

FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY NAME: United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Rural Utilities Service (RUS).

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY TITLE: Solid Waste Management Grant Program.

ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE: Solicitation of Applications.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER: SWMFY2021.

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NUMBER: 10.762.

The Rural Utilities Service (RUS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), herein referred to as RUS or the Agency, announces its Solid Waste Management Grant (SWMG) Program application window for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021.

APPLICATION DUE DATE: December 31, 2020.

SUBMISSIONS: Submit completed paper or electronic applications for grants according to the following deadlines. Further information regarding submission is located at item D 4 of this document.

- *Paper submissions:* Paper submissions must be postmarked and mailed, shipped, or sent overnight *no later than* December 31, 2020, to be eligible for FY 2021 grant funding. Late or incomplete applications will not be eligible for FY 2021 grant funding.

- *Electronic submissions:* Electronic submissions must be received no later than 11:59 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, on December 31, 2020, to be eligible for FY 2021 grant funding. Late or incomplete applications will not be eligible for FY 2021 grant funding.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Questions about this announcement can be directed to Chris Adamchak, Community Programs Specialist, Water and Environmental Programs, Water Programs Division, Rural Utilities Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, telephone: (352) 363-0550.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

A. Program Description

SWM grants are designed to assist communities through technical assistance and/or training provided by the grant recipients. Qualified organizations will receive SWM grant funds to reduce or eliminate pollution of water resources in rural areas and improve planning and management of solid waste sites in rural areas. The grants are awarded through a competitive process. The regulation for the SWMG Program can be found at 7 CFR part 1775.

Applicants should use the appropriate Fiscal Year Application Guide to aid in developing a complete application. All applicants should carefully review and prepare their applications according to instructions in the Application Guide and sample materials. Expenses incurred in developing applications will be at the applicant's own risk. The Application Guide can be found at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/solid-waste-management-grants>.

B. Federal Award Information

The Agency will make awards and the successful applicants will be required to execute documents appropriate to the project before funding will be advanced. Award documents specify the term of each award. Prior SWM grants cannot be renewed; however, existing SWMG awardees can submit applications for new projects which will be evaluated as new applications. Grant applications must be submitted during the application window.

C. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants (See 7 CFR 1775.65)

- a. Entities eligible for grants must:

(1) Be a private, non-profit organization with tax exempt status designated by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS); a public body; a Federally acknowledged or State-recognized Native American tribe or group; or an academic institution.

(2) Be legally established and located within any of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Territory of Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Palau, or the U.S. Virgin Islands.

(3) Have capitalization acceptable to the Agency and be composed of at least 51 percent of the outstanding interest or membership being citizens of the United States or individuals who reside in the United States after being legally admitted for permanent residence.

(4) Have no delinquent debt to the Federal Government or no outstanding judgments to repay a federal debt.

b. Organizations must be incorporated by December 31 of the year the application period occurs to be eligible for funds.

c. Private businesses, Federal agencies, and individuals are ineligible for these grants.

d. Applicants must also have the proven ability; background; experience, as evidenced by the organization's satisfactory completion of project(s) similar to those proposed; legal authority; and actual capacity to provide technical assistance and/or training on a regional basis to associations as provided in §1775.63. "Association" is defined in §1775.2 as "An entity ... that is eligible for RUS Water and Waste Disposal financial assistance in accordance with 7 CFR 1780.7 (a)." Eligible applicants are defined in §1780.7 as public bodies, organizations operated on a not-for-profit basis, or Indian tribes on Federal and State reservations and other Federally recognized Indian tribes. To meet the requirement of actual capacity, an applicant must either:

(1) Have the necessary resources to provide technical assistance and/or training to associations in rural areas through its staff, or

(2) Be assisted by an affiliate or member organization which has such background and experience, and which agrees, in writing, that it will provide the assistance, or

(3) Contract with a nonaffiliated organization for not more than 49 percent of the grant to provide the proposed assistance.

e. Corporations that have been convicted of a federal felony within the past 24 months are not eligible. Any corporation that has been assessed to have any unpaid federal tax liability, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed and is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, is not eligible for financial assistance.

