

February 7, 2008

\$1 Million in Colorado NRCS Conservation Innovation Grants...Apply Today

Lakewood, CO - The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) recently announced the availability of up to \$1 million for proposed projects in Colorado through the 2008 Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) Program. Applications must be received by **March 31, 2008**, and are being accepted electronically as well as in written form. Please visit www.co.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig/cig.htm for additional information.

Individual applications will be awarded up to \$75,000 through this statewide competitive process for improving conservation practices in Colorado. Colorado CIG grant applications will be awarded at the State level -- a process that differs from the recent announcement of \$20 million in CIG funding at the National level.

“These grants provide an excellent opportunity to demonstrate new conservation technologies that will address one or more of the six priority natural resource concern areas in Colorado, which are: Water Resources, Soil Resources, Atmospheric Resources, Grazing Land and Forest Health, Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy Sources, and Wildlife Habitat,” said Dollie Gonzales, Resource Conservationist and CIG Program Coordinator, NRCS.

The purpose of CIG, a component of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, is to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies while leveraging Federal investment in environmental enhancement and protection, in conjunction with agricultural production.

Applications will be accepted from eligible entities, including Federally-recognized Indian Tribes, State and local governments, non-governmental organizations, and individuals for competitive consideration of grant awards for single or multi-year projects, not to exceed three years.

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Helping People Help the Land

Selected applicants may receive grants of up to 50 percent of the total project cost. Applicants must provide non-Federal matching funds for at least 50 percent of the project cost, of which up to 50 percent may be from in-kind contributions.

An exception regarding matching funds is made for projects funded that benefit beginning and limited resource farmers and ranchers, and Indian Tribes. Seventy-five (75) percent of the required matching funds for such projects may be derived from in-kind contributions to help these entities meet the statutory requirements for receiving a CIG.

Written applications must be sent to USDA-NRCS c/o Dollie Gonzales, Resource Conservationist, 655 Parfet Street, Room E200C, Lakewood, CO 80215, and received no later than **Monday, March 31, 2008**.

For additional information on CIG, please contact Gonzales at 720-544-2821, via email at dollie.gonzales@co.usda.gov.

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