Notice of Funding Opportunity USDA-NRCS-IA-IPC-20-GEN0010749
Questions and Answers Document
*As of 05/10/2020*

**Question:** We had questions regarding the Cost benefit analysis in section IX. Do we need to break down every individual deliverable by cost? For example 100 Technical assists and it would cost $5 per assist. Do we need to break it down to that level?

**Answer:** NRCS Leadership is very interested in the cost/benefit for each proposal. We will be looking at the overall proposal, as well as, individual deliverables.

**Question**: Strategic goal #2, on page 3 of the announcement, references 'conservation agronomists.' Can you provide a definition of conservation agronomists? Is this definition limited to NRCS staff agronomists?

**Answer:** Conservation agronomists is used as a general term, not specific to NRCS. We view a conservation agronomist as a person who is well versed in production agriculture, as well as, a person who has a strong conservation background. This person would have the skillset to work with ag producers on the linkage between those two areas.

**Question:** Strategic goal #4 references "Iowa NRCS' new conservation delivery schedule" Can you elaborate on the new conservation delivery schedule, or point us to where we can find more information?

**Answer:** *Reorganization information pertaining to the public, including our customers, is located on* the Reorganization web page on the Iowa NRCS website.

**Question**: Strategic goal #4 also references "resource team members". Is the resource team limited to the NRCS staff serving each 4-county area?

**Answer:** … This point is related to our new structure and conservation delivery at the field level. In general terms, it was related to teambuilding internally, which would result in better customer service both internally and externally. The teambuilding could be within the 4- County Resource Team and its members, but also teambuilding among the Resource Team members and the Local Field Office Staff.

**Question:** Can I get access to a copy of the NRCS strategic plan that the RFP references? We want to be sure what we are thinking of proposing aligns with the document.

**Answer:** Here is the website for the NRCS Strategic Plan. https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/about/acc/strategy/ You can download a copy of the plan on this site. The Iowa Strategic plan is available at: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb1262015.pdf. This version is 2015-2019.

**Question:** What is Iowa looking for in "Facilitating conversations with NRCS staff and partners at the field level regarding Iowa NRCS' new conservation delivery schedule. The conversations need to result in relationships between field staff and resource team members."

**Answer:** This point is related to our new structure and conservation delivery at the field level. In general terms, it was related to teambuilding internally, which would result in better customer service both internally and externally.

**Question:** Under category B (FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION), item 2. Start Dates and Performance Periods, where it states:

Approved Iowa Partners for Conservation awards will be awarded in FY 2020 and will not exceed 5 years. Projects may be between three and five years in duration. ***Applicants should plan their projects based on a project start date of September 15, 2020. Project years are determined using the NRCS fiscal year with the first fiscal year ending on September 30, 2020 and the second year beginning October 1, 2020.***

Am I correct in interpreting that in the first years request of funding will only be for one month, and that any financial needs to support a program request that occurs past September 30,2020 will need to be requested for in year 2. For example, if we would like to apply for a program that runs from September 15, 2020 through August 12, 2021, would we apply over the course of two fiscal years?

**Answer:** For purposes of completing Sections D and E of the SF424A, according to the instructions, yes September 15, 2020 - September 30, 2020 would be year 1. However, your budget narrative should reflect calendar years. Therefore, year 1 for a project that is proposed for September 15, 2020 through August 12, 2020 would indeed be September 15, 2020 through August 12, 2020.