

RANGELAND RESEARCH PROGRAM

2008 Request for Applications

APPLICATION DEADLINE: July 7, 2008



U.S. Department of Agriculture



Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service



U.S. Forest Service Research and Development

**COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE;
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

Rangeland Research Program

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under **10.200**.

DATES: Applications must be received by close of business (COB) on July 7, 2008 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding. Comments regarding this request for applications (RFA) are requested within six months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT: The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is requesting comments regarding this RFA from any interested party. These comments will be considered in the development of the next RFA for the program, if applicable, and will be used to meet the requirements of section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)(2)). This section requires the Secretary to solicit and consider input on a current RFA from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, education and extension for use in formulating future RFAs for competitive programs. Written stakeholder comments on this RFA should be submitted in accordance with the deadline set forth in the DATES portion of this Notice.

Written stakeholder comments should be submitted by mail to: Policy, Oversight, and Funds Management Staff; Office of Extramural Programs; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; USDA; STOP 2299; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2299; or via e-mail to: RFP-OEP@csrees.usda.gov. (This e-mail address is intended only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and not requesting information or forms.) In your comments, please state that you are responding to the **Rangeland Research Program** RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: CSREES announces the availability of grant funds and requests applications for the **Rangeland Research Program** (RRP) for fiscal year (FY) 2008 to support rangeland research. The amount available for support of this program in FY 2008 is approximately **\$950,000**.

This notice identifies the objectives for RRP projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a RRP grant. CSREES additionally requests stakeholder input from any interested party for use in the development of the next RFA for this program.

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PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

Section 1480 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended [7 USC 3333(a)(1)] which authorizes the Secretary, acting through the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), to establish a competitive grants program for rangeland research.

B. Purpose and Priorities

The goal of RRP is to contribute to the improvement of U.S. rangeland resources and the ecosystem services they provide by supporting the development of new and emerging rangeland science methodologies which specifically address the interrelationships between multiple disciplines.

The primary purpose of RRP is to provide U.S. agricultural producers, rural landowners, and land managers with integrated science strategies to make informed land management decisions with an emphasis on enhancing the restoration and sustainable integrity of rangelands. FY 2008 RRP funds will support projects in the following emphasis areas. Proposed projects must address components of at least three of the following emphasis areas:

1. **Rangeland Restoration** – emphasis on integrated science strategies for improved assessment procedures and technologies for rangeland health and status;
2. **Rangeland Fire and Fuels Management** – emphasis on integrated science strategies of prescribed fire for woody plant control, to enhance forage availability for livestock and wildlife, to encourage native plant establishment and production, and to promote biological diversity;
3. **Invasive Species** – emphasis on integrated science strategies to control and manage invasive species;
4. **Fish and Wildlife** – emphasis on integrated science strategies for the enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat on rangelands;
5. **Rangeland Watershed and Riparian Management** – emphasis on integrated science strategies for rangeland management at the watershed level and evaluation of the impacts of new management strategies;
6. **Cultural and Social Issues** – emphasis on integrated science strategies to understand and accommodate changes in land values, uses, agricultural markets, economic returns, and human perceptions of natural resource management;

7. **Technological Innovation** – emphasis on development of technological innovations that integrate new technologies, such as Geographical Information Systems (GIS), and integrated rangeland research datasets; and
8. **Livestock Management and Grazing** – integrated science strategies for sustainable livestock management and grazing practices that are compatible with the goal and purpose of RRP.

Priority will be given to proposals that effectively demonstrate the capacity to develop rangeland research programs that integrate multiple disciplines, are based on stakeholder input and include stakeholder involvement, and deliver the desired outcomes of both the purpose and goals of RRP.

