



**Massachusetts State Office**

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# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## NRCS seeks Conservation Innovation Grant proposals

AMHERST, Mass. (March 1, 2012) – The Massachusetts State Office of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is seeking proposals for projects that demonstrate the use of innovative technologies or approaches to protecting soil, water, air, plant, animal and energy resources for possible funding through a Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG). Some \$217,000 is available for Massachusetts projects.

NRCS will fund single and multi-year projects. Funds will be awarded through a statewide competitive grants process. Projects are not to exceed three years with an anticipated project start date of September 1, 2012; the maximum award amount for any project will not exceed \$75,000. Eligible entities include federally recognized Indian tribes, state and local units of government, and non-governmental organizations and individuals in Massachusetts.

CIG funds projects targeting innovative on-the-ground conservation, including pilot projects and field demonstrations. The purpose of CIG is to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies, while leveraging the federal investment in environmental enhancement and protection in conjunction with agricultural production.

For more information contact: Deborah Johnson-Hawks, Assistant State Resource Conservationist, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, 451 West Street, Amherst, MA 01002, 413-253-4368; fax 413-253-4375, [deb.johnson@ma.usda.gov](mailto:deb.johnson@ma.usda.gov). The full announcement can be accessed at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov); search by geographic region or by the funding opportunity number 1320-12-CCC1.

Proposal must be received at the NRCS Massachusetts State Office by 5:00 pm on March 30, 2012. Applications sent via hand-delivery, US Postal Service, or overnight courier service must be sent to: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Conservation Innovation Grants Program, 451 West Street, Amherst, MA 01002. To submit an application electronically, visit [www.grants.gov/apply](http://www.grants.gov/apply).

“CIG stimulates development and adoption of conservation approaches or technologies that are likely to succeed so that the technology can be transferred or institutionalized,” said Christine Clarke, NRCS Massachusetts State Conservationist.

CIG projects are expected to lead to the transfer of conservation technologies, management systems, and innovative approaches into NRCS policy, technical manuals, guides, and references, or to the private sector. CIG is used to apply or demonstrate previously proven technology; it does not fund research projects. Projects intended to test hypotheses do not qualify for a CIG grant.

Selected applicants may receive CIG grants of up to 50 percent of their total project cost. CIG recipients must match the USDA funds with cash and in-kind contributions from non-Federal sources. Of the applicant’s required 50 percent match, a minimum of 25 percent of the total project cost must come from cash sources; the remaining 25 percent may come from in-kind contributions.

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