

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service, Commodity Credit Corporation

AREA: Pacific Islands Area

ACTION: NOTICE

Conservation Innovation Grants Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 Announcement for Program Funding

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 10.912

SUMMARY: The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is announcing availability of Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies. Applications are accepted from the Pacific Islands Area (Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands). NRCS anticipates that the funding amount available for support of this program in FY 2011 will be approximately \$300,000. Applications are requested from eligible governmental or non-governmental organizations or individuals for competitive consideration of grant awards for projects between 1 and 3 years in duration.

This notice identifies the objectives for CIG projects, the eligibility criteria for projects, and provides the instructions needed to apply to CIG.

Each proposal 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

DATES: Proposals must be received at the NRCS Pacific Islands Area State Office by 2:00 PM. Hawaiian Standard Time (HST), on **May 20, 2011**.

ADDRESSES: Applications sent via the United States Postal Service must be sent to the following address:

Pacific Islands Area, CIG Program Manager
United States Department Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Pacific Islands Area
P. O. Box 50004
Honolulu, HI 96850-0050
The contact phone number is (808) 541-2600.

The address for hand-delivered, express or overnight Commercial Carrier of your proposals or application is:

Pacific Islands Area, CIG Program Manager
United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Pacific Islands Area
300 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 4-118
Honolulu, Hawaii 96850

For more information contact:

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Contents

I.	FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION	4
A.	LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY	4
B.	OVERVIEW.....	4
C.	INNOVATIVE CONSERVATION PROJECTS OR ACTIVITIES	4
D.	STATE COMPONENT.....	5
II.	FUNDING AVAILABILITY	9
A.	STATE COMPONENT.....	9
B.	STATE COMPONENT FINAL RULE	9
III.	ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION.....	10
A.	MATCHING FUNDS.....	10
B.	BEGINNING OR LIMITED FARMERS OR RANCHERS OR INDIAN TRIBES	10
C.	EQIP PAYMENT LIMITATION AND DUPLICATE PAYMENTS	11
D.	PROJECT ELIGIBILITY.....	12
IV.	APPLICATION INFORMATION FOR FULL PROPOSALS.....	12
A.	PROPOSAL CONTENT AND FORMAT	12
B.	HOW TO SUBMIT A WRITTEN APPLICATION.....	16
C.	APPLICATION DUE DATE	17
D.	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SUBMISSION.....	17
E.	FUNDING RESTRICTIONS.....	18
F.	PATENTS AND INVENTIONS	18
G.	ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW REQUIREMENTS.....	18
H.	WITHDRAWAL OF APPLICATIONS	19
I.	DELIVERABLES	19
V.	APPLICATION REVIEW	19
A.	APPLICATION REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS.....	19
B.	CRITERIA FOR APPLICATION EVALUATION.....	20
C.	ANTICIPATED ANNOUNCEMENT AND AWARD DATES	20
VI.	AWARD INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION	21
A.	AWARD NOTIFICATION	21
B.	ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW REQUIREMENTS.....	21
C.	GRANT AGREEMENT	21
D.	REPORTING REQUIREMENTS	22
VII.	AGENCY CONTACTS.....	22
VIII.	OTHER INFORMATION	24

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) 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 (such as market-based systems) into NRCS policy, technical manuals, guides, and references or to the private sector. CIG does not fund research projects. Projects intended to formulate hypothesis do not qualify. CIG is to apply proven technology which has been shown to work previously. It is a vehicle to stimulate the development and adoption of conservation approaches or technologies that have been studied sufficiently to indicate a likelihood of success, and to be 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 Pacific Islands Area (PIA) will accept proposals for single or multi-year projects, not to exceed 3 years, submitted to NRCS from eligible entities including federally recognized Indian tribes, State and local units of government, and non-governmental organizations and individuals. Proposals are accepted from the PIA (Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands).

Complete applications received by applicable deadlines will be evaluated by a technical peer review panel based on the Criteria for Application Evaluation identified in the application instructions in section V.B.

Applications with technically-based recommendations from the peer review groups will be forwarded to the Grants Review Board. The Grants Review Board will make recommendations for project approval to the Director 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, including market-based systems;

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

To be given priority consideration, the innovative project or activity:

- Makes use of a proven technology or a technology that has been studied sufficiently to indicate a high probability for success;
- Demonstrates and verifies environmental (soil, water, air, plants, energy use, and animal) effectiveness, utility, affordability, and usability of conservation technology in the field;
- Adapts conservation technologies, practices, systems, procedures, approaches, and incentive systems to improve performance and encourage adoption;
- Introduces conservation systems, approaches, and procedures from another geographic area or agricultural sector; and
- Adapts conservation technology, management, or incentive systems to improve performance.

D. STATE COMPONENT

For FY 2011, CIG will offer the following funding categories: *Adapting Management for Improved Conservation Effects, Preservation and Enhancement of Wildlife Habitat, Energy, Productivity and Environmental Health of Forestland, Promotion of Sustainable Agriculture, Soil Quality, Nutrient Management, Program Outreach and Conservation Technology Transfer to Targeted Groups, Sustainable and Organic Agriculture, and Specialty Crops*. These funding categories may include applications that focus on market-based approaches to conservation, including the advancement of emerging markets for ecosystem services and the development of market-based tools. Beginning Farmers or Ranchers, Limited Resource Farmers or Ranchers, Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers, and Indian tribes or eligible entities servicing Beginning, Limited Resource, Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers, and Indian tribes are encouraged to submit application(s) in any of the categories. Proposals must identify the most appropriate category.

Proposals must demonstrate the use of innovative technologies or approaches, or both, to address the sub-categories listed below. Only proposals addressing the following categories will be considered:

Adapting Management for Improved Conservation Effects

- Use the field-level Agriculture Policy Extender (APEX) model to generate site-based benefits of conservation, including quantifiable outcome-based metrics that fits within the NRCS field office planning structure.
- Development of innovative technologies to reduce transformation and transport of mercuric compounds (methyl mercury), nitrogen, and other potential contaminants from natural and constructed wetlands.
- Cloud based computational analysis and modeling to link resource concerns, conservation systems/practices, and quantifiable outcome-based metrics.
- Develop planning and decision aids to assess and maximize environmental outcomes of implementing conservation systems on working lands, including metrics that quantify units of environmental benefits provided.

Preservation and Enhancement of Wildlife Habitat

- Develop planning and decision aids to assess and maximize wildlife habitat value on land used to grow bio-fuel crops, including metrics that quantify units of potential habitat provided.
- Examine managed grazing as a habitat management tool, including metrics that quantify units of potential habitat provided.
- Develop fish screen technology and criteria for native aquatic species of conservation concern.
- Evaluate (and quantify) the benefits of controlling invasive species in forest habitats.

Energy

- Innovative tools to estimate the energy and fossil fuel implications of cropland agronomic practices. Such tools need to be based on sound science and data, yet be useable by farmers and conservationists. Proposals may be based either on extending and validating the NRCS Cropland Energy Estimator prototype or developing a new tool.
- Life cycle analyses for current conservation practices to assess the energy and fossil fuel implications associated with the use of the practice including analyzing the fossil fuel embedded in materials and agrochemicals.
- Innovative implementation systems to achieve greater use of energy audits including energy audits that address cropland in addition to buildings and equipment.
- Innovative on-farm energy conservation technologies.
- Innovative on-farm applications of renewable energy production technologies to displace fossil fuel energy.
- Sustainable biomass production, harvest, and handling technologies.
- Evaluate and demonstrate the use of fast-growing woody biomass species in agroforestry systems e.g., alley cropping, riparian forest buffers, windbreaks, etc.

