

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Commodity Credit Corporation
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Wyoming State Office

**Conservation Innovation Grants – Wyoming State Component
(Available Only in Wyoming)
Fiscal Year 2011 Announcement of 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, is announcing availability of Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies. For fiscal year 2011, up to \$500,000 is available for the Wyoming State CIG competition. Funds will be awarded through a statewide competitive grants process.

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

APPLICATION DUE DATE AND ADDRESSES:

Applications must be received in the WYOMING NRCS State Office by 4:30 p.m., Mountain Standard Time (MST) by April 15, 2011. The address for the U.S. Postal Service, hand-delivered applications, or applications submitted using express mail or overnight courier service is: Cheryl Grapes, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, Natural Resources Conservation Service, 100 East B Street, Room 3124, PO Box 33124, Casper, WY 82602.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Cheryl Grapes, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, NRCS, 100 East B Street, Room 3124, PO Box 33124, Casper, WY 82602. Phone: (307) 233-6757; facsimile: (307) 233-6753; email: cheryl.grapes@wy.usda.gov or view the Wyoming NRCS web site at <http://www.wy.nrcs.usda.gov>.

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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 authority 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 will accept applications for single or multi-year projects, not to exceed three years, submitted to NRCS from eligible entities including federally recognized Indian tribes, State and local units of government, and non-governmental organizations and individuals.

Applications will be evaluated by NRCS staff under the bulleted topics identified by the applicant. 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 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 group will be forwarded to the NRCS State Conservationist 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; or
- 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 should:

- Make use of a proven technology or a technology that has been studied sufficiently to indicate a high probability for success;
- Demonstrate and verify environmental (soil, water, air, plants, energy use, and animal) effectiveness, utility, affordability, and usability of conservation technology in the field;
- Adapt conservation technologies, 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;
- Adapt conservation technology, management, or incentive systems to improve performance; and
- Demonstrate transferability of knowledge.

D. Natural Resource Concerns

Applications must demonstrate the use of innovative technologies, approaches, or both to address a natural resource concern or concerns. Eight natural resource concerns have been identified for possible funding through the FY2011 Wyoming Conservation Innovation Grants State competition. Applications that benefit multiple resource concerns will receive priority for funding, as well as applications that focus on Market Based Approaches. The objective of this approach is to develop, implement, and/or evaluate processes, technology tools, institutional arrangements, or systems that are “market-based” in nature and address one of the priority resource concerns below:

1.) Atmospheric Resources

The objective of this conservation concern is to implement new technologies and/or approaches to maintain, restore, or enhance air quality and atmospheric resources through agricultural and forest practices while sustaining productivity. Subtopics include but are not limited to:

- Manage agricultural primary and precursor emissions of particulates, odors, volatile organic compounds, and greenhouse gases to limit on-site and/or off-site effects from emission;
- Demonstrate innovative approaches to decrease atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases by increasing carbon sequestration (e.g.: increasing soil carbon) and/or by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture operations;
- Identify management practices for air quality and atmospheric change concerns at animal operations and quantify the effect of the practices on all applicable resource concerns; and
- Development of monitoring protocol.

2.) Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy Sources

The objective of this conservation concern is to demonstrate new energy-related technologies and approaches, and alternate energy sources to reduce energy consumption in agricultural systems. Subtopics include but are not limited to:

- Renewable energy sources such as wind, solar or bio-based fuels; micro hydro power;
- Energy audit of activities related to natural resource concerns (soil, water, air, plants and animals) on agriculture lands.
- Improving the energy efficiency of land-based agriculture production through conservation practices and activities.
- Development of Monitoring protocol

3.) Forest Health

The objective of this conservation concern is to implement new technologies and/or approaches to maintain, restore, or enhance forest health while sustaining productivity. Subtopics include but are not limited to:

- Improving water and air quality while maintaining forest health and productivity.
- Development of monitoring protocol.

4.) Grazing Land

The objective of this conservation concern is to implement new technologies and/or approaches to maintain, restore, or enhance grazing land while sustaining productivity. Subtopics include but are not limited to:

- New and innovative approaches and methods to reduce the effects of pests and diseases on grazing land; land quality, health and productivity.
- Development of monitoring protocol.

