

CONSERVATION DISTRICTS FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT For SAGE-GROUSE COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM

Nevada Conservation Districts Program and The State Conservation Commission FY24 Competitive Sage-grouse Program

This announcement contains instructions and the required format for projects to be considered and selected for funding. The format supplied or allowed in this package is the only format that will be accepted and considered for funding.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS: February, 6th 2024, 5:00 p.m. Total available \$75,000.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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Email: convprogram@dcnr.nv.gov

Conservation District Sage grouse Grant Application Process and Instructions

1. Background and Description of Program Grant

When the Nevada Legislature passed SB45 during the 2015 Legislative Session, the Nevada Conservation Districts Program (NCDP) was awarded a competitive grant program. Additionally, the State Conservation Commission (SCC) adopted regulations (R113-15) that became effective on December 21, 2015. With the statute changed and the regulations now in place, the SCC has the authority to provide specific legislatively appropriated funding, and other qualifying funding, to qualifying Conservation Districts.

<u>Objectives:</u> The stated objective of the Sage-grouse Competitive Grant Program is to assist qualifying Nevada Conservation Districts develop and implement projects that benefit Sage-grouse populations and their habitats.

These projects can be for either Bi-state Sage-grouse (a Distinct Population Segment of the Greater Sage-grouse), or the Greater Sage-grouse. Through the work of the Sagebrush Ecosystem Program (SEP) and the Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team (SETT), a Greater Sage-grouse Management Categorization Map has been developed and is available on at <a href="majorage-grouse-gro

There is a total of \$75,000 allocated for the 2024 fiscal year. The SCC currently plans to make all funding available during this announced application period.

You may contact your respective NCDP Conservation Specialist for assistance and they may be able to help as appropriate and given their time and resource constraints.

2. Grant Information:

The SCC will make funding decisions based on the areas outlined in the Decision Points Allocation List, included on pages five and six (5 and 6) of this document.

Eligible Applicants:

- Only Nevada Conservation Districts in good standing and with documented Sage-grouse habitat are eligible to apply for the grant funds.
- All applicants must provide a copy of their District Board's meeting minutes reflecting approval of the specific application(s) submitted.

Program/Project Performance Goals:

The goal of this program is to implement projects with measurable results that benefit Sage-grouse and their habitat.

Anticipated Start Date:

The anticipated start of any project under this grant is March, 2024, but no later than June 30, 2024. This program is for projects that already have necessary clearances and are currently "shovel ready." The grant funding **must be committed** no later than June 30, 2024. The funding agreement must be signed by both NCDP and successful applicants prior to commencement of any project work. Work can be continued on past the June 30th date with the committed and awarded funds with project timeframes negotiated and outlined in the Funding Agreement.

Matching Funds:

Matching funds are always considered a positive aspect for any grant program and this one is no exception. Those Districts providing matching funds will receive additional "Decision Points" when their application is considered by the SCC.

Matching funds will be allowed in a variety of ways:

- The match may include verifiable cash on hand,
- Verifiable contributions from other entities are encouraged,
- Documentable and documented in-kind goods, services or labor,
- Documented project materials utilized for the project,
- If volunteers are used, labor contributions should be calculated using the most recent independent or volunteer time, which at the time of this funding announcement was \$28.50 per hour for Nevada (last updated on 04/18/2022),
- Applicants should use local rates for other in-kind valuation of contributions (equipment operators, equipment use, and professional salaries).
- The match is to be explained in the project proposal and listed on the budget attachment.

Award Information:

Successful applicants will be notified for final negotiations prior to signing a required award and performance document known as the "Funding Agreement." The Funding Agreement will include details regarding beginning and end dates, monitoring schedules, and any other information deemed necessary by the SCC or NCDP staff.

a. Expected Number of Awards:

The final number of awards will be dependent on the quality and quantity of applications received.

b. Total Funding Estimated to be awarded:

The Grant Program expects to award \$75,000 this year.