Productivity and Environmental Health of Forestland

- Develop improved assessment tools for economic decision-making and modeling of the transitional stages of different forestry/agroforestry practices.
- Implement the use of new or novel forest/agroforestry management systems that can benefit water or air quality, greenhouse gases (GHGs), or other ecosystem services, and metrics to quantify measurable units of improvement gained through the use of these systems.
- Implement new technologies and/or approaches to maintain, restore, or enhance forest health including impacts from invasive species, pests, and fire.
- Demonstrate that agroforestry systems that can provide new revenue through ecosystem benefits
- Implement new and innovative technologies to restore and enhance at risk forest ecosystems.

Promotion of Sustainable Agriculture

- Examine methods and life cycle analysis for encouraging niche agricultural markets. These markets would focus on providing value-added agricultural products that are produced in an environmentally sustainable way.
- Develop and demonstrate the use of Ecological Site Descriptions (ESDs) in response to catastrophic events.
- Develop and demonstrate the use of ESDs for the preservation of at risk forests.

Soil Quality

- Compare new technologies and methods (carbon fractions, enzymes, and other) for early prediction of soil quality degradation.

- Demonstrate conservation technologies to reduce soil erosion and minimize soil emissions of carbon in organic soils.
- Demonstrate technologies to restore and enhance the function and ecosystem services of degraded soils.
- Develop and implement a decision support system to aid land management decisions to enhance soil quality and other related ecosystem services.
- Evaluate and demonstrate technologies to restore and enhance ecosystem services of subaqueous soils.
- Application of continuous no-till crop production to enhance soil resources and other ecosystem services while maintaining crop productivity.
- Identify cover crop species and management strategies for areas with less than 20 inches of rainfall.
- Demonstrate agroforestry technology for enhancing soil health.

Nutrient Management

- Demonstrate feed management, or adoption of new or novel feedstuffs or additives, for manure nutrient reduction to reduce water and air quality problems, GHGs, or pathogen loading and runoff.
- Demonstrate active methods which improve on the capture of nitrogen in manure management systems and provide the opportunity to recycle the manure nitrogen in lieu of synthetic fertilizers.
- Demonstrate the use of water filtration or other medium as a method of reducing chemical compounds and odors from poultry operations and other livestock facilities.
- Design and test “farmer-friendly” recordkeeping software for complex systems, including quantification of nutrients applied by crop and field, manure form, dates, irrigation data, and runoff water quality.
- Development of new strategies to fully implement existing nutrient management conservation.
- Demonstrate methods to capture dissolved phosphorus from field runoff and subsurface drainage.

Program Outreach and Conservation Technology Transfer to Targeted Groups

- Technology transfer to, 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 concerns or problems of the farmers, producers, or landowners.
- 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.
- Examine resource conditions and land capabilities by social groups of the traditionally underserved groups and communities.
- Emphasis on program outreach to underserved producers or landowners.
- 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 Beginning, Limited Resource, Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers and Indian tribes.

- The transfer of demonstrated conservation technologies and practices through a producer handbook consistent with the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) and adapted to specific producer groups (i.e., organic farming, specialty crops, livestock, poultry, row crops, small grains, agroforestry, etc.).

Sustainable and Organic Agriculture

Technology Needs

- Develop technology to determine which crops help to suppress specific pests and the sequencing of the crops to minimize pest (weeds, insects, diseases).
- Demonstrate technology to evaluate the predicted wind and water erosion for organic crop rotations and tillage systems and slopes greater than 1-2 percent slopes.
- Demonstrate technology to determine the proper crops and the sequence of the crops to maximize the nutrient cycling of crop nutrients.
- Determine the proper source, rate, timing, and method(s) of application for organically approved nutrient amendments.
- Determine harvesting times and techniques that may minimize pest damage for the planned commodity.
- Describe the ecological site description based on the existing condition and the expected site condition with organic management.
- Develop protocols to assess the suitability of forages for a given soil/climate under organic management conditions.
- Demonstrate technology to determine the amount (acres) of habitat required to provide adequate pest control, matching plant species to attract desirable beneficial insect species, and managing habitat to provide pest control during the cropping season.
- Demonstrate technology to determine how cover crops can be used on a continuous basis throughout the growing season to provide erosion control, crop nutrients, and pest control for the next crop in rotation and other ecosystem services.
- Adaption of technology and approaches to aid organic farming and organic transition.
- Adaption of technology and approaches to aid small scale farming.
- Demonstrate small-scale technologies in the harvesting and utilization of disease/insect killed timber and trees.
- Demonstrate methods and life cycle analysis for encouraging niche agricultural markets. These markets would focus on providing value-added agricultural products that are produced in an environmentally sustainable way, including agroforestry systems.

Conservation Planning Needs

- Produce an informational document on developing NRCS conservation plans to help organic producers meet the Organic System Plan conservation components for crop and livestock production.
- Analyze requirements to develop a Conservation Plan Supporting Organic Transition Plan to identify obstacles and limitation that discourage its use by farmers and provide recommendation to overcome obstacles and limitations.
- Analyze requirements to become a Technical Service Provider (TSP) in order to write a Conservation Plan Supporting Organic Transition identifying obstacles and limitation that discourage individual from seeking TSP certification and provide recommendation to overcome obstacles and limitations.
- Expand the investigation of how conservation practices can be scaled to increase the adoption by small farms.
- Undertake an assessment of applicable conservation practices on organic production.

Specialty Crops

Technology Needs

- Demonstrate conservation systems for specialty crops using seasonal tunnels involving crop rotations, cover crops, conservation tillage, nutrient management, pest management, and irrigation systems.
- Develop and test new tools for measuring soil carbon where specialty crops are grown and on organic farms.
- Demonstrate technology to determine which crops help to suppress specific pests and the sequencing of the crops to minimize pests (weeds, insects, diseases) in specialty crop systems.
- Demonstrate conservation systems to include crop rotations, cover crops, organic mulches, conservation tillage, etc. in lieu of plastic culture.
- Determine the proper crops and the sequence of the crops to maximize the nutrient cycling in specialty crop production systems.
- Determine harvesting times and techniques that may minimize pest damage for the planned commodity.
- Demonstrate technology to determine the amount (acres) of habitat required to provide adequate pest control, matching plant species to attract desirable beneficial insect species, and managing habitat to provide pest during the cropping season.
- Demonstrate technology to determine how cover crops can be used for the production of specialty crops to include orchards and vineyards to provide erosion control, recycle crop nutrients, improve soil quality, pest control for the next crop in rotation, and other ecosystem services.
- Produce an informational document and evaluate criteria to determine when an Integrated Pest Management Plan has been developed and implemented that meets NRCS Pest Management Standard 595.
- Demonstrate technology on how agroforestry can be used for the production of specialty crops to provide erosion control, recycle crop nutrients, improve soil quality, improve pollinator habitat, and other ecosystem services.

II. FUNDING AVAILABILITY

A. STATE COMPONENT

Effective on the publication date of this notice, the CCC through the Pacific Islands Area (PIA) State Office, NRCS announces the availability of approximately \$300,000 for State Component of CIG. Funds will be awarded through a competitive grants process. Individual projects funded through CIG in fiscal year 2011 may not receive more than \$75,000 from NRCS. CIG will fund single- and multi-year projects, not to exceed three years. Awards will be made using grant agreements with NRCS PIA State Office.

B. STATE COMPONENT FINAL RULE

The final rule describes the potential for implementing a state component. In general, the intent of the State Component is to provide flexibility to NRCS State Conservationists or Directors to target CIG funds to individual producers and smaller organizations that may possess promising innovations, but may not compete well on the larger scale of the national grants competition.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

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

A. MATCHING FUNDS

Selected applicants may receive CIG grants of up to 50 percent of the total project cost. The recipient is required to match the USDA funds awarded on dollar-for-dollar basis from non-Federal sources with cash and in-kind contributions. Of the applicant's required match (50%), 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.

