



Natural Resources Conservation Service
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USDA PROVIDES UP TO \$1 MILLION IN NEW CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE GRANTS

Lakewood, CO – The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) recently announced that \$1 million is available through their Conservation Partnership Initiative (CPI) grants for state and local governments, tribes and nongovernmental organizations that have a history of working with agricultural producers. This year’s CPI funding is available until September 10, 2004.

CPI is a voluntary program that fosters conservation partnerships and funds projects that focus technical and financial resources on conservation priorities within environmentally sensitive watersheds and other geographic areas.

“The program was established to encourage partnerships that develop and implement watershed and regional solutions to pressing natural resource priorities associated with agriculture and rural areas,” states Allen Green, NRCS State Conservationist, Lakewood, Colorado.

Applications for 2004 funding must address at least one of the four CPI conservation priorities which include: terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitat, coastal resources, livestock nutrient management, and minor/specialty crop pest management. Projects must encourage

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producers to cooperate in the installation and maintenance of conservation practices that affect multiple agricultural operations; encourage producers to share information, technical and financial resources; support the cumulative conservation benefits in a geographic area; and promote the development and demonstration of innovative conservation methods.

“It’s important to note that each year NRCS intends to select for one of the CPI awards a proposal that addresses at least one of the CPI conservation priorities that impacts limited resource or beginning farmers and ranchers or Tribes,” Green further states.

CPI is carried out through two phases. First, applicants in Colorado must submit proposals to the Colorado NRCS State Office in Lakewood by September 10, 2004 for evaluation. Applicants may request no less than \$100,000 and no more than \$200,000 in funding for the planned project. A 1:1 match using non-NRCS funding is required and up to 100 percent of the match may come from in-kind contributions. **Interested parties may send applications to USDA NRCS c/o Allen Green, NRCS State Conservationist, 655 Parfet Street, RM E200C, Lakewood, CO 80215.** The state selections will be forwarded to the NRCS national office for further review and final award determinations.

Upon completion of the national review and selection, chosen applicants will have up to 18 months to develop the partnership, generate producer interest and participation, and prepare a final project plan. Following completion and approval of the final project plan, phase two, project implementation begins. Applicants are expected to secure project implementation funds from a wide range of potential partners including local, state and Federal agencies and nongovernmental organizations.

For additional information on CPI, including the RFP, please contact Dennis Alexander, NRCS Assistant State Conservationist, Lakewood, Colorado at 720-544-2805 or visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cpi/index.html

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