

## SUMMARY INFORMATION

**Federal Awarding Agency Name:** U.S. Department Of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

**Funding Opportunity Title:** Montana Conservation Agreement for Implementing Key Conservation Objectives Fiscal Year 2019 Announcement for Program Funding.

**Announcement Type:** Initial Announcement

**Funding Opportunity Number:** USDA-NRCS-MT-MULTI-19-GEN0010228

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:**

**10.902; 10.912; 10.924; 10.931**

### **Funding Opportunity Announcement Summary**

The NRCS - Montana State Office, an agency under the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is announcing the potential availability of funding for agreements for the purpose of leveraging NRCS resources, addressing local natural resource issues, encouraging collaboration and developing state-and-community-level conservation leadership. Proposals must be for projects based in Montana and focus on the funding priorities identified in Section A of this opportunity.

Collaborative projects that provide on-the-ground support for Montana NRCS Field Offices are highly encouraged. Research proposals will not be accepted, nor considered. NRCS anticipates that the amount available for support of this program in Federal Fiscal Year 2019 will be up to \$1,200,000. Proposals are requested from eligible entities as identified in Section C (1) below for competitive consideration of discretionary awards for multi-year projects, up to five years in duration.

This notice identifies the objectives, eligibility criteria, and application instructions for projects. Proposals will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice. Incomplete and/or noncompliant proposals will be eliminated from competition, and notification of elimination will be sent to the applicant. The Montana State Conservationist reserves the right not to fund any or all applications. NRCS will accept applications under this notice for single or multiyear applications submitted by eligible entities.

**Key Dates:** Applications must be received by **4:00 p.m. Mountain Time, June 30, 2019.**

Applicants may submit proposals via Grants.gov or via e-mail to the following address:

[Kyle.Tackett@usda.gov](mailto:Kyle.Tackett@usda.gov) with a cc to Charissa.Williams@usda.gov.

## **Federal Funding Floor and Ceiling Amounts**

The agency expects to make 1 award between \$500,00 and \$1,200,000.

### **A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The authorizing statutes and regulations for this opportunity are:

**10.902: 16 U.S.C. 590a-f, 590q**

**10.912: 16 U.S.C. 3839 et seq.**

**10.924: 16 U.S.C. 3838d-3838g**

**10.931: 16 U.S.C. 3865 et seq.**

#### **Overview**

The purpose of Montana Conservation Agreements for Implementing Key Conservation Objectives will be to leverage NRCS and partner resources for the following funding priorities:

