NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS
GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

I. APPLICABLE REGULATIONS

a. The recipient, and recipients of any subawards under this award, agree to comply with the following regulations, as applicable. The full text of Code of Federal Regulations references may be found at https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collectionCfr.action?collectionCode=CFR and http://www.ecfr.gov/.

(1) 2 CFR Part 25, "Universal Identifier and System of Award Management"
(2) 2 CFR Part 170, "Reporting Subaward and Executive Compensation Information"
(3) 2 CFR Part 180, "OMB Guidelines To Agencies On Governmentwide Debarment And Suspension (Nonprocurement)"
(4) 2 CFR Part 182, "Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)"
(5) 2 CFR Part 200, "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, And Audit Requirements for Federal Awards"

b. The recipient, and recipients of any subawards under this award, assure and certify that they have and/or will comply with the following regulations, as applicable. The full text of Code of Federal Regulations references may be found at https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collectionCfr.action?collectionCode=CFR and http://www.ecfr.gov/.

(1) 2 CFR Part 175, "Award Term for Trafficking in Persons"
(2) 2 CFR Part 417, "Nonprocurement Debarment and Suspension"
(3) 2 CFR Part 418, "New Restrictions on Lobbying"
(4) 2 CFR Part 421, "Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)"

c. Allowable project costs will be determined in accordance with the authorizing statute, the purpose of the award, and to the extent applicable to the type of organizations receiving the award, regardless of tier. The following portions of the Code of Federal Regulations are hereby incorporated by reference. The full text of Code of Federal Regulations references may be found at https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collectionCfr.action?collectionCode=CFR and http://www.ecfr.gov/.

(1) 2 CFR Part 200, "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles And Audit Requirements For Federal Awards"
(2) 48 CFR Part 31, "Contract Cost Principles and Procedures"

II. UNALLOWABLE COSTS

The following costs are not allowed:

a. Costs above the amount authorized for the project
b. Costs incurred after the expiration of the award including any no-cost extensions of time
c. Costs that lie outside the scope of the approved project and any amendments thereto
d. Compensation for injuries to persons or damage to property arising from project activities

This list is not exhaustive. For general information about the allowability of particular items of costs, please see 2 CFR Part 200, "Subpart E - Cost Principles", or direct specific inquiries to the NRCS administrative contact identified in the award.

III. CONFIDENTIALITY

a. Activities performed under this award may involve access to confidential and potentially sensitive information about governmental and landowner issues. The term "confidential information" means proprietary information or data of a personal nature about an individual, or information or data submitted by or pertaining to an organization. This information must not be disclosed without the prior written consent of NRCS.

b. The recipient's personnel will follow the rules and procedures of disclosure set forth in the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. Section 552a, and implementing regulations and policies with respect to systems of records determined to be subject to the Privacy Act. The recipient's personnel must also comply with privacy of personal information relating to natural resources conservation programs in accordance with section 1244 of Title II of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-171).

c. The recipient agrees to comply with NRCS guidelines and requirements regarding the disclosure of information protected under Section 1619 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (PL 110-246), 7 U.S.C. 8791.

d. The recipient agrees to comply with the **"Prohibition Against Certain Internal Confidentiality Agreements:"**

1. You may not require your employees, contractors, or subrecipients seeking to report fraud, waste, or abuse to sign or comply with internal confidentiality agreements or statements prohibiting or otherwise restricting them from lawfully reporting that waste, fraud, or abuse to a designated investigative or law enforcement representative of a Federal department or agency authorized to receive such information.
2. You must notify your employees, contractors, or subrecipients that the prohibitions and restrictions of any internal confidentiality agreements inconsistent with paragraph (1) of this award provision are no longer in effect.
3. The prohibition in paragraph (1) of this award provision does not contravene requirements applicable to any other form issued by a Federal department or agency governing the nondisclosure of classified information.
4. If NRCS determines that you are not in compliance with this award provision, NRCS:
   a. Will prohibit your use of funds under this award, in accordance with sections 743 and 744 of Division E of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, (Pub. L. 114-113) or any successor provision of law;

   b. May pursue other remedies available for your material failure to comply with award terms and conditions.