In-kind costs of equipment or project personnel cannot exceed 50 percent of the applicant's match (except in the case of projects carried out by either a Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher, or Indian tribe or a community-based organization comprised of or representing these entities). The remainder of the 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 the following link: [2 CFR 215](#).

Waiver of Matching Funds for Insular Areas:

In accordance with Public Law 95-134, title V, Section 501, October 15, 1977, 91 Stat. 1164 and Public Law 95-348, Section 9, August 18, 1978, 92 Stat. 495 as amended, the USDA NRCS may grant a waiver of the local matching funds requirement, including in-kind contributions, for grant applicants from "Insular Areas" including Guam, American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands. Hawaii is not included as an "Insular Area." If this waiver is granted, federal funds can cover 100% of the total project costs but still may not exceed \$75,000.

B. BEGINNING OR LIMITED FARMERS OR RANCHERS OR INDIAN TRIBES

For the FY 2011 grant 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, or Indian tribes or community-based organizations comprised of or representing these entities. An exception regarding matching funds is made for projects funded out of the set-aside. Up to three-fourths of the required matching funds for such projects (up to 37.5 percent of the total project cost) may derive from in-kind contributions. This exception is intended to help Beginning Farmers or Ranchers, Limited Resource Farmers or Ranchers, and Indian tribes meet the statutory requirements for receiving a CIG.

To compete for these set-aside funds, the applicant must make a declaration in the application as described in Part IV.A.8 in this notice. Applications that are unsuccessful in the set-aside

competition will be placed automatically in the general application pool for consideration. Funds not used in the set-aside pool will revert back into the general funding pool.

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).

Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher - a farmer or rancher who has been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudices because of their identity as a member of a group without regards to their individual qualities. Those groups include African Americans, American Indians or Alaska natives, Hispanics, Asians, Asians, and native Hawaiians or Pacific Islanders.

C. EQIP PAYMENT LIMITATION AND DUPLICATE PAYMENTS

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 2012. 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 producers involved in CIG projects do not exceed the payment limitation. Further, all direct and indirect payments made to producers 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 producer 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.) since this would be considered a duplicate payment.

D. PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for CIG, projects must involve landowners who meet the EQIP eligibility requirements as set forth in [16 USC 3839aa-1](#). Further, all agricultural producers receiving direct or indirect payments through participation in a CIG project must also meet the EQIP eligibility requirements. Additional information regarding EQIP eligibility requirements can be found at: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/>. Participating producers are not required to have an EQIP contract.

A person or legal entity will not be eligible to receive any benefit during a crop, fiscal, or program year, as appropriate, if the average adjusted gross non-farm income of the person or legal entity exceeds \$1,000,000, unless not less than 66.66 percent of the average adjusted gross income of the person or legal entity is average adjusted gross farm income.

A person who is determined ineligible for USDA program benefits under the Highly Erodible Land Compliance and Wetland Compliance provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985 will not be eligible to receive direct or indirect payments through CIG.

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 INFORMATION FOR FULL PROPOSALS

All Office of Management and Budget standard forms necessary for CIG submission are posted on the following Web site: [Grants.gov-Forms](#). An application checklist is available on the CIG Web site: <http://www.pia.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/cig/index.html>. **PROPOSAL SUBMISSION**

HOW TO OBTAIN PROPOSALS MATERIALS

The announcement for CIG funding opportunity can be found on the following Web site: [www.grants.gov](#) and <http://www.pia.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/cig/index.html>. Pre-proposals are not required or desired for the Pacific Islands Area (Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands).

A. Proposal Content and Format

Proposals must contain the information set forth below in order to receive consideration for the full application phase. Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of NRCS or

others as to the relative merits of the project described in the application. If submitting proposals for more than one project, submit a separate document for each project.

All non-form based submissions should be prepared in a font no smaller than 12-point, single-spaced, single-sided, with one-inch margins. Material exceeding stated page limits will not be considered. Applications should also be saved as **Microsoft Word** file onto a CD and included in the application package.

Applications must include all required forms and narrative sections described below. **Incomplete applications will not be considered.**

1. Proposal Cover Sheet:

Applicants must use Standard Form 424 Application for Federal Assistance as the cover sheet for each project application. Standard Form 424 can be downloaded from [Grants.gov-Forms](http://www.grants.gov/forms).

2. Project Brief Description:

Applicants must submit a brief description including the information below (limited to 3 pages in length). An optional template titled Project Summary Sheet is available on the NRCS CIG Web site at: <http://www.pia.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/cig/index.html>.

Project Title

Applicant determined CIG funding category (refer to page 5)

Project start and end dates

Project director name, contact information (including email)

Names and affiliations of project collaborators

Project purpose

Project scope/area

Project summary

Project deliverables/products

Declaration of EQIP eligible producer involvement

Declaration of Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher, Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher, or Indian tribe

3. Project Description:

The description must include the following information and is limited to 10 pages in length.

Pages in excess of the 10-page limit will be discarded and not evaluated. Bibliography, resumes, and references will be included in the page count for the project page limit.

Project narrative: The project narrative should provide a clear description of the work to be undertaken and how it will be accomplished. It must be formatted to address each of the merit review criteria listed in Part V.B and provide sufficient information for the reviewers to evaluate the application in accordance with these merit review criteria.

Project background: Describe 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.

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.

Project methods: Describe clearly the methodology of the project and the tools or processes that will be used to implement the project.

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 and demographics, etc.) of the project area. Provide a map, if possible.

Producer participation: Estimate the number of producers involved in the project, and describe the extent of their involvement (all producers involved in the project must be eligible for EQIP).

Project action plan and timeline: Provide a table listing project actions, timeframes, and associated milestones through project completion.

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.

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.

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 report of progress, quarterly financial reports, and a final project report to NRCS. Instructions for submitting quarterly reports will be detailed in the grant agreement).

4. Natural Resources and Environmental Concerns Inventory:

Environmental Information and Assessment of Environmental Impacts: Describe and assess the anticipated environmental effects 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. One line or short descriptions of environmental impacts are not acceptable. The length of the analysis should be commensurate with the complexity of the project proposed and the environmental resources impacted either directly, indirectly (later in time), 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 specific resources protected by law, Executive Order, and agency policy.

5. Budget Information:

Applicants must prepare a Standard Form (SF) 424-A Budget Information Non-Construction Programs to document budget needs. The SF-424A is available at: [Grants.gov-Forms](https://www.grants.gov/forms) or can be obtained from a NRCS State office. For standard grant applications, a budget form is required for each year of requested support. In addition, a cumulative budget is required detailing the requested total support for the overall project period. The budget form may be reproduced as needed by applicants. Funds may be requested under any of the categories listed on the form, provided that the item or service for which support is requested is allowable under the authorizing legislation, the applicable statutes, regulations, Federal cost principles, and NRCS program guidelines and can be justified, as necessary, for the successful conduct of the proposed project. Applicants must also include a budget narrative to justify their budget requests (see number 6 below). If claiming indirect costs, the applicant must provide an indirect cost rate

agreement or indirect cost rate proposal as justification for the rate of indirect costs being claimed. Indirect costs is based on total Federal funds awarded and cannot exceed 15 percent.

