

**Kansas Component
Conservation Innovation Grants
Fiscal Year 2013 Announcement of Program Funding**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC)

NOTICE: Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 Kansas Announcement for Program Funding. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 10.912

SUMMARY: The Kansas NRCS requests applications for CIG to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies. Applications are accepted from all 50 states, the Caribbean Area (Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands), and the Pacific Islands Area (Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands). For FY 2013, Kansas NRCS has made available \$200,000, with individual grants not to exceed \$50,000. Funds will be awarded through a 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 provides the 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.

DUE DATE: Applications must be received in the Kansas NRCS State Office by 4 p.m., Central Daylight Saving Time (CDST), June 7, 2013.

ADDRESSES: The address for hand-delivered applications or applications submitted using regular, express mail, or overnight courier service is:

State Conservationist
Attn: Management Services
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
760 South Broadway
Salina, Kansas 67401

To submit your application electronically, visit www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp and follow the instructions.

For more information contact:

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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority

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

B. Overview

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

The Kansas 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 governments, and non-governmental organizations and individuals.

Kansas component CIG projects must take place in Kansas; multi-state projects will not be considered. Complete applications will be screened for eligibility determination by appropriate NRCS staff. Applications determined eligible will be evaluated and scored by a subcommittee of the Kansas Technical Committee (KTC). (More information on the KTC may be found at www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/KTC or by calling the Kansas NRCS State Office at 785-823-4500.) Scored applications will be forwarded to the State Conservationist for final selection and funding decisions.

C. Innovative Conservation Projects or Activities

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

1. Conservation adoption approaches or incentive systems.
2. Promising conservation technologies, practices, systems, procedures, or approaches.

3. Environmental soundness with goals of environmental protection and natural resource enhancement.

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

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

D. Kansas Component CIG Categories

For FY 2013, CIG will offer eight categories. Applicants must identify the most appropriate category for their proposal. The categories are Program Outreach, Nutrient Management, Energy Conservation, Soil Health, Wildlife, Economics, Co-Management for Food Safety and CIG Project Assessment. Beginning Farmers or Ranchers; Limited Resource Farmers or Ranchers; Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers; Indian tribes; or eligible entities servicing Beginning, Limited Resource, or Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers or Indian tribes are encouraged to submit application(s) in any of the categories.

Only proposals that demonstrate the use of innovative technologies and/or approaches to address at least one bulleted topic listed below will be considered.

1. Program Outreach

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

Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers, and Indian tribes or entities servicing those landowners

2. Nutrient Management

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

3. Energy Conservation

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

4. Soil Health

- Demonstrate and quantify the impacts of cover crops, crop rotations, tillage and/or soil amendments on soil chemical, physical, and/or biological

properties and their relationships with nutrient cycling, soil water availability, and plant growth.

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

5. Wildlife

- Develop planning and decision aids to assess and maximize wildlife habitat value on land used to grow biofuel crops.
- Demonstrate new techniques and/or technologies for monitoring and evaluating wildlife habitat both on-site and via remote sensing.
- Develop regional, crop-specific guidance providing the vegetative species, landforms, and necessary acreage to support appropriate populations of managed and wild pollinators per unit area of pollinated crops (e.g., describe the components of the landscape).
- Demonstrate and quantify the impacts of grazing as a habitat management tool.

- Develop and/or demonstrate fish screen, fish passage, and other fish related technology and criteria for native aquatic species of conservation concern.
- Demonstrate innovative approaches for restoring and reconnecting bottomland hardwood ecosystems that preserve hydrologic connectivity and aquatic organism passage.
- Develop metrics of measurable habitat improvement that could potentially be traded under a species-banking framework

6. *Economics*

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

7. *Co-Management for Food Safety*

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

8. *CIG Project Assessment*

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

II. FUNDING AVAILABILITY

Effective on the publication date of this notice, the Kansas NRCS State Conservationist announces the availability of \$200,000 for CIG proposals in the state, with individual grants not to exceed \$50,000. The intent of the state component is to provide flexibility 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 grant's competition.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

CIG applicants must be a federally recognized Indian tribe, state or local unit of government, non-governmental organization, or individual. CIG projects must involve landowners who meet the EQIP eligibility requirements set forth in 16 USC 3839aa-1. <http://uscode.house.gov/download/pls/16C58.txt> Additional information regarding EQIP eligibility requirements can be found at:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/eqip>.

Participating producers are not required to have an EQIP contract.

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. Only 25 percent of the required match can be contributed as in-kind. 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, 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 available at time of application. Additional information about matching funds can be found at the following link: [2 Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\) Part 215](#).

