SUMMARY INFORMATION

Federal Awarding Agency Name: U.S. Department Of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Funding Opportunity Title: Wetland Restoration Planning, Design, and Implementation for Louisiana ACEP-WRE, WRP, and EWPP-FPE

Announcement Type: Initial announcement

Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-NRCS-LA-MULTI-20-GEN0010555

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 10.072, 10.931, 10.928, 10.923

Funding Opportunity Announcement Summary

The Natural Resources Conservation Service in Louisiana is requesting applications to provide planning, design**,** and implementation of restoration activities on eligible Agricultural Conservation Easement Program-Wetland Reserve Easement (ACEP-WRE), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), and Emergency Watershed Protection Program-Floodplain Easements (EWPP-FPE). Applications are being requested from eligible government or non-government organizations, tribes, or individuals for competitive consideration. Information related to NRCS Easement Programs can be found at the following links:
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/easements/ and
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/loandscape/ewpp/

A total of up to $12 million is available in FY2020. All agreements will be five years in duration. Applications must be received by **10:59 p.m. Central Time (CT) on February 3, 2020.**

Key Dates

Posting Date: December 2, 2019
Closing Date for Applications: February 3, 2020

Federal Funding Floor and Ceiling Amounts

The funding floor for this announcement $0, and the funding ceiling is $4,000,000. 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

The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) was authorized as part of the Food Security Act of 1985, Title XII, Public Law 99-198 (7 U.S.C. 1281), as amended; Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993; Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996; Agriculture, Rural, Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies

Appropriations Act of 1998, Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2001 and as amended, Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, Section II of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, 16 U.S.C. 3837-3837f, Public Law 110-234 authorized the Secretary of Agriculture to provide technical assistance under this program to eligible producers. It was repealed as part of the Agricultural Act of 2014, Title II of Public Law 113-79. However, funds have been authorized for the remaining restoration need for this program.

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) was established under the Agricultural Act of 2014, Public Law 113-79, Section 1265C (b)(4)(16 U.S.C. 3865 et seq.). This authorized NRCS to establish the agricultural conservation easement program for the conservation of eligible land and natural resources through easements or the interests in land and combines the purposes and coordinates the functions of the wetlands reserve program, the grassland reserve program, and the farmland protection program. Under Agricultural Conservation Easement Program – Wetland Reserve Easements (ACEP-WRE), NRCS restores, protects, and enhances wetlands and associated uplands.

The Emergency Watershed Protection Program – Floodplain Easements (EWPP-FPE) was authorized in the Flood Control Act of 1950, Section 216, Public Law 81-516 (33 U.S.C. 701b-1); Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013, Public Law 113-2, 127 Statute 4.; and Section 403-405, Public Law 95-334 (16 U.S.C. 2203-2205). This authorized NRCS to undertake emergency measures, including the purchase of floodplain easements, for runoff retardation and soil erosion prevention, in cooperation with landowners and land users, as necessary to safeguard lives and property from floods, drought, and the products of erosion on any watershed whenever fire, flood, or any other natural occurrence is causing or has caused a sudden impairment of that watershed.

The purpose of the NRCS easement programs is voluntary conservation by landowners. The easement programs promote the restoration, enhancement, protection, maintenance, and management of wetland, floodplain, and forestland systems, and associated uplands that would contribute significantly to the functions and values of these habitats. Through the easement programs, landowners may receive assistance to install or implement structural and/or vegetative and associated upland restoration practices on eligible land. The easement programs allow NRCS to request the services of and enter into agreements with non-Federal entities to assist in providing specialized assistance necessary to plan, design, and implement restoration plans. NRCS is directing technical and financial resources toward the restoration of degraded wetlands, floodplains, and forestlands.

Applicants will be responsible for assisting NRCS and landowners by providing technical assistance necessary to plan, design, and implement ACEP-WRE, WRP, and EWPP-FPE restoration plans, while at the same time improving and protecting habitats for environmental benefits. Performance may include any part or all operations necessary to plan, design, construct, inspect, manage, and monitor various restoration, enhancement, and creation practices.

Performance may also include other restoration-related conservation practices that meet NRCS standards and specifications.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1. Estimated Funding

The total amount of Federal funding the agency expects to award through this announcement is $12 million.

2. Start Dates and Performance Periods

Projects may be up to five years in duration. Applicants should plan their projects based on a project start date of 10/1/2020.

3. Type of Federal Award

The agency plans to initially enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with selected applicants pursuant to this opportunity. Individual cooperative agreements will be subsequently awarded to obligate funds for actual easement restoration activities. There shall be no guaranteed minimum or maximum award amount for the cooperative agreements which are subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Cooperative agreements have been determined to be the appropriate funding instrument because of the substantial involvement of NRCS in providing technical oversight and coordination of planning, designing, implementation, and monitoring of restoration activities. NRCS will be substantially involved in the work performed under the agreement and will undertake activities such as the following:

- NRCS will identify and prioritize work assignments for completing activities required to plan, design, and implement the wetland, floodplain, forestland, and associated upland restoration components of each conservation plan.
- NRCS will monitor the awardee's progress and suspend work if agreement or conservation plan requirements or NRCS standards and specifications are not met.
- Provide quality assurance for activities under the agreement.