6. Budget Narrative (maximum 3 pages):

In addition to the SF-424A, all applicants must provide a detailed narrative in support of the budget for the project, broken down by each project year. All budget categories for which support is requested must be individually listed (with costs) in the same order as the budget and justified on a separate sheet of paper and placed immediately behind the Budget Form (SF-424A). Discuss how the budget specifically supports the proposed activities. Explain how budget items such as personnel, travel, equipment, etc. are essential to achieving project objectives. Justify the project cost effectiveness and include justification for personnel salaries such as resumes. A budget narrative is also required for the matching portion.

7. Matching:

Applications should include written verification of commitments of matching support (including both cash and in-kind contributions) from third parties.

For any third party cash contributions, a separate pledge agreement for each donation, signed by the authorized organizational representative of the donor organization and the applicant organization, which must include: (1) the name, address, and telephone number of the donor, (2) the name of the applicant organization, (3) the title of the project for which the donation is made, (4) the dollar amount of the cash donation, and (5) a statement that the donor will pay the cash contribution during the grant period.

"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 include work done by unpaid volunteers and donations of supplies, facilities, or equipment. In-kind contributions must be necessary to accomplish program activities and are verifiable.

For any third party in-kind contributions, a separate pledge agreement for each contribution, signed by the authorized organizational representatives of the donor organization and the applicant organization, which must include: (1) the name, address, and telephone number of the donor, (2) the name of the applicant's organization, (3) the title of the project for which the donation 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 donor will make the contribution during the grant period.

The sources and amounts of all matching support from outside the applicant institution should 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, Cost Principles that apply to their entity for additional guidance, and other requirements relating to matching and allowable costs.

8. Declaration of Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher, or 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, or Indian tribe or a community-based organization comprised of or representing these 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 Indian tribes.)

9. Declaration of EQIP Eligibility:

Applicants must include a statement indicating that the proposed project will involve EQIP-eligible producers. Applicants must make a declaration in writing that they, or parties involved in the project, are eligible for EQIP (if EQIP eligible producers are not involved, the proposal will be considered ineligible). The declaration must describe and certify the level of involvement by EQIP eligible producers.

10. Certifications:

All applications must include a signed Standard Form (SF) 424B - Assurances, Non-construction Programs. The SF-424B may be found at: Grants.gov-Forms or by contacting the State office. Applicants, by signing and submitting an application, assure and certify that they are in compliance with the following from 7 CFR:

- Part 3017, Government wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement)
- Part 3018, New Restrictions on Lobbying
- Part 3021, Government wide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)

11. Project Location Map:

Applicants must submit a map indicating the location of the proposed project (limited to 1 page in length).

12. 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. A *Federal Register* notice of final policy issuance (68 FR 38402) requires a DUNS number in every application (i.e., hard copy and electronic) for a grant or cooperative agreement (except applications from individuals) submitted on or after October 1, 2003. Information on how to obtain a DUNS number can be found at:

<http://www.grants.gov/RequestaDUNS> or by calling 1-866-705-5711. Please note that the registration may take up to 14 business days to complete.

13. Required Central Contractor Registry (CCR) Registration:

The CCR is a database that serves as the primary government repository for contractor information required for the conduct of business with the government. This database will also be used as a central location for maintaining organizational information for organizations seeking and receiving grants from the government. CIG applicants must register with the CCR. To register, go to: <http://www.ccr.gov>. Allow a minimum of 5 days to complete the CCR registration.

B. HOW TO SUBMIT A WRITTEN APPLICATION

Applicants must submit one signed original copy of each project application. Applicants must submit three copies of the application. Hard copies must be accompanied by an electronic copy on a compact disc (CD). Electronic files must be Microsoft Word files. Applications submitted via facsimile or e-mail will not be accepted.

ADDRESSES: The address for hand-delivered, express or overnight Commercial Carrier of your proposals or application is:

Pacific Islands Area, CIG Program Manager
United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Pacific Islands Area
300 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 4-118
Honolulu, Hawaii 96850

The contact phone number is (808) 541-2600. A government issue ID will be required to enter the PJKK Federal Building. Applicants must enter from the Ala Moana Blvd side entrance

Applications sent via the **United States Postal Service** must be sent to the following address:

Pacific Islands Area, CIG Program Manager
United States Department Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Pacific Islands Area
P. O. Box 50004
Honolulu, HI 96850-0050

Applications WILL NOT be accepted electronically Any application submitted by email fax or any on-line method will not be considered.

C. APPLICATION DUE DATE

Applications must be received in 300 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 4-118 at the NRCS Pacific Islands Area CIG Program Manager office by 2:00 p.m. HST on **May 20, 2011**. The applicant assumes the risk of any delays in application delivery. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit completed applications via overnight mail or Commercial Carrier delivery service to ensure timely receipt by NRCS.

Applications WILL NOT be accepted electronically Any application submitted by email fax or any on-live method will not be considered.

D. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SUBMISSION

Applications received by the due date will be acknowledged with an official letter. If an applicant has not received an acknowledgement within 30 days of the submission, they must contact the NRCS program contact below. Failure to do so may result in the application not being considered for funding.

For more information contact:

Jeff Harlow, Assistant Director for Programs
Pacific Islands Area
United States Department Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Pacific Islands Area
300 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 4-118
Honolulu, Hawaii 96850
Tel: (808) 541-2600 ext. 149
Fax: (808) 541-1335
E-Mail: Jeff.Harlow@hi.usda.gov

E. 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:

- a. Costs above the amount of funds authorized for the project;
- b. Costs incurred prior to the effective date of the grant;
- c. Costs which lie outside the scope of the approved project and any amendments thereto;
- d. Entertainment costs, regardless of their apparent relationship to project objectives;
- e. Compensation for injuries to persons, or damage to property arising out of project activities;
- f. 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,
- g. 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.
- h. This list is not exhaustive. Questions regarding the allowances of particular items of cost should be directed to the administrative contact person.

F. PATENTS AND INVENTIONS

Allocation of rights to patents and inventions shall be in accordance with USDA regulation [7 CFR §3019.36](#). This regulation provides that small businesses normally may retain the principal worldwide patent rights to any invention developed with USDA support. In accordance with [7 CFR §3019.2](#), this provision will also apply to commercial organizations for the purposes of CIG. 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.

G. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

The Council on Environmental Quality's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations at CFR Part 1500-1508 and 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 complete the **“Natural Resources and Environmental Concerns Inventory”** worksheet to help NRCS determine the appropriate documentation required to comply with NEPA and NRCS regulations. If the application is selected for funding, the applicant will then be required to complete a **“NRCS CPA-52 Environmental Evaluation”** to determine the potential environmental impacts their project will have. Selected applicants will be notified of an opportunity to participate in a training workshop on how to complete the NRCS CPA-52 Environmental Evaluation. The applicant will also be assigned an NRCS Technical Contact to assist with questions that arise during the review. The NRCS CPA-52 Environmental Evaluation will determine if further environmental review is required to comply with NEPA (e.g., Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement). The NRCS CPA-52 Environmental Evaluation is completed after the application is selected but before the project is funded. The applicant is responsible for ensuring the evaluation is completed in time to award grant funding. Grant funding cannot be approved until the environmental review requirements demonstrating compliance with NEPA are met.

(Note: In order to complete the Natural Resources and Environmental Concerns Inventory and the NRCS CPA-52 Environmental Evaluation a project site must be clearly defined.)

H. WITHDRAWAL OF APPLICATIONS

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 thereof, if the representative's identity is made known and the representative signs a receipt for the application.