Program staff or their designee will review all the applications and provide them to the SETT for review under the guidelines listed in the pertinent Nevada Administrative Code (NAC 548). The SCC will review and deliberate on all applications presented at a public meeting in March 2024, after the grant closing date. At this meeting, it is expected the SCC will make decisions regarding which applications receive funding, direct staff for any specific negotiations required, and approve funding based on the requirements. All SCC decisions are considered final unless the SCC chooses to re-visit an issue at a later time. All decisions will be made by action of the SCC.

If the application is approved by the SCC, staff will work with the authorized individual, listed on the district's application, to develop the required Funding Agreement.

Funding Agreements:

The Funding Agreement must include a monitoring plan (with methods and detail appropriate for the project), project beginning and ending dates, required permits, any written permissions that may be required, and all other details required by the SCC. This agreement will then be signed by both parties.

- -Implementation of the project will begin, with applicable funds provided.
- -Monitoring and reporting, as agreed to in the Funding Agreement, will be implemented.
- -The final report is due within 45 days after project completion.
- -The Funding Agreement will specify the final report due date.

When the District meets to approve the application as required, it is strongly suggested that they also authorize a Supervisor (or someone of the board's choosing) to approve and sign the funding agreement.

If the authorization is not in the motion to approve the application or a separate action during the meeting, there will likely be a delay in release of funding until the District approves the Funding Agreement.

3. Application and Submission Information:

This announcement includes all information, documents, and electronic addresses needed to submit an application. There are numerous steps that will need to be completed, especially if the application is successful.

Applications must include all required information shown below, including a Proposal (Attachment A) and a Budget Detail (Attachment B). More than one application can be submitted by a qualifying Conservation District, however, if multiple applications are submitted, they must be ranked by that CD applicant in the order of importance.

Project Proposal (Attachment A)

- 1) Attachment A is the project proposal template to be used when developing and submitting the proposal. The proposal should be typewritten, no longer than 10 pages, 12-point or larger font size, and at least one (1) inch margins on all sides. The 10-page limit includes all text and figures, but does not include the Budget Detail (Attachment B) or supporting maps or other necessary appendices.
- 2) Per the Nevada Open Meeting and Public Records Laws, all proposals and information provided to the NCDP and SCC are available for public view including at the SCC meeting, which will likely take place in March 2024.

Budget Detail (Attachment B)

NOTE: The forms provided for the Budget Detail may be limiting. If preferred, applicants can attach an Excel workbook with separate worksheets for each category.

- 1) Use the Budget Detail form (Attachment B) or suitable Excel Workbook to present the breakdown of estimated costs, by category, necessary to complete project activities. Estimated costs should be described in sufficient detail so they may be reviewed and deemed reasonable. Include a description of any cost share (cash, in-kind, etc.) listed. Lump sum costs are not acceptable in any category, without a detailed breakdown of how the cost was determined. A maximum of fifteen percent (15%) of the project cost can be requested to cover administrative or indirect costs as long as it is in the Budget Detail.
- 2) Budget details should be broken down into the following categories:

(a) Supplies:

The cost of materials and supplies used directly on this project, such as seed, plugs, fuel, rock material, fencing, office supplies, etc. Explain the details and purpose in the Narrative box. The Nevada Administrative Code states that SCC will not consider funding applications for grants that it determines are primarily for the purpose of acquiring equipment. Any matching supplies used need to be detailed and expenses explained in the narrative.

(b) Contractual Costs:

Include estimated costs of proposed professional and technical consultants and contractors working on the project. Identify all work that will be accomplished, including a breakdown of tasks to be completed, and a detailed budget estimate of time, rates, supplies, and materials that will be required for each task. Any changes or additions will require a request for approval.

(c) Other Costs:

The cost of items not listed above, and which do not fit in any other category, such as the cost of duplicating and printing, equipment rental, postage, etc.

(d) Total Direct Costs:

Costs calculated from Supplies, Contractual, and Other.

(e) Administrative or Indirect Costs.

If indirect costs will be charged to the project, complete this section and show the proposed rate (no more than 15% per regulation), cost base, and proposed amount for allowable indirect costs. It is not acceptable to simply incorporate indirect rates within other direct cost line items.

