

Integrated Research, Education, and Extension Competitive Grants Program – National Integrated Water Quality Program

FY 2008 Request for Applications

APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 29, 2008



U.S. Department of Agriculture



Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

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

**INTEGRATED RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION COMPETITIVE
GRANTS PROGRAM – NATIONAL INTEGRATED WATER QUALITY PROGRAM**

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.303.

DATES: Applications must be received by close of business (COB) on **April 29, 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 National Integrated Water Quality Program RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: CSREES announces the availability of grant funds and requests applications for the Integrated Research, Education, and Extension Competitive Grants Program – National Integrated Water Quality Program (NIWQP) for fiscal year (FY) 2008. CSREES anticipates providing approximately \$12.6 million in support for this program in FY 2008.

This notice identifies the objectives for NIWQP projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a NIWQP 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 406 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA) (7 U.S.C. 7626) authorized the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a research, education, and extension competitive grants program to provide funding for agricultural activities with a total integrated, multifunctional research, education, and extension approach (see definition in Part VIII, E.). Subject to the availability of appropriations to carry out this program, the Secretary may award grants to colleges and universities (as defined by section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA) (7 U.S.C. 3103)) on a competitive basis for integrated research, education, and extension projects. Grants are to be awarded to address priorities in United States agriculture that involve integrated research, education, and extension activities as determined by the Secretary in consultation with the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board (NAREEEAB). Section 7206 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 amended section 406(b) of AREERA to add the 1994 Land-Grant Institutions as eligible to apply for grants under this authority.

CSREES will administer the Integrated Research, Education, and Extension Competitive Grants Program by determining priorities in U.S. agriculture through Agency stakeholder input processes in consultation with the NAREEEAB. Each RFA will be developed each fiscal year based on these established priorities and approaches to solving the critical agricultural issues. While the overall approach to solving critical agricultural issues, priorities, or problems will be through an integration of research, education, and extension activities within each individual program, component RFAs, depending on the priority addressed, may request applications that are research, education, or extension only, or a combination thereof.

B. Purpose and Priorities

The goal of the National Integrated Water Quality Program (NIWQP) is to contribute to the improvement of the quality of our Nation's **surface water** and **groundwater** resources through research, education, and extension activities. Projects funded through this program will work to solve water resource problems by advancing and disseminating the knowledge base available to agricultural, rural, and urbanizing communities. Funded projects should lead to science-based decision making and management practices that improve the quality of the Nation's surface water and groundwater resources in agricultural, rural, and urbanizing watersheds.

Priorities for the NIWQP are consistent with *A Strategy for Federal Science and Technology to Support Water Availability and Quality in the United States* (Office of Science and Technology Policy, 2007) and are responsive to recommendations from the NAREEEAB. Priorities also reflect input from stakeholder groups and organizations who conduct, collaborate with, or respond to research, education, and extension programming to improve water resources.

FY 2008 Program Priorities include:

- Developing tools and expanding knowledge to make more efficient use of existing water supplies and conserve water in agricultural, rural, and urbanizing communities.
- Understanding the role of ecosystems in maintaining water availability and quality.
- Expanding knowledge on water use efficiency and water quality protection to improve water policy implementation and compliance.

C. Program Area Description

Projects **MUST** address water quality issues in **agricultural, rural, and/or urbanizing watersheds**. Eight topical themes have been identified for the NIWQP:

1. Animal Waste Management;
2. Drinking Water and Human Health;
3. Environmental Restoration;
4. Nutrient and Pesticide Management;
5. Pollution Assessment and Prevention;
6. Watershed Management;
7. Water Conservation and Agricultural Water Management; and
8. Water Policy and Economics.

The CSREES National Water Program promotes the synergistic interaction among projects funded in the three (3) Program Areas listed below. We expect that knowledge created through funded projects is shared at the community and watershed scale via education and outreach activities. We also expect that knowledge is transferred among projects and across Program Areas within the NIWQP. Ultimately, Watershed Scale Projects should be sharing and coordinating project accomplishments with appropriate National Water Resource Projects and Regional Water Resource projects. Likewise, National Water Resource and Regional Water Resource projects should coordinate activities to achieve synergistic effects of greater knowledge transfer and use among stakeholders and practitioners in the water resources community. We expect project outcomes and impacts to describe changes in knowledge, action, and conditions for targeted audiences.

