

**State and Private Forestry
FY 2010 Western Competitive
Resource Allocation
Single-State Project Proposal**

Filename	
SD_Partnership.doc	
Administration Information	
Dollar Amount Requested:	\$300,000
Matching Share:	\$453,000

Applicant Information															
1	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>State Forestry Agency:</td> <td>South Dakota Department of Agriculture - Resource Conservation & Forestry</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Contact Person:</td> <td>Ray Sowers, State Forester</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Address:</td> <td>523 East Capitol Avenue</td> </tr> <tr> <td>City/State/Zip Code:</td> <td>Pierre, SD 57501</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Phone (Work/Cell):</td> <td>605-773-3623</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Email:</td> <td>ray.sowers@state.sd.us</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fax:</td> <td>605-773-4003</td> </tr> </table>	State Forestry Agency:	South Dakota Department of Agriculture - Resource Conservation & Forestry	Contact Person:	Ray Sowers, State Forester	Address:	523 East Capitol Avenue	City/State/Zip Code:	Pierre, SD 57501	Phone (Work/Cell):	605-773-3623	Email:	ray.sowers@state.sd.us	Fax:	605-773-4003
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Project Information			
2	Descriptive Title of Project:	South Dakota Cooperative Forestry Partnership	
	Names of Partnering Agencies / Organizations:	South Dakota Department of Agriculture, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, South Dakota Conservation Commission, South Dakota Association of Conservation Districts, private landowners	
	State(s):	South Dakota	Congressional Districts: South Dakota-At Large
	Counties:	38 of South Dakota's 66 counties identified as high stewardship potential counties identified through the State Forest Stewardship Plan. High priority areas along the Moreau and Grand Rivers are also eligible.	Forest Service Regions: Rocky Mountain, Region 2

Total Leverage							
Please specify each 3 rd party contributor (partnering organizations and agencies, including other Federal) and the dollar value of each contribution. Please DO NOT show grant requested funds in this table.							
3	Contributors: (Please specify by name)	Conservation Districts	NRCS	Landowners			TOTAL
	Value of Contributions:	\$300,000	\$370,000	\$113,000	\$0	\$0	\$783,000

Project Budget					
	Grant Share (\$ requested)	Applicant	Non-Federal Contributors	TOTAL	
		Cash ¹	In-Kind ²		
4	Personnel / Labor:	\$24,857	\$21,750	\$0	\$46,607
	Fringe Benefits:	\$13,384	\$11,711	\$0	\$25,095
	Travel:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$ 0
	Equipment:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$ 0
	Supplies:	\$4,780	\$4,780	\$0	\$9,560
	Contractual:	\$255,000	\$0	\$413,000	\$668,000
	Construction:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$ 0
	Other:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$ 0
	Indirect Costs:	\$1,979	\$1,759	\$0	\$3,738
	TOTAL:	\$300,000	\$40,000	\$413,000	\$753,000

Project Duration	
5	What is the duration of this project? <input type="checkbox"/> One Year <input type="checkbox"/> Two Years <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Three Years

National Relevance	
6	Conserve Working Forest Landscapes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Protect Forests From Harm <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhance Public Benefits From Trees and Forests <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Project Description	
7	<p>Maximum 5500 Characters Including Spaces – Clearly summarize the proposed project, including goals, objectives, measurable outputs, outcomes, and how grant funds will be used towards successful completion of the project.</p> <p>The diversity of South Dakota's forest resources often creates a challenge in coordinated implementation of various programs available through a variety of federal, state and county resources, but the interest in managing these resources is high with all the stakeholders. Since 1935, almost 400,000 acres of trees have been planted by conservation interests in South Dakota. The current 5-year average is approximately 5,600 acres of trees per year, but recent trends indicate a decreasing trend in planting trees. According to NRCS, tree plantings in 2008 were down almost 20% from the long-term average.</p> <p>In FY2009, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in South Dakota earmarked funds in the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) for windbreak/shelterbelt renovations in the northeastern part of the state and for thinning in the Black Hills to improve forest health, reduce fire danger and to improve overall forest management by thinning densely populated stands. Landowner interest in EQIP in FY2009 was high and over \$370,000 of EQIP funds were used for thinning in the Black Hills and to renovate shelterbelts in the northeastern part of the state. Additionally, NRCS received many comments from producers about expanding these two initiatives statewide. As a result, NRCS removed the earmarks and modified their EQIP ranking for FY2010 to expand forest management and shelterbelt renovation statewide.</p>

¹ 'Cash' is the value of any qualifying match the applicant pays for such as cash, staff time, supplies, or equipment.