2. Eligible Projects. Grants may be made to organizations as defined in §1775.65 to enable such organizations to assist recipients to:

a. Provide technical assistance and/or training to reduce the solid waste stream through reduction, recycling, and reuse.

b. Provide training to enhance operator skills in maintaining and operating active landfills.

c. Provide technical assistance and/or training for operators of landfills which are closed or will be closed in the near future with the development/implementation of closure plans, future land use plans, safety and maintenance planning, and closure scheduling within permit requirements.

d. Evaluate current landfill conditions to determine the threats to water resources.

e. Pay the expenses associated with providing the technical assistance and/or training authorized in paragraphs (a) through (d) of this section.

D. Application and Submission Information

The FY 2021 Application Guide provides specific, detailed instructions for each item of a complete application. The Agency emphasizes the importance of including every required item and strongly encourages applicants to follow the instructions carefully, using the examples and illustrations in the FY 2021 Application Guide. Applicants should also ensure they are using the most updated version of the Application Guide before submitting an application. Any updates to the Application Guide will be posted at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/solid-waste-management-grants>.

Agency contact information can be found in Section G of this document. The Agency will not solicit or consider new scoring or eligibility information that is submitted after the application deadline; however, the Agency reserves the right to contact applicants to seek clarification on materials contained in the submitted application. See the FY 2021 Application Guide for a full discussion of each required item. For requirements of completed grant applications, refer to 7 CFR 1775.10. The application and any materials sent with it become Federal records by law and cannot be returned to you.

1. *Location of SWMG Program Information.* The FY 2021 Application Guide, copies of necessary forms and samples, and the SWMG Program regulation are available at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/solid-waste-management-grants>. Application information is also available at <https://www.grants.gov/>.

2. *Content and Form of Application Submission.* Carefully review the FY 2021 SWMG Application Guide and 7 CFR part 1775, which detail all necessary forms and worksheets. A complete application consists of:

a. Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) and System for Awards Management (SAM). Grant applicants must obtain a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and register in the System for Award Management (SAM) prior to submitting an application pursuant to 2 CFR part 25.200. In addition, an entity applicant must maintain registration in SAM at all times during which

it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by the Agency. Similarly, all recipients of Federal financial assistance are required to report information about first tier subawards and executive compensation in accordance with 2 CFR part 170. If an entity applicant does not have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b), the applicant must have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the reporting requirements should the applicant receive funding. An applicant, unless excepted under 2 CFR 25.110(b), (c), or (d), is required to:

- (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application,
- (ii) Provide a valid 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 Federal awarding agency may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Federal awarding agency is ready to make a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency 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. As required by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), all grant applications must provide a DUNS number when applying for Federal grants, on or after October 1, 2003. Organizations can receive a DUNS number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free number at 1-866-705-5711 or via internet at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. Additional information concerning this requirement can be obtained on the Grants.gov website at <http://www.grants.gov>. After receiving a DUNS number, applicants may register for SAM at www.sam.gov/SAM or by calling 1-866-606-8220.

The applicant must provide a DUNS number and documentation of registration in SAM with their application. If the applicant does not provide documentation that they are registered in SAM and their DUNS number, the application will not be considered for funding. You will need the following information when requesting a DUNS number:

