

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**Cooperative State Research,
Education, and Extension Service****Rangeland Research Grants Program
for Fiscal Year 1996; Solicitation of
Applications**

Notice is hereby given that under the authority in section 1480 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended (7 U.S.C. 3333), the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) will award standard grants for basic studies in certain areas of rangeland research. No more than \$80,000 will be awarded for the support of any one project, regardless of the amount requested. The total amount of funds available for grants under the Rangeland Research Grants Program during fiscal year 1996 is \$451,535.

Eligibility and Limitations on Use of Funds

Under this program, subject to the availability of funds, the Secretary may award grants to land-grant colleges and universities, State agricultural experiment stations, and to colleges, universities, and Federal laboratories having a demonstrable capacity in rangeland research, as determined by the Secretary. Except in the case of Federal laboratories, each grant recipient shall match the Federal funds expended on a research project based on a formula of 50 percent Federal and 50 percent non-Federal funding. Proposals received from scientists at non-United States organizations or institutions will not be considered for support. Section 712 of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-37, prohibits CSREES from paying indirect costs on research grants that exceed 14 percent of total Federal funds provided under each award. In addition, section 716 of that Act provides that, in the case of any equipment or product that may be authorized to be purchased with funds appropriated under that Act, entities receiving such funds are encouraged to use such funds to purchase only American-made equipment or products.

Pursuant to section 1473 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended (7 U.S.C. 3319), funds made available under this program to recipients other than Federal laboratories shall not be subject to

reduction for indirect costs or for tuition remission costs. Since these costs are not allowable costs for purposes of this program, such costs incurred by a grant recipient may not be used to meet the matching fund requirement.

Applicable Regulations

This program is subject to the provisions found in 7 CFR part 3401, as amended (58 FR 21852, April 23, 1993), which sets forth procedures to be followed when submitting grant proposals, rules governing the evaluation of proposals, processes regarding the awarding of grants, and regulations relating to the post-award administration of grant projects. In addition, the USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, 7 CFR part 3015, as amended; the Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments, 7 CFR part 3016, as amended; the regulations governing Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) and the Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Grants), 7 CFR part 3017, as amended; the New Restrictions on Lobbying, 7 CFR part 3018; the Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations, 7 CFR part 3019; the Audits of Institutions of Higher Education and Other Nonprofit Institutions, 7 CFR part 3051; and the CSREES regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, 7 CFR part 3407, apply to this program.

Specific Areas of Research To Be Supported in Fiscal Year 1996

Standard grants will be awarded to support basic research in certain areas of rangeland research. Proposals will be considered in the following specific areas: (1) Management of rangelands and agricultural land as integrated systems for more efficient utilization of crops and waste products in the production of food and fiber; (2) methods of managing rangeland watersheds to maximize efficient use of water and improve water yield, water quality, and water conservation, to protect against onsite and offsite damage to rangeland resources from floods, erosion, and other detrimental influences, and to remedy unsatisfactory and unstable rangeland conditions; and (3) revegetation and rehabilitation of rangelands including the control of undesirable species of plants.

For Further Information Contact:
Program related questions should be

directed to Dr. Paul F. McCawley, CSREES-USDA; telephone: (202) 401-5351.

**Compliance With the National
Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)**

As outlined in 7 CFR part 3407 (the CSREES regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969), environmental data for any proposed project is to be provided to CSREES so that CSREES may determine whether any further action is needed. The applicant shall review the following categorical exclusions and determine if the proposed project may fall within one or more of the categories.

**(1) Department of Agriculture
Categorical Exclusions (7 CFR 1b.3)**

(i) Policy development, planning and implementation which are related to routine activities such as personnel, organizational changes, or similar administrative functions;

(ii) Activities which deal solely with the functions of programs, such as program budget proposals, disbursements, and transfer or reprogramming of funds;

(iii) Inventories, research activities, and studies, such as resource inventories and routine data collection when such actions are clearly limited in context and intensity;

(iv) Educational and informational programs and activities;

(v) Civil and criminal law enforcement and investigative activities;

(vi) Activities which are advisory and consultative to other agencies and public and private entities; and

(vii) Activities related to trade representation and market development activities abroad.