5.) Organic Agriculture

The objective of this conservation concern is to implement new technologies and/or approaches to maintain, restore, or enhance organic agriculture. Subtopics include but are not limited to:

- Demonstration of continuous cover crops.
- Conservation practices for specialty crops.
- Lower energy use.
- Organic agriculture effect on soil health.
- Retention of carbon and nitrogen in organic plots. Organic approved nutrient (timing, rates, sources, and methods) – determine the proper source, rate, timing, and method(s) of application for organically approved nutrient amendments.
- Harvesting time and techniques for commodities quality and pest control – determine harvesting times and techniques that may minimize pest damage for the planned commodity.

6.) Soil Resources

The objective of this conservation concern is to implement new technologies and/or approaches to maintain, restore, or enhance soil resources associated with agricultural and forest land uses while sustaining productivity. Subtopics include but are not limited to:

- Accumulation of harmful levels of constituents in soils, including nutrients, metals, and salts;
- Cropping systems to improve soil health and sequester carbon; and
- Erosion reduction in low residue specialty crops (potatoes, vegetables, etc.), cropping systems.

7.) Water Resources

The objective of this conservation resource concern is to implement new technologies and/or approaches to maintain, restore, or enhance water quality and/or quantity in watersheds with significant agricultural land uses while sustaining productivity. Subtopics include but are not limited to:

- Alternate water conservation cropping systems and/or crops for economic or environmental stability.
- Aquifer recharge/maintenance of groundwater supplies.
- Irrigation management for water conservation.
- Nutrient, pesticide, and pathogen transport to surface water and groundwater.
- Salinity or selenium reduction.
- Sediment transport to surface water.

8.) Wetlands and Wildlife Habitat

The objective of this conservation concern is to implement new technologies and/or approaches for the development of wildlife habitat for at-risk species on agricultural working lands while maintaining agricultural productivity. Subtopics include but are not limited to:

- Incentive systems that promote the conservation of species at-risk and agricultural production equally.
- Monitoring protocols.
- Pollinator species protection.
- Riparian area management and restoration.

II. FUNDING AVAILABILITY

Effective on the publication date of this notice, the CCC announces the availability of up to \$500,000 for CIG in Wyoming. Funds will be awarded through a statewide 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 written using grant agreements with the Wyoming NRCS State Office.

The anticipated start date for awarded projects is September 1, 2011.

The intent of the State Component is to provide flexibility to State Conservationists and Directors of the Caribbean and Pacific Islands Areas 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 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.

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](#).

B. Beginning, Limited Resource, or Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers or Indian Tribes

For applicants who qualify for Beginning, Limited Resource, or Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers or Indian Tribes, up to three-fourths of the applicant's required matching funds (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, Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers and Indian tribes meet the statutory requirements for receiving a CIG. To be eligible for this category, the applicant must make a declaration in the application as described in Part IV 7 in this notice. Verification of this eligibility may be requested.

Below are definitions of Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher, and Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher. Definitions can also be found at: <http://www.lrftool.sc.egov.usda.gov/>

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 - Farmers or ranchers 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, 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 <http://uscode.house.gov/download/pls/16C58.txt>. 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 and SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. How to Obtain Application Materials

All Office of Management and Budget standard forms necessary for CIG submission are posted on the following website: www.grants.gov/agencies/approved_standard_forms.jsp. An application checklist is available at the end of this announcement.

B. Application Content and Format

Applications must contain the information set forth below in order to receive consideration for a grant. 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. Applicants are encouraged to submit electronic applications or must submit five copies of the application in the following format:

- Applications are to be typewritten on 8½" x 11" white paper, double spaced, and on one side only. The text of the application should be in a font no smaller than 12-point, with one-inch margins. If submitting applications for more than one project, submit a separate, complete application package for each project.

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

Application Cover Sheet: Applicants must use Standard Form 424 Applications for Federal Assistance as the cover sheet for each project application. Standard Form 424 can be downloaded from the following website:
www.grants.gov/agencies/approved_standard_forms.jsp.

- 1.) **Project Summary Sheet:** Applicants must contain a summary of (no more than two pages in length) that includes the listed information. A template for the Project Summary Sheet is available at the end of this announcement.
 - a. CIG Natural Resource Concerns;

