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## **Colorado NRCS Awards Nearly \$685,000 in Conservation Innovation Grants**

*Two Entities in Colorado Will Receive Funds to Develop Innovative Agriculture Approaches*

**DENVER** -- USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State Conservationist Phyllis Ann Philipps announced nearly \$685,000 in Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) is being awarded to two entities in Colorado for projects that test and prove innovative approaches to conserving America's private lands.

These awardees include the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory who will receive nearly \$257,000 in their efforts to raise awareness of Greater Sage-grouse and other sagebrush-obligate bird population habitats and fence-marking projects; and the Colorado State University who will receive more than \$428,000 to develop state and transition models (STMs) that focus on Sage-grouse habitat conditions.

*"These Conservation Innovation Grants will be funded to develop and refine cutting-edge conservation technologies and approaches to natural resource management and conservation, which will ultimately result in helping producers maintain viable agricultural operations that benefit the environment,"* said Philipps.

NRCS administers CIG as part of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Grants are awarded to state and local governments, federally recognized Indian tribes, non-governmental organizations and individuals. NRCS uses CIG to invest in innovative, on-the-ground conservation technologies and approaches with the goal of wide-scale adoption to address water quality and quantity, air quality, energy conservation, and environmental markets, among other natural resource issues.

For a complete list of national CIG awardees and more information about NRCS conservation programs online, visit: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>.

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