

**Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, June 11, 2014**  
**Red Cliff**

Meeting called to order at 8:04

**1. Roll Call**

Present: Bad River (Lacey Hill-Kastern), FCPC (Nate Guldán), Ho-Chunk Tina Warner), Lac du Flambeau (Scott McDougall), Menominee (Jeremy Pyatskowitz), Mole Lake (Tina Van Zile, Roman Ferdinand), Oneida (Pat Pelky), Red Cliff (Nathan Gordon, Chad Abel, Larry Balber), St. Croix (Katie Stariha)

A quorum is present.

Others Present: Mary Rasmussen (USFS), Jim Ruppel (EPA), Shelly Allness (WDNR), JoAnn Cruse (APHIS), Greg Yakle (NRCS), Keith Sengbusch (WTCAC), Randy Gilbertson (WTCAC), Gary Haughn (NRCS), Bruce Savage (IAC), Chris Borden (NRCS), Alan Johnson (WTCAC), Carl Bohman, Carl Beckman (FSA)

Nathan Gordon – Red Cliff Vice Chairman welcomed everyone

**2. Approval of Agenda**

WDNR, NRCS new partnership, and response letter to technical recommendations all need to be added to the agenda.

**MOTION:** Motion to approve the agenda with the additions. Motion by Mole Lake, seconded by Menominee. All ayes, zero opposed, motion carried.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

Gary's last name for Red Cliff is Defoe.

**MOTION:** Motion to approve the April 29 and 30, 2104 WTCAC meeting minutes with the correction. Motion by Red Cliff, seconded by Mole Lake. All ayes, zero opposed, motion carried.

**4. NRCS Update**

Chris Borden – Jimmy is in DC and send his regrets. Farm Bill – Leslie Wheelock mentioned at the Food Sovereignty Summit that she is putting together a summary of the Farm Bill in regards to Tribes. The budget is pretty tight for a number of reasons, Jimmy wanted him to mention that he is very committed to supporting the operations of WTCAC and he is trying to free up about \$40,000 out of their funds now for WTCAC. He indicated that we need to get together pretty shortly on what might work for the upcoming year. We need to have a meeting with WTCAC

and NRCS state staff and have a proposal developed soon. He handed out the response letter to WTCAC technical recommendations (attached). We will discuss in more detail later. One of the concerns over the last couple of years is that they have a tendency to do their planning very late in the year. They have moved up their EQIP process. The deadline for applications will probably be at the end of September this year. Payment schedule is not exactly known, but there is no downside to be working on this right away. Deadline coming up for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program which is part of the new Farm Bill.

### **5. FSA Update**

Carl Beckman - Can sign up on website to receive all press releases, information and news letters. Farm Loan programs have been pretty active. Susan's report is attached.

### **6. APHIS Update**

JoAnn Cruse – A couple of Farm Bill projects that have been awarded. FCPC and Menominee, she is guessing there will be some more funds next year. Gypsy moth traps are still going out, nothing new in that area, things are behind development wise. They have a contractor that is placing EAB traps in the state, some Tribes had requested that if cells fell on Tribal lands they would like to contractor to do it. They are starting a First Detector Program this year with UW (handout attached). Contact her if you are interested in starting a program.

### **7. USFS Update**

Mary Rasmussen – report attached. Forest will be having a Regional Forest review.

**MOTION:** Motion to support Katie Stariha from St. Croix to serve on the Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) for USFS. Motion by Red Menominee, seconded by Ho-Chunk. All ayes, zero opposed, motion carried.

Mike Conner couldn't be here but wanted us to be aware of the GLRI RFP that is out with replies do July 14 (attached).

### **8. EPA Update**

Jim Ruppel – Grand Traverse Bay is the site of the next RTOC on August 21. Tribal caucus meeting will be the afternoon of August 20<sup>th</sup>. Anticipating an RFP coming out from EPA GLRI funds at some point this year. Looking at changing the way we do Treatment in the Same Manner as a State (TAS) for Water Quality Standards so that Tribes do not have to do the Montana test. Important for Tribes to send comments to demonstrate how burdensome the process is. Staff changes – he has no information on staff changes. Email Jim specific training needs for the Tribes.