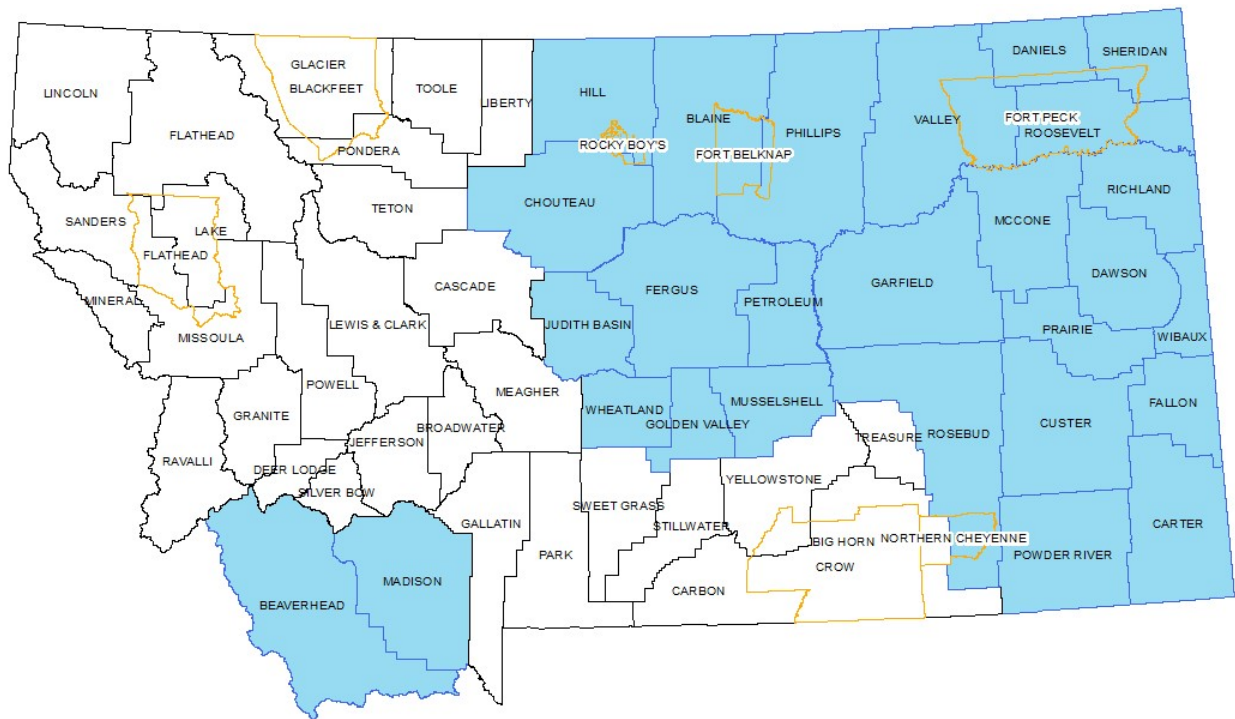
1. Restore grassland and sagebrush ecosystems to benefit both wildlife and ranching.
2. Improve management of grazing lands, including expiring CRP, to benefit grasslands and wildlife species.
3. Improve landscape permeability to wildlife.
4. Permanently conserve grassland and sagebrush ecosystems that are vulnerable to habitat conversion through conservation easements.
5. Restore and enhance ecosystem resilience of riparian areas and wet meadows by restoring their hydrologic and ecological function across public and private ownership boundaries.
6. Restore sagebrush habitat through removal of invading conifers
7. Promote ecologically based noxious and invasive weed management that focuses on integrated approaches to reduce noxious and invasive weed populations and stop their spread.
8. Promote conservation and protection of working wet meadows, such as flood irrigated hay fields.

Emphasis will be placed on projects in the landscapes highlighted in blue in Figure 1 below that:

1. Build technical capacity to implement Farm Bill Conservation Programs.
2. Build technical capacity of NRCS and partner field conservation employees.
3. Build the capacity of local partners to develop and implement effective projects.

4. Leverage non-Federal and non-government resources to achieve positive natural resources conservation outcomes.
5. Provide local, one-on-one outreach to farmers and landowners on USDA conservation programs and services.

Figure 1:



## B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

### 1. Estimated Funding

Estimated Funding Available	Minimum Award Amount	Maximum Award Amount	Anticipated # of Agreements
\$1,200,000	\$500,000	\$1,200,000	1

### 2. Start Dates and Performance Periods

Awards are expected to begin in Federal Fiscal Year 2019 for multi-year projects, not to exceed 5 years.

### **3. Type of Federal Award**

The agency plans to award a cooperative agreement pursuant to the opportunity. The agency will be substantially involved in the work performed under the agreement and will undertake activities such as the following:

- a. Authority to suspend work if specifications or work statements are not met;
- b. Review and approval of one stage of work before another may begin;
- c. Review and approval of substantive provisions of proposed sub-grants or contracts beyond existing Federal policy;
- d. NRCS and recipient collaboration or joint participation;
- e. Project monitoring to permit specified kinds of direction or redirection of the work because of interrelationships with and impacts on other projects;
- f. Highly prescriptive NRCS requirements that limit recipient discretion;
- g. Review and approval of key personnel; or
- h. Direct NRCS operational involvement or participation during the activity.

### **4. Number of Awards**

The agency expects to make 1 award(s).

### **5. Procurement Contracts**

The agency does not expect to award procurement contracts associated with this announcement.

### **6. Eligibility of Renewal or Supplemental Project Applications**

Applications for renewal or supplementation of existing projects are not eligible to compete with applications for new Federal awards. An application for renewal means a proposal submitted to continue an existing agreement that meets the objectives and requirements of this NFO. An application for supplementation of an existing project means a proposal to add components to an existing agreement so that it would meet the objectives and requirements in this NFO.

## **C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### **1. Eligible Applicants**

Applicants and applications must meet eligibility criteria by the application deadline to be considered for award. Eligible applicant type is determined by the implementing program statute.

