

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

USDA ANNOUNCES THE AVAILABILITY OF GRANTS FOR INNOVATIVE GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION AND CARBON SEQUESTRATION PROJECTS

JACKSON, MS, December 13, 2010 - USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Chief Dave White today announced the availability of conservation grants to support large-scale demonstration projects that will accelerate the adoption of new and innovative approaches to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and promote carbon sequestration on America's private lands.

"By supporting the development of the most promising new approaches for reducing greenhouse gases we can identify new methods that may ultimately help every farmer and rancher reduce their carbon footprint," White said. "We want to encourage technology that helps the environment but also improves producers' ability to run sustainable and profitable operations by enhancing energy efficiency and soil quality."

NRCS is making \$5 million available through the Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) program, and requesting proposals that meet the following requirements:

- Promote the adoption of conservation systems and practices for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and sequestering carbon;
- Quantify the impacts of applied conservation practices on GHG emissions and carbon sequestration;
- Demonstrate and further develop opportunities for marketing environmental credits associated with reducing GHG emissions and/or increasing carbon sequestration;
- Quantify the environmental benefits of these practices and work with GHG trading organizations to assist eligible producers interested in selling their GHG emission-reduction credits; and
- Assess the market response to the availability of agricultural GHG credits.

CIG is a voluntary program intended to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies. This is the first time NRCS has made GHG projects a focus of the CIG program. Project proposals must involve producers who are eligible for the NRCS' [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) (EQIP), which offers financial and technical assistance to help producers implement conservation practices on agricultural land. In addition to the CIG awards, NRCS will provide up to \$10 million in EQIP funding to support eligible producers, who are working with grant recipients, as they implement conservation practices associated with selected GHG projects.

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Funding for CIG is made available through the 2008 Farm Bill. Funds will be awarded through a nationwide competitive grants process with applications being accepted from all 50 States, the Caribbean Area (Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands), and the Pacific Islands Area (Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands). Applications will be accepted from all eligible individuals, non-federal governments and non-governmental organizations, including federally recognized tribes and private businesses. At least 50 percent of the total cost of the GHG demonstration project must come from non-Federal matching funds (cash and in-kind contributions) provided by the grant recipient.

Applications for CIG GHG grants must be received in the NRCS National Headquarters by close of business February 11, 2011. Applications should be sent to: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Conservation Innovation Grants Program; National Technology Support Team, Room 6227-S; 1400 Independence Ave, SW; Washington, DC 20250. To view the complete Announcement of Program Funding, visit <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/cig/index.html>. To apply electronically visit: www.grants.gov/.

For more information about NRCS conservation programs online, visit: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>, or visit your local USDA Service Center.

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