(f) Total Costs:

The total of both direct and indirect costs estimated to be expended for activities included in the agreement.

Reporting:

A monitoring and reporting plan with methods and detail appropriate to the project must be included in the application and in the Funding Agreement. The Funding Agreement will take precedence over the application once it is appropriately executed by the supervisor authorized by action of the Board, and it will serve as the plan document that the District agrees to execute.

Submission Dates and Times:

The deadline for submission of applications is <u>February 6th, 2024, at 5 pm</u>. Applications must be received by NCDP prior to the posted deadline. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered for award unless it can be determined the delay was due to an error in NCDP's processes.

Application Submission Process:

The NCDP prefers that applications be submitted by email, but they may be hand-delivered, or delivered by a carrier service. No late submissions will be accepted.

- Email to convprogram@dcnr.nv.gov
- Mailing Address:

Conservation District Program:

3275 Fountain Way, Winnemucca, NV 89445

• Hand delivered to:

ATT: Conservation District Program:

3275 Fountain Way, Winnemucca, NV 89445

4. Application Review Process

Following a basic eligibility review, NCDP staff or a designee will use a 100-point scoring system to evaluate each proposal received. A business evaluation and budget review will also occur before an application is submitted to the SCC.

The NCDP or the SCC reserves the right to reject proposals that do not meet the requirements of this funding opportunity or are deemed incomplete. Applications must meet the requirements outlined in this grant, and the sponsoring District shall have been determined to be in good standing by the SCC for the applicable fiscal year.

Awards will be made to responsive, responsible applicants submitting proposals that conform to the

announcement guidelines and consider the evaluation factors listed below, within available funding limits.

To ensure a complete application see the Application Checklist at end of funding announcement page 7.

The evaluation process will be comprised of the following screening levels and use the following Decision Points Allocation List:

First Level Screening -- Basic Eligibility:

Applications will be screened by NCDP, or designee, to ensure that applications meet eligibility requirements. Depending on the specifics of the project, screening may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- 1) Eligibility.
- 2) Submitted on time.
- 3) All necessary attached documents were submitted.

Applications must satisfy basic eligibility screening requirements to be considered for further review.

Second Level Evaluation – Decision Points Allocation List Project Merit Review:

Eligible applications will be evaluated by NCDP or their designee, in an objective and unbiased manner, using the following merit review criteria and numerical scoring based on a 100-point maximum score.

Decision Points Allocation List

1) Project Overview (maximum score 30 points):

Application should clearly outline the project purpose, work to be completed and all collaborative partners, project experience and qualification of those working on the project. This section of the application specifies the qualifications of professional team members (i.e. you might have a UNR professor providing technical expertise), years of experience of team members in the specific technical field (e.g., vegetation management or other aspects), previous projects accomplished and the results, and/or other pertinent expertise of team members and/or the District itself. This section should also detail the connectivity to other projects, and overall benefits and justification for use of the funds.

- Anticipated start and completion dates?
- Have necessary clearances/permits?
- Does applicant have all needed permissions documented in writing?
- Does this project still need NEPA?
- Is the project shovel ready?
- Were CD minutes with approval provided?
- Did application include a monitoring plan?
- Will the end result be measurable/quantifiable?
- Would project align with another initiative or programmatic funds?
- Would the project provide outreach?
- Are there any potential indirect negative impacts on habitat (Sage grouse or otherwise)?
- Are there partner organizations involved in the project?

2) Sage Grouse Benefits (maximum score 45 points):

Application should describe the technical aspects of the project. These may include items such as the specific seed mix to be used, how the monitoring will take place and the schedule, the vegetation treatment and why the specific method was chosen, and any other unique or technical issues in the project. Application should describe the limiting factors affecting the habitat or sage grouse population and how the project is designed to address these limiting factors (e.g., how would siting of the project in a lower habitat type improve connections between higher habitat types).

- Project located in PHMA, GHMA or OHMA habitat?
- Addresses a limiting factor of the respective habitat type or sage grouse population?
- Includes corridors and/or connected habitat enhancement or other benefits to sage grouse populations?
- Is it outlined in the narrative and monitoring plan HOW the project will directly help sage grouse?
- Is the project tied into another project to compound the benefits?