C. Program Area Description

1. Rangeland Research

Agricultural producers, rural landowners, and land managers must employ science based strategies with the primary goal of enhancing the sustainable integrity of rangelands. Managing complex rangelands subject to today's demands for products and services requires integrated science strategies from several disciplines. Integration among sciences is required to address complex problems. Highly focused, traditional approaches have been proven insufficient to generate workable solutions to modern environmental issues. Rangeland research that provides appropriate, science-based decisions in rangeland management requires collaboration that works to inspire innovation. Rangeland research should employ a methodology that integrates approaches to discover, understand, and address phenomena that are too broad to be explained by standard disciplinary science. Integrated rangeland research projects should include collaborations that inspire innovative research that transcends disciplinary science and enhances land management strategies for future generations.

Rangeland research requires a collaborative effort of a multidisciplinary team of researchers. RRP encourages multidisciplinary teams that represent different types of eligible institutions. Successful applicants will document success with multidisciplinary research projects and with collaborative rangeland research efforts.

RRP is a collaborative effort between CSREES and USFS. A nationally coordinated meeting will be held to accomplish the following: solicit stakeholder input from various interested parties; establish research priorities; develop project parameters that will achieve these priorities; and establish comprehensive dissemination plans for research results. CSREES and USFS will provide programmatic and administrative oversight, and technical assistance. RRP is expected to be a system of research that can easily adapt to emerging concerns, changes in staff, and funding. Innovation of integrated rangeland research should be the driving force of all planned RRP research projects and staff.

Successful RRP applications will:

- Clearly document the experience level of key personnel working within a collaborative, integrated rangeland research project;
- Demonstrate the ability to participate in a comprehensive nationally coordinated effort that shares data, analysis of data, and derived conclusions;
- Demonstrate capacity to conduct efficient and successful integrated rangeland research projects;
- Demonstrate ability to develop new scientific methodologies and innovations that transcend standard disciplinary science;
- Ability to develop multidisciplinary research projects which result in an enhanced land and resource management knowledge base; and
- Ability to conceptualize and implement research projects that support the purpose and goals of RRP:
 - Identify key knowledge gaps within at least 3 of the 8 emphasis areas listed in Part I (B);
 - Provide solutions to eliminate these knowledge gaps; and
 - Demonstrate ability to provide information to better inform policy makers in developing the most equitable multi-state and/or regional strategies for rangeland enhancement for:
 - The long term knowledge base;
 - Existing opportunities for leveraging; and
 - Active public and private sector participation.

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

Approximately \$950,000 is available to fund applications in FY 2008. There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards.

B. Types of Applications

In FY 2008, applications may be submitted to the Rangeland Research Program as one of the following types of requests:

(1) New application. This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the **RRP** Program. All new applications will be reviewed competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.

(2) Renewal application. This is a project application that requests additional funding for a project beyond the period that was approved in an original or amended award. Applications for renewed funding must contain the same information as required for new applications, and additionally must contain a Progress Report (see Project Narrative, Part IV). Renewal applications must be received by the relevant due dates, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in appropriate area to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.

C. Project Types

For FY 2008, a proposal may request no less than \$350,000 and no more than \$500,000 and project periods may range from 1 to 3 years. Priority will be given to proposals that effectively demonstrate the capacity to develop rangeland research programs that integrate multiple disciplines, are based on stakeholder input and involve stakeholders, and deliver the desired outcomes of both the purpose and goals of RRP.

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Pursuant to Section 1480 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended [7 USC 3333(a)(1)] applications may be submitted by land-grant colleges and universities, State agricultural experiment stations, and colleges, universities, and Federal laboratories having a demonstrable capacity in rangeland research, as determined by the Secretary. Note: In FY 2008 USFS will not compete for this funding due to substantial involvement in the development and administration of this program.

Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project. An applicant's failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of an application deadline will result in CSREES returning the application without review or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude CSREES from making an award.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

Pursuant to Section 1480 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 as amended [7 USC 3333(b)(1)], applicants are required to provide 50 percent matching funds from non-federal sources for all proposed Federal funds sought in the application. Non-federal matching contributions, such as cash and third party in kind, are accepted under this program as qualified by 7 USC 3015 and 7 USC 3019.

PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Address to Request Application Package

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to CSREES in response to this RFA.

Prior to preparing an application, it is suggested that the PD/PI first contact an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grant.gov. If the organization is not prepared, the AOR should see http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp for steps for preparing to submit applications through Grants.gov.

The steps to access application materials are as follows:

1. Download and install PureEdge Viewer, a small, free program that provides access to the grant application. See http://www.grants.gov/resources/download_software.jsp#pureedge.
2. The application package must be obtained via Grants.gov, go to <http://www.grants.gov>, click on “Apply for Grants” in the left-hand column, click on “**Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions**,” enter the funding opportunity number **USDA-CSREES-OP-001625** in the appropriate box and click “Download Package.” From the search results, click “Download” to access the application package.

Contained within the application package is the “[CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov](#).” This Guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information about how to use a Grant Application Package in Grants.gov, and instructions on how to complete the application forms.

If assistance is needed to access the application package (e.g., downloading or navigating PureEdge forms, using PureEdge with a Macintosh computer), refer to resources available on the Grants.gov Web site first (<http://grants.gov/>). Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

- Grants.gov customer support
Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726
Business Hours: M-F 7:00 am – 9 pm Eastern Standard Time
Email: support@grants.gov

See <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html> for additional resources for applying electronically.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Electronic applications should be prepared following Part V and VI of the document entitled “[A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov.](#)” This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A. of this Part). The following is **additional information** needed in order to prepare an application in response to this RFA. If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFA is overriding.

Note the attachment requirements (e.g., portable document format) in Part III section 3. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide available with the Application Package at Grants.gov. **ANY PROPOSALS CONTAINING NON-PDF DOCUMENTS WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM CSREES REVIEW.** Partial applications will be excluded from consideration. With documented prior approval, resubmitted applications will be accepted until close of business (COB) on the closing date in the RFA.

If you do not own PDF generating software, Grants.gov provides online tools to assist applicants. Users will find a link to “[PDF Conversion Programs](#)” on (http://www.grants.gov/resources/download_software.jsp#pdf_conversion_programs).

1. R&R Other Project Information Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 3. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

- a. Project Summary/Abstract (Field 6. on the Form). The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of RRP.
- b. Project Narrative (Field 7. on the Form).

PLEASE NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed 20 pages of written text and up to 5 additional pages for figures and tables. This maximum (25 pages) has been established to ensure fair and equitable competition. The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

i) Introduction. A clear statement of the long-term goal(s) and supporting objectives or research questions of the proposed project should be included. Summarize the body of knowledge or other past activities that substantiate the need for the proposed project. Describe ongoing or recently completed significant activities related to the proposed project including the work of key project personnel. Preliminary data/information pertinent to the proposed research should be included in this section. In addition, this section should include in-depth information on the following:

- (1) Estimates of the magnitude of the issues and their relevance to stakeholders and to ongoing State-Federal rangeland research programs;
- (2) Role of the stakeholders in problem identification, planning, and implementation and evaluation; and
- (3) Reasons for having the work performed at the proposing institution.

ii) Objectives. Clear, concise, and logically arranged statements of specific aims of the proposed effort.

iii) Rationale and Significance. Describe the rationale behind the proposed research. Document priority-setting processes and stakeholder involvement. Describe how the applications' goals and priorities relate to potential long-range restoration, improvement, and sustainability of U.S. rangelands. Novel ideas or contributions that the proposed project offers should also be discussed in this section.

iv) Methods and Approach. The activities proposed or problems being addressed must be clearly stated and the approaches being applied clearly described. Specifically, this section must include:

- A description of the activities proposed and the sequence in which the activities are to be performed;
- Methods to be used in carrying out the proposed project, including the feasibility of the methods and rationale for their use in the project;
- Expected outcomes;
- Means by which results will be analyzed, assessed, or interpreted;
- Uses for results or products;
- Pitfalls that might be encountered; and
- Mechanisms for reporting research accomplishments and technological interface for disseminating information.

v) Project Timetable. The proposal should outline all important phases as a function of time, year by year, for the entire project, including periods beyond the grant funding period.

vi) Progress Report. Renewal applications must contain a detailed progress report demonstrating satisfactory progress towards achievement of RRP goals. Progress reports may not be used to circumvent the maximum (25 pages). Do not submit a progress report for new applications.

2. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 4. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

3. R&R Personal Data – As noted in Part V, 5., the submission of this information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award. **PLEASE DO NOT PROVIDE THE SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER OF PROJECT DIRECTOR / PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR.**

4. SF 424 (R&R) Budget Fed & Non-Fed

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 6., of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide. This form (accompanied by the required Budget Justification attachment (see Field K on the Form)) contains the itemized listing and description of your project's budget. Applicants must complete one SF 424 (R&R) Budget Fed & Non-Fed Form for each 12-month period, plus a cumulative budget form and budget narrative for the entire project.

5. Supplemental Information Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part VI, 1. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Program Code (Field 2. on the Form). Enter the program code name (i.e., enter "Rangeland Research Program") and the program code (i.e., enter "VK").

b. Field 3. Type of Applicant. Enter the type of Applicant/Organization: (for example 1862 Cooperative Extension Service).

c. Conflict of Interest List (Field 8. on the Form). A conflict of interest list is required under this program.

C. Submission Dates and Times

Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, Section 1.9 of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by COB on **July 7, 2008** (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

Correspondence regarding submitted applications will be sent using e-mail. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide accurate e-mail addresses, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance.

If the AR has not received correspondence **from CSREES** regarding a submitted application within 30 days of submission of the application, please contact the Program Contact identified in Part VII of the applicable RFA and request the proposal number assigned to the application.

Failure to do so may result in the application not being considered for funding by the peer

review panel or a delay in the issuance of an award. Once the application has been assigned a proposal number, this number should be cited on all future correspondence.

D. Funding Restrictions

CSREES has determined that grant funds awarded under this authority may not be used for the renovation or refurbishment of research, education, or extension space; the purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such space; or the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.

Pursuant to Section 1473 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended, 7 U.S.C. 3319, indirect costs and tuition remission are not allowable and no funds will be approved for this purpose.

E. Other Submission Requirements

The applicant should follow the submission requirements noted in the document entitled “A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov.”

PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

Each application will be evaluated in a 2-part process. First, each application will be screened to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, applications that meet these requirements will be technically evaluated by a review panel.

Reviewers will be selected based upon training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors: (a) The level of relevant formal scientific, technical education, or extension experience of the individual, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research, education, or extension activities; (b) the need to include as reviewers experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields; (c) the need to include as reviewers other experts (e.g., producers, range or forest managers/operators, and consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs; (d) the need to include as reviewers experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and Federal agencies, private profit and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations; (e) the need to maintain a balanced composition of reviewers with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and (f) the need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness to producers and the general public of each application.

B. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria below will be used in reviewing applications submitted in response to this RFA:

General criteria to be used to award applications: Total Value 50%

1. Relevancy of the application to the goals and purpose of RRP: Value 25%
 - Demonstrated ability to develop new scientific methodologies and innovations that transcend standard disciplinary science;
 - Relevancy to integrated rangeland science discipline and to specific goals, purpose, and priorities of RRP;
 - Quality of stakeholder process (es) by which priorities were identified;
 - Evidence of stakeholder involvement in development of proposed research,
 - Level of involvement of stakeholders and social science aspects in the conduct of research; and
 - Demonstrated capability to implement a technology transfer component.
2. Coordination component of the application: Value 25%
 - Documented experience in nationally coordinated rangeland research projects involving a national priority setting process; and
 - Well defined proposal timelines and budget to complete project with effective results.

