



REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA) Drought Initiative

Proposal submission deadline

December 22, 2017
Must arrive by 5 p.m.

Submit proposal in paper form to

Nevada Department of Agriculture
Plant Division
Attn: Jake Dick, Plant Industry
405 South 21st Street
Sparks, NV 89431

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1. Background and history

Agriculture plays a crucial role in Nevada's economy and in supporting local and domestic food security. Agriculture production practices that support sustainability and conservation efforts particularly during adverse weather events and/or seasons are critical to the industry. Due to this need, Governor Sandoval has established a task force to sustainably manage natural resources, promote water conservation and support management actions that Nevada for severe drought conditions. The task force has secured state funding to support drought initiatives and water conservation efforts, which will be overseen by the Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA). Approximately \$500,000 has been made available for Nevada producers to implement projects that improve water efficiency for agricultural and livestock production. Individual projects will be selected that support the development and use of water saving technology and/or best management practices. NDA recognizes that producers have varying needs for improving water conservation so applications will be reviewed and scored based on their potential to impact individual sites rather than a prescriptive approach.

2. Scope of work

The NDA is seeking proposals from established agriculture and/or livestock producers to implement projects that facilitate water conservation efforts. Projects must be able to demonstrate post-award water savings, which will require baseline water data from previous years. The objective of the program is to award projects that improve water efficiency by 1.5 acre feet; however, projects with a lower impact will still be competitively reviewed.

Contracts will be awarded on a competitive basis and will be evaluated based on a scoring rubric. Applicants using water sources located in basins with over allocated water resources will be scored higher in the selection process; however, this is not a requirement.

Eligibility criteria

- Has your operation been in agriculture and/or livestock production for at least 3 years? If not, can you demonstrate that the operation is well established? Was the operation in production prior to your ownership?
**Long term/sustainable projects are likely to be chosen over short term.*
- Do you have a means of measuring or calculating previous water usage to demonstrate improved efficiency as a result of funds received?
- Would you be able to expend all project funds by June 30, 2018?
- Have you ever received state or federal funds to support water conservation efforts?
**Previous awards will not deem you ineligible; however, you must detail in your application how these funds would be used for a separate water conservation project.*
- Have you ever been in default with the state?

To be considered for an award, each recipient **must** agree to the following:

- Projects must implement water conservation activities approved by NDA that will improve water efficiency. The objective of this program is to award projects that improve water conservation by 1.5 acre feet; however, projects with less impact will

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still be competitively reviewed. Project activities can include, but are not limited to, installing new equipment or technology, implementing best management practices, using laser leveling and improving riparian zones (planting soil stabilizers, leaching/run-off control).

- Projects completed as a result of funding must demonstrate sustainability.
- Funds must be expended by June 30, 2018.
- Final reports describing improved water conservation will be due September 30, 2018.

Expenditure requirements

All costs must be necessary, reasonable and allowable for proper efficient performance and administration of the contract.

- Costs should be reasonable and justifiable. When determining reasonableness of a given cost, the following should be considered:
 - The cost must be in compliance with federal, state and your organization's own established policies for incurring a cost or charge.
 - Consideration must be given for market prices for comparable goods or services in the geographic area.
 - Individuals responsible for the expenditure must act with due prudence in carrying out their responsibilities to state government, the public and the organization.

All expenditures must:

- be authorized or not prohibited under state or local laws and regulations;
- be assigned cost-to-cost objectives and must be treated consistently for all work performed by the organization under similar circumstances, regardless of the source of funding, to avoid duplicate charges; and
- be in conformance with limitations and exclusions contained in the terms and conditions of this award.

Eligible expenditures

The following are examples of eligible expenditures: **This list is not all inclusive and applications will be evaluated independently based on their potential to improve conservation efforts.*

- Water saving technology
- Pivots
- Pivot nozzles
- Water meters
- Contractual work for improving irrigation canals and/or streambeds for erosion control and run-off
- Laser leveling
- Variable rate irrigation

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- Crop covering
- Drip irrigation

Eligible expenditures include:

- **Personnel** – Describe key personnel that will be involved and how their activities will go towards accomplishing the objectives of the award. Provide a breakdown of their time commitment to the project and estimated hourly rate.
- **Contractual** – If contracting, describe their role in the project and describe their experience with similar projects. Provide a breakdown of their time commitment to the project and estimated rate. Describe liability insurance coverage provided by the contractor and the land owner.
- **Supplies** – Provide a breakdown of supplies needed to implement the project in addition to the source used for estimating costs.

3. Request for application deadline

All proposal must be received by **December 22, 2017 no later than 5 p.m.** The NDA will **not** accept any submission of incomplete proposals. Deadline extensions will **not** be provided to vendors that miss the posted proposal deadline.

