

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Sources of Support for Tribal Wetland Programs

These case studies demonstrate the many diverse partnership opportunities available to Tribes to protect their wetlands and associated resources. The EPA Wetland Program Development Grant (see page II-4) is an excellent source of funding for Tribes to initiate and develop wetland programs. Long-term operational costs of Tribal wetland programs pose particular challenges to Tribes, as funding for operational expenses is difficult to secure. The scarcity of long-term funding for Tribal wetland programs has led many Tribes to develop partnerships with organizations that can help them meet their wetlands protection goals. Partnerships may result in funding of particular projects, but in-kind assistance to Tribes is also a practical way for Tribes and their partners to meet mutually beneficial goals even though dollars do not change hands. Examples of in-kind assistance in these case studies include management assistance provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service to the Port Graham/Nanwalek Watershed Council and technical expertise provided by professors at Northern New Mexico Community College and New Mexico Highlands University to the Taos Pueblo.

The sections below present a list of programs available through EPA and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) that support Tribal wetland programs. Other federal agencies that have programs that support Tribal wetland programs include the Department of Defense, the Department of Commerce/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of the Interior/Bureau of Indian Affairs and Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Department of Transportation. A more complete overview is available from the publication, *Funding for Habitat Restoration Projects: A Compendium of Current Federal Programs with Fiscal Year 1996-1998 Funding Levels, A Citizens Guide* (see Appendix III for information). It offers a comprehensive survey of many of the programs discussed here as well as those available from the other federal agencies mentioned earlier. Additionally, the 1997 *Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance* is an excellent source of funding information (see Appendix III for information).

EPA Programs

Clean Water State Revolving Fund—Section 205 of the Clean Water Act authorized the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) to provide grants or “seed money” to all 50 states plus Puerto Rico to capitalize state loan funds. The states, in turn, make loans to communities, Tribes, individuals, and others for high priority water quality activities. As money is paid back into a revolving fund, new loans are made to other recipients that need help in maintaining the quality of their water. Currently, the program has more than \$20 billion in assets. The SRF allows states and Tribes the flexibility to use funding for projects that will address their highest-priority water quality needs. While traditionally used to build or improve wastewater treatment plants, loans are increasingly used for wetlands protection;

agricultural, rural, and urban runoff control; estuary improvement projects; wet weather flow control, including storm water and sewer overflows; and, alternative treatment technologies such as constructed treatment wetlands.

Many people believe they would rather have a grant. Most water quality experts are more familiar with grants and, consequently, many misconceptions persist. In fact, a loan may be a better deal. Why? First, no cash is required up front. Most grant programs require significant cost shares (as much as 40 percent or more). An SRF loan can cover 100 percent of project costs with no cash up front. Second, SRF loans provide significant cost savings over the life of the loan. A 0 percent SRF loan will cost approximately 50 percent less than the same project financed by a commercial loan at 7.5 percent. Additionally, a 0 percent SRF loan is equivalent to receiving a 50 percent grant (where the other 50 percent (match) is financed at market rate). Third, financing a project with an SRF loan means fewer federal requirements than any federal grant. In addition, the 51 SRF programs are experienced in helping applicants through the loan application process and providing a wide range of technical assistance.

Contact

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Clean Water State Revolving Fund Branch (4204)
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460
Phone: (202) 260-7359
Fax: (202) 260-1827
Internet: www.epa.gov/owm

Community/University Grants—This grant program is administered through the Office of Environmental Justice and is funded by media-specific statutes. The objective of the program is to increase environmental awareness, expand outreach, and provide education and training in socioeconomically disadvantaged communities. Historically, grants have involved partnerships between Tribal colleges and universities.

Contact

Environmental Justice Hotline: (800) 962-6215

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund—Authorized by the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996, this program offers formula grants to assist public water systems in building drinking water infrastructure and protecting source water quality. Up to 10 percent of funds can be used for land acquisition and conservation easements in order to protect source waters.

Contact

Safe Drinking Water Hotline: (800) 426-4791

Environmental Education Grant Program—Section 6 of the National Environmental Education Act provides funding to support the design and implementation of environmental education programs that enhance critical thinking and problem solving skills to ensure informed, responsible decisions are made to protect the environment. Information may be obtained from the Regional Tribal Contact (Appendix I).

Environmental Justice Small Grants—This grant program, administered by the Office of Compliance Assurance, is funded by media-specific statutes. Its purpose is to provide assistance to grassroots, community-based groups to support projects related to environmental justice. Historically, grants have involved Tribal efforts to monitor and improve the health of Tribal waters.

Contact

Environmental Justice Hotline: (800) 962-6215

Indian Environmental General Assistance Program—This program, administered by the American Indian Environmental Office, provides funding for Tribes to build their capacity to plan, develop, and establish environmental protection programs. Information may be obtained from the Regional Tribal Contact (Appendix I).

