



Natural Resources Conservation Service
Denver Federal Center
Building 56, Room 2604
P.O. Box 25426
Denver, CO 80225

December 10, 2010

State Technical Committee Members

Dear State Technical Committee Member:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Colorado recently announced the availability of approximately \$25 million to fund the Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Program (WREP), a voluntary program to help landowner s protect, restore, enhance, and manage high priority wetlands and optimize wildlife habitat.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2011, NRCS will make WREP funds available for partnership proposals that will enroll eligible landowners under a permanent easement, a 30-year easement, a 30-year contract on acreage owned by Indian tribes, or a restoration cost-share agreement.

Additionally, NRCS will accept partnership proposals that will provide for the long-term management of existing Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) easements. WREP funds are only available for financial assistance activities for enrollment, acquisition, restoration, enhancement, management activities, or other financial assistance costs.

For all activities conducted by partners, WREP will not provide technical assistance funds to partners to conduct outreach, assist with eligibility, develop restoration designs or management plans, conduct evaluations, or other technical assistance type activities. WREP funds may only be used for projects that meet WRP requirements and transactions processed through normal contracting procedures.

Approved partners are required to provide matching funds towards the cost of managing or restoring wetland habitat under the agreement. The matching funds can be either cash, in-kind, or a combination.

WREP requires partners to contribute to the cost of the project as follows:

1. Proposals for enrollment of new projects or restoring existing projects: partners are required to provide a match of: a) in-kind contributions of at least 20 percent of the restoration cost, b) cash only contributions of at least five percent of the restoration costs, or c) a combination of in-kind and cash contributions of at least 20 percent of the restoration costs.



2. Proposals for management of existing projects: partners are required to contribute at least 20 percent of the management costs. The 20 percent match requirement can be reached through either an in-kind contribution or a combination of in-kind and cash contributions.

Proposals which include additional partner resources will be given additional consideration in the selection process. Contributions provided by the partners to achieve additional ranking points can be in the form of technical or financial assistance for the protection, restoration, and enhancement of wetlands. Contributions can also be in the form of assistance with management and monitoring activities.

Contributions above the match requirement can be cash or in-kind equipment or services. Partners may also provide contributions in the form of incentives to landowners to participate in WREP; however, incentive payments will not be considered as part of the match requirement.

Project proposals must be received by the Colorado State Conservationist no later than **December 24, 2010**, to be eligible for funding. Proposals should be sent to: State Conservationist Allen Green, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Denver Federal Center, Building 56, Room 2604, P.O. Box 25426, Denver, CO 80225.

For information about other NRCS conservation programs, visit: www.co.nrcs.usda.gov, or the nearest USDA Service Center in your area.


ALLEN GREEN
State Conservationist

cc:

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