I. DELIVERABLES

Applications must include all of the following activities as deliverables:

1. Semi-annual reports
2. Supplemental narratives to explain and support payment requests
3. Final report
4. Performance items specific to the project that indicate progress
5. A thorough list and explanation of measurable performance items specific to the project will be used in the technical evaluation (refer to “CIG Technical Evaluation Criteria”)
6. New technology and innovative approach fact sheet
7. Attendance to at least one NRCS CIG Showcase or comparable NRCS event during the period of the grant

V. APPLICATION REVIEW

A. Application Review and Selection Process

Prior to the technical (peer) review, each application will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice. Incomplete applications, and those that do not meet the provisions of this notice, will be eliminated from competition and notification of elimination will be mailed to the applicant.

Applications meeting the provisions of this notice will be reviewed by a Peer Review Panel. Applications will be reviewed based on the Criteria for Application Evaluation. Reviewed applications will be forwarded 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 Grant Review Board consists of two members of NRCS leadership; specifically the, Assistant Director for Operations and Assistant Director for Programs. The Grant Review Board will make recommendations to the State Conservationist for final selection and funding decisions.

B. CRITERIA FOR APPLICATION EVALUATION

Peer review panels will use the following criteria to evaluate project proposals:

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.

Innovative Technology or Approach

- Project is innovative (national, regionally, and local in nature).
- Project conforms to description of innovative projects or activities in proposal request announcement.

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.

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 traditionally 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

CIG Awards are anticipated to be announced by June 30, 2011. Funds are not awarded, and work may not start until an agreement is signed by both NRCS and the grantee. All agreements are expected to be awarded by July 29, 2011.

VI. AWARD INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

A. AWARD NOTIFICATION

Applicants who have been selected for funding will receive a letter of official notification from the PIA State Office. However, all selections are contingent upon successful completion of the environmental review process. Upon notification of selection, the applicant must contact the NRCS PIA CIG Program Contact Liaison in order 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. The official notice will also indicate the need to work with the administrative contact to develop an agreement prior to starting work on the project. Applicants who are not selected will be notified by official letter.

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. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

Project proponents that are selected to receive grant funding must complete a “**NRCS CPA-52 Environmental Evaluation**” to determine the potential environmental impacts their project will have. Selected applicants will be notified of an opportunity to participate in a training workshop on how to complete the NRCS CPA-52 Environmental Evaluation. The NRCS CPA-52 Environmental Evaluation will determine if further environmental review is required to comply with NEPA (e.g., Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement). The NRCS CPA-52 Environmental Evaluation is completed after the application is selected but before the project is funded. The applicant is responsible for ensuring the evaluation is completed in time to award grant funding. Grant funding cannot be approved until the environmental review requirements demonstrating compliance with NEPA are met.

C. GRANT AGREEMENT

The Commodity Credit Corporation, through NRCS, will use a grant agreement with selected applicants to document participation in the CIG component of EQIP. The grant agreement will include:

1. Project purpose
2. Project objectives
3. Project deliverables (refer to section IV. I)
4. Final project plan listing cooperators in the project and identifying the grant applicant and project manager
5. Project timelines and expected project completion date
6. Project progress and budget reporting requirements
7. Award amount and budget information
8. Information regarding requests for advance of funds or reimbursement
9. Role of NRCS technical oversight in the project
10. Reporting requirements including attendance at NRCS CIG showcase or comparable NRCS event during the period of the grant
11. Changes in project plans
12. Other requirements and terms deemed necessary by the CCC to protect the interests of the United States

D. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

All Grantees must submit a Federal Financial Report (SF-425) no later than 30 days after the end of each quarter and 90 days after completion of project. This report is used to monitor cash advanced to recipients and to obtain disbursement and outlay information for each award. SF-425 is available at: [Grants Management Forms](#).

In addition, the grantee must submit a written performance progress report to the NRCS Program Contact and Technical Contact every 6 months. This report is distinct from the quarterly financial report described above. Each progress report must 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 grantee is responsible for providing the technical assistance required to successfully implement and complete the project. NRCS will designate a Program Contact, an Administrative Contact, and a Technical Contact to provide oversight for each project receiving an award. These individuals will have technical oversight responsibility for the project.

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

1. A list of producers, identified by name and social security number, of all EQIP-eligible producers or entities involved in the project.
2. 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.
3. 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.

A progress report template will be provided to grantees by the Program Contact. This template is available on the NRCS CIG Web site at: [Information for Grantees](#).

The grantee must send copies of each semi-annual progress report to the NRCS contacts and comply with any requests for information from them. NRCS recommends that the grantee work closely with these subject matter experts throughout the course of the project.

Upon passage of the completion date of the project, a final report must be submitted within 90 days detailing project activities, funding received, funding expended, results, and potential for transferability of results. The final report should address completion of the project deliverables listed in the grant agreement.

NRCS will host an annual meeting for CIG grantees and NRCS technical contacts. Grantees will be required to attend at least one of these sessions at their own expense.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

NRCS PIA CIG Program Contact:
Jeff Harlow, Assistant Director for Programs

Pacific Islands Area
United States Department Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Pacific Islands Area
300 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 4-118
Honolulu, Hawaii 96850
Tel: (808) 541-2600 ext. 149
Fax: (808) 541-1335
E-Mail: Jeff.Harlow@hi.usda.gov

NRCS PIA CIG Administrative Contact:
Stephen Case, Contract Specialist
Pacific Islands Area
United States Department Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Pacific Islands Area
300 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 4-118
Honolulu, Hawaii 96850
Tel: (808) 541-2600 ext. 131
Fax: (808) 541-2613
E-Mail: Stephen.Case@hi.usda.gov

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

Signed this _____ day of _____ in Honolulu, HI.

Lawrence T. Yamamoto
Director, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Pacific Islands Area

Attachments

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

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

CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANTS FISCAL YEAR 2011 PROPOSAL PACKAGE CHECK LIST

- 1. Proposal Cover Sheet:** Submit Standard Form 424 Application for Federal Assistance
- 2. Project Brief Description:** Submit a brief description including the information below (limited to 3 pages in length). An optional template titled Project Summary Sheet is available on the NRCS CIG Web site at:
<http://www.pia.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/cig/index.html>.
Project Title
Applicant determined CIG funding category (refer to page 4)
Project Start and End Dates
Project Director name, contact information (including e-mail)
Names and Affiliations of Project Collaborators
Project Purpose
Project Scope/Area
Project Summary
Project Deliverables/Products
Declaration of EQIP eligible producer involvement
Declaration of beginning or limited farmer or rancher or Indian tribe
- 3. Project Location Map:** Submit a map indicating the location of the proposed project (limited to 1 page in length).
- 4. Budget Information** (limited to one page in length).
- 5. DUNS Number:** For information about how to obtain a DUNS number, go to <http://www.grants.gov/RequestaDUNS> or call 1-866-705-5711. Please note that the registration may take up to 14 business days to complete.
- 6. Required CCR Registration:** To register, visit <http://www.ccr.gov>. Allow a minimum of 5 days to complete the CCR registration.
- 7. Project Description:** (10 pages maximum, single-spaced, single-sided, 12 point font)
Project narrative
Project background
Project objectives
Project methods
Location and size of project area (include a map if possible)
Producer participation
Project action plan and timeline
Project management
Benefits or results expected and transferability
Project evaluation
Environmental information and assessment of environmental impacts
- 8. Budget Information:** Submit a completed Standard Form 424A (SF-424a) Budget Information-Non-Construction Programs.
- 9. Budget Narrative:** Submit a detailed budget narrative (maximum of 3 pages).
- 10. Matching Information.**

- 11. Declaration of Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Limited Farmer or Rancher, or Indian tribe (Special Provisions):** If applicable, include a statement declaring your status as a Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher, or Indian tribe, or community-based organization representing these entities.
- 12. Declaration Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Eligibility:** Include a statement indicating that the proposed project will involve EQIP-eligible producers. Applicants must make a declaration in writing that they, or parties involved in the project, are eligible for EQIP. (If EQIP eligible producers are not involved, the proposal will be considered ineligible.)
- 13. Conservation Innovation Grant:** Natural Resources and Environmental Concerns Inventory
- 14. Certifications:** Complete Standard Form 424B (SF-424b) Assurances-Non-Construction Programs.

