

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF PROGRAM FUNDING
CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANTS
FISCAL YEAR 2012**

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 10.912

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: The New Hampshire State Office of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) requests applications for Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies. Applications will be accepted from any eligible entity for projects within the State of New Hampshire. Funds will be awarded through a statewide competitive grants process. Applications are requested from eligible government or non-government organizations or individuals within the State of New Hampshire for competitive consideration of grant awards for projects between one and three years in duration. This notice identifies the objectives for CIG projects, the eligibility criteria for projects, and associated instructions needed to apply for a CIG. There are two CIG components available in FY2012: **(1) Natural Resource Concerns Component, and (2) Technology Component.**

Contingent on Congressional action, NRCS anticipates the availability of up to **\$134,000** of funds during fiscal year 2012 for the New Hampshire CIG program competition. Grants to eligible entities and individuals may not exceed a maximum of \$75,000 each. The State Conservationist reserves the right not to fund any or all proposals. These funds are in addition to up to **\$20** million of funds available through application from the national CIG program. For information about the national program visit: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/financial/cig/?&cid=nrcs143_008205.

PROPOSAL DUE DATE AND ADDRESSES

Written or electronic proposals must be received in the NH NRCS State Office by 4:00 pm Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) on June 7, 2012

Written Proposal Submission: The address for hand-delivered applications (including support materials), or applications submitted using mail or overnight courier service is:

Natural Resources Conservation Service
2 Madbury Road
Durham, New Hampshire 03824-2043
Conservation Innovation Grants Program
Attn: Deborah Weymouth, Assistant State Conservationist – Programs

Electronic submission: To submit your application electronically, visit www.grants.gov and follow the instructions.
Important Note: Please notify NH NRCS at 603.868.9931 x 102 by 4:00 p.m. EDT on June 7, 2012 that you have submitted your application through grants.gov, and retain a printed copy of your submittal for your records.

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I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority

The Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) program was authorized as part of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) [16 U.S.C. 3839aa-8] under section 2509 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-246). The Secretary of Agriculture delegated the authority for the administration of EQIP and CIG to the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), who is Vice President of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC). EQIP is funded and administered by NRCS under the authorities of the CCC.

B. Overview

The purpose of CIG is to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies, while leveraging the Federal investment in environmental enhancement and protection in conjunction with agricultural production. CIG projects are expected to lead to the transfer of conservation technologies, management systems, and innovative approaches (such as market-based systems) into NRCS policy, technical manuals, guides, and references or to the private sector. CIG does not fund research projects. Projects intended to formulate hypothesis do not qualify. CIG is to apply proven technology which has been shown to work previously. It is a vehicle to stimulate the development and adoption of conservation approaches or technologies that have been studied sufficiently to indicate a likelihood of success, and to be candidates for eventual technology transfer or institutionalization. CIG promotes sharing of skills, knowledge, technologies, and facilities among communities, governments, and other institutions to ensure that scientific and technological developments are accessible to a wider range of users. CIG funds projects targeting innovative on-the-ground conservation, including pilot projects and field demonstrations.

NRCS will fund applications for single or multi-year projects, not to exceed 3 years, submitted to NRCS from eligible entities, including federally recognized Indian tribes, State and local units of government, and non-governmental organizations and individuals.

Complete applications received by the deadline will be evaluated by a technical peer review panel identified in this document. Scored applications will be forwarded to a Grant Review Board. The Grant Review Board will make recommendations for project approval to the State Conservationist. Final award selections will be made by the State Conservationist.

C. Innovative Conservation Projects or Activities

For the purposes of CIG, the proposed innovative project or activity must encompass the development, field testing, evaluation, implementation, and monitoring of:

- Conservation adoption approaches or incentive systems, including market-based systems; or
- Promising conservation technologies, practices, systems, procedures, or approaches; and
- Environmental soundness with goals of environmental protection and natural resource enhancement.

