



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

**Nevada Conservation Districts Program and
The State Conservation Commission
2020 Competitive Sage-grouse Program**

This announcement contains instructions and the required format for projects selected for funding in fiscal year 2020. 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 21, 2020, 5:00 p.m.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Zachary Ormsby, Conservation Districts Program Manager

Telephone: 775- 684-2717 or 775-461-6229

Email: zormsby@dcnr.nv.gov

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1. Description of Program

With the passage of SB45 during the 2015 Legislative Session, the Nevada Conservation Districts Program (NCDP) now has a competitive grant program. This is the second year of the competitive program. Additionally, the SCC adopted regulations (R113-15) that became effective on December 21, 2015. With the statute changed, and the regulations now in place and used without incident last year, the Commission has the authority to provide specific legislatively appropriated funding, and other qualifying funding, to qualifying Conservation Districts.

- a. Objectives: 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.

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 sagebrusheco.nv.gov. For the Bi-state Sage-grouse areas, use of the “Proposed Critical Habitat Oct. 2013,” and the “Sage-grouse Priority Habitat” area maps, [found here](#), will be acceptable. Shape files, for GIS processes, are available if needed for the Bi-state areas by contacting Zachary Ormsby.

There is a total of \$75,000 allocated for the 2020 fiscal year. The SCC currently plans to make all funding available during this announced application period.

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. Many other calculations will be used by the SCC to make the funding decisions; please refer to the “Decision Points Allocation List,” included on pages five and six (5-6) of this document.

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
- . If volunteers are used, labor contributions should be calculated using the independentsector.org value for volunteer time of \$21.85 per hour for Nevada
- . 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.

2. Program/Project Performance Goals

Implementation of projects with measureable results that benefit Sage-grouse

B. AWARD INFORMATION

1. Award Instrument

- a. 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.

2. Expected Number of Awards

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

3. Total Funding Estimated to be awarded through this year’s Grant Program

The SCC expects to award \$75,000.

4. Anticipated Start Date

The anticipated start date is between April 10, 2020 and but no later than June 30, 2020. 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, 2020. The funding agreement is required to be signed by both parties prior to commencement of any project work.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. 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.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Application Package

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.

Here are some of the specific steps required:

- Submit a complete and thorough application, including attachments and budget detail no later than February 21, 2020 at 5:00PM.

- Program staff or their designee will review the applications and provide them to the SETT for review under the guidelines listed in the pertinent Nevada Administrative Code (regulation).

- The SCC will review and deliberate on all applications presented by staff at a public meeting in early to mid-March 2020. 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 their 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. This process may include a monitoring plan (if 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, as agreed to in the Funding Agreement, will be implemented.

 - Once the project is complete, the final report is due within 45 days.

This is not intended to be a complete or detailed list, and additional steps may be required. Each project and Funding Agreement is expected to be tailored to the site level project design and the needs of the individual District, within the stipulations (if any) of the SCC and those included in the application.

The Funding Agreement will also 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. Paper copies of this application may be requested by contacting Zachary Ormsby, who is listed on the application coversheet. The Funding Agreement will not be available in any format until such time as the District is approved for a grant by the SCC, and it is drafted by NDCP staff with the direct assistance of the contact person listed on the application.

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 in the order of importance.

- a. Project Proposal (Attachment A)

- 1) Attachment A is a suggested project proposal template and may be used when submitting the proposal. The proposal should be typewritten, no longer than 10 pages (excluding maps or supporting appendices), 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 Law, all proposals are available for public view at the SCC meeting, which will likely take place in mid-March 2020.
- b. Budget Detail (Attachment B)
- 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) 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.
 - (b) 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.
 - (c) Total Direct Costs calculated from the above items 2(a) through 2(c).
 - (d) Administrative or Indirect Costs.
 - (1) 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..

2. Submission Dates and Times

The deadline for submission of applications is February 21, 2020, at 5 pm. 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.

3. Application Submission

Applications are preferred to be submitted by email, but can be hand delivered, faxed, or delivered by a carrier service. **No late submissions will be accepted.**

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

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 of the Nevada Administrative Code (regulation), 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 which conform to the announcement and consider the evaluation factors listed below, within available funding limits.

The evaluation process will be comprised of the following three screening levels:

1. First Level Screening --Basic Eligibility

- a. 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) Program requirements are met.
 - 2) Submission is timely.
 - 3) Complete and properly executed application package documents are included (see D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION).
- b. Applications must satisfy basic eligibility screening requirements to be considered for further review.

2. Second Level Evaluation -- Merit Review Evaluation

- a. 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.