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANTS
Project Summary Sheet

Project Title:

Project Director:

Contact Information:

E-mail:

Project Collaborators:

Project Purpose:

Project Deliverables:

Project Scope/Location:

Project Start and End Dates:

Select the applicable Category: (Check one)

Adapting Management for Improved Conservation Effects

Soil Quality

Preservation and Enhancement of Wildlife Habitat

Nutrient Management

Energy

Program Outreach and Conservation Technology Transfer to Targeted Groups

Productivity and Environmental Health of Forestland

Sustainable and Organic Agriculture

Promotion of Sustainable Agriculture

Specialty Crops

Declaration of Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Eligibility

1) The applicant has read and understands the responsibilities related to EQIP eligibility and payment limitations as outlined in Part III of this announcement. (Check one)

Yes

No

2) The applicant and any producers that will receive direct or indirect payments through this project are eligible to participate in the EQIP program. (Check one)

Yes

No

3) The applicant is requesting federal funds from other sources for the same or similar project. (Check one)

Yes

No

Total Cost of Project: \$

Federal Funds Requested: \$

Brief Project Summary:

Conservation Innovation Grant

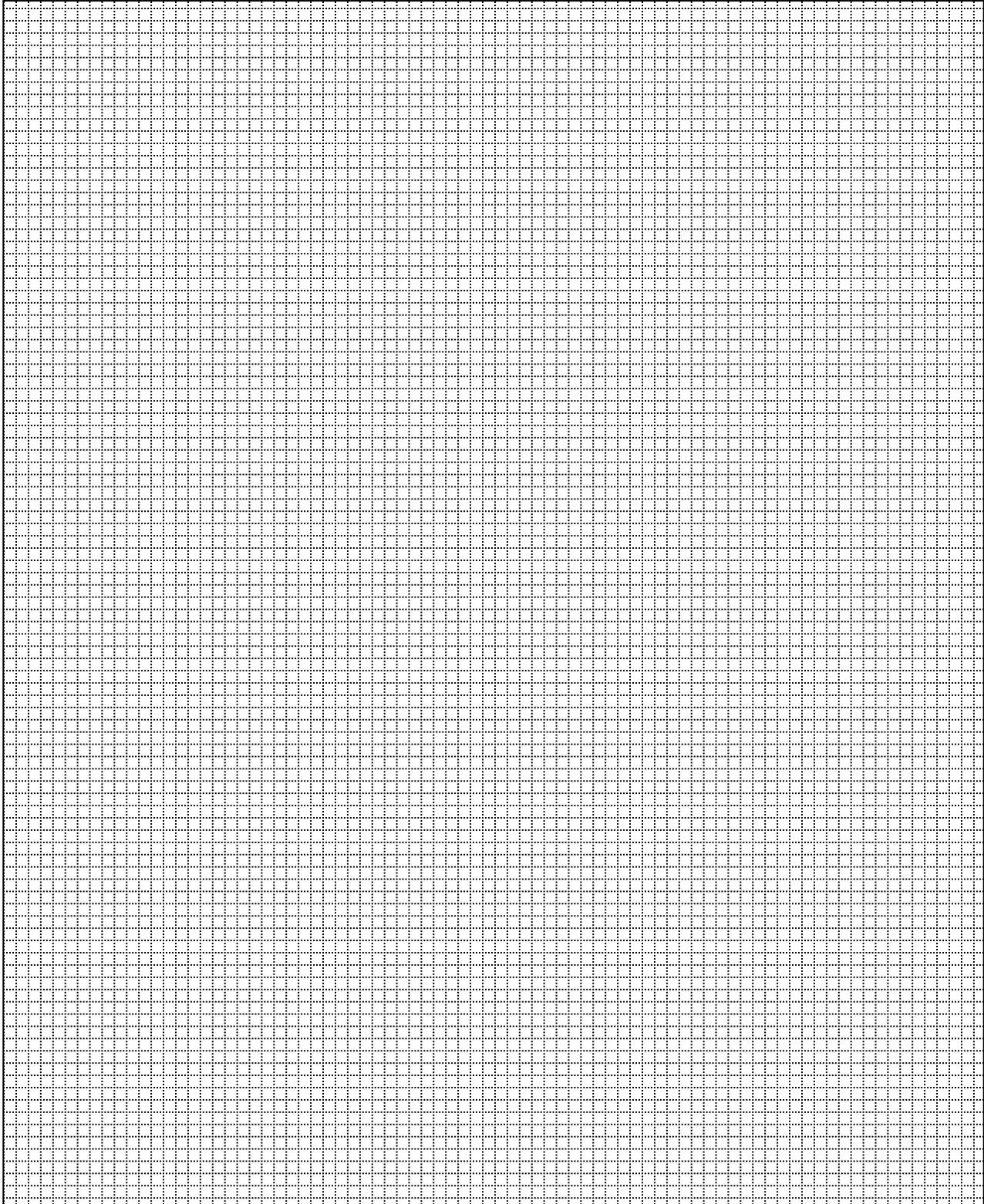
Natural Resources and Environmental Concerns Inventory

Project Title: _____

Project Leader: _____

Property Identification: _____

(Please insert a map of the area the project will be located)



Natural Resources and Environmental Concerns Inventory

Indicate below the natural resource conditions of the proposed project area.

Natural Resource	Description	Present in project area? (Yes, No or Unknown) If "yes", next column must be completed	Details/Notes	Addressed by CIG project? (Y or N)
SOIL EROSION				
Sheet and Rill	Rain causes soil movement.			
Wind	Wind causes soil movement.			
Ephemeral Gully	Runoff forms small channels that can be obscured by heavy tillage.			
Classic Gully	Runoff causes deep, permanent channels.			
Streambank	Accelerated loss of stream bank soils restricts land and water use and management.			
Shoreline	Soil is eroded along shoreline by wind or wave action.			
Irrigation Induced	Improper Irrigation application causing soil erosion.			
Mass Movement	Soil slippage, landslides, or slope failures.			
Road, Road Slides and Construction Sites	Soil loss occurs on areas left unprotected during or after construction.			
SOIL CONDITION				
Organic Matter Depletion	Soil organic matter has lowered to level that degrades soil quality.			
Rangeland Site Stability	The capacity to limit redistribution and loss of soil resources.			
Compaction	Compressed soil particles caused by mechanical compaction.			

Natural Resource	Description	Present in project area? (Yes, No or Unknown) If "yes", next column must be completed	Details/Notes	Addressed by CIG project? (Y or N)
Contaminants—Salt and Other Chemicals	Inorganic chemical elements and compounds such as salts, selenium, boron, and heavy metal restricts soil use.			
Contaminants—Animal Waste & Other Organics	Nutrient levels from applied animal waste and other organics restrict desired use of land.			
Contaminants—Commercial Fertilizer	Over application of nutrients degrades plant health and vigor or exceeds soil capacity to retain nutrients.			
Contaminants—Residual Pesticides	Residual pesticides in soil have adverse effect on nontargeted plants and animals.			
Damage from Soil Deposition	Sediment deposition damages or restricts land use/management or adversely affects ecological processes.			
WATER QUANTITY				
Rangeland Hydrologic Cycle	Capacity to capture, store, and safely release water from rainfall.			
Excessive Seepage	Subsurface water oozing to the surface restricts land use management.			
Excessive Runoff, Flooding, or Ponding	Land becomes inundated, restricting land use and management.			
Excessive Subsurface Water	Water saturates upper soil layers, restricting land use and management.			