To be given priority consideration, the innovative project or activity:

- Makes use of a proven technology or a technology that has been studied sufficiently to indicate a high probability for success;
- Demonstrates and verifies environmental (soil, water, air, plants, energy use, and animal) effectiveness, utility, affordability, and usability of conservation technology in the field;
- Adapts conservation technologies, practices, systems, procedures, approaches, and incentive systems to improve performance and encourage adoption;
- Introduces conservation systems, approaches, and procedures from another geographic area or agricultural sector; and
- Adapts conservation technology, management, or incentive systems to improve performance; and
- Demonstrates transferability of knowledge

D. CIG Categories

For Fiscal Year 2012 the following two categories will be offered for New Hampshire CIG: (1) Natural Resource Concerns and (2) Technology. Applications must demonstrate the use of innovative technologies or approaches, or both, to address a natural resource concern or concerns. Applicants may apply for multiple components but will not receive more than one award.

1. Natural Resource Concerns

Proposals for possible funding through Conservation Innovation Grants for fiscal year 2012 must address one or more of the following specific natural resource concern areas identified by NRCS:

a. Water Resources

The objective of this natural resource concern is to implement new technologies and/or approaches to maintain, restore, or enhance water quality and/or quantity in watersheds with predominantly agricultural land uses while sustaining productivity. Subtopics include:

- Small Farm scalable technologies to maintain, restore, or enhance water quality and/or quantity
- Innovative approaches to reduce nutrient, pesticide, and/or pathogen transport to surface water and groundwater;
- Innovative approaches to reduce sediment transport to surface water;
- Demonstration of the effectiveness of “high potential” NRCS conservation practices in reducing nutrient leaching and runoff and document benefits in small watersheds;
- Demonstration of the establishment and performance of conservation buffers and filter strips such as comparing different widths and plant materials (e.g. pollinator friendly plantings).

b. Soil Resources

The objective of this conservation concern is to implement new technologies and/or approaches to maintain, restore, or enhance soil resources associated with agricultural and forest land uses while sustaining productivity. Subtopics include:

- Carbon Sequestration – how much carbon can be sequestered using various rotations and tillage systems typical for organic and specialty operations

- New, innovative methods (e.g. living mulches for vegetable production) for erosion control and reduction on all land uses;
- New and innovative methods to improve overall soil quality and soil tilth related to maintained or improved productivity.
- Evaluate and demonstrate technologies to restore and enhance ecosystem services of subaqueous soils
- Application of continuous no-till crop production to enhance soil resources and other ecosystem services while maintaining crop productivity

c. Atmospheric Resources

The objective of this conservation concern is to implement new technologies and/or approaches to maintain, restore, or enhance air quality and atmospheric resources through agricultural and forest practices while sustaining productivity. Subtopics include:

- Decreasing atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases by increasing carbon sequestration in soil and through other mechanisms and/or by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from agricultural operations;
- Identification of management practices for air quality and atmospheric change concerns at animal operations and quantify the effect of the practices on all applicable resource concerns.

d. Grazing Land

The objective of this conservation concern is to implement new technologies and/or approaches to maintain, restore, or enhance grazing land while sustaining productivity. Subtopics include:

- Invasive species management on grazing land;
- Alternative grasses or forages for livestock production that improve or enhance resource conservation;
- Demonstration of innovation techniques (fencing and watering systems, management intensive grazing, multi-species grazing) to improve grazing management and minimize impacts on natural resources

e. Forest Health

The objective of this conservation concern is to implement new technologies and/or approaches to maintain, restore, or enhance forest health while sustaining productivity. Subtopics include:

- Invasive species management on forest land;
- Reduce the effects of pests, diseases, and fragmentation on health and productivity;
- Improving water and air quality while maintaining forest health and productivity.

f. Wildlife Habitat and Ecosystem Restoration in Priority Landscapes

The objective of this conservation concern is to implement new technologies and/or approaches for environmentally sound wildlife habitat management while sustaining productivity. Subtopics include:

- Habitat development and management for native pollinators, New England Cottontail, Eastern Brook Trout as well as other declining species;
- Ecosystem restoration efforts focusing on Great Bay
- Wetland and Riparian area management and restoration
- Invasive species management
- Adapt technologies (LiDAR, remote sensing, electromagnetic induction (EMI), and simulation models) for assessment of ecosystem restoration projects (e.g. Salinity for phragmites control).