Indian Set-Aside Program—Section 518 of the Clean Water Act authorized EPA to create a grants program to help pay for the planning, design, and construction of wastewater treatment systems to serve Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Villages. The Indian Set-Aside (ISA) Program is administered by EPA through a cooperative effort with the Indian Health Service. Applicants can obtain a copy of the guidance document, entitled “Guidelines and Requirements for Applying for Grants from the Indian Set-Aside Program” (April 1988), to determine how to apply for these grants. An Addendum to the guidance document was issued in March 1995. The guidance document can be obtained by contacting EPA’s Regional ISA Coordinator (Appendix I) for the area in which you are located. The guidance document can be obtained by contacting your Regional Tribal Coordinator (Appendix I).

Nonpoint Source Implementation—This program is authorized by Section 319 of the Clean Water Act. It is administered by the Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds, and aims to assist states and Tribes in implementing EPA-approved nonpoint source programs. Programs funded in the past have included a variety of wetland, riparian, and watershed restoration activities.

Contact

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Nonpoint Source Control Branch (4503F)
Assessment and Watershed Protection Division
Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460
Phone: (202) 260-7100
Fax: (202) 260-7024

Partnership for Environmental Research: Water and Watersheds

Competition—This grant program is authorized by the Clean Water Act and administered through the Office of Research and Development and the National Science Foundation. It aims to support research that contributes to an improved understanding of the processes that govern the quality of water resources.

Contact

Barbara Levinson: (202) 564-6911

Sustainable Development Challenge Grant Program—This grant program is administered by the Office of Air and Radiation and is funded by media-specific statutes. It aims to address non-sustainable behavior through community involvement.

Contact

Pamela Hurt: (202) 260-2441

Water Pollution Control State and Interstate Program—This program is authorized under Section 106 of the Clean Water Act and is administered by the Office of Wastewater Management. It aims to establish and maintain adequate measures for prevention and control of surface and groundwater pollution.

Contact

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Wastewater Management (4201)
Section 106 Tribal Coordinator
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460
Phone: (202) 260-5828
Fax: (202) 260-1040

Water Quality Management Planning—Section 106 of the Clean Water Act authorizes funding through formula grants to assist states and Tribes in water quality management planning. The program is administered by the Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds.

Contact

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Assessment and Watershed Protection Division (4503F)
Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460
Phone: (202) 260-7040
Fax: (202) 260-7024

Wetland Program Development Grants—Section 104(b)(3) of the Clean Water Act provides funding to states, Tribes and local governments for wetland protection, management or restoration. The grants must be used for the development of new, or refinement of existing wetland programs, not for operational support. This grant program is administered through the Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds. Annual Grant Guidance for this program can be found on EPA's website at www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/partner.html.

Contact

Shanna Draheim
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Wetlands Division (4502F)
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460
Phone: (202) 260-6218
Fax: (202) 260-8000

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Programs

Conservation of Private Grazing Land Initiative—The Conservation of Private Grazing Land (CPGL) Initiative will ensure that technical, educational, and related assistance is provided to those who own private grazing lands. It is not a cost-share program. This technical assistance will offer opportunities for better grazing land management, protecting soil from erosive wind and water, using more energy-efficient ways to produce food and fiber, conserving water, providing habitat for wildlife, sustaining forage and grazing plants, using plants to sequester greenhouse gases and increase soil organic matter, and using grazing lands as a source of biomass energy and raw materials for industrial products. For more information about CPGL, contact USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Conservation Technical Assistance—The purpose of Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) is to assist land users, communities, units of state, Tribal, and local government, and other federal agencies in planning and implementing conservation systems. The purpose of the conservation systems is to reduce erosion,

improve soil and water quality, improve and conserve wetlands, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, improve air quality, improve pasture and range condition, reduce upstream flooding, and improve woodlands.

Contact

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Deputy Chief for Natural Resources Conservation Programs
Natural Resources Conservation Service
P.O. Box 2890
Washington, DC 20013
Phone: (202) 720-4527

Environmental Quality Incentives Program—The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides technical, educational, and financial assistance to eligible farmers and ranchers to address soil, water, and related natural resource concerns on their lands in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner. The program provides assistance to farmers and ranchers in complying with federal, state, and Tribal environmental laws, and encourages environmental enhancement. The program is funded through the Commodity Credit Corporation. The purposes of the program are achieved through the implementation of a conservation plan that includes structural, vegetative, and land management practices on eligible land. Five- to ten-year contracts are made with eligible producers. Cost-share payments may be made to implement one or more eligible structural or vegetative practices, such as animal waste management facilities, terraces, filter strips, tree planting, and permanent wildlife habitat. Incentive payments can be made to implement one or more land management practices, such as nutrient management, pest management, and grazing land management. Of the funding available for the program, 50 percent will be targeted at natural resource concerns relating to livestock production. The program is carried out primarily in priority areas that may be watersheds, regions, or multi-state areas, and for significant statewide natural resource concerns that are outside of geographic priority areas. For more information about EQIP, contact your local NRCS office, or:

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Washington, DC 20013
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Rise to the Future: Fish US—This program is administered by the U.S. Forest Service and offers grants and assessment and implementation assistance to protect and restore national forest fish habitats and enhance opportunities for use and enjoyment of national forest fisheries.

