

Grants Available for Innovative Conservation Projects

Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) is a voluntary program intended to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies in environmental enhancement and protection, in conjunction with agricultural production. CIG funds projects targeting innovative on-the-ground conservation, including pilot projects and field demonstrations. CIG 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.

There are five natural resource concerns for possible funding through CIG for fiscal year 2008. They are:

- Water Resources
- Soil Resources
- Atmospheric Resources
- Grazing Land and Forest Health
- Wildlife Habitat

This Category also includes proposals that focus on Market Based Approaches to address any or all of these five resource concern areas. The objective of this approach is to develop, implement, and or evaluate processes, technology tools, institutional arrangements, or systems that are 'market-based' in nature and address one of the above priority resource concerns. 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
- Processes and institutional arrangements that develop, demonstrate, evaluate, and clarify successful approaches to market-based conservation involving private working lands.

There is also a technology component for possible funding through CIG for FY08. They are:

- Improved on-farm energy efficiency
- Water management (both drainage and irrigation water)

Grant Name: Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)

Funding Agency: USDA NRCS

CFDA #: 10.912

Due Date: February 20, 2008

Eligible Applicants: state, tribal, and local government agencies, non-governmental organizations, private businesses and individuals; projects must involve landowners who meet the EQIP eligibility requirements

Size and Range of Awards: \$20 million is available

Estimated Number of Awards: N/A

Examples of funded projects: Last year several projects in these areas were funded: forested riparian buffers, biofuels, grazing management, carbon credit trading, dairy waste water treatment, etc.

Website: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig/index.html>