Natural Resource	Description	Present in project area? (Yes, No or Unknown) If "yes", next column must be completed	Details/Notes	Addressed by CIG project? (Y or N)
Inadequate Outlets	Natural or constructed outlets are too small to remove excess water in timely manner.			
Inefficient Water Use on Irrigated Land	Limited water supplies are not optimally utilized.			
Inefficient Water Use on Non-irrigated Land	Natural moisture is not optimally utilized.			
Reduced Capacity of Conveyances by Sediment Deposition	Sediment deposits in water bodies reduce the desired volume capacity.			
Reduced Storage of Water Bodies by Sediment Accumulation	Sediment deposits in ditches, canals, culverts, and other water conveyances reduce the desired flow capacity.			
Aquifer Overdraft	Water withdrawals exceed the safe yield for the aquifer.			
Insufficient Flows in Watercourses	Water flows are not consistently available in sufficient quantities to support ecological processes and land use and management.			
Water Quality - Groundwater				
Harmful levels of Pesticides	Residues resulting from the use of pest control chemicals.			
Excessive Nutrients and Organics	Pollution from natural or human induced nutrients (including animal and other wastes).			
Excessive Salinity	Pollution from salts such as Ca Mg, Na, K, HCO ₃ , CO ₃ , Cl and SO ₄ .			
Harmful Levels of Heavy Metals	Natural or human-induced metal pollutants present in toxic amounts.			

Natural Resource	Description	Present in project area? (Yes, No or Unknown) If "yes", next column must be completed	Details/Notes	Addressed by CIG project? (Y or N)
Harmful Levels of Pathogens	Kinds and numbers of viruses, protozoa, and bacteria are present at a level that degrades groundwater quality.			
Harmful Levels of Petroleum	Fuel, oil, gasoline and other hydrocarbons present in toxic amounts.			
WATER QUALITY – SURFACE WATER				
Harmful Levels of Pesticides	Residues resulting from the use of pest control chemicals.			
Excessive Nutrients and Organics	Pollution from natural or human induced nutrients (including animal and other wastes).			
Excessive Suspended Sediment and Turbidity	Excessive concentrations of mineral or organic particles, algae, or organic stains in the water.			
Excessive Salinity	Pollution from salts such as Ca Mg, Na, K, HCO ₃ , CO ₃ , Cl and SO ₄ .			
Harmful Levels of Heavy Metals	Natural or human-induced metal pollutants present in toxic amounts.			
Harmful Temperatures of Surface Water	Water temperatures too high or too low.			
Harmful Levels of Pathogens	Kinds and numbers of viruses, protozoa, and bacteria are present at a level that degrades groundwater quality.			
Harmful Levels of Petroleum in Surface Water	Fuel, oil, gasoline, and other hydrocarbons present in toxic amounts degrade groundwater quality.			
AIR QUALITY				

Natural Resource	Description	Present in project area? (Yes, No or Unknown) If "yes", next column must be completed	Details/Notes	Addressed by CIG project? (Y or N)
Air particulate matter	Particulate matter is suspended in the air, causing potential health hazards to humans and animals.			
Excessive Ozone	High concentrations of ozone are adversely affecting human health, reducing plant yields, and creating smog.			
Excessive Greenhouse Gas	Increased greenhouse gas concentrations are adversely affecting ecosystem processes.			
Ammonia	Animal waste and inorganic commercial fertilizers emit ammonia that contributed to odor, is a large dust precursor, and contributed to acid rain.			
Chemical Drift	Materials applied to control pests drift downwind and contaminate/injure non-targeted fields, crops, soils, water, and animals and humans.			
Objectionable Odors	Land use management operations produce offensive smells.			
Reduced Visibility	Sight distance is impaired due to airborne particles causing unsafe conditions and impeded viewing or natural vistas, especially in Class I viewing areas.			

Natural Resource	Description	Present in project area? (Yes, No or Unknown) If "yes", next column must be completed	Details/Notes	Addressed by CIG project? (Y or N)
Undesirable Air Movement	Wind velocities reduce animal or plant productivity, impact human comfort and increase energy consumption.			
Adverse Air Temperature	Air temperatures reduce animal or plant productivity, impact human comfort and increase energy consumption.			
PLANT CONDITION				
Plants Not Adapted or Suited	Plants are not adapted and/or suited to site conditions or client objectives.			
Productivity, Health and Vigor	Plants do not produce the yields, quality, and soil cover to meet client objectives.			
T&E Plant Species: Listed or Proposed for Listing under the Endangered Species Act	Site includes individuals, habitat or potential habitat for one or more plant species listed or proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).			
T&E Plant Species: Declining Species or Species of Concern	Site includes individuals, habitat or potential habitat for one or more plant species that the State or State Technical Committee has identified as a species of concern.			
Noxious and Invasive Plants	Site has an infestation of noxious or invasive plants.			

Natural Resource	Description	Present in project area? (Yes, No or Unknown) If "yes", next column must be completed	Details/Notes	Addressed by CIG project? (Y or N)
Forage Quality and Palatability	Plants do not have adequate nutritive value or palatability for the intended use.			
Wildfire Hazard	The kinds and amounts of fuel loadings (plant biomass) pose risks to human safety, structure, and resources, should wildfire occur.			
FISH AND WILDLIFE				
Inadequate Food	Quantity and quality of food are unavailable to meet the life history requirements of the species or guild of species of concern.			
Inadequate Cover/ Shelter	Cover/shelter for the species of concern is unavailable or inadequate. This includes lack of hiding, thermal, and/or refuge cover.			
Inadequate Space	Lack of required areas disrupts the life history of the species.			
Habitat Fragmentation	Habitat has insufficient structure, extent, and connectivity to provide ecological functions and/or achieve management objectives.			
Imbalance Among and Within Populations	Populations are not in proportion to available quantities and qualities of food (plants, predator/prey), cover/shelter, water and space and other life history requirement.			

Natural Resource	Description	Present in project area? (Yes, No or Unknown) If "yes", next column must be completed	Details/Notes	Addressed by CIG project? (Y or N)
T&E Fish and Wildlife Species: Listed or Proposed for Listing under the Endangered Species Act	Site includes individuals, habitat or potential habitat for one or more fish or wildlife species listed or proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).			
T&E Fish and Wildlife Species: Declining Species or Species of Concern	The site includes individuals, habitat or potential habitat for one or more fish or wildlife species that the State or the State Tech. Committee has identified as a species of concern or as a candidate for ESA listing.			
DOMESTIC ANIMALS				
Inadequate Quantities & Quality of Feed & Forage	Total feed and forage are insufficient to meet the nutritional and production needs of the kinds and classes of livestock.			
Inadequate Shelter	Livestock are not protected sufficiently to meet the production goals for the kinds and classes of livestock.			
Inadequate Stock Water	The quantity, quality and distribution of drinking water are insufficient to meet the production goals for the kinds and classes of livestock.			
Stress and Mortality	Animals exhibit illness or death from disease, parasites, insects, poisonous plants, or other factors.			

Special Environmental Concerns

Provide information for each of the following. If you answer “Yes” to any of the questions, please explain how the proposed CIG project will affect the environmental concern or how negative impacts will be avoided or minimized.

Clean Air Act

1. Is the proposed action or alternative expected to increase the emission rate of any regulated air pollutant?

NOTE: The definition of a “regulated air pollutant” differs depending on the air quality regulations in effect for a given site. For a federal definition of “regulated air pollutant,” please refer to the 40 CFR 70.2. Other definitions for “regulated air pollutant” found in state or local air quality regulations may be different.