g. Sustainable Agriculture, Organic Agriculture and Specialty Crops – Possible subtopics include:

- Nutrient Management for organic crop production – determine the proper source, rate, timing, and method(s) of application for organically approved nutrient amendments
- Beneficial Insect Habitat for Pest Control – need technology to determine the amount (acres) of habitat required to provide adequate pest control, matching plant species to attract desirable beneficial insect species, and managing habitat to provide pest control during the cropping season
- Demonstration of locally adapted cover crop varieties
- Continuous Cover Crops – need technology on how cover crops can be used on a continuous basis throughout the growing season to provide erosion control, crop nutrients, and pest control for the next crop in rotation and other ecosystem services

2. Technology

Proposals for possible funding through Conservation Innovation Grants for fiscal year 2012 must address one or more of the following specific technology needs areas identified by NRCS:

a. Improved on-farm energy efficiency and production – Possible subtopics include:

- Improving the energy efficiency of land-based agricultural production through conservation practices and activities; and
- Demonstrate and document ways to achieve greater use of energy audits, including energy audits that address cropland, pasture and forest land, in addition to buildings and equipment (especially greenhouses, livestock operations, and maple production)

b. Conservation Technology Transfer to Targeted Groups of Farmers – Possible subtopics include:

- Transfer of demonstrated conservation technologies and practices through a producer handbook consistent with NRCS' Field Office Technical Guide and adapted to specific producer groups (i.e., organic farming, specialty crops, livestock, poultry, row crops, small grains, etc.);
- Demonstration of conservation practices and systems that are effective for organic crops and livestock/poultry production; and

- Technology transfer to Beginning Farmers, Socially Disadvantaged Farmers, or Limited Resource Farmers

c. Market-based approaches – Possible subtopics include:

- Development and application of technology tools that measure environmental services (i.e. benefits) in order to document credits for trading;
- Greenhouse gas accounting tools and registries;
- Water quality improvement accounting tools;
- Nutrient trading and/or accounting tools; and
- Demonstration of ecosystem-based services that facilitate conservation implementation.

II. FUNDING AVAILABILITY

A. State Component

- Effective on the publication date of this notice, the NRCS in New Hampshire announces the availability of up to \$134,000 for CIG.
- Funds will be awarded through a competitive grants process.
- Individual projects funded through CIG in fiscal year 2012 may not receive more than \$75,000 from NRCS.
- CIG will fund single and multi-year projects, not to exceed three years.
- The anticipated start date for awarded projects is September 1, 2012. Awards will be made using grant agreements with NRCS New Hampshire State Office, located in Durham, NH.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

CIG applicants must be a federally recognized Indian tribe, State or local unit of government, non-governmental organization, or individual.

A. Matching Funds

Selected applicants may receive CIG grants of up to 50 percent of the total project cost. Applicants must provide non-Federal funding (matching funds) for at least 50 percent of the project cost. Up to half of the applicant's matching funds (up to 25 percent of the total project cost) may be from in-kind contributions. The remainder of the match must be provided in cash.

However, for Beginning Farmers, Limited Resource Farmers, Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Indian Tribes, an exception regarding matching funds is made allowing for up to three-fourths of the required matching funds for such projects from in-kind contributions. This exception is intended to help Beginning Farmers, Limited Resource Farmers, Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Indian Tribes meet the statutory requirements for receiving a Conservation Innovation Grant.

Matching funds must be available at time of application. Additional information about matching funds can be found at the following link: [2 CFR 215](#).

B. Historically Underserved Farmers and Ranchers and Indian Tribes

For the FY 2012 grant award process, up to 10 percent of the total funds available for CIG may be set-aside for applications from Beginning Farmer or Ranchers, Limited Resource Farmers or Ranchers, Socially Disadvantaged, Indian tribes or community-based organizations comprised of, or representing these entities. To compete for these set-aside funds, the applicant must make a declaration in the application as described in Part IV.5 in this notice. Applications that are unsuccessful in the set-aside competition will be placed automatically in the general application pool for consideration. Funds not used in the set-aside pool will revert back into the general funding pool. See Section III.A for information on matching funds.