4. Number of Awards

NRCS anticipates making 3 awards.

5. Procurement Contracts

NRCS will not award procurement contracts associated with this announcement.

6. Eligibility of Renewal or Supplemental Project Applications

Applications for renewal or supplementation of existing projects are not eligible to compete with applications for new Federal awards under this announcement.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. 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.
Applicants must be certified as a Technical Service Provider (TSP), meeting the USDA NRCS national criteria established for certification. The certification criteria are located in "TechReg," an NRCS web-based certification application program found at http://techreg.usda.gov.

Organizations that share a mutual interest in wetland conservation and who have the highest probability of providing in-kind contributions and other sources of financial and technical support are encouraged to submit an application. A listing of possible eligible applicants is as follows:

- State governments,
- Parish governments,
- County governments
- City or township governments,
- Special district governments,
- Federally recognized Native American tribal governments
- Non-profits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions or higher education,
- Non-profits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions or higher education, and
- Individuals.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

There is no cost sharing or matching requirement for this opportunity.

3. Other (if applicable)

Applicant entities identified in the SAM.gov Exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited/restricted or excluded from receiving Federal contracts, certain subcontracts, 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)).

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package

All standard forms necessary for this announcement are included in the Grants.gov application package. Applicants may request paper copies of materials by contacting the Federal Awarding Agency Contacts listed in Part G of this announcement by telephone or by written request.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

To be considered for funding under this opportunity, an application must contain:

a. Application Form: (Standard Form 424 Application for Federal Assistance) Applicants must use this document as the cover sheet for each proposal. In Block 18 of the SF 424, enter $0.

b. Budget Narrative - The Budget Narrative must include rates for the following: personnel listed by labor category, equipment, materials and supplies, travel, all other costs, and indirect costs. The agreed to rates will be incorporated into the Memorandum of Understanding and be the basis for future cooperative agreements. Salaries of project personnel who will be working on the project may be requested in proportion to the effort that they will devote to the project.

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:

"My organization was required to submit a Single Audit report last year. The reporting period covered was from (insert date) to (insert date). This report, filed under EIN # (insert EIN), is available on the Federal Audit Clearinghouse Single Audit Database website (https://harvester.census.gov/facweb/) or will be by (insert date). "

OR

"My organization was not required to submit a Single Audit report last year."

ii. Required Indirect Costs Statement - All applicants except individuals applying for funds separate from a business or non-profit organization he/she may operate must complete and attach the Indirect Costs Statement located in the Related Documents tab of this announcement on Grants.gov.

c. Proposal

Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of NRCS or others as to the relative merits described in their application.

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 25 pages.

Applications 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.

Project Abstract
The application shall include a narrative statement that addresses the following as a minimum:

- Description of the resources and experiences of the organization necessary to successfully perform planning, design, and implementation of wetland and associated upland restoration activities.
- Description of the organization's level of capacity in terms of the staff, equipment resources, and/or support necessary to complete activities.
- Description of the organization's capabilities to perform easement restoration activities, including a brief description of the organizational entity and the qualifications, employment status, current responsibilities, and proposed level of effort for the project coordinator and staff responsible for implementation. Resumes for key personnel should be included in an appendix to the proposal.
- Description of the organization's history of successfully managing federal and non-federal agreements, including meeting and complying with reporting requirements, reporting on progress made in achieving results under those projects, and submitting acceptable payment requests.

d. Appendix
Applications shall include an appendix. Material should be included only when necessary to support information provided in the narratives. Copies of documents, brochures, etc. are encouraged to demonstrate experience, knowledge, skills, and abilities.

e. Post Award Documentation
Every funded restoration that involves ground disturbance activities is subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NRCS must complete an environmental review of each awarded project before project commencement. Environmental Assessments (EA) or Environmental Impact Statements (EIA) will be the responsibility of NRCS.

In addition, a National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) section 106 review and consultation by NRCS state and area office with consulting parties (such as the pertinent State Historic Preservation Officer and federally recognized

Indian Tribes) may be required prior to the implementation of project activities that have the potential to impact cultural resources. NHPA section 106, its implementing regulations (36 CFR Part 800), and other related authorities, require Federal agencies to determine if a project has the potential to cause an effect to historic properties and, if so, if they are adverse and how the effects may be addressed. The NHPA review and compliance in accordance with section 106 of NHPA and implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800 must be completed by NRCS.

3. **Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)**
Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR §25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR §25.110(d)) 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/portal/public/SAM. The Federal Service Desk is available for registration assistance, and can be contacted via the Help tab at the website listed above.

4. **Submission Dates and Times**
   Applicants must submit proposals via Grants.gov. Proposals must be received by 10:59 p.m., Central Time (CT) on February 3, 2020. Late submissions will not be reviewed or considered. NRCS 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 for Cooperative Agreements**
   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 announcement.

   Indirect costs limitations:

   a. Non-profit organizations awarded cooperative agreements will be limited to a 10% indirect cost rate in accordance with the Agency's annual appropriations act. The 10% indirect cost rate applies to both federal and non-federal funds.