**(2) CSREES Categorical Exclusions (7
CFR 3407.6(a)(2))**

Based on previous experience, the following categories of CSREES actions are excluded because they have been found to have limited scope and intensity and to have no significant individual or cumulative impacts on the quality of the human environment:

(i) The following categories of research programs or projects of limited size and magnitude or with only short-term effects on the environment:

(A) Research conducted within any laboratory, greenhouse, or other contained facility where research practices and safeguards prevent environmental impacts;

(B) Surveys, inventories, and similar studies that have limited context and minimal intensity in terms of changes in the environment; and

(C) Testing outside of the laboratory, such as in small isolated field plots,

which involves the routine use of familiar chemicals or biological materials.

(ii) Routine renovation, rehabilitation, or revitalization of physical facilities, including the acquisition and installation of equipment, where such activity is limited in scope and intensity.

In order for CSREES to determine whether any further action is needed with respect to NEPA, pertinent information regarding the possible environmental impacts of a particular project is necessary; therefore, Form CSREES-1234, "NEPA Exclusions Form" (copy enclosed), must be included in the proposal indicating whether the applicant is of the opinion that the project falls within one or more of the categorical exclusions and the reasons therefore. If it is the applicant's opinion that the proposed projects falls within one or more of the categorical exclusions, the specific exclusion(s) must be identified. The information submitted shall be identified in the Table of Contents as "NEPA Considerations" and Form CSREES-1234 and supporting documentation shall be placed after the Form CSREES-661, "Application for Funding," in the proposal.

Even though a project may fall within one or more of the categorical exclusions, CSREES may determine that an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement is necessary for a proposed project if substantial controversy on environmental grounds exist or if other extraordinary conditions or circumstances are present that may cause such activity to have a significant environmental effect.

Addresses:

How To Obtain Application Materials

Copies of this solicitation, the Application Kit, and the Administrative Provisions for this program (7 CFR Part 3401) may be obtained by writing to the address or calling the telephone number which follows: Proposal Services; Grants Management Branch; Office of Extramural Programs; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture;

Room 303, Aerospace Center; Ag Box 2245; Washington, DC 20250-2245; Telephone: (202) 401-5048.

These materials may also be requested via Internet by sending a message with your name, mailing address (not e-mail) and phone number, to psb@morrill.esusda.gov which states that you want a copy of the application materials for the Fiscal Year 1996 Rangeland Research Grants Program. The materials will then be mailed to you (not e-mailed) as quickly as possible.

What To Submit

An original and nine copies of each proposal must be submitted. This number of copies is necessary to permit thorough, objective merit evaluation of all proposals received before funding decisions are made.

Every effort should be made to ensure that the proposal contains all pertinent information when submitted. Prior to mailing, compare your proposal with the guidelines contained in the Administrative Provisions which govern the Rangeland Research Grants Program, 7 CFR Part 3401. Proposals submitted by organizations other than Federal laboratories shall state that the 50 percent non-Federal funding requirement will be met.

Each copy of each proposal must include a Form CSREES-661, "Application for Funding." Applicants should note that one copy of this form, preferably the original, must contain pen-and-ink signatures of the principal investigator(s) and the authorized organizational representative. (Form CSREES-661 and the other required forms and certifications are contained in the Application Kit).

Grant proposals shall be limited to 10 pages (single-spaced and typed on one side of the page only), exclusive of required forms, bibliography and vitae of the principal investigator(s), senior associate(s), and other professional personnel.

All copies of each proposal shall be mailed in one package. Please make sure that each copy of each proposal is stapled securely in the upper left-hand corner. DO NOT BIND.

One copy of each proposal not selected for funding will be retained for

a period of one year. The remaining copies will be destroyed.

Where and When To Submit Applications for Funding

To be considered for funding during Fiscal Year 1996, proposals must be submitted by February 29, 1996.