Applications are being solicited for the National Integrated Water Quality Program under the following areas:

1. National Water Resource Projects;
2. Regional Water Resource Projects; and
3. Watershed Scale Projects.

In each Program Area, projects are solicited for only those topics identified in that program area's description below. It is essential that applicants read the descriptions carefully when preparing applications. Proposals submitted to the Watershed Scale

Projects (Program Area Code 110.C) must address the priority question areas listed in this RFA or applications will not be reviewed.

Support for International Activities:

Agricultural water resources issues addressed in this program reflect the broader spectrum of international water issues. This program encourages international partnerships, linkages, and exchanges so long as clear explanation is provided as to how such international activities, as part of the proposed project, will contribute to U.S. national water resources issues. However, investigators should recognize that such international partnerships, linkages, and exchanges are expected to be a small proportion of the total funding provided through this program.

Support for eXtension:

NIWQP encourages projects that develop content suitable for delivery through eXtension (http://about.extension.org/mediawiki/files/5/51/EXECUTIVE_SUMMARY_-_March_14%2C_2006_-_YEAR_2.pdf). This content is for end users, as opposed to staff development, and must align with the eXtension Implementation Plan (available at <http://about.extension.org/wiki/Planning>). Funds may be used to contribute to existing Communities of Practice (COPs) (http://about.extension.org/wiki/Glossary_of_eXtension_Terms#Community_of_Practice_.28CoP.29;) or form new COPs that focus on Water Resources (for examples of developing COPs and guidance on forming COPs, see http://cop.extension.org/wiki/Main_Page).

1. National Water Resource Projects

Program Area Code 110.A

Across the nation, communities are attempting to formulate public policy and management strategies that will allow economic growth and increased profitability. Proposed projects should coordinate new or expand existing programs to provide a common base of knowledge in support of individuals and communities addressing economic growth and profitability while also protecting or improving water resources.

Through these projects, we intend to: (a) increase public understanding and involvement in community decision-making for water resources; and (b) facilitate development and application of recommendations and tools to improve public policy. This Program Area will support projects that facilitate the appropriate application of tools and techniques to strengthen awareness of the impacts of current and proposed land use activities on water resources. We expect project outcomes and impacts to describe changes in knowledge, action, and conditions for targeted audiences.

All applications **must**:

- Work at a national or multi-regional scale (based on U.S. EPA regions <http://www.epa.gov/nerl/regions/regions.html>);

- Include an evaluation component to document project impacts at the community level that ultimately are aggregated to the multi-regional or national scale. The evaluation component should document impacts on behavior change or elevating awareness and building capacity; and
- Provide an appropriate management plan for the project team and all partners to successfully address the water resource issue of concern.

Proposed projects should:

- (a) Develop solutions to identified water resource issues of concern;
- (b) Result in additional citizen involvement;
- (c) Contribute to an increase in community partnerships and networks; and
- (d) Yield more rational analysis of environmental decisions and wider dispersal of information in communities and across the Nation.

Two (2) areas of special emphasis exist for the FY 2008 program. Projects addressing one of these two areas of special emphasis will be given priority for funding.

- A. Use of recycled water in agriculture. Successful projects should address the following questions: What knowledge gaps and barriers exist to expanded implementation and what strategies can be developed to overcome these barriers? How can we best document and communicate scientific information regarding benefits and risks of using recycled water in agriculture? Successful projects also should develop appropriate training and educational materials for key target audiences in food production, food processing, and consumption. Successful projects should provide an organized synthesis of available information that addresses the questions and issues identified above. These projects should include multi-disciplinary teams that include expertise on water, food safety, agronomy, engineering, microbiology, and other relevant disciplines.