Clean Water Act

1. Will the proposed action or alternative involve or likely result in the discharge of dredged or fill material or other pollutants into “waters of the United States”?
2. Is the proposed action or alternative located in proximity to waters listed by the State as “impaired” under Section 303(d) of the CWA?
3. Will the proposed action or alternative likely result in point-source discharges from developments, construction sites, or other areas of soil disturbance, or sewer discharges?
4. If “yes” to above, has the client obtained a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit or a determination of an exemption from the appropriate State regulatory office?

Coastal Zone Management Areas

1. Is the proposed action or alternative in an officially designated "Coastal Zone Management Area Special Management Area"?
2. Is the proposed action or alternative "consistent" with the goals and objectives of the State's Coastal Zone Management Program (as required by Section 307 of the Coastal Zone Management Act)?

Coral Reefs

1. Are coral reefs or associated water bodies (e.g. embayment areas) present in or near the planning area?
2. Is there a potential for the proposed action or alternative to degrade the conditions of the coral reef ecosystem?

Cultural Resources

1. Are there any cultural resources within the project area?
2. Is the proposed action(s) or alternative(s) identified as an "undertaking" with the potential to cause effects to cultural resources/historic properties?
3. Has the undertaking's Area of Potential Effect (APE) been determined? NOTE: Include all areas to be altered or affected, directly or indirectly: access and haul roads, equipment lots, borrow areas, surface grading areas, locations for disposition of sediment, streambank stabilization areas, building removal and relocation sites, disposition of removed concrete, as well as the area of the actual conservation practice. Consultation is essential during determination of the APE so that all historic properties (buildings, structures, sites, landscapes, objects, and properties of cultural or religious importance to American Indian tribal governments) are included.
4. Have the appropriate Records (National, State and local registers and lists) been checked and/or interviews conducted to determine whether any known cultural or historic resources are within or in close proximity to

the proposed APE/project area? Note: This record checking does not substitute for mandatory consultation with SHPO, THPO, tribes and other identified consulting parties.

Endangered Species Act

1. Are there any endangered or threatened species, designated critical habitat(s), proposed species/habitats, or state-listed species of concern present, or potentially present, in the area of potential effect? NOTE: Federal candidate species (those species not yet listed) should be considered within the scope of planning. Be aware that if the species becomes listed during project implementation, the project would be halted while the necessary consultation requirements are met.
2. What are the short and long-term impacts of the proposed action or alternative on endangered or threatened species or their designated critical habitat? If more than one may apply please explain.

Environmental Justice

1. In the area affected by the proposed project, are there low-income populations, minority populations, Indian tribes, or other specified populations that would be adversely impacted by environmental effects resulting from the proposed action?
2. Is the proposed action or alternative the type that might have a disproportionately adverse environmental or human health effect on any population?

Essential Fish Habitat

1. Is the proposed action or alternative in an area designated as Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) or in an area where effects could indirectly or cumulatively affect EFH?
2. Will the proposed action or alternative result in short-term or long-term disruptions or alterations that may result in an "adverse effect" to EFH?

Flood Plain Management

1. Is the project area in or near a 100-year floodplain?
2. Is the planning area in the floodplain an agricultural area that has been used to produce food, fiber, feed, forage or oilseed for at least 3 of the last 5 years before the request for assistance?
3. Is the floodplain's agricultural production in accordance with official state or designated area water quality plans?
4. Over the short or long term, will this proposed action or alternative likely result in an increased flood hazard, incompatible development, or other adverse effect to the existing natural and beneficial values of the floodplain or lands adjacent or downstream from the floodplain?

Invasive Species

1. Is the proposed action or alternative in an area where invasive species are known to occur or where risk of an invasion exists?

Migratory Bird Species Act

1. Could the proposed action or alternative result in a "take" (intentionally or unintentionally) to any migratory bird, nest or egg? "Take" means to pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or attempt to pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect.

Natural Areas

1. Are there any designated natural areas present in or near the planning area?
2. Will the proposed action or alternative positively or negatively affect the natural area?

Prime and Unique Farmlands

1. Does the proposed action or alternative convert farmland to a nonagricultural use? NOTE: Conversion does not include construction of on-farm structures necessary for farm operations.
2. Are prime or unique farmlands or farmlands of statewide or local importance present in or near the area that will be affected by the proposed action or alternative?

Riparian Areas

1. Is a riparian area present in or near the planning area?
2. Does the proposed action or alternative conflict with the conservation values/functions of the riparian area?
3. Does the proposed action or alternative maintain or improve water quality and quantity benefits provided by the riparian area?

Scenic Beauty

1. Will the proposed action or alternative negatively affect the scenic quality of the general landscape or any specifically designated unique or valuable scenic landscape?

Wetlands

1. Are wetlands present in or near the planning area? NOTE: This includes ALL wetlands except those artificial wetlands created by irrigation water.
2. Will the proposed action or alternative impact any wetland areas (this includes changing wetland types when considering wetland restoration projects)?

CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANTS
FISCAL YEAR 2011 PROPOSAL PACKAGE CHECK LIST

- 1. Proposal Cover Sheet:** Submit Standard Form 424 Application for Federal Assistance
- 2. Project Brief Description:** Submit a brief description including the information below (limited to 3 pages in length). An optional template titled Project Summary Sheet is available on the NRCS CIG Web site at: <http://www.pia.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/cig/index.html>.
 - a. Project Title
 - b. Applicant determined CIG funding category
 - c. Project Start and End Dates
 - d. Project Director name, contact information (including e-mail)
 - e. Names and Affiliations of Project Collaborators
 - f. Project Purpose
 - g. Project Scope/Area
 - h. Project Summary
 - i. Project Deliverables/Products
 - j. Declaration of EQIP eligible producer involvement
 - k. Declaration of beginning or limited farmer or rancher or Indian tribe
- 3. Project Location Map:** Submit a map indicating the location of the proposed project (limited to 1 page in length).
- 4. Budget Information** (limited to one page in length).
- 5. DUNS Number:** For information about how to obtain a DUNS number, go to <http://www.grants.gov/RequestaDUNS> or call 1-866-705-5711. Please note that the registration may take up to 14 business days to complete.
- 6. Required CCR Registration:** To register, visit <http://www.ccr.gov>. Allow a minimum of 5 days to complete the CCR registration.
- 7. Project Description:** (10 pages maximum, single-spaced, single-sided, 12 point font)
 - a. Project narrative
 - b. Project background
 - c. Project objectives
 - d. Project methods
 - e. Location and size of project area (include a map if possible)
 - f. Producer participation
 - g. Project action plan and timeline
 - h. Project management
 - i. Benefits or results expected and transferability
 - j. Project evaluation
 - k. Environmental information and assessment of environmental impacts

- 8. Budget Information:** Submit a completed Standard Form 424A (SF-424a) Budget Information-Non-Construction Programs.
- 9. Budget Narrative:** Submit a detailed budget narrative (maximum of 3 pages).
- 10. Matching Information.**
- 11. Declaration of Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Limited Farmer or Rancher, or Indian tribe (Special Provisions):** If applicable, include a statement declaring your status as a Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher, or Indian tribe, or community-based organization representing these entities.
- 12. Declaration Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)**
Eligibility: Include a statement indicating that the proposed project will involve EQIP-eligible producers. Applicants must make a declaration in writing that they, or parties involved in the project, are eligible for EQIP. (If EQIP eligible producers are not involved, the proposal will be considered ineligible.)
- 13. Conservation Innovation Grant:** Natural Resources and Environmental Concerns Inventory
- 14. Certifications:** Complete Standard Form 424B (SF-424b) Assurances-Non-Construction Programs.