## **9. IAC Update**

Bruce Savage – He has been working for IAC for 1.5 years. There is a farmer promotion grant that is open until June 20 and a local food promotion grant that is also open until the 20<sup>th</sup>. Notice of mobile farmers market events on the website, he also sent a request for events for the mobile farmer's market. They did a couple workshops with RD, RMA, NRCS, FSA, and USFS and discussed maple sugaring. They are putting together an Intertribal Maple Syrup Producers Cooperative (attach info). His email address is bruce@indianaglink.com. There is the potential opportunity for a subcommittee to work on sugaring practices.

## **10. WDNR**

Shelly Allness – they are going to be asking for input on developing, modifying, or updating their Water Quality Standards for their triennial review. A survey will be sent out to the Tribes. It should be coming out on Friday. Long eared bat email went out. Trail camera research project will be upcoming and they will be checking with Tribes to see if they want to participate with the study. Shelly will be sending out an email. Deer trustee report continues to be implemented. They are attempting to get a lot more input locally, they are establishing county deer advisory councils. An invitation will be going out to Voight on this. All the different state agencies meet with the Tribes each year, DNR is scheduled for September at Menominee. They have been doing live chats, they are a great way to learn about different topics and what is going on. Experts are brought together in Madison to respond to questions. What should we do if we don't use all youth funds because of school getting out late? Shelly will look into it. Provide them an update if we need to move money between line items.

## **11. WTCAC Intern Program**

WTCAC has 6 interns, with one starting in July. We really need to get Pathways approved to help these students move into full time positions. All of the student based programs (STEP, SCEP, and Presidential Management Fellows) were consolidated under Pathways. The only other way would be for them to compete for permanent jobs with the general public. WINS Program at APHIS HQ? With NRCS, when they took STEP and SCEP program and now pathways Wisconsin lost the ability to control the hiring. Now everyone applies to pathways at HQ, and then they tell WI NRCS how many students they have the authority to hire. All they can do now is budget for a certain amount of interns but they cannot say for certain how many positions they will have and when the positions will be announced. Greg Yakle would be willing to work with the interns on developing a good resume. They need to pick up the students after their sophomore year because they need 2 years in pathways. They are all at camp at Trees for Tomorrow, the one from California is coming in July. Alan's goal is to bring on 12 interns next summer. Is there a way to bring on interns through APHIS Farm Bill Funding? Shelly recently found out about a small grant program only for Tribes and she will get back to us. SAIGE – Society of American Indian Government Employees is a group we need to investigate. Intern presentations on August 4 at St. Croix.

**MOTION:** Motion to purchase a \$150 Cabela's Gift Card as a present for Tony Havranek. Motion by FCPC, seconded by Ho-Chunk. All ayes, zero opposed, motion carried.

### **11. WTCAC Projects and Grants**

NRCS Cooperative Agreement – We are on track for our current deliverables. Jimmy is trying to identify about \$40,000 for a new cooperative agreement with WTCAC. He is trying to find it in the 2014 budget. We need to have another planning meeting for the cooperative agreement, probably need Pat and Alan there in June.

GLRI Invasive Species – Everything seems to be on track, issue with lost employment forms but we are working it out.

AmeriCorps Aquaponics – Keith is continuing to work on it and meeting with Tribes. Erin is working on a grant for a facility at Oneida. This is the Food and Nutrition Service grant with an eligibility of 15% poverty and 15% diabetes rate. Can FCPC supply survey that was sent to potential customers?

APHIS Outreach Program – We contracted with Jerry in order to fulfill the deliverable in the grant. He will be providing training to Tribes in North Carolina or Wisconsin. The new agreement with APHIS has been signed.