3) Budget (maximum score 25 points):

Budget line items must be allowable, allocable, reasonable in price, and appropriate for the level of effort needed to accomplish the project. Budget details and narrative must provide adequate explanation of, and justification for, each estimated cost. Cost sharing/matching funds must be reasonable. In the case of a cash match, a verifiable written commitment from the entity providing the match must be included. Please add narrative on scalable budget and project reductions in the proposal (i.e., can the project move forward at a smaller scale with less funding?).

- Are indirect costs included and at what percentage?
- Volunteer labor?
- Are costs described in sufficient detail?
- Do costs appear reasonable?
- Does Budget provide reasonable details and adequate narrative?
- Are matching funds reasonable?
- Are matching funds documented in writing?
- Is the Budget flexible to allow for project scaling with partial funding options?

Application Award Process:

If the results of all pre-award reviews and clearances are satisfactory, NCDP will provide the application to the SCC for consideration and approval at a public meeting. If NCDP determines an application is not satisfactory for funding consideration, the reasons why will be provided to the SCC. Decisions made by the SCC supersede any ranking process and are final.

Award Notices:

A Notice of Award will be provided to the individual designated on the front sheet of the application. The designee, based on the authority provided by the CD Board, and reflected in the minutes of a properly noticed District Board meeting where the authority was delegated, will work with NCDP to negotiate an agreement for the project. This may include changes to the project, budget, monitoring plan, regular reporting dates, or other information as specified by the SCC.

END
FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT

App	lication Checklist:
	Applicants meet eligibility requirements.
	Submit a complete and thorough application, no later than February 6th, 2024, at 5:00PM.
<u> </u>	Project Proposal (Attachment A) Completed the following areas: Project Proposal: Contact information Project Proposal: Purpose Objective and Relevance Project Proposal: Technical Approach Project Proposal: Detailed Description of Project Project Proposal: Description of Project Timelines Project Proposal: Maps and Description of Area of Work Project Proposal: Qualifications, Experience, and Past Performance
<u> </u>	Project Budget (Attachment B or Excel worksheet) Completed the following areas: Project Budget: Supplies Project Budget: Contractual Project Budget: Other Project Budget: Direct total Costs Project Budget: Indirect Cost Project Budget: Total Project Cost
∏ (Budg	Conservation District Board Agenda and Minutes showing the approval of the Grant Application and get.

Attachment A
Conservation Districts Program
Competitive Sage-grouse Grant – 2024

PROJECT PROPOSAL

<u>Do not start work on the proposed grant project without prior approval from the Program and an executed Funding</u> Agreement.

Instructions: A complete and detailed Project Proposal must be submitted, including the Budget Detail, Attachment B, or an Excel workbook as described in the Budget directions. Please use the electronic version if possible. Those sections that may need greater detail will expand as you type so there is no need to limit your explanations. Your proposal must be no more than ten pages including maps and other attachments. NOTE: This page limitation does not include the Budget Detail or additional spread sheets for that portion of the application. We encourage the Budget Detail to be as long and detailed as necessary to explain planned expenditures.

<u>Date:</u> Click or tap here to enter text.

Conservation District: Click or tap here to enter text.

Project Title: Click or tap here to enter text.

Project Manager Name and Contact Information: Click or tap here to enter text.

Address: Click or tap here to enter text.

<u>Phone:</u> Click or tap here to enter text. <u>Cell:</u> Click or tap here to enter text.

Email: Click or tap here to enter text.

Other contact information for CD: Click or tap here to enter text.

1. Overview: Purpose, Objectives, and Relevance:

(Overview: Describe why the project is needed; include specific objectives, how the objectives support the project, and how this project benefits Sage-grouse populations)

*Text Boxes will expand as you type into them. If they do not, please feel free to type outside the box.

Overview and Purpose Description	n:	
Click or tap here to enter text.		

^{*}Text Boxes will expand as you type into them. If they do not, please feel free to type outside the box.

