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News Release

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NRCS seeks proposals to further conservation innovation in Oregon
Submit proposals to NRCS by May 23

PORTLAND, Ore. – (Mar. 24, 2016) — When it comes to advancing the viability of modern agriculture, innovation and conservation go hand-in-hand. That's why the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service is offering up to $250,000 this year in Oregon through its Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) program.

The program is open to individuals, local and state governments, non-profits, businesses and tribes. The deadline to submit applications is **May 23**.

CIG projects support the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies, while also aiding agricultural production. Proposed projects must occur within Oregon and may be county-based or statewide in scope.

"Conservation Innovation Grants enable NRCS to work with public and private entities—as well as farmers and ranchers—to accelerate the transfer of new tools and approaches to the wider agricultural community," said Tom Watson, acting NRCS Oregon state conservationist.

CIG proposals must involve farmers and ranchers who meet the eligibility criteria for the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). Proposals should also demonstrate how innovative technologies or approaches will address a natural resource concern in one of the following sub-categories:

- Energy
- Air quality and atmospheric change
- Water quality or quantity
- Plant health/vigor
- Soil quality and health
- Wildlife habitat

CIG does not fund research projects; rather, these funds support on-the-ground projects with an application in an agricultural setting.

Applicants may request up to $75,000 of federal funds; and in return, applicants must match those funds on a dollar-for-dollar basis from non-federal sources, which can include cash or in-kind services.

Since 2009, NRCS Oregon has awarded more than $2 million in competitive grants through its CIG program. Examples of previous Oregon CIG projects include piloting rain harvest catching systems (which collect and re-use rain water to supplement irrigation demands); and developing pest management techniques to limit pesticide use on cropland.

For complete details on CIG, read the 2016 Announcement of Program Funding, available on the Oregon CIG webpage or on Grants.gov.

Proposals may be submitted online via Grants.gov, emailed to the NRCS Oregon CIG Manager at Todd.Peplin@or.usda.gov; or mailed to:

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) Program Manager
1201 NE Lloyd Blvd., Suite 900
Portland, OR 97232

Mailed proposals must be received at the state office by 4 p.m. PST on May 23.

Applicants with questions about the program or the application process should contact the CIG Program Manager Todd Peplin at 503-414-3292 or todd.peplin@or.usda.gov.

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