- b. Project title;
 - c. Project duration (beginning and ending dates);
 - d. Name, address, telephone, e-mail, and other contact information for the project director (please provide a mailing address, not a P.O. Box);
 - e. Names and affiliations of project collaborators;
 - f. Estimated number of EQIP-eligible producers involved in the project;
 - g. Technology or innovation to be addressed;
 - h. List of deliverables/products of project activities;
 - i. Summary of the work to be performed;
 - j. Total project cost; and,
 - k. Total Federal funds requested.
- 2.) **One-Page Abstract:** A one-page, single-sided, non-confidential technical summary that describes the work to be undertaken and the expected outcome and benefits. The technical summary should take into account the priorities and evaluation factors described in this solicitation. Pages in excess of one-page limit will be discarded.
- 3.) **Project Description:** Each project must be completely and accurately described in no more than 10 typewritten, 12 pt font, double-spaced pages, which must include the following:
- a. Project narrative which clearly and concisely describes the proposed project and discusses the expected benefits. The project narrative should provide a clear description of the work to be undertaken and how it will be accomplished. The project narrative should detail the amount of money applied for and matching dollars provided.
 - b. 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;
 - c. Project objectives: Be specific, using qualitative and quantitative measures to describe the project's purpose and goals. Describe how, based upon the description of innovative conservation projects and activities provided in section I.C., the project is innovative;
 - d. Project methods: Describe clearly the methodology of the project and the tools or processes that will be used to implement the project;
 - e. 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;
 - f. 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);
 - g. Project action plan and timeline: Provide a table listing project actions, project deliverables associated with the budget, timeframes, and associated milestones through project completion;
 - h. Project management: Give a detailed description of how the project will be organized and managed. Include a list of key project personnel, their relevant educations or experiences, 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;
- i. Benefits or results expected and transferability: Identify the results and benefits to be derived from the proposed project activities. Identify project beneficiaries—for example, agricultural producers by type or region or sector; rural communities; municipalities. Explain how these entities will benefit. In addition, describe specifically how results will be documented and 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 written biannual report of progress, quarterly financial reports, and a final project report to NRCS. All reports will discuss project deliverables and associated budget expenditures. Instructions for submitting reports will be detailed in the grant agreement; and,
 - k. Environmental Information and Assessment of Environmental Impacts: Describe 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 description of the potential impacts to all environmental resources must be disclosed. Environmental resources include soil, water, air, plants, and animals, as well as other specific resources protected by law, Executive Order, and Agency policy. These resources are outlined in the NRCS Environmental Evaluation Worksheet, form NRCS-CPA-52, which is available at www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/envicomp.html. (**Note:** you will have to scroll about half way down the page to find the actual form). The CPA 52 form can be used as a guide for the scope of environmental information that should be prepared for this section of the application. 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. Applicants may consult with NRCS Environmental Liaison concerning the scope of what should be addressed in this section of the application. A list of the Environmental Liaisons can be found on the following website:
<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/ECS/environment/liaison.doc>.
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. If projects cannot be modified, then there is a potential during the screening process that the application may not be selected.
- 4.) Budget Information:** Must use Standard Form (SF) 424A Budget Information Non-Construction Programs to document budget needs. SF 424A is available at www.grants.gov/agencies/approved_standard_forms.jsp.
The Cost Proposal must:
- a. Itemize the costs necessary for successful completion of the proposed project. Indicate the total amount (both cash and in-kind) of non-Federal matching support that will be provided to the proposed project.
 - b. Provide a project budget and the applicant's request for a specific amount of Federal funds under this solicitation. The project budget should show a summary of proposed

- cost for each task identified in the Technical Approach/Work Plan, as well as the matching or corresponding resources devoted to this project by the applicant, including each of the participating entities in a consortium engaged to carry out the project as proposed.
- c. The project budget should include the following for the applicant and each participant:
 - i. Position title, number of hours, and total cost for personnel proposed;
 - ii. Total cost for travel;
 - iii. Proposed equipment, supplies, or other major expenses over \$5,000;
 - iv. Total of all direct costs;
 - v. Total of all indirect costs; and
 - vi. Summary of total project costs.
- 5.) **Budget Narrative:** In addition to the SF424A, all applicants must provide a detailed narrative (3 pages maximum, single-sided and double-spaced) in support of the budget for the project, broken down by each task (deliverables) and project year. Itemize the cost necessary for successful completion of the proposed project. Indicate the total amount (both cash and in-kind) of non-Federal matching support that will be provided to the proposed project. Identify and provide documentation of the source(s), the amount, and the nature (cash or in-kind) of the matching funds. An indirect cost-rate agreement must be included if the applicant is claiming indirect costs. Indirect costs cannot exceed 15 percent. 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 or 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.
- 6.) **Declaration of Limited Resource, Beginning, or Socially Disadvantage Farmer or Rancher or Indian Tribe:** If an applicant wishes to apply as a Limited Resource, Beginning, or Socially Disadvantage Farmer or Rancher and avail themselves of the in-kind contribution exception, applicants must make a declaration in writing of their status as a Limited Resource or Beginning Farmer or Rancher or Socially Disadvantage Farmer or Rancher, or a community-based organization comprised of or representing these entities.
- 7.) **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 application will be considered ineligible).
- 8.) **Certifications:** All applications must include a signed Standard Form (SF) 424B - Assurances, Non-construction Programs. SF 424B may be found at: www.grants.gov/agencies/approved_standard_forms.jsp. Applicants, by signing and submitting an application, assure and certify that they are in compliance with the following from 7 Code of Federal Register (CFR):
 - a. Part 3017, Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement)
 - b. Part 3018, New Restrictions on Lobbying; and