Additional resources regarding the use of recycled water in agriculture are available on the CSREES web site at:

http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/nre/in_focus/water_if_security.html
http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/nre/in_focus/water_if_listening.html
http://www.csrees.usda.gov/newsroom/news/2005news/water_wp.html

- B. Impacts of bioenergy development on water use and water quality. What sources of water (quality and quantity) can be used or will be needed to expand bioenergy development for crop growth and in the energy production process? What will be the changes in water quantity and quality that result from converting conservation reserve lands or changing cropping patterns or practices (e.g. tillage, residue management, and nutrient management)? How will biobased feedstock management during and after processing impact water quality and water demand? Successful projects should develop

appropriate training and educational materials for key target audiences that integrate water protection and management into biofuel production and processing. We encourage multi-disciplinary teams that include expertise on water, engineering, forestry, rangelands, agronomy, economics, policy, and other relevant disciplines.

The CSREES National Water Program promotes the synergistic interaction among projects funded in the three (3) Program Areas. National Water Resource and Regional Water Resource projects should coordinate activities to achieve synergistic effects of greater knowledge transfer and use among stakeholders and practitioners in the water resources community.

All Project Directors (PDs) funded in this section of the program are expected to participate in the annual CSREES National Water Conference. Reasonable travel expenses relative to attending the CSREES National Water Conference may be claimed as part of the project budget.

In addition, funded PDs are expected to participate in the Standing Leadership Team for National Water Resource Projects of the CSREES Committee for Shared Leadership for Water Quality. Information about this committee is available at www.usawaterquality.org.

Award recipients are expected to provide copies of annual reports and periodic updates to the CSREES National Program Leader for Water Resources (see Part VII Agency Contacts) and appropriate Regional Water Resource Project Directors. Contact information for the Regional Water Resource Project Directors will be provided to award recipients at the time of the award.

Examples of funded National Water Resource Projects are available at www.usawaterquality.org/facilitation.

2. Regional Water Resource Projects

Program Area Code 110.B

(Maximum award: \$650,000 per year/ per region for up to four years. Projects involving more than one region may request additional funding beyond the \$650,000. CSREES expects that some regions will request less funding due to a smaller number of states within the region).

CSREES invites proposals to ensure the integration of water resource efforts within the jurisdiction of each of the ten (10) regions established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA Regions are: *Region 1*—Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. *Region 2*—New Jersey, New York, and the territories of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. *Region 3*—Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. *Region 4*—Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. *Region 5*—Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. *Region 6*—Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. *Region 7*—Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska. *Region 8*—Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. *Region 9*—Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, and the Pacific Island territories. *Region 10*—Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. Proposals may be submitted for one or any combination of regions.

This component of the NIWQP is designed to make research, education, and extension resources of the university system more accessible to Federal, State, and local water resources improvement efforts. Through these projects, new or expanded opportunities are expected for agricultural producers and agriculturally impacted communities to adopt voluntary approaches for the improvement of water resources. **Funds from this program section should be used to promote delivery of multi-state programming to address regional and/or multi-regional water quality concerns.** Projects are encouraged that promote delivery of effective and efficient programs that address common water resources issues between adjacent regions. Leveraging funds across multiple regions also is encouraged.

Proposals in this section will:

- (a) Target the most important water resource issues within the region and the relevant NIWQP program themes (see topical themes listed on page 5) and deliver knowledge-based programs that protect or improve water resources through adoption of practices and technologies in agricultural, rural, and urbanizing watersheds;
- (b) Build new capacity within the region – empowering new groups to participate in regional programs through regional workshops, conferences, seed grants or other mechanisms;
- (c) Integrate research, extension, and education, promote stakeholder focused research and extension efforts, and improve curriculum development for water resources;
- (d) Build new and innovative leadership in water resources by linking and leveraging CSREES funded projects (including formula and competitively funded projects) into regional programs and expand the geographic impact of project successes or investments;
- (e) Employ websites, regional needs assessments or surveys, Regional Advisory Committees, and logic models or other evaluation tools to improve regional coordination and evaluate the effectiveness of regional programs and approaches;
- (f) Use innovative technologies to communicate successes and project impacts that describe changes in knowledge, action, and conditions for targeted audiences; and
- (g) Provide effective liaison efforts between Federal, State, and local agencies and organizations in the region (as needed) and universities and colleges represented in the project.