² 'In-Kind' is the value of any qualifying match contributed by a non-federal 3rd party contributor such as donated time, supplies, or equipment.

Critical to furthering forestry efforts in South Dakota is technical assistance. Private forestry efforts in South Dakota are often overlooked, as privately-owned forests in South Dakota tend to be small in size. In the past, South Dakota's conservation districts worked as primary contacts between government agencies and landowners.

Funding from this three-year grant will be used by South Dakota's conservation districts to provide forestry technical assistance to landowners within the 38 counties of South Dakota identified as high stewardship potential counties identified through the State Forest Stewardship Plan. Priority areas will be identified by the Statewide Forest Resource Assessment and will also be targeted by these grant funds as well as on high priority sites along the Grand and Moreau River watersheds in Dewey and Corson counties. Practices established on high priority areas on private lands will:

- renovate old field windbreaks and shelterbelts to reduce wind and water erosion;
- improve the health of existing private forest resources by removal of dead and dying trees;
- establish new windbreaks and shelterbelts to reduce wind and water erosion;
- enhance water quality in the Black Hills by assisting landowners with understanding and implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs); and
- assist landowners with re-establishment and management of riparian forests.

The grant funds requested will allow conservation districts to increase their ability to provide technical assistance to landowners. Despite landowner interest and additional resource provided by the EQIP in South Dakota, the conservation districts are finding it increasingly more difficult to provide the same level of technical assistances as in the past. Without additional financial resources, technical assistance will decline and NRCS will be less likely to provide additional funding for privately owned forestry work in the future.

Approximately \$45,000 will be used to provide forestry training to current and new conservation district staff twice a year. Training will focus on:

- cost share programs available to landowners;
- techniques on windbreak and shelterbelt establishment and renovation;
- thinning for the purposes of removal of diseased trees and reduction of fuels for wildfire protection;
- forest management planning; and
- supplies to implement forest management.

\$255,000 will be allocated to the South Dakota Association of Conservation Districts for distribution to the conservation districts within the high priority areas of the Forest Stewardship Plan to deliver technical assistance for forestry practices. To receive funding, conservation districts must submit a proposal to South Dakota Association of Conservation Districts. All proposals must outline the type of forestry work to be done by the District, monitor performance of the districts, document accomplishments and report these to SDACD quarterly. Anticipated outcomes include the restoration of 500 acres of riparian forest buffers, 600 acres of farm and homestead windbreaks and 1,000 acres of field windbreaks.

Program Integration

Maximum 1250 Characters Including Spaces

8

The South Dakota Cooperative Forestry Partnership will strengthen the "one-stop shopping" opportunities for private forest landowners to utilize financial and technical resources available throughout federal, state and local forestry programs. This grant will complement current forestry initiatives in EQIP by South Dakota NRCS. The conservation districts and NRCS will assist landowners with planning, applying and implementing federal, state and local forestry programs. Funding proposed in this grant will be directed to the conservation districts identified as counties with high stewardship potential identified through the State Forest Stewardship Plan. Priority areas will be identified by the Statewide Forest Resource Assessment for the purposes of providing increased technical assistance and for training of conservation district staff to increase their abilities to deliver federal, state and local forestry programs. South Dakota Department of Agriculture will provide additional forestry technical assistance, at the request of the conservation districts, for the purposes of addressing insect and disease issues on private forest land.