Beginning Farmer or Rancher - a person or legal entity who:

- Has not operated a farm or ranch, or who has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years. This requirement applies to all members of an entity who will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch;
- In the case of a contract with an individual, individually, or with the immediate family, material and substantial participation requires that the individual provide substantial day-to-day labor and management of the farm or ranch consistent with the practices in the county or State where the farm is located; and
- In the case of a contract with an entity or joint operation, all members must materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch. Material and substantial participation requires that each of the members provide some amount of the management or labor and management necessary for day-to-day activities, such that if each of the members did not provide these inputs, operation of the farm or ranch would be seriously impaired.

Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher -

- A person with direct or indirect gross farm sales not more than \$155,200 in each of the previous 2 years (adjusted for inflation using Prices Paid by Farmer Index as compiled by National Agricultural Statistical Service); and
- Has a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four, or less than 50 percent of county median household income in each of the previous 2 years (to be determined annually using Department of Commerce data).

Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher -

- a farmer or rancher who has been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudices because of their identity as a member of a group without regards to their individual qualities. Those groups include African Americans, American Indians or Alaska natives, Hispanics, Asians, and native Hawaiians or Pacific Islanders.

C. EQIP Payment Limitation and Duplicate Payments

Section 1240G of the Food Security Act of 1985, 16 U.S.C. 3839aa-7, imposes a \$300,000 limitation for all cost-share or incentive payments disbursed to individuals or entities under an EQIP contract between fiscal years 2008 and 2012. CIG funds are awarded through grant agreements. These grant agreements are not EQIP contracts; thus, direct recipients of CIG awards are not limited by the EQIP payment limitation. The limitation applies to CIG in the following manner:

- Direct or indirect payments made to an individual or entity using funds from a CIG award to carry out structural, vegetative, or management practices count toward each individual's or entity's EQIP payment limitation. Through project progress reports, CIG grantees are responsible for certifying that producers involved in CIG projects do not exceed the payment limitation. Further, all direct and indirect payments made to producers using CIG funds must be reported to the NRCS CIG program manager in the semi-annual report. Direct or indirect payments cannot be made for a practice for which the producer has already received funds, or is contracted to receive funds through any of the USDA programs (EQIP, Agricultural Management Assistance, Conservation Security Program, Conservation Stewardship Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program, etc.) since this would be considered a duplicate payment.

D. Project Eligibility

To be eligible for CIG, projects must involve landowners who meet the EQIP eligibility requirements as set forth in [16 USC 3839aa-1](#). Further, all agricultural producers receiving direct or indirect payments through participation in a CIG project must also meet the EQIP eligibility requirements. Additional information regarding EQIP eligibility requirements can be found at: <http://www.nh.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/>. Participating producers are not required to have an EQIP contract.

A person or legal entity will not be eligible to receive any benefit during a crop, fiscal, or program year, as appropriate, if the average adjusted gross non-farm income of the person or legal entity exceeds \$1,000,000, unless not less than 66.66 percent of the average adjusted gross income of the person or legal entity is average adjusted gross farm income. A person who is determined ineligible for USDA program benefits under the Highly Erodible Land Compliance and Wetland Compliance provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985 will not be eligible to receive direct or indirect payments through CIG.

Technologies and approaches that are eligible for funding in a project's geographic area through EQIP are ineligible for CIG funding except where the use of those technologies and approaches demonstrates clear innovation. The burden falls on the applicant to sufficiently describe the innovative features of the proposed technology or approach (applicants should reference the appropriate New Hampshire EQIP practice list by contacting the New Hampshire State office) or by visiting the NH NRCS web site at www.nh.nrcs.usda.gov.

The grantee is responsible for providing the technical assistance required to successfully implement and complete the project. NRCS will designate a Program Contact, Administrative Contact, and Technical Contact to provide administrative and technical oversight for each project receiving an award.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. How to Obtain Application Materials

All Office of Management and Budget standard forms necessary for CIG submission are posted at: www.nh.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/Farm_Bill/CIG/cig.html. An [application checklist](#) is available on the NH CIG web site.