Each Regional Water Resource project is expected to participate in activities that strengthen the capacity of the national program to meet NIWQP goals (http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/nre/in_focus/water_if_waterquality.html). Key elements of the national program include the continued development and hosting of a national web site (www.usawaterquality.org) that coordinates and links to web sites hosted by Regional Water Resource projects; development and implementation of a system to describe and report successes and impacts; hosting the CSREES National Water Conference; and communicating the successes

from water resources projects that demonstrate the capacity of the national program to address water resource issues.

The PD of the Regional project is expected to participate as a member of the CSREES Committee for Shared Leadership for Water Quality (CSL-WQ). The Regional PD also must travel to and participate in quarterly CSL-WQ meetings, and participate in subcommittees of the CSL-WQ, as appropriate. Information concerning the CSL-WQ is available at <http://www.usawaterquality.org/about/csl/>

All PDs and Co-PDs funded in this section of the program are expected to participate in the annual CSREES National Water Conference. Reasonable travel expenses relative to attending the CSREES National Water Conference may be claimed as part of the project budget.

Award recipients are expected to provide copies of annual reports and periodic updates to the CSREES National Program Leader for Water Quality (see Part VII Agency Contacts).

3. Watershed Scale Projects

Program Area Code 110.C

We are interested in projects that solve water resource issues using research, education, and extension activities. We encourage projects that explore the linkage between surface water and groundwater availability and quality. Successful projects must describe expected outcomes in terms of changes in knowledge, changes in behaviors, and changes in environmental conditions. Projects must be conducted at a watershed or equally-appropriate geographic scale. Projects at the plot- or field-scale will not be accepted.

Three (3) project types are allowed in Program Area 110.C: Education projects (up to \$60,000 per year), extension projects (up to \$80,000 per year); or integrated research, education, and extension projects (up to \$220,000 per year). All projects may be one (1) to three (3) years in duration.

All projects must identify the cause of water resource degradation. All projects are expected to develop and implement an evaluation plan that captures project outcomes and demonstrates the impact of the project through measured improvements in water resources and/or measurable behavior change.

Projects MUST address at least one (1) of the two (2) following issue areas:

- A. Drought, climate change, salinity, and competing demands for water resources could lead to 20% less water available for agriculture, and rural and urbanizing communities by 2025. Projects are requested that demonstrate conservation of water resources at the watershed (or other appropriate) scale to meet this potential diminished supply.

Examples include: Strategies or tools for effective education and outreach related to water and wastewater use for producers, decision-makers, and the public; Improved water management strategies for homeowners and the landscape industry; Water conservation at

the watershed scale through irrigation efficiency or improved water management.

- B. Tools, management strategies, and new technologies are needed to improve conservation on working lands (grazing lands, forest lands, and croplands) or expand the acceptance and implementation of long-term land retirement programs. Projects are requested that improve the effectiveness of conservation practices and programs by targeting critical areas (physical, social, or economic) and protecting or improving these areas to achieve water resource goals.

Examples include: Innovative graduate and undergraduate educational programs that prepare the next generation of water professionals to address multi-disciplinary water resource issues and challenges; Modeling and management tools that reduce the risk of water quality impairment from critical locations through implementing appropriate conservation practices or programs; Tools that help agricultural producers to visualize water quality and other environmental benefits and compare alternative income trajectories from land retirement.

All PDs funded in this section of the program are expected to participate in the annual CSREES National Water Conference. Reasonable travel expenses to the CSREES National Water Conference may be claimed as part of the project budget.

The intent of the NIWQP is to have Watershed Scale projects funded by the program participate in, coordinate with, and share suitable information with the appropriate Regional Water Resource and National Water Resource programs. These interactions are intended to expand the geographic scope and impact of Watershed Scale projects to a broader regional audience.

Selected projects, based upon their objectives, may be identified as particularly relevant to the USDA CEAP Program. These projects may be asked to participate in CEAP activities and cooperate with CEAP investigators to promote effective conservation at the watershed scale.

Award recipients are expected to provide copies of annual reports and periodic updates to the CSREES National Program Leader for Water Quality (see Part VII Agency Contacts) and appropriate Regional Water Resource Project Directors. Award recipients also are expected to participate in Regional Water Resource Project meetings. Contact information for the Regional Project Directors will be provided to award recipients at the time of the award.