Applicants must be a:

- Federally recognized Native American Tribal Government
- State Government
- City or Township Government
- County Government
- Special District Government

- Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS (other than institutions of higher education),
- Nonprofits that do not have a 501 (c)(3) status with the IRS (other than institutions of higher education)
- Private institutions of higher education
- Public and State-controlled institutions of higher education

## 2. **Cost Sharing or Matching**

There is not a specific match amount required. However, proposals will be evaluated in part on the relative contribution of non-Federal resources to the project. Cost sharing may be achieved with contributions of cash, services, materials, equipment, or third party in-kind contributions.

## 3. **Other**

Applicant entities identified in the SAM.gov Exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited/restricted or excluded from receiving Federal contracts, certain subcontracts, and certain Federal assistance and benefits will not be considered for Federal funding, as applicable to the funding being requested under this Federal program (2 CFR 200.205(d)).

# D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

## 1. **Address to Request Application Package**

All standard forms necessary for this announcement are included in the Grants.gov application package. Applicants may request paper copies of materials by contacting Kyle Tackett at 406.925.2865 or by written request mailed to Kyle.Tackett@usda.gov or at 420 Barrett Street, Dillon, Montana 59725.

## 2. **Content and Form of Application Submission**

To be considered for funding under this opportunity, an application must contain:

- Application Form:** (Standard Form 424 Application for Federal Assistance) Applicants must use this document as the cover sheet for each proposal. See Instructions for Completing SF 424 located in the Related Documents tab of this announcement on Grants.gov.
- Standard Form (SF) 424A, Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs.** Fill in all spaces as appropriate. Section B, Item 6, Column 1 should reflect the agency funds, and Column 2 should reflect the applicant's matching funds. This form is the summary budget for the project. See Instructions for Completing SF 424A located in the Related Documents tab of this announcement on Grants.gov.
- Budget Narrative** - In a separate narrative titled "Budget Narrative", explain and

justify all requested budget items/costs. Detail how the totals on the SF-424A were determined and demonstrate a clear connection between costs and the proposed project activities. For personnel salary costs, include the base-line salary figures and the estimates of time (as percentages) to be directly charged to the project. Describe any item that under the applicable Federal cost principles requires the agency's approval and estimate its cost. See Instructions for Completing Budget Narrative located in the Related Documents tab of this announcement on Grants.gov.

- i. As required in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, Subpart F Audit Requirements, all U.S. states, local governments, federally-recognized Indian tribal governments, and non-profit organizations expending \$750,000 USD or more in Federal award funds in a fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System. Therefore, any U.S. states, local governments, federally-recognized Indian tribal governments, and non-profit organizations applying under this opportunity must include one of the following statements in its budget narrative:

“My organization was required to submit a Single Audit report last year. The reporting period covered was from (insert date) to (insert date). This report, filed under EIN # (insert EIN), is available on the Federal Audit Clearinghouse Single Audit Database website (<https://harvester.census.gov/facweb/>) or will be by (insert date). “

OR

“My organization was not required to submit a Single Audit report last year.”

- d. **Standard Form (SF) 424B, Assurances - Non-Construction Programs.** Applicants, by signing and submitting an application, assure and certify that they are in compliance with the following Federal regulations:

- 2 CFR Part 417, Government wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement)
- 4 CFR Part 418, New Restrictions on Lobbying
- 2 CFR Part 421, Government wide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)

- e. **Certification and Disclosure of Lobbying Activities** - Under Title 31 of the United States Code, Section 1352, an applicant or recipient must not use any federally appropriated funds (both annually appropriated and continuing appropriations) or matching funds under a grant or cooperative agreement award

to pay any person for lobbying in connection with the award. Lobbying is defined as influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress connection with the award. Submission of an application also represents the applicant's certification of the statements in 2 CFR Part 418, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying. If you/your organization have/has made or agrees to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection with this proposal AND the Federal share exceeds \$100,000, you must also complete and submit the SF LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities located at 2 CFR 418, Appendix B. See 2 CFR, Subpart 418.110 for more information on when additional submission of this form is required.

f. **AD-3031**, Assurance Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants. Although the text of this document states it is applicable only to corporate entities, USDA policy requires that all entity types complete it.