- (i) Legal name of the applicant
 - (ii) Headquarters name and address of the applicant
 - (iii) The names under which the applicant is doing business as (dba) or other name by which the organization is commonly recognized
 - (iv) Physical address of the applicant
 - (v) Mailing address (if separate from headquarters and/or physical address) of the applicant
 - (vi) Telephone number
 - (vii) Contact name and title
 - (viii) Number of employees at the physical location
- b. Standard Form 424, “Application for Federal Assistance (For Non-Construction).”
- c. Standard Form 424A “Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs.”
- d. Attachment regarding assistance provided to Rural Development Employees as required by RD Instruction 1900-D.
- e. Form RD 400-1, “Equal Opportunity Agreement.”
- f. Indirect cost documentation such as cost rate proposals, cost allocation plans, or other election for indirect costs and appropriate certification of indirect costs in accordance with Cost Principles in 2 CFR part 200, subpart E, as adopted by USDA through 2 CFR part 400.
- g. Statement of Compliance for Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- h. SF LLL, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities” (include only if grant is over \$100,000).

i. Certification regarding Forest Service grant. In accordance with 7 CFR 1775, subpart A §1775.5 (j), applicants must certify there is no duplication with the National Forest-Dependent Rural Communities Economic Diversification Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6613).

j. Supporting information. All applications shall be accompanied by:

(i) Evidence of applicant's legal existence and authority. See 7 CFR 1775.10 for specific documentation required.

(ii) Evidence of tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), if applicable.

(iii) Narrative of applicant's experience in providing services similar to those proposed. Provide brief description of successfully completed projects including the need that was identified, and objectives accomplished.

(iv) Latest financial information to show the applicant's financial capacity to carry out the proposed work. A current audit report is preferred; however, applicants can submit a balance sheet and an income statement in lieu of an audit report.

(v) List of proposed services to be provided.

(vi) Estimated breakdown of costs (direct and indirect) including those to be funded by grantee as well as other sources. Sufficient detail should be provided to permit the approval official to determine reasonableness, applicability, and allowability.

(vii) Evidence that a Financial Management System is in place or proposed.

(viii) List of the entities to be served and the State or States where assistance will be provided. Identify entities by name, as well as other characteristics such as size, income, location, and provide Median Household Income (using the five-year block of 2006-2010 from the American Community Survey) and population from the 2010 Census data.

(ix) Description of the type of technical assistance and/or training to be provided and the tasks to be contracted.

(x) Description of how the project will be evaluated and provide clearly stated goals and the method proposed to measure the results that will be obtained.

(xi) Documentation of need for proposed service. Provide detailed explanation of how the proposed services differ from other similar services being provided in the same area.

(xii) Personnel on staff or to be contracted to provide the service and their experience with similar projects.

(xiii) Statement indicating the number of months it takes to complete the project or service.

(xiv) Documentation on cost effectiveness of project. Provide the cost per association to be served or proposed cost of personnel to provide assistance.

(xv) Other factors for consideration, such as emergency situation, training need identified, health or safety problems, geographic distribution, Rural Development Office recommendations, etc.

k. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable, applicant must include approved cost agreement rate schedule).

l. Applicants must also submit a work plan/project proposal that will outline the project in sufficient detail to provide the reader with a complete understanding of how the proposed project will be carried out, including goals and objectives.

m. The applicant must provide evidence of compliance with other Federal statutes, including but not limited to the following:

(i) Debarment and suspension information in accordance with 2 CFR part 417, *Nonprocurement Debarment and Suspension*, supplemented by 2 CFR part 180, *OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement)*, if it applies. The section heading is “What information must I provide before entering into a covered transaction with the Federal Government?” located at 2 CFR 180.335.

(ii) All of the organization’s known workplaces by including the actual address of buildings (or parts of buildings) or other sites where work under the award will take place. Workplace identification is required under the drug-free workplace requirements in Subpart B of 2 CFR part 421, *Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)*.

(iii) 2 CFR parts 200 and 400, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards*.

(iv) 2 CFR part 182, *Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)*, and 2 CFR part 421, *Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)*.

(v) Executive Order 13166, *Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency*. For information on limited English proficiency and agency-specific guidance, go to <https://www.lep.gov/>.