Contribution to Rangeland Ecological Site Descriptions (ESDs) and State and Transition (S&T) Models

In order to help focus their research, applicants who are likely to generate new knowledge that is relevant to the dynamics or management of grassland and/or shrubland are strongly encouraged to consult appropriate ESDs and the associated S&T conceptual models. These models are increasingly used by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and U. S. Forest Service to guide the application of management practices. The appropriate ESDs can be identified using soil surveys together with on-site soil verification at your proposed study sites, or by contacting the NRCS State Rangeland Management Specialist.

Successful applicants are strongly encouraged to recommend changes to ESDs based on the

results of their research to the NRCS team responsible for reviewing potential changes. Where S&T models do not exist, opportunities may exist to contribute to their development.

Examples of funded projects are available at www.usawaterquality.org/projects.

4. Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP)

Program Area Code 110.E

It is anticipated that this program area will be offered as part of a separate interagency joint solicitation titled “Evaluating the Effects of Conservation Practices on Water Quality.” If funded, in FY '08, information on this program area will be made available in a supplemental RFA.

This RFA does not solicit applications for CEAP. For more information on this program area, potential applicants may contact Mike O'Neill at (202) 205-5952 or moneill@csrees.usda.gov; Jim Dobrowolski at (202) 401-5016 or jdobrowolski@csrees.usda.gov; or Bruce Mertz at (202) 401-4601 or bmertz@csrees.usda.gov.

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards. CSREES anticipates that support of this program in FY 2008 is approximately \$12.6 million.

B. Types of Applications

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

(1) New application. This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the NIWQP. 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.

(3) Resubmitted application. This is an application that had previously been submitted to the NIWQP but not funded. Project Directors (PDs) must respond to the previous review panel summary (use R & R Other Project Information, Field 11 on the Form). Resubmitted 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.

(4) Resubmitted renewal application. This is a project application that requests additional funding for a project beyond the period that was approved in the original award. In addition, this is an application that had previously been submitted for renewal to the NIWQP but not funded. Therefore, PDs must provide a Progress Report as required under the Project Narrative, Part IV, and must respond to the previous review panel summary (use R & R Other Project Information, Field 11 on the Form). Resubmitted renewal applications must be received by the relevant due dates, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in appropriate areas to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.

C. Project Types

The following are CSREES funding estimates for FY 2008, number of awards anticipated, maximum annual project budgets, and acceptable project periods for each of the program areas within the NIWQP.

Program Area	Funding Estimate FY 2008	Number of Awards Anticipated FY 2008	Maximum Annual Project Budget	Acceptable Project Period
National Water Resource Projects – <i>Program Area Code 110.A</i>	\$1,400,000	3-4	\$100,000	1 – 4 yrs.
Regional Water Resource Projects – <i>Program Area Code 110.B*</i>	\$5,500,000	7-10	\$650,000	1 – 4 yrs
Watershed Scale Projects – <i>Program Area Code 110.C**</i>	\$5,700,000	10-12	\$220,000	1 – 3 yrs.
<p>* Regional Water Resource Projects involving more than one region may request funding beyond the maximum annual project budget listed. ** The maximum budget for Extension Watershed Scale Projects is \$80,000 per year. The maximum budget for Education Watershed Scale Projects is \$60,000 per year.</p>				

Applications that include requests for annual project budgets in excess of the maximum annual project budgets established above (with the exception of multi-region projects under the Regional Water Resource Program Area), or propose project periods outside the acceptable project ranges above, for the applicable Program Area, will be at risk of being excluded from CSREES review.

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted by colleges and universities (as defined in section 1404 of the NARETPA). For purposes of this program, the terms “college” and “university” mean an educational institution in any State which (1) admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate, from a school providing secondary education; (2) is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of education beyond secondary education; (3) provides an educational program for which a bachelor's degree or any other higher degree is awarded; (4) is a public or other nonprofit institution; and (5) is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association. Applications also may be submitted by 1994 Land-Grant Institutions (as defined in Part VIII, E.). A research foundation maintained by a college or university is not eligible to receive an award under 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 not accepting the application, or even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude CSREES from making an award.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

If a grant provides a particular benefit to a specific agricultural commodity, the grant recipient is required to provide funds awarded on a dollar-for-dollar basis from non-Federal sources with cash and/or in-kind contributions. See Part IV.B - R&R Budget for further details.