4. Written questions and answers

All questions and/or comments will be addressed in writing and can be sent to: jdick@agri.nv.gov. The deadline for submitting questions is December 20, 2017. Responses will be emailed or faxed to prospective vendors on December 22, 2017.

5. Proposal and submission information

If interested in applying, producers should carefully review this request for applications (RFA) for award expectations and application requirements.

Applications are due **December 22, 2017 by 5 p.m.** to the NDA:

- One signed physical copy hand delivered or mailed (must be postmarked by above deadline) to:

Jake Dick
Award Coordinator
Nevada Department of Agriculture
405 South 21st Street Sparks, NV 89431-5557

- One digital copy emailed to Jake Dick at jdick@agri.nv.gov

5.1 Proposal formatting and length instructions

- Proposal font: Times New Roman
- Proposal font size: 12 point
- Proposal spacing: Single-spaced
- Proposal printing: Single-sided
- Binding: bind clips only

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- Proposal cannot be stapled, in three ring binders or otherwise bound

Applicants that fail to follow all the formatting requirements listed above shall not be considered for funding.

5.2 Submission instructions

Proposals must be sent to Jake Dick, Nevada Department of Agriculture's Plant Industry Division, by **Friday December 22, 2017 at 5 p.m.**

Faxed or emailed proposals will not be accepted unless a signed hard copy is also submitted by this deadline. You may mail or deliver your proposal. Proposals that do not include all required components will not be reviewed. Proposals received after the deadline will not be reviewed.

5.3 Number of copies of proposal

Submit three (3) copies of the full proposal signed and date stamped by the assigned deadline. Emailed copies are also required (send to jdick@agri.nv.gov).

5.4 Mailing proposal instructions

Mail proposal, including all required documents, to:

Nevada Department of Agriculture
Plant Industry Division
Attn: Jake Dick, Plant Industry
405 South 21st Street
Sparks, NV 89431

5.5 Proposals delivered in-person instructions

Deliver proposals to the front desk. Make sure proposals, including all required documents, are delivered in an envelope or box between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. to:

Nevada Department of Agriculture
Plant Industry Division
Attn: Jake Dick, Plant Industry
405 South 21st Street
Sparks, NV 89431

6. Nevada state vendor number

A vendor number is required if selected for funding. This is how electronic payments will be issued. The state controller's office issues vendor numbers and application instructions are available on their website or can be found by clicking [here](#).

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7. Proposal timeline

Proposal events	Deadlines
Release of request for proposal	Dec. 6, 2017
Deadline for submission of questions concerning RFA via email to Jake Dick	Dec. 20, 2017 at 5 p.m.
Responses to questions will be emailed to prospective vendors.	Dec. 22, 2017 by 3 p.m.
Proposal submittal deadline	Dec. 22, 2017 at 5 p.m.
Selection committee members review and score proposals	Jan. 5, 2017 (subject to change)
Funding recommendations and finalized and intent to award sent out	Jan 10, 2017 (subject to change)
Contract award process	Jan. 22, 2018 (subject to change)
Anticipated award start date	Jan. Once funding is awarded.

8. Billing

- There shall be no advance payment for services furnished by a contractor pursuant to the executed contract.
- Payment for services shall only be made after agreed upon completed deliverables are received, reviewed and accepted in writing by the NDA.
- The applicant must bill the NDA as outlined in the approved contract and/or deliverable payment schedule.

9. Proposal evaluation and award process

Proposals shall be evaluated and scored on the following scoring rubric.

Criteria	Strong (3 points)	Satisfactory (2 points)	Needs improvement (1 point)	Missing project elements (0 points)	Total
Project scope	Scope of project is clearly defined. Producer lists crops and/or livestock that will be in production. Project is well suited to water conservation. Information is understandable and well defined.	Scope of project is fairly well defined. Producer lists crops and/or livestock that will be in production during project. Project appears to be well suited to water conservation. Information is understandable 1 or 2 questions may arise. Some scope details are vague.	Scope of project is vague, and not enough detail is provided to identify current production impacts and potential outcomes.	Insufficient information or does not meet program requirements.	