3. Number of copies of submitted applications.

a. Paper submissions. Submit the original application and two copies by the deadline date of December 31, 2020.

b. Electronic submissions. File electronic applications at <https://www.grants.gov> by the deadline date of December 31, 2020.

You must be registered with Grants.gov before you can submit a grant application. If you have not used Grants.gov before, you will need to register with the

System for Award Management (SAM). You will need a DUNS number to access or register for any of the services. **The registration processes may take several business days to complete.** Follow the instructions at Grants.gov for registering and submitting an electronic application. RUS may request original signatures on electronically submitted documents later.

SAM registers your organization and stores your organizational information, which allows Grants.gov to use it to verify your identity. You may register online at www.sam.gov/SAM. The SAM registration must remain active with current information at all times while RUS is considering an application or while a Federal grant award or loan is active. To maintain the registration in the SAM database the applicant must review and update the information in the SAM database annually from date of initial registration or from the date of the last update. The applicant must ensure that the information in the database is current, accurate, and complete Applicants must ensure they complete the Financial Assistance General Certifications and Representations in SAM. If system errors or technical difficulties occur, use the customer support resources available at the Grants.gov website.

Submit all electronic documents using one of the following formats. Documents submitted in any other format will not be accessible to RUS, and the application will be considered incomplete.

- Excel
- Word
- PDF

4. Submission Dates and Times.

a. Paper applications must be postmarked and mailed, shipped, or sent overnight no later than December 31, 2020, to be eligible for FY 2021 grant funding. Late applications, applications which do not include proof of mailing or shipping, and incomplete applications are not eligible for FY 2021 grant funding.

(i) If your grant application will service only one State, please forward your application to the USDA Rural Development State Office, attention Community Programs Director. The address and contact information for each State's USDA Rural Development Office can be accessed at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/state-offices>.

If the grant application will service more than one State, please forward the application to:

USDA Rural Development, Rural Utilities Service
Attention: Chris Adamchak
103 Cherokee Boulevard, Suite 217
Chattanooga, TN 37405

(ii) Paper applications must show proof of mailing or shipping by the deadline, consisting of one of the following:

- A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service (USPS) postmark,
- A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the USPS, or
- A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier

(iii) Due to screening procedures at the USDA, packages arriving via regular mail through the USPS may be irradiated, which can damage the contents and delay delivery to RUS. RUS encourages applicants to consider the impact of this procedure when selecting application delivery method.

b. Electronic grant applications must be received no later than 11:59 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, on December 31, 2020, to be eligible for FY 2021 funding. Late or incomplete applications will not be eligible for FY 2021 grant funding.

c. Applications will not be accepted via fax or electronic mail.

d. If the submission deadline falls on Saturday, Sunday, or a federal holiday, the application is due the next business day.

E. Application Review Information

1. RUS will acknowledge the application's receipt by email to the applicant. The application will be reviewed for completeness to determine if it contains all the items required. If the application is incomplete or ineligible, RUS will return it to the applicant with an explanation. RUS reserves the right to request additional information once an application is determined to be complete in order to minimize the risk of duplication of other federal efforts. The RUS grant offer to a successful applicant will be based on the submitted application and may be more narrowly tailored than the submitted application to meet rural community needs at the time of the offer or over the course of the grant period.

2. A review team, composed of at least two members, will evaluate all applications and proposals. They will make overall recommendations based on factors such as eligibility, application completeness, and conformity to application requirements. They will score the applications based on criteria in item 3 of this section.