- 1) Purpose and Objectives (maximum score 60 points):
Include descriptions of what the project will do to help Sage-grouse, how the project will accomplish this goal in a step-by-step process, where it will take place, and what end result is expected. This portion has 60 points available; matching funds can count for up to 15 of these points.
- 2) Technical Approach (maximum score 30 points):
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. This portion can be awarded a total of 30 points.
- 3) Qualifications, Experience, and Past Performance (maximum score 10 points):
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. A total of 10 points may be awarded for this section of the application.

3. Third Level Review Pre-Award Clearance and Approvals

A business evaluation and determination of responsibility will be completed after the first and second level reviews. NCDP, or designee, will evaluate variables such as those included below.

- 1) The management capacity review is based on the following:
 - (a) Financial stability;
 - (b) Quality of management systems;
 - (c) History of performance managing awards, timeliness of compliance with reporting requirements, conformance to the terms and conditions of previous awards;
 - (d) Previous report submission timeliness; and
 - (e) The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.
- 2) Budget review is based on the following:
 - (a) Budget line items must be allowable, allocable, reasonable in price, and appropriate for the level of effort needed to accomplish the project;

- (b) Budget details and narrative must provide adequate explanation of, and justification for, each estimated cost; and
- (c) Cost sharing/matching funds must be reasonable. In the case of a cash match, a verifiable letter from the entity providing the match must be included.

4. Application Selection 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. Decisions made by the SCC supersede any ranking process and are final.

F. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Award Notices

- a. 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.

2. Reporting

- a. A monitoring and reporting plan will be included in the application (see Item 2 in the Project Proposal), 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.

END
FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT

**Conservation Districts Program
Competitive Sage-grouse Grant – 2020**

PROJECT PROPOSAL

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 at all possible. Those sections that may need greater detail will expand as you type so there is no need to limit your explanations. As stated in Section D 1.(a)(1) of the Funding Opportunity Announcement, please limit your proposal to no more than ten pages including maps and other attachments. This 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.

Date: | | _____

Conservation District: | | _____

Project Title: | | _____

Contact Name: | | _____

Title: | | _____

Address: | | _____

City: | | _____ State: Nevada Zip: | | _____

Phone: | | _____ Cell: | | _____

Email: | | _____

Other contact information: | | _____

Do not start work without prior approval from the Program and an executed Funding Agreement.

1. Purpose, Objectives, and Relevance:

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

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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.

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3. Detailed Description of Project:

- a. *Include any development plans such as vegetation manipulation, planting, seeding, or installation of structures; also include the schedule for obtaining any necessary permits, completing NEPA compliance if needed, and any other required clearances.*

- c. *An adequate map of the project area is required to be attached. It 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 (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 this 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.***

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4. 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).

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**Conservation Districts Program
Competitive Sage-grouse Grant – 2020**

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. Please provide a separate worksheet for each 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: [] _____

Contact Name: [] _____

Project Title: [] _____

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 (NAC).

Item	Quantity	Cost per Unit	Matching Funds (if applicable)	SCC Grant Funds
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
A) SUPPLIES COST TOTAL:			\$ []	\$ []
<i>Narrative:</i> []				

B) CONTRACTUAL

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

Contractor Name, Type, etc.	Cost	Matching Funds (if applicable)	SCC Grant Funds
B) CONTRACTUAL COST TOTAL:	\$	\$	

Narrative:
 |
 |

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	Matching Funds (if applicable)	SCC Grant Funds
C) OTHER COSTS TOTAL:	\$	\$	

Narrative:
 |
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D) TOTAL DIRECT CHARGES		
The total of all direct costs applicable to this project.		
Direct Costs	Matching Funds (if applicable)	SCC Grant Funds
D) TOTAL DIRECT COSTS:	\$	\$

E) ADMINISTRATIVE AND/OR INDIRECT COSTS		
Costs which can't 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 (Items I above). This percentage is called the Indirect Cost Rate. Use the Narrative box below to explain how you calculated your indirect costs.		
Base amount for this Grant: (Total Direct Costs)	\$	
Rate to be used on this Grant (%):		
Indirect Costs	Matching Funds (if applicable)	SCC Grant Funds
E) TOTAL INDIRECT COSTS:	\$	\$
<i>Narrative:</i> 		

F) TOTALS The sum total of Direct and Indirect Costs applicable to this agreement.		
Total Project Costs	Matching Funds (if applicable)	SCC Grant Funds
F) TOTAL COSTS:	\$	\$

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Name & Title of Person Completing the Application and Budget

| |

Date

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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.)