

Fact Sheet: Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative

April 2009

Overview

The Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI) aligns certain programs of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) with the resources of eligible partners to provide financial and technical assistance to owners and operators of agricultural and nonindustrial private forest lands in specified project areas.

Authorized in Section 2707 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill), CCPI is designed to encourage investment in natural resource conservation by non-Federal sources, foster coordination with other partners, and achieve high-priority natural resource objectives.

Under CCPI, NRCS enters into multi-year agreements with eligible partner organizations.

Eligibility

Partners eligible to enter into a CCPI agreement with NRCS include federally-recognized Indian Tribes, State and local units of government, farmer cooperatives, producer associations, institutions of higher education, and other non-governmental organizations with a history of working cooperatively with producers to address conservation priorities related to agriculture and nonindustrial private forest land.

In order to receive CCPI financial assistance, owners and operators of agricultural and non-industrial private forest lands must participate within a project area defined in an approved CCPI agreement and be enrolled in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program

(EQIP); Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP), or the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

How to Apply

Eligible partners must submit proposals for a specified project area and describe the natural resource concerns, conservation priorities and objectives, number of producers likely to participate, contributions to be made by the partner, and other required information cited in the Request for Proposals (RFP).

Proposals for projects located entirely within State boundaries should be submitted to the NRCS State Conservationist. Proposals that are multi-State or national in scope should be submitted to the NRCS Chief.

When announced, the CCPI RFP and other details are published in the *Federal Register* and on www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/ccpi/.

Producers who own and operate agricultural and non-industrial private forest lands within an approved CCPI project area may apply for assistance through EQIP, WHIP, or CSP at a local NRCS or USDA Service Center. Producers do not apply directly for CCPI.

How It Works

The Farm Bill requires that 6 percent of EQIP and WHIP funds and 6 percent of allowed acres for CSP be reserved for approved agreements in support of producers and conservation under the CCPI authority. Of these funds, 90 percent will be used for projects solely within individual States and U.S. territories, as approved by NRCS State



Conservationists. Ten percent of these resources will be awarded based upon a competitive national process.

More Information

For more information and updates about CCPI and the 2008 Farm Bill programs, including EQIP, WHIP and CSP, visit the USDA Web site at www.usda.gov/farmbill or the NRCS Web sites www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/ccpi/ and www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/farmbill/2008/.