g. **Proposal**

Each page must be on numbered 8½” x 11” paper with one-inch margins. The text of the proposal must be single spaced and typed in New Times Roman, no smaller than 12 point font. Proposals must be divided into the following sections:

i. **Project Summary:** [Three (3)-page maximum] Applicants must submit a description including the following information:

- a. Project title;
- b. Primary emphasis area that application pertains to as described in Section 1, Part B of this announcement;
- c. Project director/contact name, and contact information (including address, email, and telephone number);
- d. Names and affiliations of application collaborators;
- e. Project objectives (purpose and goals);
- f. Project geographic area/location (where application activities will take place);
- g. Project proposed activities; and
- h. Project deliverables and benefits.

ii. **Project Description:** [Ten (10)-page *maximum*] The description must include the following information:

- a. Proposal background: Describe the issue or problem. Include the geographic area and those who will be affected and benefit from this project proposal.

- b. Project objectives and methods: Be specific using qualitative and quantitative measures, if possible, to describe the project's purpose and goals.
- c. Project action plan and timeline: Provide a table listing project actions, timeframes, and associated milestones through project completion. Anticipated start date after August 1, 2018 but subject change. Proposals should have flexible start dates with timelines shown relative to the execution of an agreement.
- d. Project Management: Give a detailed description of how the project will be organized and managed. Include a list of key project personnel, their relevant experience, and their anticipated contributions to the project. Identify who will participate in monitoring and evaluating the project.
- e. Project deliverables/products: Provide a list of specific deliverables and products that will allow NRCS to monitor progress and make payment. In addition to proposal- specific deliverables, selected applicants will be required to provide the following:
- f. References, bibliographies, and citations, if included, do not count towards the 12-page maximum.

### **3. Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)**

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR §25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR §25.110(d)) is required to: (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier (Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number) in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. The agency may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the agency is ready to make an award, it may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

Entities must obtain a DUNS and register in SAM prior to registering with Grants.gov. A description of each is below. Entities are strongly encouraged to apply early for their DUNS number and SAM registration.

Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number: A Dun and Bradstreet DUNS number is a unique, nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and keeping track of over 70 million businesses worldwide. Applicants must obtain a DUNS number.

Information on how to obtain a DUNS number can be found at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform> or by calling 1-866-705-5711.

System for Award Management (SAM) Registration: SAM is the official Federal system that consolidated the capabilities of Central Contractor Registry, Federal Agency Registration, Online Representations and Certifications Application, and Excluded Parties List System. To register, go to: <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM>. The Federal Service Desk is available for registration assistance, and can be contacted via the Help tab at the website listed above.

#### **4. Submission Dates and Times**

Applicants may submit proposals via Grants.gov or via e-mail to the following address: [Kyle.Tackett@usda.gov](mailto:Kyle.Tackett@usda.gov) with a cc to [Charissa.Williams@usda.gov](mailto:Charissa.Williams@usda.gov). Proposals must be received by 4:00 p.m. Mountain Time on June 30, 2019. Late submissions will not be reviewed or considered. The agency will rely on system generated date and time receipt documentation for submission made both via Grants.gov and e-mail to determine whether applications meet the submission deadline. Grants.gov provides an automatic acknowledgement when applications are received. Applicants who make submission via e-mail must contact Kyle Tackett at [Kyle.Tackett@usda.gov](mailto:Kyle.Tackett@usda.gov) to confirm receipt.

#### **5. Intergovernmental Review (if applicable)**

This funding opportunity is not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

#### **6. Funding Restrictions**

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

- Costs above the amount of funds authorized for the project;
- Costs incurred prior to the effective date of the grant;
- Costs which lie outside the scope of the approved project and amendments thereto;
- Entertainment costs, regardless of their apparent relationship to project objectives;
- Compensation for injuries to persons, or damage to property arising out of project activities;
- 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
- 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 in this announcement.