B. Beginning Farmers or Ranchers, Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers or Federally Recognized Indian Tribes or Members of Federally Recognized Indian Tribes

For the FY 2013 grant award process, up to 10 percent of the total funds available for CIG may be set aside for applications from beginning farmers or ranchers, socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers, 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 be derived 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. The remaining 12.5 percent match must be provided in cash.

To compete for these set-aside funds, the applicant must make a declaration in the application as described in Section IV.B.7. of 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.

1. **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.

- 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.

2. 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).
- Has a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four or less than 50 percent of the county median household income in each of the previous 2 years (to be determined annually using Department of Commerce data).

3. Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher

- A farmer or rancher who has been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudices because of his/her identity as a member of a group without regard to his/her individual qualities. Those groups include African Americans, American Indians/Alaska natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans, native Hawaiians, or Pacific Islanders.

C. EQIP Payment Limitation and Duplicate Payments

Section 1240G of the Food Security Act of 1985, 16 U.S. Code (U.S.C.) 3839aa-7, <http://uscode.house.gov/download/pls/16C58.txt> imposes a \$300,000 limitation for all cost-share or incentive payments disbursed to individuals or entities under an EQIP contract between FY 2008 and FY 2014. The limitation applies to CIG in the following manner:

- CIG funds are awarded through grant agreements; these grant agreements are not EQIP contracts. Thus, CIG awards in and of themselves are not limited by the payment limitation.
- Direct or indirect payments made to an individual or entity using funds from a CIG award to carry out structural, vegetative, or management practices count toward each individual's or entity's EQIP payment limitation. Through project progress reports, CIG grantees are responsible for certifying that 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 contact 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 of the USDA programs (EQIP, Agricultural Management Assistance, Conservation Security Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, etc.) since this would be considered a duplicate payment.

- Further, all individuals or entities receiving direct or indirect payments through participation in a CIG project must also meet the EQIP eligibility requirements.

D. Project Eligibility

To be eligible for CIG, projects must involve landowners who meet the EQIP eligibility requirements as set forth in 16 U.S.C. 3839aa-1. Further, all agricultural producers receiving direct or indirect payments through participation in a CIG project must also meet the EQIP eligibility requirements. Refer to www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/ for more information on EQIP eligibility requirements. Participating producers are not required to have an EQIP contract.

A person or legal entity shall 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 (AGI) 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 conservation (HELC) and wetland conservation (WC) 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 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 Kansas EQIP Eligible Practices List by contacting the Kansas 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/technical contact and administrative contact to provide oversight for each project receiving an award.

IV. APPLICATION, SUBMISSION INFORMATION, AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. How to Obtain Application Materials

All Office of Management and Budget (OMB) standard forms necessary for CIG submission are posted on the following Web site:
http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aforms_repository_information.jsp An application checklist is available on the Kansas NRCS CIG Web site:
<http://www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig/index.html>

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 must submit seven copies of the application in the following format.

Typewritten or printed on 8½" x 11" white paper. The text of the application should be in a font no smaller than 12-point, double-spaced, and with one-inch margins and page numbered. 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.

1. Application Cover Sheet

Applicants must use Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance, as the cover sheet for each project application. SF-424 can be downloaded from :
http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aforms_repository_information.jsp or obtained from the Kansas NRCS State Office.

2. Project Summary Sheet

Applicants must submit a Project Summary Sheet (no more than one page in length) that includes the listed information. A template for the Project Summary Sheet is available on the national NRCS CIG Web site:
www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig.

- a. Project title.
- b. Project director's name, contact information (including e-mail).
- c. Names and affiliations of project collaborators.
- d. Project purpose.
- e. Project deliverables/products.
- f. Project scope/area.
- g. Project start and end dates.
- h. CIG Kansas component category.
- i. Certification request for federal funds.

3. One-Page Abstract

Applicants must submit 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 the one-page limit will be discarded.

4. 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.

- a. 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.
- 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, if possible, to describe the project's purpose and goals. Describe how 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) of the project area. Provide a map if possible.
- 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, 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 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.
- i. Project deliverables/products: Provide a list of specific deliverables and products that will allow NRCS to monitor project progress and payment. In addition to specific deliverable, applications must include the following activities as deliverables:
 - Semi-annual reports.
 - Supplemental narratives to explain and support payment requests.
 - Final report.
 - Performance items specific to the project that indicate progress [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")].
- j. 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.
- k. 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).

5. Assessment of Environmental and Social 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 potentially impacted 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 impacts 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. These resources are outlined in the NRCS Environmental Evaluation Worksheet, Form NRCS-CPA-52, which is available at: <http://efotg.sc.gov.usda.gov/references/public/KS/KSCPA52.xls>. Form NRCS-CPA-52 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 the NRCS Environmental Liaison concerning the scope of what should be addressed in this section of the application. See Section VII. AGENCY CONTACTS for Ks Environmental Liaison.