3. All applications that are complete and eligible will be scored and ranked competitively. The categories for scoring criteria used are the following:

Criteria No.	Criteria	Points
1	Project Area:	
	Multi-State	10 points
	Single State	5 points
2	Applicant experience in developing and implementing successful technical	

	assistance and/or training programs similar to proposed project:	
	More than ten years	5 points
	Six to ten years	2 points
	Up to five years	1 point
3	Applicant resources – use of grant funds for grantee’s staff or affiliated staff versus contract personnel to carry out the proposed project:	
	At least 75% staff	10 points
	Between 50% and 74.99% staff	5 points
	Less than 50% staff* (See Regulatory Requirement)	Ineligible
4	Population of proposed area(s) to be served (based on 2010 Census data):	
	Less than 2,500	Up to 15 points
	Less than 5,500	Up to 10 points
	5,500 or more	0 points
5	MHI of proposed area(s) to be served (based on American Community Survey data from 2006-2010 5-year period):	
	Less than 80% of the SNMHI (State Non-metropolitan Median Household Income)	Up to 10 points
	80% to 100% of the SNMHI	Up to 5 points
	More than 100% of the SNMHI	0 points
6	Project Duration:	
	Projects providing technical assistance and/or training that accomplish the objective within a 12 month or less time frame	5 points
	Over 12 months	0 points
7	Needs Assessment - The problem/issue(s) being addressed is clearly defined, supported by data, and addresses the need.	Up to 15 points
8	Goals and objectives are clearly defined, tied to the need as defined in the work plan, and are measurable.	Up to 15 points
9	Work plan - Clearly articulates a well thought out approach to accomplishing objectives; clearly identifies who will be served by project.	Up to 40 points
10	Actual assistance provided (Projects using multiple methods may receive a maximum total score of 30 points for this criterion):	
	Applicant is providing “hands-on” technical assistance and/or training primarily to solid waste	Up to 10 points and/or

	management systems managers/operators.	
	Applicant is providing technical assistance primarily through the distribution of educational materials and other outreach methods.	Up to 10 points and/or
	Applicant is providing technical assistance through an evaluation project.	Up to 5 points and/or
	Applicant is providing technical assistance to address the contamination of drinking water and surface water supplies by emerging contaminants, including per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances. PFAS.	Up to 5 points and/or
11	Evaluation methods are specific to the activity, clearly defined, measurable, with expected project outcomes.	Up to 20 points
12	In-Kind Support:	
	Demonstrated commitment of non-federal resources of more than 25% of total budget.	10 points
	Demonstrated commitment of non-federal resources 10-25% of total budget.	5 points
	Less than 10% of non-federal resources.	0 points
13	Sustainability: Applicant demonstrates ability to sustain project after grant period ends without federal award using a thorough financial analysis to include: cash on hand, projected revenues, and outside source contributions.	Up to 10 points
14	Administrator Discretion: RUS Administrator may provide additional points based on the following factors: geographic, economic, agency priority issues.**	Up to 25 points

* 7 CFR 1775. 65 Eligibility - (e) (3) Applicants may contract with a nonaffiliated organization for not more than 49 percent of the grant to provide the proposed assistance. The Water and Environmental Program's definition of an affiliated organization is as follows:

1) In corporate law and taxes, an affiliate is a company that is related to another company, usually by being in the position of a member or a subordinate role (must be verified by organizational documentation). Two companies may be affiliated if one company has control over the other or if both are controlled by a third company, and

2) One corporation can be affiliated with another corporation by shareholdings, by holding a minority interest, or one corporation might be a subsidiary of another.

****Administrative Points** – In order to be considered for Administrative Points the applicant’s work plan must include a separate section titled: “Administrative Points”. In this section the SWMG applicant will address the following factors:

- Proposals that direct technical assistance to the smallest communities with the lowest incomes, with an emphasis on areas where at least 20 percent of the population is living in poverty, according to the American Community Survey data by census tracts; and/or directs technical assistance to projects located in Opportunity Zones where projects should provide measurable results in helping rural communities build robust and sustainable economies; and/or directs technical assistance to projects located in Substantially Underserved Trust Areas.

5 points

and/or

- Proposals that establish composting programs and emphasizes reducing food loss and waste in order to divert food waste from landfills, improve overall food security, and secure our nation’s natural resources. Composting programs should include the collection of compostable materials from food, yard, and/or paper waste.