IV. PRIOR APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS

The following are the most common situations requiring prior approval. However, the recipient is also bound by any other prior approval requirements of the applicable administrative provisions and Federal cost principles.

a. Purpose or Deliverables.—When it is necessary for the recipient to modify the purpose or deliverables, the recipient must submit a written request and justification for the change along with the revised purpose or deliverables of the award to the NRCS administrative contact. The request should contain the following:
    1. Grant or agreement number
    2. Narrative explaining the requested modification to the project purpose or deliverables
    3. A description of the revised purpose or deliverables
    4. Signatures of the authorized representative, project director, or both

b. Subaward/contractual Arrangement.—The recipient must submit a justification for the proposed subaward/contractual arrangements, a statement of work to be performed, and a detailed budget for the subaward/contract to the NRCS administrative contact. Subaward/contractual arrangements disclosed in the application do not require additional postaward approval.

c. Absence or Change in Project Leadership.—When a project director or the person responsible for the direction or management of the project—

    1. Relinquishes active direction of the project for more than 3 consecutive months or has a 25 percent or more reduction in time devoted to the project, the grantee must notify the NRCS administrative contact in writing, identifying who will be in charge during the project director's absence. The notification must include the qualifications and the signature of the replacement, signifying his or her willingness to serve on the project.

    2. Severs his or her affiliation with the grantee, the grantee's options include—
        i. Replacing the project director. The grantee must request written approval of the replacement from the NRCS administrative contact and must include the qualifications and the signature of the replacement signifying his or her willingness to serve on the project.
        ii. Subcontracting to the former project director's new organization. The grantee must request approval from the administrative contact to replace the project manager and retain the award, and to subcontract to the former project director's new organization certain portions of the project to be completed by the former project director.
        iii. Relinquishing the award. The grantee must submit to the NRCS administrative contact a signed letter by the grantee and the project director that indicates that the grantee is relinquishing the award. The letter must include the date the project director is leaving and a summary of progress to date. A final Standard Form (SF) 425 reflecting the total amount of funds spent by the recipient must be attached to the letter.

    3. Transfers the award to his or her new organization, the authorized organization's representative at the new organization must submit the following to the NRCS administrative contact as soon as the transfer date is firm and the amount of funds to be transferred is known:
        i. The forms and certifications included in the application package
        ii. A project summary and work statement covering the work to be completed

under the project (deliverables and objectives must be the same as those outlined in the approved proposal)

iii. An updated qualifications statement for the project director showing his or her new organizational affiliation

iv. Any cost-sharing requirements under the original award transfer to the new institution; therefore, cost-sharing information must be included in the proposal from the new organization

Note: The transfer of an award from one organization to another can take up to 90 calendar days to accomplish, which may result in a delay in the project director resuming the project at the new organization.

d. Budget Revisions.—Budget revisions will be in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200.308.

e. No-Cost Extensions of Time.—When a no-cost extension of time is required, the recipient must submit a written request to the NRCS administrative contact no later than 30 calendar days before the expiration date of the award. The request must contain the following:

- The length of additional time required to complete the project and a justification for the extension
- A summary of progress to date
- An estimate of funds expected to remain unobligated on the scheduled expiration date
- A projected timetable to complete the portions of the project for which the extension is being requested
- Signature of the grantee and the project director
- A status of cost sharing to date (if applicable)

Note: An extension will not exceed 12 months. Requests for no-cost extensions received after the expiration of the award will not be granted.

V. PAYMENTS

a. Payment by NRCS to the entity will be made monthly or quarterly (whichever is mutually agreed upon by both parties) on a reimbursable or advanced basis upon completion of work outlined herein. Payment will be executed upon the submission of a properly executed form SF-270 with supporting documentation. The SF-270 must cite the agreement number, remittance address, and billing period. The SF-270 must be sent to the NRCS administrative contact at the email address identified in block 8 of the Notice of Grant/Agreement Award.

b. Unless otherwise specified in the award, the recipient must receive payments through electronic funds transfers.

c. Recipients requesting advances should request payments in amounts necessary to meet their current needs pursuant to procedures contained in the Federal administrative provisions and **31 CFR Part 205**.

d. The method of payment between the recipient and its contractors will be in accordance with the policies and procedures established by the recipient except that the contractors may not use the USDA Office of Financial Management/National Finance Center method to request payments. If the grantee makes advance payments to contractors, the grantee must ensure that the timing of such payments is designed to minimize elapsed time between the advance payment and the disbursement of funds. Payment requests from the grantee's contractors will not be sent to NRCS for review or approval.

e. Accounting records for all costs incurred under this award must be supported by source documentation. Such documentation includes, but is not limited to, canceled checks, paid bills, payroll records, and subaward documents. Labor cost charges to this award must be based upon salaries actually earned and the time actually worked on this award. All project costs must be incurred within the approved project period of this award, including any approved no-cost extension of time. Costs that cannot be supported by source documentation or that are incurred outside of the approved project period and budget may be disallowed and may result in award funds being returned to the Federal Government by the recipient.