Agri-Food Council Concept – LCO Community College is trying to get something like this so Pat will try and get a hold of them.

State Gaming Monies – Try to apply for it and see what happens

Regional Conservation Partnership – Chris Borden – Presentation attached.

### **12. Executive Session**

**MOTION:** Motion to go into Executive Session. Motion by Mole Lake, seconded by St. Croix. All ayes, zero opposed, motion carried.

**MOTION:** Motion to leave Executive Session. Motion by Lac du Flambeau, seconded by Lac du Flambeau. All ayes, zero opposed, motion carried.

**MOTION:** Motion to change Alan's title to Executive Director. Motion by Mole Lake, seconded by Menominee. All ayes, zero opposed, motion carried.

**MOTION:** Motion to adjourn. Motion by Mole Lake, seconded by Bad River. All ayes, zero opposed, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 3:38 pm.

# **ATTACHMENTS**

## WI NRCS Response to WTCAC EQIP Letter Dated March 4, 2014

1. Access Roads in Forested settings. WTCAC was not very successful in finding projects that were eligible to obtain funding through EQIP for most Access Roads in 2013.
  - a. NRCS will provide training to WTCAC in 2014 on the identification of resource concerns and how to identify the appropriate practice standards to address those resource concerns.
  
2. Endangered Species. What is the NRCS opinion on when Tribes must address State listed Threatened or Endangered Species to implement an EQIP practice? Does the issue change based on how the land is held? (Trust, Tribal Owned, Tribal Member owned/Fee Land)? What about State Permits?
  - a. The current standard operating procedure to complete the NEPA Environmental Assessment for Tribal EQIP projects for the NRCS to analyze the project area for the presence of threatened and endangered species. In cases where there are federally listed threatened or endangered species, avoidance measures must be planned and implemented in order for the project to move forward. In cases where there are State Listed threatened or endangered species, the NRCS tribal liaison will discuss the findings with Tribal staff and recommend avoidance measures if suitable habitat is present and the project tasks have a potential to negatively impact the species. The NRCS will track how this standard operating procedures works for FY 2014 projects and will work with the Tribes if there are any changes needed in future years.
  
3. Aquaculture Pond. Currently the only Resource Concern under which an Aquaculture facility can be funded by EQIP, is based on an existing facility not being adequate to produce fish. WTCAC would like to have an eligible Resource Concern based on Tribal Concerns about inadequate stocks of fish species, in waters of Tribal concern, and that are of Tribal importance for subsistence farming.
  - a. NRCS will continue to work together with WTCAC through the Fisheries Subcommittee to explore this opportunity. Good progress has been made to date in identifying resource concerns that may be applicable and a process for documenting the resource need.
  
4. Request that NRCS bring back the scenario components of 2,4D amine salt, granular and liquid, for Eurasian Milfoil control and other aquatic species.
  - a. NRCS will work to develop a scenario for 315-Herbaceous Weed Control for FY15 that includes a 2,4-D product labeled for aquatic use.
  
5. WTCAC would like to request Forestry Practice Standards training from the NRCS Forester.
  - a. NRCS training on forestry practices will be provided to WTCAC in 2014.

6. Due to difficulty using the NRCS web site, WTCAC would like to post information such as conservation practice standards, NRCS-CPA-1200, WTCAC Cookbook, and other program information on our web site.
  - a. NRCS made a collective decision to remove the Cookbook from our website due to the number and type of landowners response in NRCS Field Offices. Other information like conservation practices standards can be found on our website under the eFOTG (electronic field office technical guide), and all program information should remain up to date under the Programs Tab. NRCS Tribal Liaisons should always be available to help provide assistance with locating any desired information and/or forms to help facilitate continued tribal relations in a positive, and responsive manner.