Proposals submitted through the regular mail must be postmarked by February 29, 1996, and should be sent to the following address: Proposal Services; Grants Management Branch; Office of Extramural Programs; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Room 303, Aerospace Center; Ag Box 2245; Washington, D.C. 20250-2245. The telephone number is: (202) 401-5048.

Hand-delivered proposals, including those submitted by express mail or a courier service, must be received at the following address by February 29, 1996: Proposal Services; Grants Management Branch; Office of Extramural Programs; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Room 303, Aerospace Center; 901 D Street, S.W.; Washington, D.C. 20024. The telephone number is: (202) 401-5048.

Supplementary Information: The Rangeland Research Grants Program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under No. 10.200. For reasons set forth in the Final Rule-related Notice to 7 CFR Part 3015, subpart V (48 FR 29115, June 24, 1983), this program is excluded from the scope of Executive Order 12372, which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials.

Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980, as amended (44 U.S.C. 3504(h)), the collection of information requirements contained in this notice have been approved under OMB Document Nos. 0524-0022 and 0524-0033.

Done at Washington, D.C., this 21st day of December 1995.

Colien Hefferan,

Acting Administrator, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service.

BILLING CODE 3410-22-M

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE**

OMB Approved 0524-0033
Expires 6/97

National Environmental Policy Act Exclusions Form

Principal Investigator/Project Director Name	Institution
Address	

Under 7 CFR Part 3407 (CSREES's implementing regulations of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)), environmental data or documentation is required in order to assist CSREES in carrying out its responsibilities under NEPA, which includes determining whether proposed research requires the preparation of an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement, or whether such research can be excluded from this requirement on the basis of several categories. Therefore, it is necessary for the applicant to advise CSREES whether the proposed research falls into one of the following Department of Agriculture or CSREES categorical exclusions, or whether the research does not fall into one of these exclusions (in which case the preparation of an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement may be required). Even though the applicant considers that a proposed project may or may not fall within a categorical exclusion, CSREES may determine that an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement is necessary for a proposed project should substantial controversy on environmental grounds exist or if other extraordinary conditions or circumstances are present that may cause such activity to have a significant environmental effect.

Please Read All of the Following and Check All Which Apply

- The proposed research falls under the categorical exclusion(s) indicated below:

Department of Agriculture Categorical Exclusions
(found at 7 CFR 1b.3 and restated at 7CFR 3407.6 (a)(1)(i) through (vii))

- (i) Policy development, planning and implementation which are related to routine activities such as personnel, organizational changes, or similar administrative functions
- (ii) Activities that deal solely with the functions of programs, such as program budget proposals, disbursements, and transfer or reprogramming of funds
- (iii) Inventories, research activities, and studies such as resource inventories and routine data collection when such actions are clearly limited in context and intensity
- (iv) Educational and informational programs and activities
- (v) Civil and criminal law enforcement and investigative activities
- (vi) Activities that are advisory and consultative to other agencies and public and private entities, such as legal counseling and representation
- (vii) Activities related to trade representation and market development activities abroad

CSREES Categorical Exclusions
(found at 7 CFR 3407.6(a)(2)(i) through (ii))

The following categories of CSREES actions are excluded because they have been found to have limited scope and intensity and to have no significant individual or cumulative impacts on the quality of the human environment:

- (i) The following categories of research programs or projects of limited size and magnitude or with only short-term effects on the environment:
- (A) Research conducted within any laboratory, greenhouse, or other contained facility where research practices and safeguards prevent environmental impacts
- (B) Surveys, inventories, and similar studies that have limited context and minimal intensity in terms of changes in the environment
- (C) Testing outside of the laboratory, such as in small isolated field plots, which involves the routine use of familiar chemicals or biological materials
- (ii) Routine renovation, rehabilitation, or revitalization of physical facilities, including the acquisition and installation of equipment, where such activity is limited in scope and intensity

OR

- Proposed research does not fall into one of the above categorical exclusions
(NOTE: If checked, please attach an explanation of the potential environmental impacts of the proposed research.
May require completion of an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement.)

Form CSREES-1234 (4/94)