VI. ACCRUALS

a. Recipients must submit an accrual estimate to the NRCS Program/Technical no later than 15 calendar days prior to the end of the quarter (submit by March 15, June 15, September 15 and December 15th).

b. An accrual represents the value of goods or services provided to NRCS for which you have not requested payment. The quality and completeness of NRCS audited financial statements depends on your continuing cooperation and timely information.

c. At a minimum, the signed accrual statement should include, "Under agreement number ____, at the close of the quarter ending ____, we have provided or anticipate providing goods or services that we have not requested payment for in the amount of $_____." Include the name and title of the person preparing the accrual estimate.

VII. FINANCIAL REPORTING

a. Recipients must submit a Federal Financial Report (FFR), SF 425 and 425A, in accordance with the following schedule:

Quarterly Schedule	Report Due Date
October 1 to December 31	January 31
January 1 to March 31	April 30
April 1 to June 30	July 31
July 1 to September 30	October 31

Reports must be submitted on an accrual accounting basis. Failure to submit reports in accordance with the above schedule may result in suspension or termination of award.

b. A final Report must be submitted no later than 90 calendar days after the completion of the award. For final FFRs, reporting end date must be the end date of the project or agreement period. The reports should be submitted to the NRCS administrative contact identified in award notifications.

VIII. PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND REPORTING

a. The recipient is responsible for monitoring day-to-day performance and for reporting to NRCS. If the project involves subaward arrangements, the recipient is also responsible for monitoring the performance of project activities under those arrangements to ensure that approved goals and schedules are met.

b. Every 6 months the recipient must submit a written progress report. Each report must cover—

1. A comparison of actual accomplishments with the goals and objectives established for the reporting period and, where project output can be quantified, a computation of the costs per unit of output.

2. The reasons why goals and objectives were not met, if appropriate.

3. Additional pertinent information including, where appropriate, analysis and explanation of cost overruns or high unit cost.

c. The recipient must submit a final performance report within 90 calendar days after completion of project.

IX. AUDIT REQUIREMENTS

The recipient is responsible for complying with audit requirements in accordance with 2 CFR 200, Subpart F. A non-Federal entity that expends $750,000 or more during the non-Federal entity's fiscal year in Federal awards must have a single or program-specific audit conducted for that year.

X. SPECIAL PROVISIONS

a. The recipient assures and certifies that it will comply with the minimum-wage and maximum-hour provisions of the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act.

b. Employees of NRCS will participate in efforts under this agreement solely as representatives of the United States. To this end, they may not participate as directors, officers, employees, or otherwise serve or hold themselves out as representatives of the recipient. They also may not assist the recipient with efforts to lobby Congress or to raise money through fundraising efforts. Further, NRCS employees must report to their immediate supervisor any negotiations with the recipient concerning future employment and must refrain from participation in efforts regarding such parties until approved by the agency.

c. Employees of the recipient will not be considered Federal employees or agents of the United States for any purposes under this agreement.

XI. PATENTS, INVENTIONS, COPYRIGHTS, AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SUPPORT AND DISCLAIMER

a. Allocation of rights of patents, inventions, and copyrights must be in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200.315. This regulation provides that small businesses normally may retain the principal worldwide patent rights to any invention developed with USDA support.

b. In accordance with 37 CFR Section 401.14, each subject invention must be disclosed to the Federal agency within 2 months after the inventor discloses it in writing to contractor personnel responsible for patent matters. Invention disclosure statements pursuant to 37 CFR Section 401.14(c) must be made in writing to:

Acquisitions Division
Grants and Agreements Services Branch
1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 6823 South Building
Washington, DC 20250

c. USDA receives a royalty-free license for Federal Government use, reserves the right to require

the patentee to license others in certain circumstances, and requires that anyone exclusively licensed to sell the invention in the United States must manufacture it domestically.

d. The following acknowledgment of NRCS support must appear in the publication of any material, whether copyrighted or not, and any products in electronic formats (World Wide Web pages, computer programs, etc.) that is substantially based upon or developed under this award:

- "This material is based upon work supported by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, under number [recipient should enter the applicable award number here]."