   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 the statutory limitation stated above, 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 subcontract 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. 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

The Louisiana NRCS anticipates making multiple awards under this announcement.

Prior to the evaluation review, each application will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice by the appropriate NRCS staff. Incomplete applications and those that do not meet the provisions of this notice will be eliminated from competition and the applicant will be notified of elimination.

Applications meeting the provisions of this notice will be evaluated by an evaluation team of NRCS employees against the evaluation criteria. The evaluation team will make recommendations to the State Conservationist for final selection and award.

1. **Merit/Technical Criteria**

   a. **Specialized experience and technical competence in the type of work required (40%)**
      - Evaluation will be based on the extent of related experience in performing planning, designing, and implementing wetland and associated upland restorations. Consideration will be given to those applicants with knowledge of and direct experience in planning, designing, and implementing wetland and associated upland restorations in Louisiana.
      - Organizational capabilities - The adequacy of organizational resources and experience to successfully design and install wetland restoration projects. Share in a common mission that supports the natural resource conservation efforts with private landowners.
      - Project personnel - The reasonableness and feasibility of the applicant's approach and expertise for successfully achieving the objectives of the project within the required time frame.
      - Understanding the intent of ACEP-WRE, WRP, and EWPP-FPE - The applicant's recognition of the value and need of the project and the full understanding of the intent of easement programs. Ability to demonstrate successful past history and credibility of working with private landowners.
      - Experience - Working on wetland restoration in the State of Louisiana or similar ecosystems. Examples of previous work shall be documented for review.

   b. **Professional qualifications and capacity necessary for satisfactory performance (25%)**
      - For planning, designing, and implementing wetland and associated upland restoration the applicant must have a Registered Professional Engineer in the State of Louisiana on staff and can provide a surveyor/engineering technician meeting the requirements stated in this announcement to enable planning and design of engineering practices. All engineering designs must be signed and sealed according to Louisiana State Law.
      - Evaluation will be based upon the number of qualified personnel, their knowledge and experience associated with the requirements above, and their availability to perform work on this agreement.

c. Capacity to accomplish the work (15%)

- Evaluation will be based upon the number of qualified personnel, the quantity of existing work under contract and the schedules for completion of the existing work.

d. Past performance regarding work of this nature (15%)

- Past experience with other government agencies and other organizations in regard to work of this nature. Quality and timeliness of performance of work performed.

e. Rates (5%)

Rates provided in budget narrative

2. Risk Criteria

The 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 a proposal constitutes certification that an applicant meets these standards.

3. **Review and Selection Process**
   Proposals will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice. Incomplete, noncompliant, and/or proposals 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 intents to make a selection and award without discussions, it reserves the right to conduct discussions for the purpose of allowing applicants to revise their applications to correct deficiencies or omissions identified by the NRCS. 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.

   Merit/technical reviews will be conducted by a technical review board nominated by the approving official. Risk reviews will be conducted by the Grants and Agreements Service Branch. The approving official will make the final selections. The approving official for this opportunity is the Louisiana State Conservationist

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

   a. 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));

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

   c. 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 Announcement and Federal Award Dates**
   The agency anticipates announcing or notifying successful and unsuccessful applicants by May 1, 2020 and expects to have Federal awards in place by September 30, 2020.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. 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 (form NRCS-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 selections via letter.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All project funds will be used in accordance with 2 CFR 200 and NRCS' 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 announcement.

See also Section D(2)(j) of this opportunity.

3. Cooperative Agreement Reporting

Reporting will follow NRCS' General Terms and Conditions but will generally include electronic submission of semiannual progress reports, quarterly financial status reports, and final reports.

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.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

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

Administrative Contact (Primary Contact)
Name: Rochelle McCrea
Grants Management Specialist
USDA-NRCS
Mailing Address: 355 E. Street, SW, Washington DC, 20024
Phone Number: (202) 720-6898
Email: Rochelle.mccrea@usda.gov

Program Contact:
Morgan Tyler
Easement Coordinator
USDA-NRCS
3737 Government Street
Alexandria, LA 71302
Phone Number: (318) 473-7612
Email: Morgan.Tyler@usda.gov

Or

Dustin Farmer
Easement Planning and Implementation Team Leader
USDA-NRCS
3737 Government Street
Alexandria, LA 71302
Phone Number: (318) 473-7773
Email: Dustin.Farmer@usda.gov

H. OTHER INFORMATION

1. Questions regarding this announcement must be submitted to the Administrative Contact identified above via email with the Opportunity Number in the subject line. Questions must be submitted by January 3, 2020. A questions and answers document addressing all questions will be posted to the Related Documents tab of this announcement in Grants.gov as a modification by January 8, 2020.

2. **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)**
   Proposals to NRCS are considered to be confidential information. Proposals 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 NRCS to provide notice to applicants that a third party has requested copies of their business information, and requires NRCS to consult with applicants regarding the releasing their records.

3. **Government Obligation**
   The Federal Government is not obligated to make any Federal award as a result of the announcement. 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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