- c. Part 3021, Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)

9.) 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. Therefore, potential applicants should verify that they have a DUNS number or take the steps needed to obtain one. For information about how to obtain a DUNS number go to http://www.grants.gov/applicants/request_duns_number.jsp or call 866-705-5711. Please note that the registration may take up to 14 business days to complete.

10). Required CCR Registration: The Central Contractor Registry (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, visit www.ccr.gov. Allow a minimum of 5 days to complete the CCR registration.

C. How to Submit an Application Electronically

Applicants may submit applications electronically through <http://www.grants.gov/>, the Federal government's e-grants portal. Applications submitted through <http://www.grants.gov/> must contain all of the elements of a complete application outlined above. Instructions for electronically submitting the required standard forms, abstract, narrative, and declarations are included in the CIG notice. Applications submitted electronically are date- stamped and time-stamped by <http://www.grants.gov/> and must be received by the identified closing date. **Note that NRCS is not responsible for any technical malfunctions or website problems related to <http://www.grants.gov/> submissions. Applicants should begin the <http://www.grants.gov/> process well before the submission deadline to avoid problems.**

D. How to Submit a Written Application

Applicants must submit one signed original and **five** complete copies of each project application. Each copy of the application must be stapled securely in the upper left-hand corner. Hard copies must be accompanied by an electronic copy on a compact disc (CD). Electronic files must be either Microsoft Word or Acrobat (.pdf) files. Applications submitted via facsimile or e-mail will not be accepted.

Submit written applications to:

Cheryl Grapes, ASTC, Programs
Natural Resources Conservation Service
100 East B Street, Room 3124
P.O. Box 33124
Casper, WY 82602-5011

E. Application Due Date

Applications must be received in the Wyoming NRCS State Office by 4:30 p.m., Mountain Standard Time (MST) on April 15, 2011. An application postmark date is not a factor in whether an application is received on time. The applicant assumes the risk of any delays in application delivery. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit completed applications via overnight mail or delivery service to ensure timely receipt by NRCS.

F. Acknowledgement of Submission

Applications received by the due date will be acknowledged with an official letter. If an applicant has not received an acknowledgment within 60 days of the submission, the applicant must contact the administrative contact (see "Agency Contacts" below) immediately. Failure to do so may result in the application not being considered for funding by the peer review panel.

G. Funding Restrictions

The indirect costs (F&A) for CIG awards may not exceed 15 percent of the total Federal funds provided under each award. 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.

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

H. 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.

I. Environmental Review Requirements

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and NRCS regulations that implement NEPA 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 (described further under Part IV B.4.k) to help NRCS determine the appropriate documentation required to comply with NEPA and NRCS regulations. If the application is selected, the NRCS Program Contact and the NRCS Environmental Liaison will coordinate with the selected applicant concerning documentation for compliance with NEPA. The selected applicant will be required to prepare and/or pay for the preparation of the appropriate NEPA document (e.g., Environmental Assessment and/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.

J. Withdrawal of Applications

Application may be withdrawn by written notice at any time before an award is 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.

K. Deliverables

Applications must include the following activities as deliverables:

- a. Semi-annual reports;
- b. Quarterly financial reports;
- c. Supplemental narratives to explain and support payment requests;
- d. Final report;
- e. Performance items specific to the project that indicate progress;
- f. New technology and innovative approach fact sheet; and
- g. Attend at least one NRCS CIG Showcase, State Technical Committee Meeting or comparable NRCS event during the period of the grant.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. Review and Selection Process

Prior to technical 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. A Technical Peer Review Panel will be scoring the application packages using the Criteria for Application Evaluation listed below. The Peer Review Panel will forward recommendations to the Wyoming NRCS State Conservationist for final review and selection.