Specific criteria to be used to award applications: Value 50% Total

1. Scientific Merit of the Application for Research: Value 25%

- Novelty, innovation, uniqueness, and originality;
- Clarity and delineation of objectives;
- Adequacy of the description of the undertaking and suitability and feasibility of methodology;
- Demonstration of feasibility through preliminary and current data; and
- Probability of success of project.

2. Qualifications of Project Personnel, Adequacy of Facilities, and Project Management Capability: Value 25%

- Qualifications of applicant (PD and team) to conduct the proposed project, including performance record and potential for future accomplishments;
- Collaboration component involving partnerships among Federal agencies, research participants and stakeholders; and
- Documented experience with collaborative, comprehensive rangeland research.

C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

During the peer evaluation process, extreme care will be taken to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. For the purpose of determining conflicts of interest, the academic and administrative autonomy of an institution shall be determined by reference to the current Higher Education Directory, published by Higher Education Publications, Inc., 6400 Arlington Boulevard, Suite 648, Falls Church, Virginia 22042. Phone: (703) 532-2300. Web site: <http://www.hepinc.com>.

Names of submitting institutions and individuals, as well as application content and peer evaluations, will be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of peer reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire review process. Therefore, the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants.

D. Organizational Management Information

Specific management information relating to an applicant shall be submitted on a one time basis, with updates on an as needed basis, as part of the responsibility determination prior to the award of a grant identified under this RFA, if such information has not been provided previously under this or another CSREES program. CSREES will provide copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the preaward process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on its status as one of these entities, there are factors which may exclude an applicant from receiving Federal financial and nonfinancial assistance and benefits under this program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual involved or a determination that an applicant is not responsible based on submitted organizational management information).

PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the awarding official of CSREES shall make grants to those responsible, eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this RFA. The date specified by the awarding official of CSREES as the effective date of the grant shall be no later than September 30 of the Federal fiscal year in which the project is approved for support and funds are appropriated for such purpose, unless otherwise permitted by law. It should be noted that the project need not be initiated on the grant effective date, but as soon thereafter as practical so that project goals may be attained within the funded project period. All funds granted by CSREES under this RFA shall be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, the regulations, the terms and conditions of the award, the applicable Federal cost principles, and the Department's assistance regulations (parts 3015 and 3019 of 7 CFR).

B. Award Notice

The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information including, at a minimum, the following:

- (1) Legal name and address of performing organization or institution to whom the Administrator has issued an award under the terms of this request for applications;
- (2) Title of project;
- (3) Name(s) and institution(s) of PDs chosen to direct and control approved activities;
- (4) Identifying award number assigned by the Department;
- (5) Project period, specifying the amount of time the Department intends to support the project without requiring recompetition for funds;
- (6) Total amount of Departmental financial assistance approved by the Administrator during the project period;
- (7) Legal authority(ies) under which the award is issued;
- (8) Appropriate Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number;
- (9) Applicable award terms and conditions (see <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html> to view CSREES award terms and conditions);

(10) Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the award; and

(11) Other information or provisions deemed necessary by CSREES to carry out its respective awarding activities or to accomplish the purpose of a particular award.

C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Several Federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and to project grants awarded under this program. These include, but are not limited to:

7 CFR Part 1, subpart A—USDA implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

7 CFR Part 3—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-129 regarding debt collection.

7 CFR Part 15, subpart A—USDA implementation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

7 CFR Part 331 and 9 CFR Part 121—USDA implementation of the Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002.

7 CFR Part 3015—USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, implementing OMB directives (i.e., OMB Circular Nos. A-21 and A-122, now codified at 2 CFR Parts 220 and 230) and incorporating provisions of 31 U.S.C. 6301-6308 (formerly the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, Pub. L. No. 95-224), as well as general policy requirements applicable to recipients of Departmental financial assistance.

7 CFR Part 3017—USDA implementation of Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) and 7 CFR Part 3021— Governmentwide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Grants).