Indirect costs limitations:

- a. A non-profit organization or institution of higher education awarded a cooperative agreement will be limited to a 10% indirect cost rate in accordance with the Agency's annual appropriations act. The 10% indirect cost rate applies to both federal and non-federal funds. Other types of entities are not subject to this statutory limitation.
- b. To be eligible to recover any indirect cost under a Federal award, recipients must either 1) have a current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) with a Federal agency that has not expired; or 2) qualify for use of the de minimis rate authorized by 2 CFR 200.414(f). In order to qualify for the de minimis rate, the recipient must have never had a NICRA. A State, local, or tribal governmental department or agency unit that receives more than \$35 million in direct Federal funding is not eligible for the de minimis rate.
- c. Applicants not subject to the statutory limitation stated above, which have a current NICRA must calculate indirect costs using the rate and base specified in their NICRA. A recipient may voluntarily reduce or waive recovery of indirect costs at its sole discretion and must not be encouraged or coerced in any way to do so by the agency. If voluntarily reduced or waived, the recipient may choose to apply any unrecovered indirect costs as part of their cost share or match. Unrecovered indirect cost means the difference between the amount charged to the Federal award and the amount which could have been charged to the Federal award under the recipient's approved negotiated indirect cost rate (2 CFR 200.306(c)). A copy of the applicant's current NICRA must be provided with the application. Indirect costs may not be recovered under an expired NICRA. However, if an applicant with a current NICRA is subject to the statutory limitation, indirect costs must be calculated as follows. First, multiply the NICRA rate by the base stated in the NICRA to arrive at Amount A. Next, multiply the statutory limit of 10% by the total of all direct costs to arrive at Amount B. The lower of Amount A and B is the amount of indirect cost to include on the budget.
- d. Entities that are eligible for the de minimis rate who already have a de minimis rate agreement must use the rate and base specified in the agreement, which is modified total direct costs (MTDC) as defined by 2 CFR 200.68 and also excluding the amount of each subcontract exceeding \$25,000. Note that

MTDC excludes certain costs from the base to which the rate is applied. A copy of the applicant's de minimis rate agreement must be provided with the application. If a recipient is eligible to use the de minimis rate, but does not have a de minimis rate agreement, use an indirect cost rate of no more than 10% of MTDC when preparing the budget. If selected for award, a de minimis rate agreement will be executed along with the award.

- e. Applicants who are individuals applying for funds separate from a business or non-profit organization he/she may operate are not eligible to charge indirect costs to their award. If you are an individual applying for funding, do not include any indirect costs in your proposed budget.

## **E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

### **1. Merit/Technical Criteria**

- a. The extent to which the proposal supports one or more of the identified conservation objectives from Section A above. **(50 pts)**
- b. Evidence in the proposal that the design and implementation is based on a proven track record in the entire geographic area found in Figure 1. **(100 pts)**
- c. Project staff has demonstrated the necessary technical and administrative expertise. **(50 pts)**
- d. Partner match contribution. **(0-25 pts)**
- e. Timelines and milestones are clearly stated and measurable. **(20 pts)**
- f. Budget is adequately explained and justified. **(5 pts)**

### **2. Risk Criteria**

The agency will check SAM to ensure the applicant is not suspended or debarred, which would preclude receiving an award. In addition, prior to making a Federal award with a total Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold (\$250,000), the agency must review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (the Federal Awardee Performance Integrity Information System, FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313 and 2 CFR 200.205(a)).

To further comply with the requirements at 2 CFR 200.205, the agency has established the following risk review process and related standards that an applicant must meet to be considered for award:

- a. **Financial Stability.** The applicant certifies that it maintains adequate financial resources or cash flow to meet its financial obligations on a routine basis and successfully complete any agreement it may be awarded.
- b. **Quality of Management Systems and Ability to meet Management Standards** prescribed in 2 CFR Part 200. The applicant certifies it has a financial

management system adequate to segregate and track federal funds. It further certifies it has adequate systems in place for proper agreement administration; compliance with the standards outlined in 2 CFR Part 200 Section D for procurement, property, and records management; and required financial and performance reporting.

- c. History of Performance. If the applicant has previously obtained Federal financial assistance award, it certifies that it has never failed to materially comply with the Federal award terms and conditions and further that it has never had an award terminated on that basis.

Submission of a proposal constitutes certification that an applicant meets these standards.