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.

6. Budget Information

Applicants must prepare Standard Form 424A (SF-424A), Budget Information Non-Construction Programs, to document budget needs. The SF-424A is available at http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aforms_repository_information.jsp or can be obtained from the Kansas 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 7 below).

Indirect Costs

- a. Applicants wishing to claim indirect costs must have a federally approved indirect cost rate. The approved indirect cost rate must be included in the application package.
- b. An indirect cost rate not to exceed 15 percent may be approved for applicants without a federally approved indirect cost rate. To be considered for an indirect cost rate not to exceed 15 percent, applicants must submit an indirect cost rate proposal with the application which includes:
 - Applicant's written policy for allocating and identifying direct and indirect costs.
 - Contact person information regarding who prepared proposal.
 - Breakdown of indirect salaries by position title and amount.
 - Line item expenditure description and how the costs are being allocated between direct and indirect.
 - Applicant's tax identification number.

- Signed certification that certify all costs in proposal are allowable under OMB cost principles; costs treated as indirect have not been claimed as direct; and similar types of costs have been accounted for consistently and the Federal government will be notified of any account changed that would affect the rate. Signature should be of approving official for applicant or applicant's chief financial officer.
- c. If applicant does not have a federally approved indirect cost rate, it is at the agency's (NRCS) discretion whether to allow indirect cost.

The Cost Proposal must:

- a. Indicate the amount of federal funds requested and the matching resources provided by the applicant in order to carry out the project. The cost proposal is limited to 12 pages, plus required forms. Pages in excess of the 12-page limit will be discarded.
- 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 costs 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:
 - Position title, number of hours, and total cost for personnel proposed.
 - Total cost for travel.
 - Proposed equipment, supplies, or other major expenses over \$2,500.
 - Total of all direct costs.
 - Total of indirect costs.
 - Summary of total project costs.

7. Budget Narrative (maximum 9 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 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.

8. Matching

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

Cash Match

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, 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 Match

"In-kind" refers to non-cash contributions of goods or services made by third party individuals or organizations to support projects. Examples of in-kind 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 is required 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 Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars, Cost Principles that apply to their entity for additional guidance and other requirements relating to matching and allowable costs.

9. Declaration of Beginning Farmers or Ranchers, Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers

If an applicant wishes to compete in the 10 percent set-aside funding pool (see Section III.B.) that describes the provision of a set-aside pool of funding for beginning farmer or rancher or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher and avail themselves of the in-kind contribution exception, applicants must make a declaration in writing of their status as a beginning farmer or rancher, socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher, 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.

10. 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.

11. Certifications

All applications must include a signed SF-424B, Assurances, Non-construction Programs. The SF-424B may be found at http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aforms_repository_information.jsp or contact the Kansas NRCS State Office. Applicants, by signing and submitting an application, assure and certify that they are in compliance with the following:

- 2 CFR Part 417, Government wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement)
<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2011-title2-vol1-part417.pdf>
- 7 CFR Part 3018, New Restrictions on Lobbying
<http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&sid=0a1a748744d1976267440165ef3dec1b&rgn=div5&view=ext&node=7:15.1.8.2.5&idno=7>
- 2 CFR Part 421, Government wide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)
<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2011-12-08/html/2011-31467.htm>

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

13. Required System for Award Management (SAM) Registration

The SAM 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 SAM. To register, Visit <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>. Allow a minimum of five days to complete the SAM registration.

C. How to Submit a Written Application

Applicants must submit one signed original and six complete copies of each project application. (See Section IV.B. for formatting requirements.) Hard copies must be accompanied by an electronic copy on a compact disc (CD). Electronic files must be either Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat (pdf) files. **Applications submitted via facsimile or e-mail will not be accepted.**

Submit written proposals to State Conservationist, Attn: Administrative Services, Natural Resources Conservation Service, 760 S. Broadway, Salina, Kansas 67401. The contact phone number for hand-delivered applications is 785-823-4500.

D. How to Submit an Application Electronically

Applicants may submit applications electronically through Grants.gov, the federal government's e-grants portal. Applications submitted through Grants.gov must contain all of the elements of a complete application and meet the requirements described above. Instructions for electronically submitting the required standard forms, abstract, narrative, and declarations are posted on Grants.gov. Instructions for adding attachments are available on Grants.gov. Applications submitted electronically are date- and time-stamped by Grants.gov and must be received by the identified closing date. **Note that NRCS is not responsible for any technical malfunctions or Web site problems related to Grants.gov submissions. Applicants should begin the Grants.gov process well before the submission deadline to avoid problems.**

E. Application Due Date

Complete applications must be received at the Kansas NRCS State Office by 4p.m. CDST, June 7, 2013. A 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.