Contact

Fisheries Program Leader, Mark Hudy: (202) 205-1205

Soil Survey Programs—The National Cooperative Soil Survey (NCSS) program is a partnership led by NRCS, state agricultural experiment stations, and state, Tribal, and local units of government that provide soil survey information necessary for understanding, managing, conserving, and sustaining the nation's limited soil resources. Soil surveys provide an orderly, on-the-ground, scientific inventory of soil resources that includes maps showing the locations and extent of soils, data about the physical and chemical properties of those soils, and information derived from that data about potentialities and problems of use on each kind of soil in sufficient detail to meet all reasonable needs for farmers, agricultural technicians, commu-

nity planners, engineers, and scientists in planning and transferring the findings of research and experience to specific land areas. Soil surveys provide the basic information needed to manage soil sustainably. They also provide information needed to protect water quality, wetlands, and wildlife habitat. Soil surveys are the basis for predicting the behavior of a soil under alternative uses, its potential erosion hazard, potential for ground water contamination, and suitability and productivity for cultivated crops, trees, and grasses. Soil surveys are important to planners, engineers, zoning commissions, tax commissioners, homeowners, and developers, as well as agricultural producers. For more information about NCSS, contact your local NRCS office.

Stewardship Incentives Program—The Stewardship Incentives Program (SIP) provides technical and financial assistance to encourage non-industrial private forest landowners to keep their lands and natural resources productive and healthy. Qualifying land includes rural lands with existing tree cover, or land suitable for growing trees, that is owned by a private individual, group, association, corporation, Indian Tribe, or other legal private entity. Eligible landowners must have an approved Forest Stewardship Plan and own 1,000 or less acres of qualifying land. Authorizations may be obtained for exceptions of up to 5,000 acres. For more information about SIP, contact your state forestry office.

Watersheds Operations—Small Watershed Program and Flood Prevention Program (WF 08 or FP 03)—The Small Watershed Program works through local government sponsors and helps participants solve natural resource and related economic problems on a watershed basis. Projects include watershed protection, flood prevention, erosion and sediment control, water supply, water quality, fish and wildlife habitat enhancement, wetlands creation and restoration, and public recreation in watersheds of 250,000 or fewer acres. Both technical and financial assistance are available. For more information, contact your local NRCS office, or:

Contact

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Deputy Chief for Natural Resources Conservation Programs
Natural Resources Conservation Service
P.O. Box 2890
Washington, DC 20013
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Watershed Surveys and Planning—The Watershed and Flood Prevention Act, P.L. 83-566, August 4, 1954, (16 U.S.C. 1001-1008) authorized this program. Prior to FY96, small watershed planning activities and the cooperative river basin surveys and investigations authorized by Section 6 of the Act were operated as separate programs. The 1996 appropriations act combined the activities into a single program, entitled the Watershed Surveys and Planning program. Activities under both programs are continuing under this authority. The purpose of the program is to assist federal, state, and local agencies, and Tribal governments to protect watersheds from damage caused by erosion, floodwater, and sediment, and to conserve and develop water and land resources. Resource concerns addressed by the program include water quality, opportunities for water conservation, wetland and water storage capacity, agricultural drought problems, rural development, municipal and industrial water needs, upstream flood damages, and water needs for fish, wildlife, and forest-based industries. Types of surveys and plans include watershed plans, river basin surveys and studies, flood hazard analyses, and flood plain management assistance. The focus of these plans is to identify solutions that use land treatment and nonstructural measures to solve resource problems. For more information, contact your local NRCS office.

Wetlands Reserve Program—The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is a voluntary program to restore wetlands. Participating landowners can establish conservation easements of either permanent or 30-year duration, or can enter into restoration cost-share agreements where no easement is involved. In exchange for establishing a permanent easement, the landowner receives payment up to the agricultural value of the land and 100 percent of the restoration costs for restoring the wetlands. The 30-year easement payment is 75 percent of what would be provided for a permanent easement on the same site and 75 percent of the restoration cost. The voluntary agreements are for a minimum 10-year duration and provide for 75 percent of the cost of restoring the involved wetlands. Easements and restoration cost-share agreements establish wetlands protection and restoration as the primary land use for the duration of the easement or agreement. In all instances, landowners continue to control access to their land. For more information about WRP, contact your local NRCS office, or:

Contact

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Watersheds and Wetlands Division
Natural Resources Conservation Service
P.O. Box 2890
Washington, DC 20013
Phone: (202) 690-0848

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program—The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) provides financial incentives to develop habitat for fish and wildlife on private lands. Participants agree to implement a wildlife habitat development plan and USDA agrees to provide cost-share assistance for the initial implementation of wildlife habitat development practices. USDA and program participants enter into a cost-share agreement for wildlife habitat development. This agreement generally lasts a minimum of 10 years from the date the contract is signed. For more information about WHIP, contact your local NRCS office, or:

Contact

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