**United States  
Department of  
Agriculture**

Farm and Foreign  
Agricultural  
Services

Farm  
Service  
Agency

Columbia County FSA Office  
2912 Red Fox Run  
Portage, WI 53901  
Phone: 608-742-5361  
Fax: 608-742-0194

## **Farm Service Agency (FSA) REPORT TO WTCAC – June 11, 2014**

By Susan Hunter, FSA Tribal Liaison, (608) 742-5361 ext 104, [susan.hunter@wi.usda.gov](mailto:susan.hunter@wi.usda.gov)

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### **COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTION**

- Nomination forms can now be accepted for individuals who would like to run for a position on the local FSA County Committee. Nominees must live in the portion of the county where the election is being held, so you need to check with the local FSA office to find out which townships are included in this year's election. (copy of FSA-669A nomination form attached)

### **FARM LOAN PROGRAMS:**

- June Interest Rates: 2.25% for operating/microloans/youth loans, 4% for ownership

### **CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)**

- Signup #46 for the Continuous CRP began on June 9<sup>th</sup> and ends September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Cropping history changed to 2008 – 2013. Cost-share payments, upfront signing incentive payments and practice incentive payments are available during this signup. (see attached fact sheet)
- Signup for the CRP Transitions Incentives Program (TIP) started June 9<sup>th</sup>. This CRP program assists with the transition of expiring CRP contracts from a retired or retiring owner to a beginning farmer, veteran, or minority farmer to return the land to production for sustainable grazing or crop production (see attached fact sheet)
- CRP 1-Year Contract Extension Opportunity from June 9 through August 8, 2014. Certain CRP participants with contracts expiring September 30, 2014 may modify all or part of contract to extend the expiration date for a 1-year period at the same payment rate. Letters were sent from the national FSA office to producers with eligible contracts.
- No general signup is scheduled for 2014.

### **BIOMASS CROP ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (BCAP)**

- Biomass Conversion Facility Application for Qualification signup June 16 – July 14, 2014.
- Eligible Material Owner Application for BCAP matching Payments signup in July 2014??? (see BCAP fact sheet attached)

### **LIVESTOCK LOSSES**

- Benefits are available at the local FSA office for livestock grazing losses in some counties due to the drought in 2012 under the Livestock Forage Program (LFP). Benefits are also available to compensate for livestock deaths caused by natural disasters under the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP). Losses for other livestock, farm raised fish and honey bees can be covered under the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP). . These programs were reviewed at prior WTCAC meetings with fact sheets provided.

**FSA-669A**  
(04-22-14)U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Farm Service Agency**NOMINATION FORM FOR COUNTY FSA COMMITTEE ELECTION**

This form allows individuals to nominate themselves or any other person as a candidate. If additional forms are needed, this one may be copied or may be obtained at the County FSA Office or obtained electronically at <http://www.sc.egov.usda.gov>. Each form submitted must be:

- A. Limited to one nominee.
  - B. Signed and dated by the nominee in Item 3. Nominee must sign if willing to have his/her name placed on the ballot and agrees to serve if elected.
- Note:** Name shown on ballot will appear exactly the same as in Agency records.
- C. Delivered to the County FSA Office or postmarked no later than August 1, 2014.
  - D. Signed and dated as a write-in candidate if elected as a member and willing to serve on the COC.

The County FSA Committee is responsible for reviewing each form to determine the eligibility of nominees. A person who is nominated on this form and is found ineligible will be so notified and have an opportunity to file a challenge.

Persons nominated should actively participate in the operation of a farm or ranch and be well qualified for committee work. A producer is eligible to be a County FSA committee member if the producer resides in the Local Administrative Area (LAA) in which the election is to be held and is eligible to vote.

This is a non-salary public service position. A small stipend is provided to offset expenses.

Federal regulations may prohibit County FSA Committee members from holding certain positions in some farm, commodity, and political organizations if such positions pose a conflict of interest with FSA duties. The positions include functional offices such as president, vice president, secretary, or treasurer; and positions on boards or executive committees. Conflict of interest restrictions also apply to employees, operators, managers, and majority owners of tobacco warehouses. Questions concerning eligibility should be directed to the County FSA Office.

