



United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

2010 Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative

Fact Sheet - April 2010

Summary

The Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI) is a voluntary conservation initiative that enable the use of certain conservation programs along with resources of eligible partners to provide financial and technical assistance to owners and operators of agricultural land and nonindustrial private forest lands. Effective April 12, 2010, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announced the availability of at least \$5 million in financial assistance to support new projects during Fiscal Year 2010. The following are eligible to submit a proposal and enter into a partnership agreement with NRCS: Federally recognized Indian tribes; State and local units of government; producer associations, farmer cooperatives; and institutions of higher education or nongovernmental organizations with a history of working cooperatively with producers. Individual agricultural producers are not CCPI eligible entities and may not submit proposal, nor may they apply for program benefits through this proposal submission process. No Federal CCPI funding may be used to cover partner's administrative expenses.

Background

A primary intent of CCPI is to leverage non-Federal government resources along with NRCS program resources to achieve resource conservation objectives. The purposes of the CCPI partnership agreement are to: (1) Address conservation priorities involving agriculture and nonindustrial private forest land on local, State, multi-State, or regional levels; (2) Encourage producers to cooperate in meeting applicable Federal, State, and local regulatory requirements related to production; (3) Encourage producers to cooperate in the installation and maintenance of conservation practices; and (4) Promote the development and demonstration of innovative conservation practices and delivery methods, including practices associated with specialty crop and organic production and precision agriculture operations.

Proposal Requirements

For consideration of a proposal, a potential partner must submit five copies of the written proposal and

one electronic copy. Projects may not exceed 5 years in length. The proposal must be in the following format and contain the information set forth below: Proposal Format: There are no forms required or associated with the CCPI proposal process. Five copies of the proposal should be typewritten or printed on 8.5 x 11 white paper. The text of the application should be in a font no smaller than 12-point, with one inch margins. One additional copy of the proposal shall be in a format such as Microsoft Word or PDF on one CD ROM.

Proposal Summary

The basic format for the CCPI proposal is a narrative written response to the questions and information requested in this notice. The proposal must include the following:

(1) Proposal Cover and Summary: The first two pages of the proposal must include: (a) Project Title, (b) Project director/manager name, telephone number, and e-mail address, (c) Name of lead partner entity submitting proposal and other collaborating partners, (d) Mailing address and telephone numbers for lead partner submitting proposal, (e) Short general description/ summary of project and description of resource issues to be addressed. Identify the specific natural resource concerns to be addressed, (f) List of approved FOTG conservation practices, enhancements, and conservation activity plans that will be used to address those resource Concerns, (g) Specify the geographic location: State; county(s); congressional districts; and whether proposal is a national multi-State or within-State proposal, include a general location map, (h) Proposed project start and end dates (not to exceed a period of 5 years), (i) Total amount of CCPI financial assistance being requested for project.

(2) Project Natural Resource Objectives and Actions: The proposal must include the project objectives and the natural resource concerns that will be addressed including (a) Identify and provide detail about the natural resource concern(s) to be addressed and how the proposal objectives will address those concerns,

(b) For each objective, identify the actions to be completed to achieve the objective and to address the identified natural resource concern.

(3) Detailed Proposal Criteria: Potential partners must fully describe their project and demonstrate their history of working with agricultural producers to address resource issues.

Information provided in the proposal must include: (a) A description of the partner or partners' history of working with agricultural producers to address the conservation objectives to be achieved, (b) A detailed description of the geographic area covered by the proposal, conservation priorities in the area, conservation objectives to be achieved, lands to be treated, and the expected level of participation by producers.

(4) Include a detailed map showing the project area. Describe the location and size of the proposed project area.

(5) Outline on the maps the areas which need conservation treatment and identify the number of acres involved. Applicants should also include: (a) A description of how the partner(s) will collaborate to achieve the objectives of the agreement and the roles, responsibilities, and capabilities of the partner(s), (b) A description of the project duration which cannot exceed 5 years in length, plan of action, and project implementation schedule that details when the potential partner anticipates finishing the project and submitting a final report, (c) A description of the resources (financial and technical assistance) requested from each of the applicable NRCS programs (EQIP, WHIP, and CSP) and the non-Federal resources provided by the partner that will be leveraged by the Federal contribution, (d) A description of the plan for monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on progress made toward achieving the objectives of the agreement, (e) Identify potential criteria to be used by NRCS to prioritize and rank agricultural producers' CCPI applications in the project area, (f) An estimate of the percentage of producers, including nonindustrial private forest landowners, in the project area that may participate in the project along with an estimate of the total number of producers located in the project area, (g) A listing and description of the conservation practices, conservation activity plans, enhancements, and partner activities to be implemented during the project timeframe and the general sequence of implementation of the project, (h) A description of the amount of CPPI financial assistance funds needed annually for producer contracts that will be used to implement the conservation practices and enhancements identified in previous sections, (i) A description of any requested policy adjustments, by program, with an explanation of why the adjustment is needed in order to achieve the objectives of the project. If a partner is requesting specific program flexibilities that depend on detailed participant or project information, the proposal must provide the needed information, (j) A description of how the partner will provide for outreach to beginning farmers or ranchers, limited resource farmers or ranchers, socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers, and Indian tribes, (k) A description of how the proposal's objectives may provide additional benefits to address renewable energy production, energy conservation, mitigating the effects of climate change, facilitating climate change adaptation, or fostering carbon sequestration, if applicable.

Ranking Considerations

The Chief or designee will evaluate proposals using a national competitive to proposals that: (a) Have a high percentage of producers actively farming or managing working agricultural or nonindustrial private forest lands included in the proposed project area; (b) Significantly leverage non-Federal financial and technical resources and coordinate with other local, State, or Federal efforts; (c) Deliver high percentages of applied conservation practices to address water quality, water conservation, or State, regional, or national conservation initiatives; (d) Provide innovation in approved conservation practices, conservation methods, and delivery, including outcome-based

performance measures and methods; (e) Complete the application of the conservation practices and activities on all of the covered program contracts or cost-share agreements in 5 years or less; (f) Assist the participants in meeting local, State, and Federal regulatory requirements; (g) Provide for monitoring and evaluation of conservation practices, enhancements, and activities; (h) Provide for matching financial funds or technical assistance to assist participants with the implementation of their EQIP and CSP contracts and WHIP cost-share agreements; (i) Further the Nation's efforts with renewable energy production, energy conservation, mitigating the effects of climate change, facilitating climate change adaptation, or fostering carbon sequestration; (j) Provide for outreach to, and participation of, beginning farmers or ranchers, socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers, limited resource farmers or ranchers, and Indian tribes within the proposed project area; and (k) Identify other factors and criteria which best achieve the purposes of CCPI.

Submitting Proposals

Eligible partners may submit proposals by mail or via courier. By mail: Proposals must be postmarked May 27, 2010. By courier: Proposals must be delivered by: May 27, 2010.

By mail: Gregory K. Johnson, Director, Financial Assistance Programs Division, Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, "National CCPI Proposal," 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Room 5239 South Building, Washington, DC 20250. By courier: Gregory K. Johnson, Director, Financial Assistance Programs Division, Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, "National CCPI Proposal," 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Room 5239 South Building, Washington, DC 20250. Proposals will be accepted between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Eastern time, Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Please ask the guard at the entrance to the South Building to call (202) 720-1845.

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