B. Proposal Content and Format

Proposals must contain the information set forth below in order to receive consideration for a grant. Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of NRCS or others as to the relative merits of the project described in the application. Submit applications in the following format:

- Proposals should be typewritten or printed on 8 1/2" x 11" white paper.
- The text of the proposal should be prepared in a font no smaller than 12-point, single-spaced, single-sided, with one-inch margins and page numbered.
- If submitting proposals for more than one project, submit a separate, complete application package for each project.
- Proposals should be saved as Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat pdf files onto a CD, and the electronic copy included in the application package.
- Applications that fail to comply with the required content and format will not be considered for funding.

Proposals must include all required forms and narrative sections described below; incomplete applications will not be considered.

1. **Cover Sheet:** Applicants must use **Standard Form 424** Application for Federal Assistance as the cover sheet for each project application. Standard Form 424 can be downloaded from [Grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) or by contacting the NH NRCS State Office at (603) 868-9931 Extension 102 or at: http://www.nh.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/Farm_Bill/CIG/cig.html.
2. **Project Summary Sheet:** Applicants must submit a Project Summary Sheet (limited to 3 pages in length) that includes the listed information.
 - a. Project Title
 - b. Applicant determined CIG funding category and subcategory
 - c. Project Director Name and Contact information (including email)
 - d. Names and Affiliations of Project Collaborators
 - e. Project Purpose
 - f. Project Deliverables/Products
 - g. Project Scope/Area
 - h. Project Start and End Dates (Projects should plan to begin no earlier than September 1, 2012)
 - i. Certifications and Declarations – EQIP Eligibility and Request for Federal Funds
 - j. Brief Summary of Project
3. **Project Description:** The description must include the following information and is limited to 10 pages in length. The description must include the following information:
 - a. Project background: Describe the history of, and need for, the proposed innovation. Provide evidence that the proposed innovation has been studied sufficiently to indicate a good probability for success of the project.
 - b. Project objectives: Be specific using qualitative and quantitative measures, if possible, to describe the project's purpose and goals. Describe how the project is innovative.

- c. Project methods: Describe clearly the methodology of the project and the tools or processes that will be used to implement the project.
 - d. Location and size of project or project area: Describe the location of the project and the relative size and scope (e.g., acres, farm types and demographics, etc.) of the project area. Provide a map, if possible.
 - e. Producer participation: Estimate the number of producers involved in the project, and describe the extent of their involvement (all producers involved in the project must be eligible for EQIP).
 - f. Project action plan and timeline: Provide a table listing project actions, timeframes, and associated milestones through project completion.
 - g. Project management: Give a detailed description of how the project will be organized and managed. Include a list of key project personnel, their relevant education or experience, and their anticipated contributions to the project.
 - h. Benefits or results expected and transferability: Identify the results and benefits to be derived from the proposed project activities, and explain how the results will be measured. Identify project beneficiaries, i.e., agricultural producers by type, region, or sector; rural communities; and municipalities. Explain how these entities will benefit. In addition, describe how results will be communicated to others via outreach activities.
 - i. Project evaluation: Describe the methodology or procedures to be followed to evaluate the project, determine technical feasibility, and quantify the results of the project for the final report (grant recipients will be required to provide a semiannual report of progress, quarterly financial reports, and a final project report to NRCS. Instructions for submitting quarterly reports will be detailed in the grant agreement); and
 - j. Environmental Information and Assessment of Environmental Impacts: Describe and assess the anticipated environmental effects of the proposed project. This description will be used to determine whether an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is needed for any given project, prior to the awarding the grant funds. The applicant is responsible for the cost of an EA or EIS, should one be required. This cost may be counted as part of the grantee's in-kind contribution.
4. **Budget Information**: Applicants must prepare a **Standard Form (SF) 424-A Budget Information Non-Construction Programs** to document budget needs available at: http://www.nh.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/Farm_Bill/CIG/cig.html. In addition to the SF-424A, all applicants must provide a **detailed narrative** in support of the budget for the project, broken down by each project year. Itemize the costs necessary for successful completion of the proposed project. Indicate the total amount (both cash and in-kind) of non-Federal matching support that will be provided to the proposed project. Identify and provide documentation of the sources, the amount, and the nature (cash or in-kind) of the matching funds. An indirect cost-rate agreement must be included if the applicant is claiming indirect costs. Indirect costs cannot exceed 15%. In-kind costs of equipment or project personnel cannot exceed 50 percent of the applicant's match (except in the case of projects carried out by either a Beginning, Limited Resource, or Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher, or Indian Tribe, or a community-based organization comprised of or representing these entities). The remainder of the match must be provided in cash. See Section III.A Matching Funds.

