58502-1458
Phone: 701/530-2000
Fax: 701/530-2110
mary.podoll@nd.usda.gov

NE – Craig Derickson
Federal Building, Room 152
100 Centennial Mall, North
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-3866
Phone: 402/437-5300
Fax: 402/437-5327
craig.derickson@ne.usda.gov

OK – John Mueller, Acting
100 USDA, Suite 206
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74074-2655
Phone: 405/742-1204
Fax: 405/742-1126
john.mueller@tx.usda.gov

SD – Jeffrey Zimprich
Federal Building, Room 203
200 Fourth Street, S.W.
Huron, South Dakota 57350-2475
Phone: 605/352-1200
Fax: 605/352-1288
jeffrey.zimprich@sd.usda.gov

TX – Salvador Salinas
W.R. Poage Federal Building
10l South Main Street
Temple, Texas 76501-7602
Phone: 254/742-9800
Fax: 254/742-9819
salvador.salinas@tx.usda.gov

WI – Jimmy Bramblett
8030 Excelsior Drive, Suite 200
Madison, Wisconsin 53717
Phone: 608/662-4422
Fax: 608/662-4430
jimmy.bramblett@wi.usda.gov

West Region

AK – Robert Jones
800 West Evergreen
Atrium Building, Suite 100
Palmer, Alaska 99645-6539
Phone: 907/761-7760
Fax: 907/761-7790
robert.jones@ak.usda.gov

AZ – Curtis Elke, Acting
230 North First Avenue
Suite 509
Phoenix, Arizona 85003-1733
Phone: 602/280-8801
Fax: 602/280-8809 or 8805
curtis.elke@sd.usda.gov

CA – Carlos Suarez
430 G Street
Suite 4164
Davis, California 95616-4164
Phone: 530/792-5600
Fax: 530/792-5790
carlos.suarez@ca.usda.gov

CO – Phyllis Philipps
655 Parfet Street
Room E200C
Lakewood, Colorado 80215-5521
Phone: 720-544-2810
Fax: 720-544-2965
phyllis.philipps@co.usda.gov

GU – Angela Biggs, Acting
FHB Building, Suite 301
400 Route 8
Mongmong, Guam 96910
Phone: 671/472-7490
Fax: 671/472-7288
angela.biggs@il.usda.gov

HI – Angela Biggs, Acting
300 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 4-118
P.O. Box 50004
Honolulu, Hawaii 96850-0002
Phone: 808/541-2600 x105
Fax: 808/541-1335
angela.biggs@il.usda.gov

ID – Jeffery Burwell
9173 West Barnes Drive
Suite C
Boise, Idaho 83709
Phone: 208/378-5700
Fax: 208/378-5735
jeffery.burwell@id.usda.gov

MT – Joyce Swartzendruber
Federal Building, Room 443
10 East Babcock Street
Bozeman, Montana 59715-4704
Phone: 406/587-6811
Fax: 406/587-6761
joyce.swartzendruber@mt.usda.gov

NM – Xavier Montoya
6200 Jefferson Street, N.E.
Suite 305
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109-3734
Phone: 505/761-4400
Fax: 505/761-4481
Xavier.montoya@nm.usda.gov

NV – Sheldon Hightower, Acting
1365 Corporate Blvd.
Reno, Nevada 89502
Phone: 775/857-8500 x102
Fax: 775/857-8524
sheldon.hightower@ny.usda.gov

OR – Ron Alvarado
1201 NE Lloyd Blvd. Suite 900
Portland, Oregon 97232
Phone: 503/414-3200
Fax: 503/414-3103
ron.alvarado@or.usda.gov

UT – David Brown
W.F. Bennett Federal Building
125 South State Street, Room 4402
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
Phone: 801/524-4555
Fax: 801/524-4403
david.brown@ut.usda.gov

WA – Roylene Rides at the Door
W. 316 Boone Avenue, Suite 450
Spokane, Washington 99201-2348
Phone: 509/323-2900
Fax: 509/323-2909
roylene.rides-at-the-door@wa.usda.gov

WY –Astrid Martinez
Federal Building, Room 3124
100 East B Street
Casper, Wyoming 82601-1911
Phone: 307/233-6750
Fax: 307/233-6753
astrid.martinez@wy.usda.gov

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers. If you believe you experienced discrimination when obtaining services from USDA, participating in a USDA program, or participating in a program that receives financial assistance from USDA, you may file a complaint with USDA. Information about how to file a discrimination complaint is available from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights.

USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex (including gender identity and expression), marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)
To file a complaint of discrimination, complete, sign and mail a program discrimination complaint form, available at any USDA office location or online at www.ascr.usda.gov, or write to:

USDA
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

Or call toll free at (866) 632-9992 (voice) to obtain additional information, the appropriate office or to request documents. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).