CSREES may waive the matching funds requirement for a grant if CSREES determines that: (a) the results of the project, while of particular benefit to a specific agricultural commodity, are likely to be applicable to agricultural commodities generally; or (b) the project involves a minor commodity, the project deals with scientifically important research, and the grant recipient is unable to satisfy the matching funds requirement.

PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Electronic 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 Representative (AR)(also referred to as Authorized Organizational Representative or AOR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grant.gov. If the organization is not prepared, the AR 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-ICGP-001264** 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: Monday through Friday 7:00 am – 9:00 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 Guide. ANY PROPOSALS CONTAINING NON-PDF DOCUMENTS WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM CSREES REVIEW. Partial applications will be excluded from CSREES review. With documented prior approval, resubmitted applications will be accepted until close of business 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 “Convert Documents to PDF” on <http://grants.gov/assets/PDFConversion.pdf>.

1. SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 2. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

2. 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. Field 6. Project Summary/Abstract. The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of NIWQP.
- b. Field 7. Project Narrative.

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

(a) Introduction: Include a clear statement of the long-term goal(s) and supporting objectives of the proposed activities. Summarize the body of knowledge or past activities which substantiate the need for the proposed project. Describe ongoing or recently completed significant activities related to the proposed activity, including the work of key project personnel. Include preliminary data/information pertinent to the proposed project. In addition, include in-depth information on the following, when applicable:

- (1) Estimates of the magnitude of the issues and their relevance to stakeholders and to ongoing State-Federal food and agricultural research, education, and extension programs;

(2) Role of the stakeholders in problem identification, planning, and implementation and evaluation as appropriate; and

(3) Reasons for having the work performed at the proposing institution.

(b) Objectives: Include clear, concise, complete, and logically arranged statement(s) of specific aims of the proposed effort in all proposals. Watershed Scale Projects (Program Area Code 110.C) must include specific objectives for each function: research, education, and extension (as appropriate).

(c) Methods: Explicitly state the procedures or methods to be applied to the proposed effort. Include, but are not necessarily limited to:

(1) Description of stakeholder involvement in problem identification, planning, implementation and evaluation;

(2) Description of the proposed project activities in the sequence in which it is planned to carry them out;

(3) Techniques to be employed, including their feasibility and rationale for their use in this project;

(4) Kinds of results expected;

(5) Means by which extension and education activities will be evaluated;

(6) Means by which data will be analyzed and interpreted;

(7) Details of plans to communicate results to stakeholders and the public;

(8) Pitfalls that might be encountered; and

(9) Limitations to proposed procedures.

(d) Project Timetable: Outline all important phases as a function of time, year by year, for the entire project, including periods beyond the grant funding period. Include specific, measurable accomplishments for each year of NIWQP funding.

(e) Progress Report: For renewal applications and resubmitted renewal applications (as defined in Part II., B.), a progress report must be included within the page limitation set for the Project Narrative portion of the application.

In addition to the contents required above, applications proposing **National Water Resource Projects (Program Area Code 110.A)** or **Regional Water Resource Projects (Program Area Code 110.B)** must describe the roles and responsibilities of central coordinators and present a

management plan for the administration of the project including facilitation of communication, planning, and annual report preparation.

3. R&R Senior/Key Personnel 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.

Also, **you must attach** “Current and Pending Support” information. See CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide, Part 4.3 for guidelines and information format for each senior/key person identified above. **Note: Even if no other funding is currently reported under the “Active” section of this attachment, you must still list information for this grant application under the “Pending” section of this attachment for each senior/key person identified above.**

4. R&R Personal Data – Optional

As noted in Part V, 5. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide, the submission of this information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award. If completing the information, **do not enter any data in the field requesting the social security number.**

5. R&R Budget

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 6. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

Matching.

If an applicant concludes that matching funds are not required as specified under Part III., B., the R&R Budget must be utilized and a justification should be included in the Budget Narrative. CSREES will consider this justification when ascertaining final matching requirements or determining if required matching can be waived. CSREES retains the right to make final determinations regarding matching requirements.