5. **Declaration of Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Limited Resource Farmer or Socially Disadvantaged Farmer, or Indian Tribe:** If an applicant wishes to compete in the 10 percent set-aside funding pool, applicants must make a declaration in writing of their status as a Beginning, Limited Resource and Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher, or Indian tribe or a community-based organization comprised of or representing these entities. This declaration is also required in order to be eligible for the in-kind contribution exception.
6. **Declaration of EQIP Eligibility:** Applicants must make a declaration in writing that they, or parties involved in the project, are eligible for EQIP. Refer to Section III. Eligibility Information for further information.
7. **Certifications:** All applications must include a signed **Standard Form (SF) 424B - Assurances, Non-construction Programs**. The SF-424B may be found at: [Grants.gov-Forms](https://www.grants.gov/forms) contacting the State office at (603) 868-9931 Extension 136.

Applicants, by signing and submitting an application, assure and certify that they are in compliance with the following from 7 CFR:

- a. Part 3017, [Government wide Debarment and Suspension \(Non-procurement\)](#)
- b. Part 3018, [New Restrictions on Lobbying](#)
- c. Part 3021, [Government wide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace \(Financial Assistance\)](#)

and

By submitting this grant/agreement application, the applicant attests that it has not been convicted of a felony criminal violation under Federal or State law in the 24 months preceding the date of signature, nor has any officer or agent of the applicant been convicted of a felony criminal violation under Federal or State law in the 24 months preceding the date of signature.

By submitting this grant/agreement application, the applicant attests that it does not have any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability.

By signing the SF 424, the corporation is attesting to the above certifications.

8. **DUNS Number:** A Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and keeping track of over 70 million businesses worldwide. CIG applicants must obtain a DUNS Number. Information on how to obtain a DUNS number can be found at: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do> or by calling 1-866-705-5711. **Please note that the registration may take up to 14 business days to complete.**
9. **Required Central Contractor Registry (CCR) Registration:** The CCR is a database that serves as the primary government repository for contractor information required for

the conduct of business with the government. This database will also be used as a central location for maintaining organizational information for organizations seeking and receiving grants from the government. **CIG applicants must register with the CCR. To register, go to: <http://www.ccr.gov>. Allow a minimum of 5 days to complete the CCR registration.**

C. How to Submit a Written Proposal

Applicants must submit one (1) signed original and three (3) complete copies of each project application. Each copy of the proposal must be stapled securely in the upper left-hand corner. Hard copies must be accompanied by an electronic copy on a compact disc (CD). Electronic files must be either Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat (pdf) files. Applications submitted via facsimile or email will not be accepted.

Submit written proposals to:

Deborah Weymouth, Assistant State Conservationist – Programs
USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Federal Building, 2 Madbury Road
Durham, New Hampshire 03824-2043

D. How to Submit a Proposal Electronically:

Applicants may submit proposals electronically through Grants.gov or via e-mail to: betty.anderson@nh.usda.gov. Applications submitted through Grants.gov must contain all of the elements of a complete application outlined above. Instructions for electronically submitting the required standard forms, and instructions for adding attachments are posted on Grants.gov. Applications submitted electronically are date and time stamped by Grants.gov and must be received by the identified closing date. **Note that NRCS is not responsible for any technical malfunctions or Web site problems related to Grants.gov submissions. Applicants should begin the Grants.gov process in advance of the submission deadline to avoid problems.**

Important Note: Notify Deborah Weymouth at 603-868-9931 ext. 102 or by email at deb.weymouth@nh.usda.gov by 4:00 pm EDT on June 7, 2012 that you have submitted your application through grants.gov, and retain a printed copy of your submittal for your records.