2. Technical Approach:

(Describe how the project will be conducted. The project design must contain enough detail to show the development of the project, including the relationship between the partners, and objectives. Clearly describe the techniques, procedures, and methodologies to be used; the data collection, analysis, and means of interpretation; the expected project goals and/or outcomes; and the procedures for evaluating project effectiveness, including appropriate performance goals and the probabilities of obtaining them; include a specific monitoring plan with regular data collection dates, if applicable, and the specific data or information that will be collected or gathered for monitoring comparisons.)

*Text Boxes will expand as you type into them. If they do not, please feel free to type outside the box.

Technical Approach Description:	
Click or tap here to enter text.	
3. Detailed Description of Project:	

(Include any development plans such as vegetation manipulation, planting, seeding, or installation of structures; also document all necessary permits and other written permissions and/or include the schedule for obtaining any necessary permits, completing NEPA compliance if needed, and any other required clearances.

Include a statement regarding the scalability of the project (can the project move forward at a smaller scale with less funding?) Please provide an alternative budget and scale of project under reduction.

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Project Description Details:
Click or tap here to enter text.
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4. Description of Project Timelines:

(The proposal must include a detailed project plan/schedule. The project plan must be supported by a narrative description of each of the activities to be undertaken. The schedule should include proposed work, reporting, major tasks, monitoring, and project milestones. The following table may be used to summarize the project schedule.)

*Text Boxes will expand as you type into them. If they do not, please feel free to type outside the box.

Milestone / Task / Activity	Planned Start Date	Planned Completion Date
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Text Boxes will expand as you type into them. If they do not, please feel free to type outside the box.
Budget Narrative:
Click or tap here to enter text.

5. Monitoring and Reporting Outline:

The monitoring and reporting should correspond with the proposed timeline in Question 4. The schedule should include proposed work, the monitoring of the work and reporting on the project's milestones. Please describe how monitoring will take place throughout the project and how reporting will be completed.

*Text Boxes will expand as you type into them. If they do not, please feel free to type outside the box.
Monitoring and Reporting Outline Description:
intering and respecting cutting a strain between
Click or tap here to enter text.

6. Maps and Description of Area of Work:

An adequate map of the project area is required with the application.

Maps must include the project title, map scale, date the map was created, and a north arrow. It must also include property ownership and contact information of where the project is taking place (this can be on a companion sheet), and have sufficient reference points (highways, county lines, specific creeks and watersheds) and be at a scale that someone not familiar with the area will know where the project is located.

- If possible, the project map should overlay the Management Categories Map for either Greater Sage-grouse or Bi-state Sage-grouse.
- If federally administered land is included, please indicate if NEPA has been completed sufficient to allow implementation of the proposed project. If appropriate, please include information in text below that references the specific NEPA documents that will allow the project to proceed on federally administered land.
- If applicable show connectivity to previous projects or partner projects.

*Text Boxes will expand as you type into them. If they do not, please feel free to type outside the box.					
Maps and Description of Area of Work:					
Click or tap here to enter text.					
7. Qualifications, Experience, and Past Performance: (Describe who will manage the project activities. List all workers associated with the project either by name or position, including consultants, contractors, etc., and their contact information. Describe their responsibilities and the amount of time each will dedicate to the project. Briefly describe how their experience and qualifications are appropriate to successfully achieve the stated objectives (i.e., continuation of existing project, location, property ownership, voluntary support capacity, cost-share ability, technical expertise or other unique qualifications).) *Text Boxes will expand as you type into them. If they do not, please feel free to type outside the box. Maps and Description of Area of Work:					
Click or tap here to enter text.					

Attachment B
Conservation Districts Program
Competitive Sage-grouse Grant – 2024

BUDGET DETAIL

Instructions: You can use this worksheet to show details of the estimated costs. If you prefer working in Excel, you can provide an Excel workbook attached to the application but ensure all categories of spending are accounted for in your worksheet. Please provide a separate worksheet for each expense category and label them appropriately. Be sure to provide enough information that costs can be analyzed for reasonableness as compared to costs or work of similar size and scope. You are welcome to insert additional rows as needed. Use the Narrative boxes as necessary to explain each cost category.