5 points

- Proposals that request less than \$100,000 in grant funds, or that direct technical assistance and/or training to problems related to landfill safety or reduction of the solid waste stream through reuse.

15 points

The administrative points will be awarded solely on the aforementioned factors, up to a total of 25 points.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

1. RUS will rank all qualifying applications by their final score. Applications will be selected for funding, based on the highest scores. The Agency expects to award several grants under this notice. The Agency reserves the right to make no grant awards if all applications are incomplete and/or score below 65 points. Each applicant will be notified via email of the Agency's funding decision.

2. In making our decision about the application, RUS may determine that the application is:

- a. Eligible and selected for funding,
- b. Eligible but offered fewer funds than requested,
- c. Eligible but not selected for funding, or
- d. Ineligible for the grant

3. Applicants selected for funding will complete a grant agreement suitable to RUS, which outlines the terms and conditions of the grant award. Pursuant to the grant agreement, grant funds may be released over the course of the grant period in reimbursement for the performance of eligible, approved activities which do not duplicate similar federal efforts or tasks. The grant agreement may also include reporting and pre-approval requirements consistent with 7 CFR part 1775 which, if not met, may result in a delay in reimbursement, disallowance of expense, or a suspension of the grant.

4. Grantees will be reimbursed as follows:

a. SF-270, "Request for Advance or Reimbursement," will be completed by the grantee and submitted to either the State or National Office not more frequently than

monthly. The grantee will be advised of the RUS servicing office where reimbursement requests are to be submitted.

b. Upon receipt of a properly completed SF-270, payment will ordinarily be made within 30 days.

5. Any change in the scope of the project, budget adjustments of more than 10 percent of the total budget, or any other significant change in the project must be reported to and approved by the approval official by written amendment to the grant agreement. Any such change not approved may be cause for termination of the grant.

6. All laborers, apprentices and mechanics employed by contractors and subcontractors on projects funded directly by or assisted in whole or in part by and through the Federal Government pursuant to this Act shall be paid wages at rates not less than those prevailing on projects of a character similar in the locality as determined by the Secretary of Labor in accordance with subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code. Further details on eligible applicants and projects may be found in the relevant regulations listed in Section C.

7. Reporting.

a. Grantees shall constantly monitor performance to ensure that time schedules are being met, projected work by time periods is being accomplished, and other performance objectives are being achieved.

b. SF-425, "Federal Financial Report," and a project performance activity report will be required of all grantees on a quarterly basis, due 30 days after the end of each calendar quarter.

c. A final project performance report will be required with the last SF-425, due 90 days after the end of the last quarter in which the project is completed. The final report may serve as the last quarterly report.

d. All grantees are to submit an original of each report to the RUS servicing office. The project performance reports should detail, in a narrative format, activities that have transpired for the specific time period.

e. The grantee will provide an audit report or financial statements to the RUS servicing office in accordance with Uniform Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 CFR part 200, subpart F.

G. Federal Awarding Agency Contacts

1. *Web site:* <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/solid-waste-management-grants>. The RUS Web site maintains up-to-date resources and contact information for the Solid Waste Management Grant Program.

2. *Telephone:* (352) 363-0550

3. *Email:* Christopher.Adamchak@usda.gov

4. *Main point of contact:* Chris Adamchak, Community Programs Specialist, Water and Environmental Programs, Water Programs Division, Rural Utilities Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

H. Other Information

USDA Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and 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 http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html 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, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. E-mail: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

National Environmental Policy Act

All recipients under this Notice are subject to the requirements of 7 CFR part 1970. However, awards for technical assistance and training under this Notice are classified as a Categorical Exclusion according to 7 CFR 1970.53(b), and usually do not require any additional documentation. The Agency will review each grant application to determine its compliance with 7 CFR part 1970. The applicant may be asked to provide additional information or documentation to assist the Agency with this determination.