For those grants where matching funds are required as specified under Part III., B., the R&R Budget (Total Fed and Non-Fed) must be utilized. Applications should include written verification of commitments of matching support (including both cash and in-kind contributions) from third parties. Written verification means:

For any third party cash contributions, a separate pledge agreement for each donation, signed by the authorized organizational representative of the donor organization and the applicant organization, which must include: (1) the name, address, and telephone number of the donor; (2) the name of the applicant organization; (3) the title of the project for which the donation is made; (4) the dollar amount of the cash donation; and (5) a statement that the donor will pay the cash contribution during the grant period.

For any third party in-kind contributions, a separate pledge agreement for each contribution, signed by the authorized organizational representatives of the donor organization and the applicant organization, which must include: (1) the name, address, and telephone number of the donor; (2) the name of the applicant organization; (3) the title of the project for which the

donation is made; (4) a good faith estimate of the current fair market value of the third party in-kind contribution; and (5) a statement that the donor will make the contribution during the grant period.

The sources and the amount of all matching support from outside the applicant institution should be summarized on a separate page and placed in the application immediately following the Budget Narrative. All pledge agreements must be placed in the application immediately following the summary of matching support.

The value of applicant contributions to the project shall be established in accordance with the applicable cost principles. Applicants should refer to OMB Circular A-21, Cost Principles for Educational Institutions, for further guidance and other requirements relating to matching and allowable costs.

6. 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 Area Code (Field 2 on the Form). Enter the appropriate program area code name and the program area code exactly as it appears in the table below. Note that the Program Area Code is case-sensitive. Do not include spaces in the Program Area Code. This data field is used to electronically route your proposal to the correct program.

Program Area Code Name	Program Area Code
National Water Resource Proposals	110.A
Regional Water Resource Proposals	110.B
Watershed Scale Proposals	110.C

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

C. Submission Date and Time

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 **April 29, 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 Agency Contact identified in Part VII of the applicable 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. 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.

Section 706 of the FY 2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act (Public Law 110-161) limits indirect costs to 20 percent of the total Federal funds provided under each award. Therefore, when preparing budgets, applicants should limit their requests for recovery of indirect costs to the lesser of their institution's official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 20 percent of total Federal funds awarded. Another method of assessing the maximum allowable indirect cost is to calculate 25 percent of the total direct costs. If no rate has been negotiated, a reasonable dollar amount (equivalent to or less than 20 percent of total Federal funds requested) in lieu of indirect costs may be requested, subject to approval by USDA. This same indirect cost limitation applies to subcontracts.

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 two (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:

Applications that are strong in all three areas and that address special emphasis areas identified in this RFA will be more likely to receive NIWQP funding.

1. Technical merit of all aspects of the application, including research, education, and extension components, as appropriate.

- (a) Adequacy and appropriateness of objectives for research, education, and extension, as appropriate;
- (b) Extent to which proposed work addresses identified stakeholder needs and water resource issues of concern;
- (c) Suitability and feasibility of methodology for conducting work;
- (d) Reasonability of time allocated for attainment of objectives;
- (e) Qualifications of key project personnel;
- (f) Institutional experience and competence in proposed area of work; and
- (g) Adequacy of available support personnel, equipment, and facilities.

2. Relevance of proposed project to NIWQP purpose (see Part I, B.).

- (a) Relationship of project objectives to national themes;
- (b) Extent to which special emphasis areas are addressed;
- (c) Transferability of project results or developed materials beyond the project scale;

- (d) Evidence of necessary involvement from interdisciplinary teams;
- (e) Extent to which partnerships with other institutions (Federal, State, other) are developed;
- (f) Extent to which end users were/will be involved in problem identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation;
- (g) Probability of success of the project; and
- (h) Extent to which potential impact(s) can/will be documented.

3. Review criteria for specific program areas.

National Water Resource Projects:

1. Degree to which the project facilitates development of public policy or increases public understanding and involvement in community decision-making for water resources;
2. Appropriateness of expected outcomes and impacts described in the project;
3. Evidence of new or enhanced partnerships and networks;
4. Quality of management plans for administering the national or multi-regional effort; and
5. Suitability and feasibility of methods for evaluating success of project activities.