7 CFR Part 3018—USDA implementation of Restrictions on Lobbying. Imposes prohibitions and requirements for disclosure and certification related to lobbying on recipients of Federal contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, and loans.

7 CFR Part 3019—USDA implementation of OMB Circular A-110, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3052—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non profit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3407—CSREES procedures to implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

29 U.S.C. 794 (section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and 7 CFR Part 15b (USDA implementation of statute) —prohibiting discrimination based upon physical or mental handicap in Federally assisted programs.

35 U.S.C. 200 et seq. —Bayh Dole Act, controlling allocation of rights to inventions made by employees of small business firms and domestic nonprofit organizations, including universities, in Federally assisted programs (implementing regulations are contained in 37 CFR Part 401).

D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

Grantees are required to submit initial project information and annual and summary reports to CSREES' Current Research Information System (CRIS). The CRIS database contains narrative project information, progress/impact statements, and final technical reports that are made available to the public. For applications recommended for funding, instructions on preparing and submitting project documentation will be provided to the applicant by the agency contact. Documentation must be submitted to CRIS before CSREES funds will be released. Project reports will be requested by the CRIS office when required. For more information about CRIS, visit <http://cris.csrees.usda.gov>.

Additional annual reports may be requested to provide timely information for the Secretary of Agriculture and Congress. The NPL will request additional reports as needed.

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact Charlotte Baer; National Program Leader – Plant and Animal Systems (PAS) Unit; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; STOP 2220; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250 - 2220; Telephone: (202) 401-6848; Fax: (202) 401-1602; E-mail: cbaer@csrees.usda.gov; OR Dr. James P. Dobrowolski, National Program Leader – Natural Resources and Environment (NRE) Unit; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; STOP 2215; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2215; Telephone: (202) 401-5016; Fax: (202) 401-1706; E-mail: jdobrowolski@csrees.usda.gov; Or Dr. E. Durant McArthur – Program Manager, Grassland, Shrubland, and Desert Ecosystems, Forest Service; U. S. Department of Agriculture; Rocky Mountain Research Station, Shrub Sciences Laboratory; 735 North 500 East, Provo, Utah 84606-1856, Telephone: (801) 356-5112; E-mail: dmcarthur@fs.fed.us; Fax: (801) 375-6968; Cell: (801) 369-0802; St. George Office (435) 628-7551; OR Dr. Ralph Holiday Crawford – National Program Leader for Rangeland Ecology Research, Forest Management Science; US Forest Service R&D; U. S. Department of Agriculture; Office Address: 1601 N. Kent Street RPC-4, Arlington, VA 22209; Telephone: (703) 605-5253; Fax: (703) 605-5133; E-mail: rcrawford01@fs.fed.us.

PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION

A. Access to Review Information

Copies of reviews, not including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments will be sent to the applicant PD after the review process has been completed.

B. Use of Funds; Changes

1. Delegation of Fiscal Responsibility

Unless the terms and conditions of the award state otherwise, the awardee may not in whole or in part delegate or transfer to another person, institution, or organization the responsibility for use or expenditure of award funds.

2. Changes in Project Plans

a. The permissible changes by the awardee, PD(s), or other key project personnel in the approved project shall be limited to changes in methodology, techniques, or other similar aspects of the project to expedite achievement of the project's approved goals. If the awardee or the PD(s) is uncertain as to whether a change complies with this provision, the question must be referred to the Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO) for a final determination. The ADO is the signatory of the award document, not the program contact.

b. Changes in approved goals or objectives shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes. In no event shall requests for such changes be approved which are outside the scope of the original approved project.

c. Changes in approved project leadership or the replacement or reassignment of other key project personnel shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes.

d. Transfers of actual performance of the substantive programmatic work in whole or in part and provisions for payment of funds, whether or not Federal funds are involved, shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such transfers, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of the award.

e. The project period may be extended by CSREES without additional financial support, for such additional period(s) as the ADO determines may be necessary to complete or fulfill the purposes of an approved project, but in no case shall the total project period exceed five years. Any extension of time shall be conditioned upon prior request by the awardee and approval in writing by the ADO, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of award.

f. Changes in Approved Budget: Unless stated otherwise in the terms and conditions of award, changes in an approved budget must be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to instituting such changes if the revision will involve transfers or expenditures of

amounts requiring prior approval as set forth in the applicable Federal cost principles, Departmental regulations, or award.