Collaboration

Maximum 1250 Characters Including Spaces

9

The conservation districts, NRCS and South Dakota Department of Agriculture have a long history of working with private landowners on forestry related issues. Because funding has declined in recent years, it will be difficult to maintain the current level of cooperation between the partners. Despite the risk of reduction in capacity, NRCS and its partners recognized the need to address declining windbreak conditions due to age in northeastern South Dakota and the need to improve forest health in the Black Hills by funding \$370,000 in projects in these areas in FY2009 and by expanding these efforts statewide in FY2010. While this financial assistance is important, additional technical assistance is needed to fully integrate EQIP into forestry projects on the ground within the counties identified as high stewardship potential counties identified through the State Forest Resource Assessment. This grant will allow conservation districts to spend more time on forestry projects as well as target efforts to high priority areas identified by the State Forest Resource Assessment.

Leverage

Maximum 1250 Characters Including Spaces

10

The South Dakota Cooperative Forestry Partnership will leverage funding sources to increase technical and financial resources for the management of privately owned forests. It will leverage an estimated \$370,000 from NRCS (based on FY2009 demand) and \$113,000 from private landowners for forestry practices in EQIP.

The value of contributions by partners for this grant include \$300,000 for technical assistance provided by conservation districts and \$40,000 by the South Dakota Department of Agriculture, Division of Resource Conservation and Forestry to assist landowners with plans for new plantings, renovating old windbreaks and management of existing forests and riparian areas. Contributions will be documented to show hard dollars used for salaries, benefits and travel involved with the implementation of this grant.

Other leveraged resources will include time spent by NRCS staff training and coordinating program delivery with conservation district staff and time spent by NRCS, conservation districts and South Dakota Department of Agriculture on outreach to landowners regarding NRCS, state and local programs for forestry management on private land.

Meaningful Scale	
11	<p>Maximum 1250 Characters Including Spaces</p> <p>Results will be achieved by focusing federal, state and local forestry efforts within South Dakota to counties identified as high stewardship potential counties identified through the State Forest Stewardship Plan. Priority areas will be identified by the Statewide Forest Resource Assessment. There are 1.5 million acres of forests within the area that would benefit from this grant. This grant would allow conservation districts to assist landowners with riparian area plantings to promote cottonwood forests, which have declined from 94,000 acres in 1935 to 36,000 acres at present. While windbreak establishment continues to be high in South Dakota, between 50 to 90 percent of the windbreaks in the state are 50 plus years old and no longer providing the benefits they were originally designed to provide. Since funding will be directed towards districts within the high priority areas identified by the State Forest Resource Assessment, funding for programs will be directed at forest areas of greatest need.</p> <p>Measureable products include acres planted, acres managed, number of forest management plans written, number of cooperators served and number of conservation district staff delivering technical assistance for forestry.</p>

Sphere of Influence	
12	<p>Maximum 1250 Characters Including Spaces</p> <p>The 2008 Farm Bill increased the focus on private forestry by establishing national priorities for federal assistance. These priorities place a greater level of focus on conserving and managing working forests for multiple uses, protecting and restoring forests, and enhancing benefits from privately owned forests. In 2008, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by several national conservation organizations that acknowledges the conservation districts' role of working with private forest owners. This grant would help further the goals of the MOU by using the Forest Stewardship Plan to place a priority on technical assistance provided by the conservation district within the counties identified as high stewardship potential counties identified through the State Forest Stewardship Plan. Priority areas will be identified by the Statewide Forest Resource Assessment.</p>

Sustainability of Outcomes	
13	<p>Maximum 1250 Characters Including Spaces</p> <p>This grant strengthens the existing partnership that exists between the conservation districts, NRCS and South Dakota Department of Agriculture. These three organizations have a long history of working together to address resource concerns on private lands. Funding sources in the future will likely become more limited and a coordinated approach to forest management will be necessary to efficiently deliver programs and technical assistance to implement forestry practices. Anticipated outcomes include the restoration of 500 acres of riparian forest buffers, 600 acres of farm and homestead windbreaks and 1,000 acres of field windbreaks which will provide long term forestry and agroforestry benefits within the state.</p> <p>Additionally, while this project initially will assist with the delivery of the two special initiatives under EQIP, this project will build the capacity of the conservation districts that will result in the ability to deliver technical assistance and help the landowners leverage funding from future federal, state and local programs.</p>

