

# Partner Contribution Letter Template

## Instructions Page

**Purpose:** In order to help the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) evaluate the value of non-lead partner contributions as well as the likelihood of contributions being available after project selection, NRCS requires each non-lead partner to submit a contribution letter as part of the lead partner's proposal. Lead partners do not need to submit a letter.

**Portal Requirements:** Lead Partner must enter contribution deliverables in the portal by Financial Assistance (FA) and Technical Assistance (TA) activity, see Financial Assistance Summary Table below. The contribution letters must include: the totals included in the portal (summary table below) and the valuation method used to calculate and document proposed contributions, otherwise the proposal may receive a lower score under the technical review criteria for Contributions.

### **Eligibility of Partner Contributions:**

NRCS will determine, during PPA negotiation, if proposed contributions are eligible. Per the NFO, eligible contributions must meet all the following criteria:

- 1) not come from other USDA sources
- 2) not be an existing commitment to another USDA program,
- 3) be cash or in-kind,
- 4) support or enhance producer contracts,
- 5) occur within the project geographic boundary,
- 6) support the project's conservation benefits,
- 7) supported by valuation method included in partner contribution letter,
- 8) be included in the programmatic agreement when executed,
- 9) and be delivered and reported by partner after project selection date and before project expiration date.

Indirect cost used as contribution is limited to the amount listed in the NFO.

### **Template Field Definitions:**

#### **Contribution Activity Types:**

**Land Management:** This includes any funds or services provided by the partner to producers, or on behalf of producers, including EQIP-like practices. This also includes restoration activities on easements within this project.

**Rental:** This includes partner rental payments paid to producers/landowners to support the project's conservation goals and objectives.

**US-Held Easement:** This category may include payments to producers to support the acquisition of a US-Held Easement parcel.

**Entity-Held Easement:** This can include both payments to producers/landowners for the acquisition of an Entity-Held Easement parcel or due diligence activities completed by or paid for by the non-lead partner.

**Watershed Activities:** Payments or work performed by the partner towards watershed activities within an NRCS approved watershed plan.

**Technical Assistance:** This can include project-level support such as project management, outreach, coordination among partners, and outcomes reporting. This can also include support of specific producer/parcel contracts such as planning, design, and installation. Indirect costs cannot exceed the NICRA rate of the non-lead partner, or the De Minimis Rate in the absence of a NICRA.

**Cash vs In-Kind**

**Cash:** Funds provided by the partner directly to producers/landowners or to hire a contractor to perform the work.

**In-Kind:** Estimated value of services or goods provided by the partner.

TEMPLATE

Partner  
Address

Date

Project Lead  
Address

RE: RCPP [Project ID# -- Project Name]

Dear Project Leader:

I am writing to document [contributing partner's name] support of the [Lead Project Entity name]'s proposal to the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), titled "[name of project]". [Contributing partner name] is familiar with the proposal, understands general expectations, and supports the efforts to address the natural resource concerns identified in therein.

If this RCPP proposal is selected for funding, [Contributing partner] will provide contributions equal to the total amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ over \_\_\_ years to this project. Our expected contributions include:

Financial Assistance Summary Table

Contribution Activity Type	Subtotal Per FA Activity Type (\$)	FA Contribution Total (\$)
<b>Financial Assistance (FA)</b>		<i>\$850,000</i>
Land Management	<i>\$250,000</i>	
Rental		
US-Held Easements		
Entity-Held Easements	<i>\$600,000</i>	
Watershed Activities		

Financial Assistance Contribution Valuation Methodology Table

FA Contribution Activity Type	FA Contribution Name	Cash vs In-Kind	Amount (\$)	Description - Including How the Contribution Amount was Estimated and will be Documented <i>(Records will be available for review in the event of an audit or as requested by the state)</i>	Required Match*
<i>Land Management</i>	<i>Payments to Producers</i>	<i>Cash</i>	<i>\$200,000</i>	<i>Estimated: Payments to producers for cost share, based on 10% of the funding request for Land Management Activities</i>  <i>Documented: will keep records of payments issued to producers with the name of producers, tract/field #, installed practices and date payments were issued.</i>	<i>N/A</i>

FA Contribution Activity Type	FA Contribution Name	Cash vs In-Kind	Amount (\$)	Description - Including How the Contribution Amount was Estimated and will be Documented <i>(Records will be available for review in the event of an audit or as requested by the state)</i>	Required Match*
Land Management	Tree Shrub Establishment	In-Kind	\$50,000	Estimated: Staff time to install NRCS practice 612 Tree-Shrub Establishment, estimated at \$25/hr. over 2000 hours. Documented: will keep copies of timesheets and payroll to support contribution value of hours worked on project.	N/A
Entity-Held Easement	Match for EHE Parcel Contracts	Cash	\$500,000	Estimated payments to and/or donations by landowners. For each parcel, the combined total equals at least 50% of the estimated easement fair market value as determined by before and after appraisal.  Documented: Actual payments to and/or donations by landowners. For each parcel, the combined total equals at least 50% of the actual easement fair market value as determined by before and after appraisal.	Yes
Entity-Held Easement	Due Diligence	Cash	\$100,000	Estimated: cost to hire third-party contractors to complete due diligence for the easement transaction, such as appraisals and easement plan development, based on typical local rates for providing such services and/or products.  Documented: Actual cost will be based on paid invoices for such services or products	
				Note: Add or delete rows as needed	

\*Match is only required for easements and watershed activities. See the latest NFO for specific match requirements.

### Technical Assistance Contribution Valuation Methodology Table

\*Note: Where indirect costs are to be included in partner contributions, it must be identified in the partner contribution letter and may only be reported in proportion to associated TA delivered (through contribution or RCPP funding).

TA Contribution Name	Cash vs In-Kind	Amount (\$)	Description - Including How the Contribution Amount Estimated and will be Documented <i>(Records will be available for review in the event of an audit or as requested by the state)</i>
Project Management	In-Kind	\$187,500	Estimated: Staff rate for project manager, based on salary of \$37,500K/year working 50% on this project for five years at \$50/hr. over 3000 hours  Documented: will keep copies of timesheets, work performed and payroll for time spent working on project.

TA Contribution Name	Cash vs In-Kind	Amount (\$)	Description - Including How the Contribution Amount Estimated and will be Documented <i>(Records will be available for review in the event of an audit or as requested by the state)</i>
<i>Outreach</i>	<i>Cash</i>	<i>\$40,000</i>	<i>Estimated: Plan 4 outreach events within project area at \$10K each</i>  <i>Documented: Will keep copies of outreach events flyers/agendas, attendance, and receipts for expenses associated with the event.</i>
<i>Plan/Design for Land Management Producer Contracts</i>	<i>In-Kind</i>	<i>\$30,000</i>	<i>Estimated: Three certified conservation planners on staff, estimated at \$24/hr. and a combined 1250 hours between all three staff over five years.</i>  <i>Documented: will keep copies of timesheets, payroll and producers served by producer name, tract/field, work completed.</i>
			<i>Note: Add or delete rows as needed</i>
<b>Technical Assistance Total</b>		<b>\$257,500</b>	

[Add any additional comments relevant to the contributing partner and project]

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Title

Authorized Signatory for [Contributing partner name]