E. Proposal Due Date

Proposals must be received in the NRCS New Hampshire State Office by 4 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) on June 7, 2012. A proposal's **postmark date is NOT** a factor in whether an application is received on time. The applicant assumes the risk of any delays in proposal delivery. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit completed applications via overnight mail or delivery service to ensure timely receipt by NRCS.

F. Acknowledgement of Submission

Proposals received by the due date will be acknowledged with an official letter. If an applicant has not received an acknowledgment within 60 days of the submission, the applicant must contact the administrative contact (see section VII) immediately. Failure to do so may result in the application not being considered for funding by the peer review panel.

G. Funding Restrictions

The indirect costs (Facilities and Administration – F&A) for CIG awards may not exceed 15 percent (15%) of the total Federal funds provided under each award. Awardees may not use unrecovered indirect costs as part of their matching funds.

CIG 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:

1. Costs above the amount of funds authorized for the project;
2. Costs which are higher than originally budgeted for an item or category of items on the approved project budget without an authorized amendment;
3. Costs incurred prior to the effective date of the grant;
4. Costs which lie outside the scope of the approved project and any amendments thereto;
5. Entertainment costs, regardless of their apparent relationship to project objectives;
6. Compensation for injuries to persons, or damage to property arising out of project activities;
7. 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,
8. 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 below.

H. Patents and Inventions

Allocation of rights to patents and inventions shall be in accordance with USDA regulation [7 CFR §3019.36](#). This regulation provides that small businesses normally may retain the principal worldwide patent rights to any invention developed with USDA support. In accordance with [7 CFR §3019.2](#), this provision will also apply to commercial organizations or the purposes of CIG. 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 normally manufacture it domestically.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW

A. Proposal Review and Selection Process

Prior to technical review, each application will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice. Incomplete applications and those that do not meet the provisions of this notice will be eliminated from competition, and notification of elimination will be mailed to the applicant.

Applications meeting the provisions of this notice will be scored using the Criteria for proposal Evaluation listed below. Applications will be reviewed by a Grant Review Board, to ensure that the proposal evaluations are consistent with program objectives. The CIG Grant Review Board will consist of members of New Hampshire State Technical Committee and one or more NH

NRCS employees. The Grant Review Board will make recommendations to the State Conservationist for final selection and funding decisions.

B. Criteria for Proposal Evaluation

Peer review panels will use the following criteria to evaluate project proposals. Each of the four criteria carries an equal weight of 25 percent.

1. Purpose, Approach, and Goals

- a. Design and implementation of project based on sound methodology and demonstrated technology.
- b. Promotes environmental enhancement and protection in conjunction with agricultural production.
- c. Project outcome is clearly measurable.
- d. Potential for successful completion.
- e. Both beneficial and adverse impacts are considered and an acceptably significant level of improvement will be achieved.

2. Innovative Technology or Approach

- a. Project is innovative (national, regionally, and local in nature).
- b. Project conforms to description of innovative projects or activities in proposal request announcement.

3. Project Management

- a. Timeline and milestones are clear and reasonable.
- b. Project staff has technical expertise needed.
- c. Budget is adequately explained and justified.
- d. Experience and capacity to partner with and gain the support of other organizations, institutions and agencies.

4. Transferability

- a. Potential for producers and landowners to use the innovative technology or technologies.
- b. Potential to transfer the approach or technology nationally or to a broader audience or other geographic or socio-economic areas, including limited resource, socially disadvantaged, and other traditionally underserved producers and communities.
- c. Potential for NRCS to successfully use the innovative approach or methods.
- d. Project will result in the development of technical or related technology transfer materials (technical standards, technical notes, guide sheets, handbooks, software, etc.)

C. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

CIG Awards are anticipated to be announced on or before August 1, 2012. Funds are not awarded until an agreement is signed by both NRCS and the grantee. All agreements are expected to be awarded on or before August 15, 2011.