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Project timeline	The full project proposal will be completed by the June 30, 2018 deadline. There is a clear and logical timeline provided including dates and activities leading up to the projects deadline.	The full project proposal will be completed by the June 30, 2018 deadline. A timeline is provided including dates and activities leading up to the project's deadline. There are some uncertainties within the timeline that may require follow-up questions.	There are some concerns of the project being completed by the June 30, 2018 deadline. A timeline is provided but is vague. There are several questions regarding the project's completion before the deadline.	Insufficient information or does not meet program requirements.	
Project sustainability	This is a sustainable water conservation project intended to prepare the producer for future droughts and periods of water shortage. This project will contribute to long-term producer water conservation efforts. The longevity of this project is backed by supporting information.	The approach appears to be a sustainable water conservation project intended to prepare the producer for future droughts. This project appears to support producer water conservation efforts. Some questions may arise regarding the projects longevity.	It is unclear whether this is a sustainable water conservation project that will prepare the producer for future droughts. The longevity of the project's water conservation efforts is unclear or not fully described. There are multiple questions on the projects longevity.	Insufficient information or does not meet program requirements.	
Measurable outcomes	The water saving data from this project is quantifiable. Past and current water use data is available and a baseline has been set to measure water savings. A comprehensive system is already in place for gathering water saving data.	The majority of water saving data from this project is quantifiable. Water use data is available and a baseline has been set to measure water savings. There is a system for collecting water savings data. There may be a few questions regarding data collection.	The majority of water saving data from this project is not quantifiable. The process of gathering data is vague and more information is needed. There are multiple questions regarding data collection and actual water savings.	Insufficient information or does not meet program requirements.	
Water savings	The project is expected to save up to 1.5 acre-feet of water.	The project is expected to save up to 1-1.5 acre-feet of water.	The project is expected to save less than 1 acre-feet of water.	Insufficient information or does not have a potential to conserve water..	

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Budget narrative	Budget items clearly support the proposed project. Adequate details are provided and expenditures are broken down. Sources providing quotes for supplies and contractual are provided.	Budget items support the proposed project. Most details are provided and expenditures are broken down. The budget appears to be fairly practical and reasonable. Some questions remain on longevity and feasibility.	Budget is vague and additional information is needed. The budget is not detailed or practical for the proposed project. Some details are lacking and expenditures are not broken down. Improvement is needed.	Insufficient information or does not meet program requirements.	
Project need (bonus)	Project is located in an area that has experienced severe drought within the past 5 years/and or is located in a basin with an over allocation of water rights.	Project is located in an area that has experienced severe drought and water shortage issues in the past decade/and or is located in a basin that has issues with the allocation of water rights.	Project is located in an area that has had drought and water shortage issues in the past decade.	Insufficient information or does not meet program requirements.	
Previous funding (bonus)	The proposed project will not receive any other source of state or federal funding.	The proposed project may receive or has received in the past other sources of state or federal funding.	The proposed project is receiving state or federal funding from other sources.	Insufficient information or does not meet program requirements.	
Total					

The evaluation committee will be composed of the Nevada drought initiative coordinator, a member of the Plant Industry administration and a member of the Plant Industry division.

10. Notice of intent

A notice of intent to award shall be issued in accordance with Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) chapter 333.170. Any award is contingent upon the successful negotiation of final contract terms and upon approval of the BOE, when required. Negotiations shall be confidential and not subject to disclosure to competing vendors unless and until an agreement is reached. If contract negotiations cannot be concluded successfully, the State upon written notice to all vendors may negotiate a contract with the next highest scoring vendor or withdraw the RFA.

11. Contract administration

- **General**

Within the limit of funds available, the awarding official of the NDA shall issue awards to eligible applicants whose proposals are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this RFA. All funds awarded by the NDA under this RFA must be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are awarded in accordance with the approved

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application and budget, regulations, the terms and conditions of the award and applicable cost principles.

- **Contract document and notice of contract**

Sub-contracts will be issued by the NDA. The program administrator, Jake Dick, will notify selected applicants upon completion of the review process. Recipients will be required to apply for a vendor number with the State of Nevada Controller's Office.

- Initial planning will determine the amount of funding to be released at a given time, based on estimates and backup documentation provided by awardees (for example, if planning to use 75 percent of funds on a center pivot, vendor price quotes must be included to receive funding advances).
- Awardees will have 30 days to provide proof of purchase after funding advances are received.
- The final portion of funding will be released based on the result of annual reports or a site visit from NDA staff to ensure funds have been used appropriately.

12. Project management

- The expenditure of funds must occur within the authorized period. All project managers will be required to submit a final report but may be subject to additional reporting if deemed necessary by the NDA. Failure to fulfill reporting requirements may be cause for withholding funding, withdrawal of funding, or rejection of future proposals.
- Accounting system requirements:
 - Financial records, statistical records, supporting documents, and other records pertinent to this award shall be retained for a period of three years from submission of the final project report.
 - Records that relate to audits, appeals, litigation, or settlement of claims arising out of the performance of the project shall be retained until such audits, appeals, litigation, or claims have been disposed of, but not earlier than three years from submission of the final project report.
 - NDA staff, or an authorized representative, shall have access to any pertinent documents, books, papers, and records of the recipient organization to make audits, examinations, excerpts, and transcripts.
- Submission of project reports must include the following information:
 - Reporting on expenditure of funds
 - Water usage before and post award
 - Problems, delays, challenges
 - Lessons learned
 - 1-5 digital images of project outcomes

13. Drought initiative application template

To apply for this funding opportunity, review this RFA to ensure eligibility criteria is met. Complete the attached application and submit to Jake Dick at jdick@agri.nv.gov or 405 South 21st street Sparks, NV 89431.