Conservation District: Click or tap here to enter text.

<u>Project Manager Contact Name:</u> Click or tap here to enter text.

<u>District Treasures Contact Information:</u> Click or tap here to enter text.

<u>Project Title:</u> Click or tap here to enter text.

*Text Boxes will expand as you type into them. If they do not, please feel free to type outside the box.

A) SUPPLIES

The cost of materials and supplies used directly on this project, such as seed, plugs, fuel, rock material, fencing, office supplies, etc. Explain the details and purpose in the Narrative box below. No significant equipment can be purchased with SCC Grant funds per Nevada Administrative Code.

Item	Quantity	Cost per Unit	Matching Funds (if applicable)	SCC Grant Funds
Click or tap here to enter text.				
Click or tap here to enter text.				
Click or tap here to enter text.				
Click or tap here to enter text.				
Click or tap here to enter text.				
Click or tap here to enter text.				
Click or tap here to enter text.				
A) SUPPLIES COST TOTAL:			\$	\$

Narrative: Click or tap here to enter text.

^{*}Text Boxes will expand as you type into them. If they do not, please feel free to type outside the box.

B) CONTRACTUAL

The cost of contracted services. Provide names if possible, or the type of contractor if names cannot be provided. Explain the details and purpose of the costs in the Narrative box below.

Contractor Name, Type, etc.	Cost	Funds	SCC Grant Funds
Click or tap here to enter text.			
Click or tap here to enter text.			
Click or tap here to enter text.			
Click or tap here to enter text.			
B) CONTRACTUAL COST TOTAL:	\$	\$	

Narrative: Click or tap here to enter text.

C) OTHER

Costs that don't fit any other Category, such as copying and printing, postage and freight, rented equipment, etc. Explain the details and purpose in the Narrative box below.

Item	Cost	Funds	SCC Grant Funds
Click or tap here to enter text.			
Click or tap here to enter text.			
Click or tap here to enter text.			
Click or tap here to enter text.			
C) OTHER COSTS TOTAL:		\$	\$

Narrative: Click or tap here to enter text.

^{*}Text Boxes will expand as you type into them. If they do not, please feel free to type outside the box.

D) TOTAL DIRECT CHARGES The total of all direct costs applicable to this project. Add up ALL Costs (A-C)		
Direct Costs	Funds	SCC Grant Funds

^{*}Text Boxes will expand as you type into them. If they do not, please feel free to type outside the box.

Supplies	
Contractual	
Other	
D) TOTAL DIRECT COSTS:	\$ \$

E) ADMINISTRATIVE AND/OR INDIRECT COSTS Costs that cannot be readily identified and charged to a particular project, such as building rent, utilities, miscellaneous office supplies, etc. Such costs are usually charged to the project as a percentage of some or all of the Direct Costs calculated above. This percentage is called the Indirect Cost Rate. Use the Narrative box below to explain how you calculated your indirect costs. NOTE: (this cannot exceed 15% per regulation) Base amount for this Grant: (Total Direct Costs) \$ Click or tap here to enter text. Click or tap here to enter text. Matching Funds SCC Grant

Undiract ('acts	0	Funds
Click or tap here to enter text.		
E) TOTAL INDIRECT COSTS:	\$	\$

Narrative: Click or tap here to enter text.

^{*}Text Boxes will expand as you type into them. If they do not, please feel free to type outside the box.

Total Project Costs	Matching Funds (if applicable)	SCC Grant Funds
F) TOTAL COSTS:	\$	\$
Supplies (A)		
Contractual (B)		
Other (C)		
Admin/ Indirect (E)		
TOTAL	\$	\$
Narrative: Click or tap here to enter text.		

^{*}Text Boxes will expand as you type into them. If they do not, please feel free to type outside the box.

Conservation Districts Program
Competitive Sage-grouse Grant – 2024
SIGANTURE PAGE
Name & Title of Person Completing the Application and Budget
Date
Date of Conservation District Board's meeting minutes where approval of the application is reflected (Please attach a copy of these minutes, even if draft.)