VI. AWARD INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

A. Award Notification

Applicants who have been selected will be notified by letter from the New Hampshire State Conservationist. This notice will indicate the need to work with the administrative contact to develop an agreement prior to starting work on the project. Applicants who are not selected will be notified by official letter.

B. Grant Agreement

The CCC, through NRCS, will use a grant agreement with selected applicants to document participation in the CIG component of EQIP. The grant agreement will include:

- Award amount and budget information including budget categories and amounts and the distribution of line item funds between in-kind, cash match and NRCS grant contribution;
- Information regarding requests for advance of funds or reimbursement;
- The role of NRCS technical oversight in the project;
- Reporting requirements including attendance at CIG grantee biannual meeting;
- Changes in project plans; and
- Other requirements and terms deemed necessary by the CCC to protect the interests of the United States.

C. Reporting Requirements

Grantees receiving an advance of Federal funds of more than \$25,000 are required to submit a SF-270 (Request for Advance or Reimbursement) no later than 15 days following the end of each quarter or 90 days after project completion. These reports are used to monitor cash advanced to recipients and to obtain disbursement and outlay information for each award.

Grantees must submit a Federal Financial Report (SF-425) no later than 30 days after the end of each quarter and 90 days after completion of project. The SF-270 and SF-425 are available on the [OMB website](#).

In addition, the grantee must submit a written performance progress report to the NRCS Program Contact and Technical Contact every 6 months. This report is distinct from the quarterly financial report described above. Each progress report must cover work performed during the previous 6-month period, including any funded or unfunded time extensions, a comparison of actual accomplishments to project goals, and a statement of work projected to be completed in the next 6-month period.

The grantee is responsible for providing the technical assistance required to successfully implement and complete the project. NRCS will designate a Program Contact, an Administrative Contact, and a Technical Contact to provide oversight for each project receiving an award. These individuals will have technical oversight responsibility for the project.

To satisfy the requirements of EQIP ([7 CFR 1466](#)) compliance measures, the grantee is required to submit as a component of the semi-annual progress report:

1. A list of producers, identified by name and social security number, of all EQIP-eligible producers or entities involved in the project.

2. The dollar amount of direct and indirect payment made to each individual producer or entity for any structural, vegetative, or management practices. Both quarterly and cumulative payment amounts must be submitted.
3. A self-certification indicating that each individual or entity receiving a direct or indirect payment through this grant is in compliance with the EQIP Payment Limitation, AGI, HEL, and Wetlands Conservation Compliance Farm Bill provisions.

A progress report template will be provided to grantees by the Program Contact. This template is available on the NRCS CIG Web site. The grantee must send copies of each semi-annual progress report to the NRCS contacts and comply with any requests for information from them. NRCS recommends that the grantee work closely with these subject matter experts throughout the course of the project.

Upon passage of the completion date of the project, a final report must be submitted within 90 days detailing project activities, funding received and expended, results and potential for transferability of results.

VII. NEW HAMPSHIRE NRCS CIG CONTACTS

For programmatic questions (e.g. natural resource concerns), please contact:

Federal Grant Representative:

Deborah Weymouth, USDA-NRCS
Federal Building, 2 Madbury Road, Durham, New Hampshire 03824-2043
Phone 603-868-9931 x 102 Fax: 603 868-5301
Email: deb.weymouth@nh.usda.gov

Technical Contact:

Rachael Phillips-Tibbetts, Acting NH NRCS Assistant State Conservationist – Programs
Federal Building, 2 Madbury Road, Durham, New Hampshire 03824-2043
Phone 603-868-9931 x 129 Fax: 603 868-5301
Email: rachael.phillips@nh.usda.gov

Administrative Contact:

Betty Anderson, Acting Grants & Agreement Specialist
USDA-NRCS
Federal Building, 2 Madbury Road, Durham, New Hampshire 03824-2043
Phone 603-868-9931 x 136 Fax: 603 868-5301
Email: betty.anderson@nh.usda.gov

Additional information about CIG, including fact sheets and FAQs, is available on the National NRCS CIG webpage and the New Hampshire NRCS CIG web page.

Signed in Durham, New Hampshire on 3-2-12.



RICHARD ELLSMORE, State Conservationist