F. 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 programmatic contact (See Section VII.). Failure to do so may result in the application not being considered for funding by the peer review panel.

G. 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.

- 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 any 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.
- 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.

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 Section IV.B.5.k.) to help NRCS determine the appropriate documentation required to comply with NEPA and NRCS regulations. If the application is selected for funding, the NRCS program contact and NRCS environmental liaison will coordinate with the selected applicant concerning documentation for compliance with NEPA. The selected applicant will be required to prepare and/or pay for the preparation of the appropriate NEPA document (e.g., Environmental Assessment (EA) and/or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) 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

Applications 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.

- Semi-annual reports.
- Supplemental narratives to explain and support payment requests.
- Final report.
- Performance items specific to the project that indicate progress.
- New technology and innovative approach fact sheet.
- At least one presentation of the project at a Kansas NRCS event during the period of the grant.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW

A. Application Review and Selection Process

Prior to the KTC 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 a notification of elimination will be mailed to the applicant.

Applications determined eligible will be evaluated and scored by a subcommittee of the KTC. Scored applications will be forwarded to the State Conservationist for final selection and funding decisions.

B. Criteria for Application Evaluation

KTC will use the following criteria to evaluate project applications:

CIG Technical Evaluation Criteria
<p>Purpose, Approach, and Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Design and implementation of project is based on sound methodology and demonstrated technology.b. Promotes environmental enhancement and protection in conjunction with agricultural production.c. Project outcome is clearly measurable.d. Potential for successful completion.e. Both beneficial and adverse impacts are considered and an acceptably significant level of improvement will be achieved.
<p>Innovative Technology or Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Project is innovative.b. Project conforms to description of innovative projects or activities in proposal request announcement.
<p>Project Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Timeline and milestones are clear and reasonable.b. Project staff has technical expertise needed.c. Budget is adequately explained and justified.d. Experience and capacity to partner with and gain the support of other organizations, institutions, and agencies is clearly defined.
<p>Transferability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Potential for producers and landowners to use the innovative technology or technologies.b. 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.c. Potential for NRCS to successfully use the innovative approach or methods.d. 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 after August 9, 2013 or following announcement of National CIG awards. Funds are not awarded, and work may not start, until an agreement is signed by both NRCS and the grantee. All agreements will be fully signed by September 30, 2013.

VI. AWARD INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

A. Award Notification

Applicants who have been selected for funding pending environmental review will receive a letter of official notification from Kansas NRCS. Upon notification of selection, the applicant should contact the Kansas NRCS program/technical contact 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 will need to work with the NRCS program/technical contact and NRCS environmental liaison concerning what documentation will need to be prepared for compliance with NEPA and NRCS regulations. Selected applicants may be required to prepare and/or pay for the preparation of the appropriate NEPA document if an EA and/or EIS are needed. Grant funds cannot be awarded until the environmental review requirements demonstrating compliance with NEPA are met. See section VII. AGENCY CONTACTS for Ks Environmental Liaison.

C. Grant Agreement

The CCC, 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 forms and 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 at least one presentation at a Kansas 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

Grantees must submit SF-425, Federal Financial Report, no later than 30 days after the end of each quarter and 90 days after completion of project. The SF-425 is available at: [Grants Management Forms](#). In addition, the grantee must submit a written semi-annual performance progress report to the NRCS program/technical contact every six months. This report is distinct from the quarterly financial report described above. Each progress report shall cover work performed during the previous six-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 six-month period.

The grantee is responsible for providing the technical assistance required to successfully implement and complete the project. NRCS will designate a program/technical contact, an administrative contact, and an environmental liaison to provide oversight for each project receiving an award.

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, and HELC/WC 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 these NRCS contacts, 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, 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 program/technical contacts. Grantees will be required to attend at least one of these sessions at their own expense or attend a comparable state-level NRCS event (at their own expense).

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

CIG Program/Technical Contact

Lyle D. Frees
CIG Program Coordinator
760 S. Broadway

Salina, Kansas 67401
785-823-4553
Fax: 785-823-4540
Lyle.frees@ks.usda.gov

CIG Administrative Contact

Erin Riffey
Contract Specialist
760 S. Broadway
Salina, Kansas 67401
785-823-4505
Fax: 785-823-4540
erin.riffey@ks.usda.gov

Kansas Environmental Liaison

Andrew (Andy) G. Burr
Biologist
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Additional information about CIG, including fact sheets and frequently asked questions (FAQs), is available on the CIG Web site

http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/programs/financial/eqip/?&cid=nrcs143_008205

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