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 or about **July 1, 2011**; all agreements are expected to be awarded by **August 31, 2011**. Funds are not awarded, and work may not start until an agreement is signed by both NRCS and the grantee.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Award Notification

Applicants who have been selected will be notified by the State Conservationist. Applications which are not selected will be notified by official letter.

B. 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 official notice will also indicate the need to work with the administrative contact to

develop an agreement prior to starting work on the project. The grant agreement will include:

1. Project purpose
2. Project objectives
3. Project deliverables
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. Role of NRCS technical oversight in the project
9. Reporting requirements including attendance at NRCS CIG showcase or comparable NRCS event during the period of the grant
10. Changes in project plans
11. Other requirements and terms deemed necessary by the CCC to protect the interests of the United States

A. Reporting Requirements

Grantees must submit a Financial Status Report (SF-425) no later than 30 days after the end of each quarter and 90 days after completion of project. The SF-425 is available at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/cig/InfoForGrantees.html>. These reports are used to monitor cash advanced to recipients and to obtain disbursement and outlay information for each award.

In addition, every six months the grantee must submit a written performance progress report to the Wyoming NRCS State Office. 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. A progress report template can be provided to grantees by NRCS upon request. To satisfy the requirements of EQIP (7 CFR 1466) compliance measures, the grantee is required to submit as a component of the biannual 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.

NRCS will designate a Federal Grant Representative (FGR) and a Technical Contact for the project. These individuals will have technical oversight responsibility for the project. The grantee must send copies of each biannual progress report to the FGR and technical contact, and comply with any requests for information from these individuals. 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 and expended results, and potential for transferability of results.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

For programmatic questions (e.g., natural resource concerns), please contact:

Cheryl Grapes, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs
Natural Resources Conservation Service
P.O. Box 33124
Casper, WY 82602-5011
Phone: (307) 233-6757
cheryl.grapes@wy.usda.gov

Additional information about CIG, including fact sheets and FAQs, is available on the Wyoming NRCS webpage: www.wy.nrcs.usda.gov.

J. XAVIER MONTOYA
Wyoming State Conservationist
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

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

WYOMING CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANTS FISCAL YEAR 2011 APPLICATION PACKAGE CHECK LIST

- 1. Application Cover Sheet:** Complete Standard Form 424 (SF-424) Application for Federal Assistance
- 2. Project Summary Sheet:** (Template Available Below)
 - a. CIG Natural Resource Concerns
 - b. Project title
 - c. Project duration (beginning and ending dates)
 - d. Name, address, telephone, e-mail, and other contact information for the project director
 - e. Names and affiliations of project collaborators
 - f. Estimated number of EQIP-eligible producers involved in the project
 - g. Technology or innovation to be addressed
 - h. List of deliverables/products of project activities
 - i. Summary of the work to be performed
 - j. Total project cost
 - k. Total Federal funds requested.
- 3. One-Page Abstract:** (non-confidential summary describing the project and expected outcomes and benefits)
- 4. Project Description** (10 pages maximum, double 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
- 5. Budget Information:** Submit a completed Standard Form 424A (SF-424A) Budget Information Non-Construction Programs.

- 6. Budget Narrative:** Submit a detailed budget narrative (maximum of 3 pages)
- 7. Declaration of Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher (Special Provisions):** If applicable, include a statement declaring your status as Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher, or Community-base organization representing these entities.
- 8. 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.)
- 9. Certifications:** Complete Standard Form 424B (SF-424B) Assurances-Non-Constructions Programs.
- 10. DUNS Number:** For information about how to obtain a DUNS number go to http://www.grants.gov/applicants/request_duns_number.jsp or call 1-866-705-5711. Registration may take up to 14 business days to complete.
- 11. Required central Contractor Registration CCR Registration:** Visit www.ccr.gov

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Wyoming
CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANTS
Project Summary Sheet Template

CIG Natural Resource Concern (select all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Forest Health |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soil Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy Conservation &
Renewable Energy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Atmospheric Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife Habitat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grazing Land | <input type="checkbox"/> Organic Agriculture |

Project Title:

Project Start and End Dates:

Project Director

Contact Information:

E-Mail:

Project Collaborators:

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?

Yes

No

3) The applicant is requesting federal funds from other sources for the same or similar projects?

Yes

No

Project Technology / Innovation:

Project Deliverables:

Total Cost of Project: \$

Total Funds Requested: \$

Brief Project Summary: