Notice of Funding Opportunity (NFO)

SUMMARY INFORMATION

Federal Awarding Agency Name: U.S. Department of Agriculture – Georgia NRCS

Funding Opportunity Title: Georgia NRCS Technical Services and Projects for Fiscal Year 2020

Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-NRCS-GA-MULTI-20-GEN0010692

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number (also known as Assistance Listing):

CFDA 10.902 – Soil and Water Conservation (CTA): Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act, Public Law 74-76, N/A Stat. N/A, 16 U.S.C 590 a-f.

CFDA 10.912 – Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP): This program is authorized by Chapter 4 of Subtitle D of Title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 USC 3839aa-- 3839aa-8), effective February 7, 2014., Executive Order Executive Order , Title XII, Part Subtitle D, Public Law 99- 198, 16 U.S.C 3830.

CFDA 10.924 – Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP) - Food Security Act of 1985, Public Law 106-224, NA Stat. NA, 16 U.S.C 3838h.

Funding Opportunity Announcement Summary

The Georgia NRCS, an agency under the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is seeking support from and opportunities to partner with likeminded natural resource conservation partners. The overall intent of this solicitation is to solicit partnerships to help enhance the implementation of key technical services and projects for Fiscal Year 2020 outlined in Section A.

Proposals will be accepted for projects performed in Georgia. NRCS anticipates that the amount available for support of this program in FY 2020 will be approximately $2,500,000. Agreements awarded in pursuant to this NFO may be 1-4 years in duration.

Eligible applicants include the following:

City or township governments
County governments
For profit organizations other than small businesses
Independent school districts
Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)

Private institutions of higher education
Public housing authorities/Indian housing authorities
Small businesses
Special district governments
State governments
Public and State controlled institutions of higher education
Native American tribal organizations (other than Federally recognized tribal governments)
Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
Nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education

This notice identifies the objectives, eligibility criteria, and application instructions. Applications will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice. Incomplete and/or noncompliant applications will be eliminated from competition and notification of elimination will be sent to the applicant. The Georgia State Conservationist reserves the right not to fund any or all applications. NRCS will accept applications under this notice for single or multiyear applications submitted by eligible entities.

Key Dates

The deadline for questions is May 1, 2020. . Applications are due by May 15, 2020. Georgia NRCS anticipates making selections by June 15, 2020, and an anticipated execution date of September 15, 2020.

Applicants must submit their applications via Grants.gov by 11:59 pm Eastern Time on May 15, 2020. For technical issues with Grants.gov, please contact Grants.gov Applicant Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov. Awarding agency staff cannot support applicants regarding Grants.gov accounts.

Federal Funding Floor and Ceiling Amounts

The funding floor for this opportunity $25,000.00, and the funding ceiling is $600,000.00. The funding floor means the minimum agreement funding amount for the Federal share per agreement awarded. The ceiling is the maximum agreement funding amount for the Federal share per agreement awarded.

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

CFDA 10.902 – Soil and Water Conservation (CTA): Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act, Public Law 74-76, N/A Stat. N/A, 16 U.S.C 590 a-f.

CFDA 10.912 – Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP): This program is authorized by Chapter 4 of Subtitle D of Title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16

USC 3839aa-- 3839aa-8), effective February 7, 2014., Executive Order Executive Order , Title XII, Part Subtitle D, Public Law 99- 198, 16 U.S.C 3830.

CFDA 10.924 – Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP) - Food Security Act of 1985, Public Law 106-224, NA Stat. NA, 16 U.S.C 3838h

The objective of this Notice of Funding is to obtain Technical Services and Projects to enhance Conservation Technical Assistance and Farm Bill Program delivery across Georgia.

1. Conservation Technical Assistance

   a) Technical assistance is defined as:

      i. Technical expertise, information, training, education, and tools necessary for a producer to be able to successfully implement, operate, and maintain the conservation of natural resources on land active in agricultural, forestry, or related uses.

      ii. Technical services provided directly to farmers, ranchers, and other eligible entities, such as conservation planning, technical consultation, and assistance with design and implementation of conservation practices;

      iii. Technical infrastructure, including activities, processes, tools, and agency functions needed to support delivery of technical services, such as technical standards, resource inventories, training, data, technology, monitoring, and effects analyses. Information regarding technical assistance can be found at: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cta/

      iv. Technical assistance does ***not*** include research.

   b. Georgia NRCS would like to receive proposals related the items below for Conservation Planning Technical Assistance.

      i. Conservation planning and implementation of pollinator habitat to include traditional and non-traditional methods of habitat development and may include a training component to help teach other conservation partners pollinator habitat benefits.

      ii. Providing training, deliverables, and demonstration on water quality and habitat improvement measures to reduce siltation and nutrients with the goal of assisting the survival of state and federal threatened and endangered aquatic species in Georgia.

      iii. Soil health on Georgia rotations (Cotton-peanut). Expand the knowledge of how common cropping systems in the southeast are impacted by soil health practices including cover crops, rotations and planting methods.

iv. Conservation Activity Plans 102 and 104 for Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans (CNMPs) with animal mortality site identification in the plan and for land application nutrient management plans with follow up in northwest Georgia as a pilot to get going on that part of the emergency response from the Agriculture Task Force.

2. Georgia NRCS would like to receive proposals related the items below for Conservation Planning Technical Assistance specifically geared toward grazing

   a. Demonstrating variable rate technology for lime applications on pasture. Through demonstrations, conduct grid soil sampling, track soil pH response, monitor yield responses and economic outcomes, and extend the technology to producer and industry groups through workshops.

   b. Utilizing technology to improve grazing management decisions. Provide technical assistance to producers in acquiring and utilizing mobile applications in planning, implementing, and monitoring grazing management.

   c. Demonstrating the use of windbreak/shelterbelts to provide shelter for livestock to improve grazing management and to provide an increase in air quality near poultry house exhaust fans. Locate demonstration sites and provide technical assistance in acquiring, establishing, maintaining and monitoring windbreak/shelterbelt sites to facilitate improved grazing management.

   d. Conversion of Tall Fescue - This initiative will target cattle and livestock producers throughout Georgia. The project will improve plant productivity and health while improving economic potential through the conversion of Endophyte-infected Tall Fescue to Novel Endophyte Tall Fescue. The project will educate producers about the plant/endophyte relationship. This education will allow them to make decisions regarding land and herd management and expand their knowledge of grazing management. The project will make funding available to convert grazing land to endophyte novel varieties

   e. Innovative ways to use design and implement a feasible mobile watering system to deliver water supply to livestock on marginal pastureland. Evaluate forage establishment and grazing management in an emerging multi-land use setting.

3. Georgia NRCS would like to receive proposals related the Program Delivery objectives below.

   a. Plan, organize, and execute a statewide multi-day conference featuring soil health practices and opportunities within the state.

   b. Provide supplemental information to improve NRCS irrigation manual. Georgia needs additional data, such as peak consumptive use rates, to update the agency irrigation manual for the following: orchard and berry crops such as olives, blueberries, blackberries, grapes, figs, additional fruit trees such as apples, pears.

c. Measure the differences in plant health and in soil physical, chemical, and biological health between one conventional system and two differing intensities of Soil Health Management Systems (SHMS) in a cotton-cotton-peanut rotation over a 4-year period.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1. Estimated Funding

The total amount of Federal funding the agency expects to award through this opportunity is $2,500,000.00

2. Start Dates and Performance Periods

Projects may be between one and four years in duration. Applicants should plan their projects based on a project start date September 15, 2020.

3. Type of Federal Award

The agency plans to award cooperative agreements pursuant to this opportunity. Cooperative agreements require substantial involvement by the awarding agency.

a. The term "substantial involvement" means the recipient may expect agency collaboration or participation, or close agency oversight and control. Each cooperative agreement must include an explicit statement of the nature, character, and extent of involvement by NRCS.
b. The following are examples of collaboration or oversight and control that are considered "substantial involvement":
(i) Authority to suspend work if specifications or work statements are not met
(ii) Review and approval of one stage of work before another may begin
(iii) Review and approval of substantive provisions of proposed subgrants or contracts beyond existing Federal policy
(iv) NRCS and recipient collaboration or joint participation
(v) Project monitoring to permit specified kinds of direction or redirection of the work because of interrelationships with and impacts on other projects
(vi) Highly prescriptive NRCS requirements that limit recipient discretion
(vii) Review and approval of key personnel
(viii) Direct NRCS operational involvement or participation during the activity

4. Number of Awards

The agency expects to make 25 awards.

5. Procurement Contracts

The agency does not expect to award procurement contracts associated with this opportunity.

6. **Eligibility of Renewal or Supplemental Project Applications**
   Applications for renewal or supplementation of existing projects are eligible to compete with applications for new Federal awards. An application for renewal means an application submitted to continue an existing agreement that meets the objectives and requirements of this NFO. An application for supplementation of an existing project means an application to add components to an existing agreement so that it would meet the objectives and requirements in this NFO.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

a. Eligible Applicants

Applicants and applications must meet eligibility criteria by the application deadline to be considered for award. Eligible applicant type is determined by the implementing program statute. Applicant entities identified in the SAM.gov Exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited/restricted or excluded from receiving Federal contracts and certain Federal assistance and benefits will not be considered for Federal funding, as applicable to the funding being requested under this Federal program (2 CFR 200.205(d)).

Eligibility for this opportunity is limited to the following entity types:

City or township governments
County governments
For profit organizations other than small businesses
Independent school districts
Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)
Private institutions of higher education
Public housing authorities/Indian housing authorities
Small businesses
Special district governments
State governments
Public and State controlled institutions of higher education
Native American tribal organizations (other than Federally recognized tribal governments)
Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
Nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education

b. Cost Sharing or Matching

This opportunity requires applicants to cost share 25 percent of total project costs. Applications that do not include cost-sharing will be ineligible for award. Cost sharing may be achieved with contributions of cash, services, materials, equipment, or third-party in-kind contributions. Refer to section D of this

opportunity for required submittals related to match or cost-share requirements. Recipients with unrecovered indirect costs may also use those to meet cost-sharing obligations.

c. Other (if applicable)
Any award made pursuant to this opportunity will be made to a single entity. Applicants that apply as "partnerships" or other similar groupings must clearly describe the relationship between the applicant and the "partner" parties. In all but exceptional cases, it must be reflected in the award as an awardee/sub awardee relationship.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

For technical issues with Grants.gov, please contact Grants.gov Applicant Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov. Awarding agency staff cannot support applicants regarding Grants.gov accounts.

a. Address to Request Application Package
All standard forms necessary for this opportunity announcement are included in the Grants.gov opportunity package.

b. Content and Form of Application Submission
To be considered for funding under this opportunity, an application must use the following template:

a. **STATEMENT OF WORK FORMAT**

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PURPOSE – Introduction, reasons for the project, over-arching goals and relation to NRCS goals

OBJECTIVES – Identify key strategies and project design, alignment of resources and activities, strategic partners and their roles, objectives and goals clearly identified

BUDGET NARRATIVE – High level summary of the budget, MUST match detailed budget list AND SF-424A. If there is a required match, it should be explicitly stated in this section. If the budget includes Indirect costs, the basis for the IDC is a required attachment.

RESOURCES REQUIRED – Items of value other than funding needed for the successful completion of the project. Do NOT repeat funding information. If it is a cooperative agreement, there should be substantial involvement of NRCS staff time or resources, so describe who and/or what is required of each party. For grants, there will be minimal or no other NRCS resources.
NRCS will: Recipient will:

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARTIES – Actions to be taken by each party. Do NOT repeat funding information and do NOT include items addressed in the General Terms and Conditions of the agreement. This section will list the responsibilities **other** than providing funding that are needed for the successful completion of the project. If it is a cooperative agreement, there should be substantial involvement of NRCS, so describe who and/or what tasks or roles are required to complete the project. For grants, there will be minimal or no other NRCS responsibilities. Reporting and payment frequency must be stated. Template language is provided below.
NRCS will: Recipient will:

EXPECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND DELIVERABLES – High level summary of products and deliverables – what will be done, how it will be measured or presented so that both parties know the project is complete.

MILESTONES – For each deliverable above, describe the subtasks and their due dates so that both parties know what is expected and when so, that the project is completed within the period of performance.

Each page must be on numbered 8½" x 11" paper with one-inch margins. The text of the proposal must be single spaced and typed in New Times Roman, no smaller than 12-point font and must not exceed 4 pages.

Proposals that fail to comply with the required content and format will not be considered for funding. Material exceeding stated page limits and/or formatting structure will not be considered. Incomplete and/or noncompliant proposals will not be considered.

b. **Application Form**: (Standard Form 424 Application for Federal Assistance) See Instructions for Completing SF 424 located in the Related Documents tab of this opportunity on Grants.gov.

c. **Standard Form (SF) 424A, Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs**. Fill in all spaces as appropriate. Section B, Item 6, Column 1 should reflect the agency funds, and Column 2 should reflect the applicant's matching funds. This form is the summary budget for the project and should include the full project totals on pages one and two. See Instructions for Completing SF 424A located in the Related Documents tab of this opportunity on Grants.gov.

d. **Budget Narrative.** In a separate narrative titled "Budget Narrative", explain and justify all requested budget items/costs. Detail how the totals on the SF-424A were determined and demonstrate a clear connection between costs and the proposed project activities. For personnel salary costs, include the base-line salary figures and the estimates of time (as percentages) to be directly charged to the project. Describe any item that under the applicable Federal cost principles requires the agency's approval and estimate its cost. See Instructions for Completing Budget Narrative located in the Related Documents tab of this opportunity on Grants.gov.

i. As required in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, Subpart F Audit Requirements, all U.S. states, local governments, federally-recognized Indian tribal governments, and non-profit organizations expending $750,000 USD or more in Federal award funds in a fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System. Therefore, any U.S. states, local governments, federally recognized Indian tribal governments, and non-profit organizations applying under this opportunity must include one of the following statements in its budget narrative:

ii. Cost sharing/matching must be committed at the time of application submission. Applications must include written documentation showing the amounts and sources of match or cost share (including both cash and in-kind contributions). Cost sharing/match documentation does not count against any applicable page limits.

iii. All applicants are hereby notified of the following:

- Recipients without an approved indirect cost rate are prohibited from charging indirect costs to a Federal award. (Accepting the 10% de minimis rate as a condition of award constitutes establishing an approved rate.)
- Failure to establish an approved rate during the award period renders all costs otherwise allocable as indirect costs unallowable under the award.
- Recipients are prohibited from shifting unallowable indirect costs to another Federal award unless specifically authorized to do so by legislation.

e. **Standard Form (SF) 424B, Assurances - Non-Construction Programs**. Applicants, by signing and submitting an application, assure and certify that they are in compliance with the following Federal regulations:

- 2 CFR Part 417, Government wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement)
- 4 CFR Part 418, New Restrictions on Lobbying
- 2 CFR Part 421, Government wide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)

f. **Certification and Disclosure of Lobbying Activities.** Under Title 31 of the United States Code, Section 1352, an applicant or recipient must not use any federally appropriated funds (both annually appropriated and continuing appropriations) or matching funds under a grant or cooperative agreement award to pay any person for lobbying in connection with the award. Lobbying is defined as influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress connection with the award. Submission of an application also represents the applicant's certification of the statements in 2 CFR Part 418, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying. If you/your organization have/has made or agrees to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection with this application AND the Federal share exceeds $100,000, you must also complete and submit the SF LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities located at 2 CFR 418, Appendix B. See 2 CFR, Subpart 418.110 for more information on when additional submission of this form is required.

3 Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Each applicant is required to: (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier (Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number) in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. The agency may not make a Federal award to an

applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the agency is ready to make an award, it may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

Entities must obtain a DUNS and register in SAM prior to registering with Grants.gov. A description of each is below. Entities are strongly encouraged to apply early for their DUNS number and SAM registration.

Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number: A Dun and Bradstreet DUNS number is a unique, nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and keeping track of over 70 million businesses worldwide. Applicants must obtain a DUNS number. Information on how to obtain a DUNS number can be found at http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform or by calling 1-866-705-5711.

System for Award Management (SAM) Registration: SAM is the official Federal system that consolidated the capabilities of Central Contractor Registry, Federal Agency Registration, Online Representations and Certifications Application, and Excluded Parties List System. To register, go to: https://www.sam.gov. The Federal Service Desk is available for registration assistance and can be contacted via the Help tab at the website listed above.

Awarding agency staff cannot support applicants regarding DUNS or SAM issues.

4. Submission Dates and Times

Applicants must submit applications via Grants.gov. Applications must be received by 11:59 pm Eastern Time on May 15, 2020. Late submissions will not be reviewed or considered. The agency will rely on system generated date and time receipt documentation to determine whether applications meet the submission deadline. Grants.gov provides and automatic acknowledgement when applications are received.

5. Intergovernmental Review

This funding opportunity is not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

6. Funding Restrictions

Funds may not be used to pay any of the following costs unless otherwise permitted by law, or approved in writing by the Authorized Departmental Officer in advance of incurring such costs:

- Costs above the amount of funds authorized for the project:

- Costs incurred prior to the effective date of the grant;
- Costs which lie outside the scope of the approved project and amendments thereto;
- Entertainment costs, regardless of their apparent relationship to project objectives;
- Compensation for injuries to persons, or damage to property arising out of project activities;
- Consulting services performed by a Federal employee during official duty hours when such consulting services result in the payment of additional compensation to the employee; and
- Renovation or refurbishment of research or related spaces, the purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such spaces, and the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.

This list is not exhaustive. Questions regarding the allowances of particular items of cost should be directed to the administrative contact person listed in this opportunity announcement.

a. A non-profit organization or institution of higher education awarded a cooperative agreement will be limited to a 10% indirect cost rate in accordance with the Agency's annual appropriations act. Other types of entities are not subject to this statutory limitation.

b. To be eligible to recover any indirect cost under a Federal award, recipients must either 1) have a current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) with a Federal agency that has not expired; or 2) qualify for use of the de minimis rate authorized by 2 CFR 200.414(f). In order to qualify for the de minimis rate, the recipient must have never had a NICRA. A State, local, or tribal governmental department or agency unit that receives more than $35 million in direct Federal funding is not eligible for the de minimis rate.

c. Applicants not subject to a statutory limitation, which have a current NICRA must calculate indirect costs using the rate and base specified in their NICRA. A recipient may voluntarily reduce or waive recovery of indirect costs at its sole discretion and must not be encouraged or coerced in any way to do so by the agency. If voluntarily reduced or waived, the recipient may choose to apply any unrecovered indirect costs as part of their cost share or match. Unrecovered indirect cost means the difference between the amount charged to the Federal award and the amount which could have been charged to the Federal award under the recipient's approved negotiated indirect cost rate (2 CFR 200.306(c)). A copy of the applicant's current NICRA must be provided with the application. Indirect costs may not be recovered under an expired NICRA. However, if an applicant with a current NICRA is subject to the statutory limitation, indirect costs must be calculated as follows. First, multiply the NICRA rate by the base stated in the NICRA to arrive at Amount A. Next, multiply the statutory limit of 10% by the total of all direct costs to

arrive at Amount B. The lower of Amount A and B is the amount of indirect cost to include on the budget.

d. Entities that are eligible for the de minimis rate who already have a de minimis rate agreement must use the rate and base specified in the agreement, which is modified total direct costs (MTDC) as defined by 2 CFR 200.68 and also excluding the amount of each subaward exceeding $25,000. Note that MTDC excludes certain costs from the base to which the rate is applied. A copy of the applicant's de minimis rate agreement must be provided with the application. If a recipient is eligible to use the de minimis rate, but does not have a de minimis rate agreement, use an indirect cost rate of no more than 10% of MTDC when preparing the budget. If selected for award, a de minimis rate agreement will be executed along with the award.

e. Profit is not an eligible project cost. Therefore, any funds awarded to for-profit entities must be used for reimbursement of award related direct and indirect costs only.

f. Applicants who are individuals applying for funds separate from a business or non-profit organization he/she may operate are not eligible to charge indirect costs to their award. If you are an individual applying for funding, do not include any indirect costs in your proposed budget.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1 Merit/Technical Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on the following items.

1. The extent to which the project supports one or more of the identified conservation objectives:

Projects that promote/enhance/foster implementation of the following state resource priorities:

- —Water Quantity
- —Water Quality
- —Plant Health
- —Soil Health
- —Wildlife
- —Energy

2. Partner match contribution.
3. Evidence in the proposal that the design and implementation of project is based on sound methodology and demonstrated technology.
4. Measurability of project outcomes.
5. Potential for successful completion and benefit to NRCS mission.

6. Project staff has technical expertise needed.
7. Budget is adequately explained and justified.
8. Project benefits to Historically Underserved Producers, Veteran Farmers or Ranchers or community-based organizations comprised of or representing these entities.
9. Negative points- The extent to which the project is dependent upon NRCS field staff inputs (engineering assistance, etc.) for its completion.

2 Risk Criteria

The awarding agency will check SAM to ensure the applicant is not suspended or debarred, which would preclude receiving an award. In addition, prior to making a Federal award with a total Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold ($250,000), the agency must review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (the Federal Awardee Performance Integrity Information System, FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313 and 2 CFR 200.205(a)).

To further comply with the requirements at 2 CFR 200.205, the agency has established the following risk review process and related standards that an applicant must meet to be considered for award:

a. Financial Stability. The applicant certifies that it maintains adequate financial resources or cash flow to meet its financial obligations on a routine basis and successfully complete any agreement it may be awarded.
b. Quality of Management Systems and Ability to meet Management Standards prescribed in 2 CFR Part 200. The applicant certifies it has a financial management system adequate to segregate and track federal funds. It further certifies is has adequate systems in place for proper agreement administration; compliance with the standards outlined in 2 CFR Part 200 Section D for procurement, property, and records management; and required financial and performance reporting.
c. History of Performance. If the applicant has previously obtained Federal financial assistance award, it certifies that it has never failed to materially comply with the Federal award terms and conditions and further that it has never had an award terminated on that basis.

Submission of an application constitutes certification that an applicant meets these standards.

3 Review and Selection Process

Applications will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice. Incomplete, noncompliant, and/or applications not meeting the formatting criteria will be eliminated from competition, and notification of elimination will be sent to the applicant. The agency intends to make a selection and award without conducting any discussions or allowing

applicants to correct deficiencies or omissions in their applications. Consequently, they must ensure their applications are complete and accurate. However, while the agency intends to make a selection without contacting applicants, it reserves the right to request applicants to revise their applications to correct deficiencies or omissions identified by the awarding agency. If this is done, the agency will conduct discussions with all applicants and identify deficiencies and omissions and give applicants and opportunity to submit a revised application by a common cut-off date. The agency may also contact individual applicants to clarify certain components of their application.