A candidate has the option to request that all voted ballots for an individual county committee election be returned to the respective State Office in lieu of being returned to the county office. This request must be in writing and submitted to the local County Executive Director prior to the announced end of the nomination period.

The duties of County FSA Committee members include:

- A. Administering farm program activities conducted by the County FSA Office.
- B. Informing farmers of the purpose and provisions of the FSA programs.
- C. Keeping the State FSA Committee informed of LAA conditions.
- D. Monitoring changes in farm programs.
- E. Participating in county meetings as necessary.
- F. Performing other duties as assigned by the State FSA Committee

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**FSA-669A**  
(04-22-14)

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
Farm Service Agency

**NOMINATION FORM FOR COUNTY FSA COMMITTEE ELECTION**

1. NAME OF NOMINEE (Type or Print Nominee's Full Name)		<b>TO BE COMPLETED BY COUNTY FSA OFFICE</b>	
2. ADDRESS OF NOMINEE		4. INITIALS OF EMPLOYEE RECEIVING FORM AND DATE RECEIVED	
3. NOMINEE'S CERTIFICATION:  <i>I hereby agree to have my name placed on the ballot, that I will serve if elected, and if there is a conflict of interest, I will resign such position.</i>  <input type="checkbox"/> I DO want to witness the settling of tied votes with another nominee. <input type="checkbox"/> I DO NOT want to witness the settling of tied votes with another nominee.		5. COUNTY	
		6. LAA	7. STATE
3A. SIGNATURE OF NOMINEE		8A. SIGNATURE OF NOMINATOR	
3B. DATE		8B. DATE	
<input type="checkbox"/> Check here if nominee is a write-in candidate.		(If the individual is self nominating, no signature is required).	

**9. TO BE COMPLETED BY NOMINEE**

**VOLUNTARY INFORMATION FOR MONITORING PURPOSES:** The following information is requested by the Federal Government in order to monitor FSA's compliance with federal laws prohibiting discrimination against program participants on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, handicapped condition, or age. You are not required to furnish this information, but are encouraged to do so. This information will not be used in evaluating your nomination or to discriminate against you in any way.

<b>ETHNICITY</b>	<b>RACE (Choose as many boxes as applicable)</b>	<b>GENDER</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Not Hispanic or Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African-American <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THIS FORM**

Complete the form as follows:

- ITEM 1** Type or Print the nominee's full name. The nominee must be:
  - A. Eligible to vote in the designated County FSA Committee election.
  - B. Eligible to hold the office of County FSA Committee member.
  - C. Willing to serve if elected.
- ITEM 2** Enter the nominee's current address
- ITEM 3** The nominee must check one of the boxes to indicate a preference regarding the settling of tied votes.
- ITEMS 3A & 3B** The nominee must sign and date.
- ITEMS 8A & 8B** The nominator must sign and date. (If the individual is self nominating, no signature is required.)
- ITEM 9** Completing this item is voluntary.

**ALL FORMS MUST BE RECEIVED IN THE COUNTY OFFICE OR POSTMARKED BY AUGUST 1, 2014.**

**NOTE:** The following statement is made in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a - as amended). The authority for requesting the information identified on this form is 7 CFR Part 7 and the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113-79). The information will be used to obtain nominees for election to the County FSA Committee. The information collected on this form may be disclosed to other Federal, State, Local government agencies, Tribal agencies, and nongovernmental entities that have been authorized access to the information by statute or regulation and/or as described in applicable Routine Uses identified in the System of Records Notice for County Personnel Records, USDA/FSA-6. Providing the nominee name, address, signature/date and nominator signature/date (when applicable) information is voluntary, but necessary for processing the form. Failure to furnish the nominee name, address, signature/date and nominator signature/date (when applicable) information will result in a determination of ineligibility for nomination for election to the County FSA Committee.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0560-0229. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 10 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The provisions of appropriate criminal and civil fraud, privacy, and other statutes may be applicable to the information provided. **RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO YOUR COUNTY FSA OFFICE.**



### Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) – Transition Incentives Program (TIP)

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#### OVERVIEW

The Transition Incentives Program, administered by the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), assists with the transition of expiring Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land from a retired or retiring owner or operator to a beginning, veteran, or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher to return land to production for sustainable grazing or crop production.