In addition, all publications and other materials, except scientific articles or papers published in scientific journals, must include the following statement:

- "Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Agriculture."

e. All publications printed with Federal Government funds will include the most current USDA nondiscrimination statement, available from the Public Affairs Division, Civil Rights Division, or on the USDA and NRCS home pages. If the material is too small to permit the full nondiscrimination statement to be included, the material must, at a minimum, include the statement:

- "USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer." Any publication prepared with funding from this agreement must include acknowledgement to USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service."

The recipient is responsible for ensuring that an acknowledgment of NRCS is made during news media interviews, including popular media such as radio, television, and news magazines, that discuss in a substantial way work funded by this award.

XII. COST-SHARING REQUIREMENTS

a. If the award has specific cost-sharing requirements, the cost-sharing participation in other projects may not be counted toward meeting the specific cost-share requirement of this award, and must come from non-Federal sources unless otherwise stated in the applicable program announcement.

b. Should the recipient become aware that it may be unable to provide the cost-sharing amount identified in this award, it must—
1. Immediately notify the NRCS administrative contact of the situation.
2. Specify the steps it plans to take to secure replacement cost sharing.
3. Indicate the plans to either continue or phase out the project in the absence of cost sharing.

c. If NRCS agrees to the organization's proposed plans, the recipient will be notified accordingly. If the organization's plans are not acceptable to NRCS, the award may be subject to termination. NRCS modifications to proposed cost sharing revisions are made on a case-by-case basis.

d. Failure by the recipient to notify NRCS in accordance with paragraph (b) above may result in the disallowance of some or all the costs charged to the award, the subsequent recovery

by NRCS of some of the NRCS funds provided under the award, and possible termination of the award, and may constitute a violation of the terms and conditions of the award so serious as to provide grounds for subsequent suspension or debarment.

e. The recipient must maintain records of all project costs that are claimed by the recipient as cost sharing as well records of costs to be paid by NRCS. If the recipient's cost participation includes in-kind contributions, the basis for determining the valuation for volunteer services and donated property must be documented.

XIII. PROGRAM INCOME

Income derived from patents, inventions, or copyrights will be disposed of in accordance with the recipient's own policies. General program income earned under this award during the period of NRCS support must be added to total project funds and used to further the purpose and scope of this award or the legislation under which this award is made.

XIV. NONEXPENDABLE EQUIPMENT

Recipients purchasing equipment or products with funds provided under this award are encouraged to use such funds to purchase only American-made equipment and products. Title to nonexpendable equipment purchased with award funds will vest in the recipient upon completion of the award project and acceptance by NRCS of required final reports. When equipment is no longer needed by the recipient and the per-unit fair market value is less than $5,000, the recipient may retain, sell, or dispose of the equipment with no further obligation to NRCS. However, if the per-unit fair market value is $5,000 or more, the recipient must submit a written request to the NRCS administrative contact for disposition instructions.

XV. LIMIT OF FEDERAL LIABILITY

The maximum financial obligation of NRCS to the recipient is the amount of funds indicated in the award as obligated by NRCS. However, in the event that an erroneous amount is stated on the approved budget, or any supporting document relating to the award, NRCS will have the unilateral right to make the correction and to make an appropriate adjustment in the NRCS share of the award to align with the Federal amount authorized.

XVI. MODIFICATIONS AND TERMINATIONS

NRCS may amend or modify the award through an exchange of correspondence between authorized officials of the recipient and NRCS. The award is subject to termination if NRCS determines that the recipient has failed to comply with the terms and conditions of the award. In the event that the award is terminated, the financial obligations of the parties will be those set forth in 2 CFR Part 200.339.

XVII. AWARD CLOSEOUT

Award closeout is the process by which NRCS determines that all required project activities have been performed satisfactorily and all necessary administrative actions have been completed.