Regional Water Resource Projects:

1. Appropriateness of expected outcomes and impacts described in the project;
2. Relevance of proposed programs to water resources issues in the region or among regions;
3. Ability of the project team to deliver knowledge-based programs across the region;
4. Success in integrating research, education, and extension activities within the region;
5. Quality of management plan for administering regional activities;
6. Degree to which coordination will occur across states within the region or across regions; and
7. Degree of participation in and support for national program development.

Watershed Scale Projects:

1. Degree of integration of research, education and extension (as appropriate);
2. Inclusion of an interdisciplinary team that includes physical, chemical, biological and social scientists (as appropriate);
3. Identification of the cause of water resource degradation;
4. Suitability of scale;
5. Likelihood that project will fill knowledge gaps that are critical to the development of practices and programs and improve the quality of the Nation's water resources;
6. Likelihood that project will create educational deliverables (e.g., interdisciplinary curriculum, experiential learning for undergraduates and graduate students) that will train the next generation of scientists and educators who will work to improve the Nation's water resources (where appropriate);
7. Identification of the appropriate audience or stakeholder group of interest and effectiveness of plan to deliver an extension/outreach program that will lead to measurable outcome-oriented impacts (where appropriate);

8. Appropriateness of watershed work plan (developed with input from stakeholder advisory groups, watershed councils, or other community led action teams) and likelihood that it will lead to measurable improvements in the watershed condition;
9. Quality of monitoring and evaluation plans; and
10. Inclusion of plans to evaluate the costs and benefit of best management practices (as needed).

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 15 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

Annually, each grantee must submit a one (1) to two (2) page technical Summary of Work to the CSREES National Program Leader for Water Quality (see Part VII Agency Contacts) and to the appropriate Regional Water Resource Project Leader (see Part I, C. for more information). Once a project is complete, the grantee is required to submit a Final Technical Report to the CSREES National Program Leader for Water Quality and to the appropriate Regional Water Resource Project Director. The Final Technical Report should summarize all work conducted and detail outcomes, accomplishments, and outputs of funded work. This report should not exceed 15 single-spaced, typed pages. Grantees also must participate in annual conferences or symposiums, organized on behalf of the NIWQP, where project results and outcomes are presented and discussed.

Grantees are required to submit annual and summary evaluation reports via CSREES' Current Research Information System (CRIS). CRIS is an electronic, Web-based inventory system that facilitates both grantee submissions of project outcomes and public access to information on Federally-funded projects.

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACTS

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact Dr. Michael P. O'Neill; National Program Leader for Water Quality; Natural Resources and Environment Unit; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; STOP 2210; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2210; Telephone: (202) 205-5952; Fax: (202) 401-1706; E-mail: moneill@csrees.usda.gov or Mr. Bruce Mertz, Program Specialist, Natural Resources and Environment Unit; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; STOP 2210; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2210; Telephone: (202) 401-4601; Fax: (202) 401-1706; E-mail: bmertz@csrees.usda.gov.

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 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 activity 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.

Extension activity means an act or process that delivers science-based knowledge and informal educational programs to people, enabling them to make practical decisions.

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.

Integrated means to bring the three components of the agricultural knowledge system (research, education, and extension) together around a problem area or activity.

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.

Research activity means a scientific investigation or inquiry that results 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.

Third party in-kind contributions means non-cash contributions of property or services provided by non-Federal third parties, including real property, equipment, supplies and other expendable property, directly benefiting and specifically identifiable to a funded project or program.

Total integrated, multifunctional research, education, and extension approach means that the combination of grants (although the individual grants may involve only research, education, or extension activities or a combination thereof) awarded under the fiscal year's program components will work together to address the priorities in United States agriculture as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture in consultation with the Advisory Board, that involve integrated research, extension, and education activities.

Urbanizing means areas of agricultural and rural watersheds that are experiencing rapidly increasing land development pressure including but not limited to development for low, medium, and high density housing, industrial and commercial sites, and the infrastructure (roads, highways, utilities, etc.) needed to support this increased land development.