### **3. Review and Selection Process**

Proposals will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice. Incomplete, noncompliant, and/or proposals not meeting the formatting criteria will be eliminated from competition, and notification of elimination will be sent to the applicant. The agency intends to make a selection and award without conducting any discussions or allowing applicants to correct deficiencies or omissions in their applications. Consequently, they must ensure their applications are complete and accurate. However, while the agency intends to make a selection and award without discussions, it reserves the right to conduct discussions for the purpose of allowing applicants to revise their applications to correct deficiencies or omissions identified by the NRCS. If this is done, the agency will conduct discussions with all applicants and identify deficiencies and omissions and give applicants an opportunity to submit a revised application by a common cut-off date.

Merit/technical reviews will be conducted by a technical review board nominated by the approving official. Risk reviews will be conducted by the Grants and Agreements Division. The approving official will make the final award decisions. The approving official for this opportunity is the Montana NRCS State Conservationist.

### **4. Awards Over the Simplified Acquisition Threshold (if applicable)**

Notice to applicants:

- a. Prior to making a Federal award with a total Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold (\$250,000), the agency must review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (the Federal Awardee Performance Integrity Information System, FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313 and 2 CFR 200.205(a));

- b. An applicant may review information in FAPIIS accessible through SAM and comment on any information about it that a Federal awarding agency previously entered;
- c. The agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR 200.205, Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

**5. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates**

The agency anticipates announcing or notifying successful and unsuccessful applicants by July 19, 2019 and expects to have Federal awards in place by September 3, 2019.

**F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

**1. Federal Award Notices**

The agency will provide notice that an application has been selected before it actually makes the Federal award. As such, the selection notification is not an authorization to begin performance. Any pre-award costs incurred by the awardee will not be reimbursed. The Notice of Grant and Agreement Award (form NRCS-ADS-093) signed by the authorized agency representative is the only authorizing document, and will be provided electronically to the entity's authorized representative for signature.

Both successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified of the award decision via letter.

**2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

All project funds will be used in accordance with 2 CFR 200 and NRCS' General Terms and Conditions; a copy of the General Terms and Conditions may be obtained by contacting the Federal Awarding Agency Contacts listed in this announcement.

**3. Reporting**

Reporting will follow NRCS' General Terms and Conditions, but will generally include electronic submission of semiannual progress reports, quarterly financial status reports, and final reports.

If the Federal share of any agreement awarded under this opportunity notice may include more than \$500,000 over the period of performance, recipients must also comply with the post award reporting requirements reflected in Appendix XII of 2

CFR Part 200 —Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters.

**G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)**

For questions regarding this opportunity, please contact one of the following individuals:

Administrative Contact (Primary Contact)

Name: Michele Devaney

Grants Management Specialist

USDA- FPAC-BC

Mailing Address: 125 S. State St. Room 4010, Salt Lake City, UT 84138

Phone Number: (801) 524-4587

Email: [Michele.Devaney@usda.gov](mailto:Michele.Devaney@usda.gov)

Program Contact

Name: Kyle Tackett

Partnership Coordinator and Resource Conservationist for Initiatives

USDA-NRCS

Mailing Address: 420 Barrett St., Dillon, MT 59725

Phone Number: 406.925.2865

Email: [Kyle.Tackett@usda.gov](mailto:Kyle.Tackett@usda.gov)

**H. OTHER INFORMATION**

1. Questions regarding this announcement must be submitted to the Administrative Contact identified above via email with the Opportunity Number in the subject line. Questions must be submitted by **June 11, 2019**. A questions and answers document addressing all questions will be posted to the Related Documents tab of this announcement in Grants.gov as a modification by **June 14, 2019**.
2. **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)**  
Proposals to NRCS are considered to be confidential information. Proposals are not shared with individuals or entities seeking public disclosure through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) without the consent of the applicant. More specifically, Executive Order 12600 and USDA FOIA regulation 7 CFR Part 1, Subpart A requires the NRCS to provide notice to applicants that a third party has requested copies of their business information, and requires NRCS to consult with applicants regarding the releasing their records.
3. **Government Obligation**  
The Federal Government is not obligated to make any Federal award as a result of the announcement. Only authorized federal officials can bind the Federal Government to the expenditure of funds.

## **U.S. Department of Agriculture Non-Discrimination Statement**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at <https://www.ascr.usda.gov/filing-program-discrimination-complaint-usda-customer> and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call

(866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

1400 Independence Avenue, SW

Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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