C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of CSREES transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. The original copy of an application that does not result in an award will be retained by the Agency for a period of three years. Other copies will be destroyed. Such an application will be released only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final action thereon.

D. Regulatory Information

For the reasons set forth in the final Rule related Notice to 7 CFR part 3015, subpart V (48 FR 29114, June 24, 1983), this program is excluded from the scope of the Executive Order 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials. Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this Notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0039.

E. Definitions

For the purpose of this program, the following definitions are applicable:

1890 Land-Grant Institution means one of those institutions eligible to receive funds under the Act of August 30, 1890 (26 Stat. 419, chapter 841, 7 U.S.C. 321 et seq.) including Tuskegee University and West Virginia State University.

1994 Land-Grant Institution means one of those institutions as defined in Section 532 of the Equity in Education Land-Grant Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note), as amended. These institutions are commonly referred to as Tribal Colleges or Tribal Universities.

Administrator means the Administrator of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) and any other officer or employee of the Department to whom the authority involved is delegated.

Authorized Departmental Officer means the Secretary or any employee of the Department who has the authority to issue or modify grant instruments on behalf of the Secretary.

Authorized Representative means the president or chief executive officer of the applicant organization or the official, designated by the president or chief executive officer of the applicant organization, who has the authority to commit the resources of the organization.

Budget period means the interval of time (usually 12 months) into which the project period is divided for budgetary and reporting purposes.

Cash contributions means the applicant's cash outlay, including the outlay of money contributed to the applicant by non-Federal third parties.

Department or USDA means the United States Department of Agriculture.

Education means formal classroom instruction, laboratory instruction, and practicum experience in the food and agricultural sciences and other related matters such as faculty development, student recruitment and services, curriculum development, instructional materials and equipment, and innovative teaching methodologies.

Grant means the award by the Secretary of funds to an eligible organization or individual to assist in meeting the costs of conducting, for the benefit of the public, an identified project which is intended and designed to accomplish the purpose of the program as identified in these guidelines.

Grantee means an organization designated in the grant award document as the responsible legal entity to which a grant is awarded.

Matching means that portion of allowable project costs not borne by the Federal Government, including the value of in-kind contributions.

Peer review means an evaluation of a proposed project for scientific or technical quality and relevance performed by experts with the scientific knowledge and technical skills to conduct the proposed work or to give expert advice on the merits of a proposal.

Project Director means the single individual designated by the grantee in the grant application and approved by the Secretary who is responsible for the direction and management of the project, also known as a principal investigator for research activities.

Prior approval means written approval evidencing prior consent by an authorized departmental officer as defined above.

Project means the particular activity within the scope of the program supported by a grant award.

Project period means the period, as stated in the award document and modifications thereto, if any, during which Federal sponsorship begins and ends.

Range embraces rangelands and also many forest lands which support an understory or periodic cover of herbaceous or shrubby vegetation amenable to certain range management principles or practices.

Rangeland is land on which the native vegetation (climax or natural potential) is

predominantly grasses, grass-like plants, forbs or shrubs suitable for grazing or browsing use. Rangelands include natural grassland, savannas, most deserts, tundra, alpine plant communities, coastal marshes, wet meadows and introduced plant communities managed like Rangeland.

Research activity means a scientific investigation or inquiry resulting in the generation of knowledge.

Secretary means the Secretary of Agriculture and any other officer or employee of the Department to whom the authority involved is delegated.