



Natural Resources Conservation Service
State Office
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April 14, 2003

OKLAHOMA BULLETIN NO. OK440-3-7

SUBJECT: PGM – Farmland Land Protection Program (FPP) - Request for Proposals and Related Information

Purpose: To transmit to field offices current information regarding the FPP.

Expiration Date: September 30, 2003

Action Required by May 19, 2003

The FPP was expanded in the 2002 Farm Bill to provide federal assistance to state, local and tribal government entities and non-governmental organizations in their efforts to preserve agricultural lands being converted to non-agricultural uses. The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-171) amended the Food Security Act of 1985 to include the Farmland Protection Program (FPP), providing up to \$100 million in financial assistance in fiscal year 2003, for the purposes described in FPP. Congress delegated authority for FPP to the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). NRCS, on behalf of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) and using its authorities, requests proposals from Federally recognized Indian tribes, States, units of local government, and nongovernmental organizations to cooperate in the acquisition of conservation easements on farms and ranches. (Note: Private individuals are not eligible to offer proposals directly to NRCS for the FPP.) Eligible land includes farm and ranch land that has prime, unique, or other productive soil, or that contains historical or archaeological resources. These lands must also be subject to a pending offer from eligible entities for the purpose of protecting topsoil by limiting conversion of that land to nonagricultural uses.

The proposing entity must have an active farmland protection and easement acquisition program in place and be actively pursuing the acquisition of property through easements. The FPP will supplement the funding of the acquiring entity, not to exceed 50 percent of the purchase price of the easement, or the appraised value, whichever is the least. NRCS is unaware of any state government entity in Oklahoma that is actively involved in purchasing agriculture conservation easements. However, local governments, tribes, and non-governmental organizations across the state may be active in this effort and should be made aware of this Request for Proposals (RFP). The Norman Area Land Conservancy, a local government entity and Land Legacy, Tulsa, a statewide entity, are examples of organizations active in Oklahoma. The FPP does not allow the opportunity for individuals to offer their land directly to the NRCS. Under the FPP, NRCS will not be the holder/manager of the conservation easement.

(MORE)

DIST:AO

The following information is provided to NRCS personnel in order to understand the FPP, the RFP process, and respond to questions by interested parties.

- The Federal Register Notice of the Request for Proposals. The RFP is provided as an attachment and can be accessed at the following web address - <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/farbill/2002/pdf/fpprfp.pdf>
- Frequently Asked Questions - <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/farbill/2002/pdf/FPPQnA.pdf>
- The Oklahoma FPP Press Release is available at: <http://intranet.ok.nrcs.usda.gov/PAS/NewReleases/FPPproposal.doc>
- Oklahoma's State FPP Plan and related information available at: <http://intranet.ok.nrcs.usda.gov/PGM/html/FPP.htm>
- The Farmland Protection Programs Manual, a Supplement to the Conservation Programs Manual (440-V-CPM), Part 519, is available at: http://policy.nrcs.usda.gov/scripts/lpsiis.dll/M/M_440_519.htm

This is TIME SENSITIVE. Proposals from eligible entities must be developed in accordance with the RFP and submitted to M. Darrel Dominick, State Conservationist, NRCS State Office, by COB May 19, 2003. District Conservationists, Tribal Conservationists, and Tribal Liaisons will ensure that information is disseminated regarding this program. If you have any questions, contact Kevin Norton, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, at Kevin.Norton@ok.usda.gov or (405)742-1236.

/s/ Kevin D. Norton, Acting For

M. DARREL DOMINICK
State Conservationist

Attachment