Merit/technical reviews will be conducted by a technical review board nominated by the approving official. Risk reviews will be conducted by the FPAC Business Center, Grants and Agreements Division. The approving official will make the final award decisions.
The approving official for this opportunity is the Terrance Rudolph, State Conservationist.

4. Awards Over the Simplified Acquisition Threshold (if applicable)
Notice to applicants:

i. Prior to making a Federal award with a total Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold ($250,000), the agency must review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (the Federal Awardee Performance Integrity Information System, FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313 and 2 CFR 200.205(a));

ii. An applicant may review information in FAPIIS accessible through SAM and comment on any information about it that a Federal awarding agency previously entered;

iii. The agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR 200.205, Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

5. Anticipated Selection Announcement and Federal Award Dates
The agency anticipates announcing or notifying successful and unsuccessful applicants by July 15, 2020 and expects to have Federal awards in place by September 15, 2020.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

a. Federal Award Notices

The agency will provide notice that an application has been selected before it actually makes the Federal award. As such, the selection notification is not an authorization to begin performance. Any pre-award costs incurred by the awardee will not be reimbursed. The Notice of Grant and Agreement Award (ADS-093) signed by the authorized agency representative is the only authorizing document and will be provided electronically to the entity's authorized representative for signature.

Both successful and unsuccessful applicants with be notified of the award decision via letter.

b. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All project funds will be used in accordance with 2 CFR 200 and the General Terms and Conditions; a copy of the General Terms and Conditions may be obtained by contacting the Federal Awarding Agency Contacts listed in this opportunity announcement.

c. Reporting

Requirements for progress and financial reporting will be included in the Agreement statement of work.

If the Federal share of any agreement awarded under this opportunity notice may include more than $500,000 over the period of performance, recipients must also comply with the post award reporting requirements reflected in Appendix XII of 2 CFR Part 200 —Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters.

Applicants that receive awards pursuant to this opportunity and any sub awardees must comply with the reporting requirements described at 2 CFR Part 170, unless an exception applies. Applicants must ensure they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with those requirements. A list of exceptions can be found at 2 CFR 170.110(b).

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

For questions regarding this opportunity, please contact one of the following individuals:

Administrative Contact
Name: Georgia Welton
Grants Management Specialist

FPAC Business Center
Phone Number: 817-509-3520
Email: georgia.welton@usda.gov

Program Contact
Name: Tansel Hudson
ASTC, Partnerships
USDA Awarding Agency
Mailing Address: 355 East Hancock Ave, Mail Stop 200
Athens GA 30601
Phone Number: 706-546-2097
Email: tansel.hudson@usda.gov

H. OTHER INFORMATION

1. Questions regarding this opportunity must be submitted to the Administrative Contact identified above via email with the Opportunity Number in the subject line. Questions must be submitted by April 20, 2020

2. For technical issues with Grants.gov, please contact Grants.gov Applicant Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov. Awarding agency staff cannot support applicants regarding Grants.gov accounts.

3. **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)**
   Applications are considered confidential information. Applications are not shared with individuals or entities seeking public disclosure through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) without the consent of the applicant. More specifically, Executive Order 12600 and USDA FOIA regulation 7 CFR Part 1, Subpart A requires the awarding agency to provide notice to applicants that a third party has requested copies of their business information and requires the awarding agency to consult with applicants regarding the releasing their records.

4. **Government Obligation**
   The Federal Government is not obligated to make any Federal award as a result of this opportunity. Only authorized federal officials can bind the Federal Government to the expenditure of funds.

U.S. Department of Agriculture Non-Discrimination Statement
In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs,

or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at https://www.ascr.usda.gov/filing-program-discrimination-complaint-usda-customer and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call

(866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

1400 Independence Avenue, SW

Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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