CRP is a voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive agricultural land is not farmed or ranched, but instead used for conservation benefits. CRP participants establish long-term, resource-conserving vegetative species, such as approved grasses or trees (known as “covers”) to control soil erosion, improve the water quality, and enhance wildlife habitat. In return, FSA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Continuous sign-up contracts are 10 to 15 years in duration.

CRP protects millions of acres of American topsoil from erosion and is designed to safeguard the nation’s natural resources. By reducing water runoff and sedimentation, CRP protects groundwater and helps improve the condition of lakes, rivers, ponds, and streams. The vegetative covers also make CRP a major contributor to increased wildlife populations in many parts of the country.

The Agricultural Act of 2014 (the 2014 Farm Bill) authorizes \$33 million for fiscal years 2014 through 2018 for TIP. The Food Security Act of 1985, as amended, authorized CRP, and is governed by regulations published in 7 CFR, part 1410.

FSA implements TIP and CRP on behalf of USDA’s Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC).

#### ENROLLMENT

Enrollment in TIP is on a continuous basis until the total funds authorized for the program are

exhausted. Beginning (including veteran), or socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and retired or retiring CRP participants may enroll in TIP during the final year before the scheduled date of CRP contract expiration or Sept. 30.

For example, if a CRP contract is scheduled to expire on Sept. 30, 2014, the land may be enrolled in TIP from Oct. 1, 2013, through Sept. 30, 2014.

TIP enrollment may begin immediately for contracts scheduled to expire on Sept. 30 2014.

#### PROVISIONS

To be eligible for TIP, an owner or operator must be a retired or retiring farmer or rancher on land enrolled in an expiring CRP contract.

The retired or retiring owner or operator must agree to sell, or have a contract to sell, or agree to lease long-term (at least 5 years) the land enrolled in an expiring CRP contract to a beginning, veteran, or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher.

The retired or retiring owner or operator must agree to permit the beginning, veteran, or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher to make conservation and land improvements according to an approved conservation plan.

Beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers participating in TIP may re-enroll otherwise eligible land under CRP’s continuous signup provisions including the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).

Also, the beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher may be eligible for enrollment in the Conservation Stewardship Program or the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), provided all eligibility requirements are met.

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**DEFINITIONS**

Retired or retiring owner or operator means an owner or operator of land enrolled in a CRP contract who has ended active labor in farming operations as a producer of agricultural crops or expects to do so within five years of the CRP contract modification.

Beginning farmer or rancher means, as determined by CCC, a person or entity who:

- Has not been a farm or ranch operator for more than 10 years; and
- Materially and substantially participates in the operation of the farm or ranch involved in CRP contract modification.
- A veteran farmer or rancher who served in the Armed Forces and who has:
  - Not operated a farm or ranch; or
  - Operated a farm or ranch for no more than 10 years.

Socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher means a farmer or rancher who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group whose members have been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities. Gender is not included.

**TRANSITION PAYMENTS**

Retired or retiring owners or operators participating in TIP may receive up to two additional annual rental payments after their CRP contract expires provided the beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher is not a family member.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

For more information about FSA and its programs, visit your local FSA county office or USDA Service Center, or on the web at :  
<http://www.fsda.usda.gov>.

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### Conservation Reserve Program Continuous Sign-Up

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#### OVERVIEW

USDA Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive agricultural land is not farmed or ranched, but instead used for conservation benefits. CRP participants establish long-term, resource-conserving vegetative species, such as approved grasses or trees (known as "covers") to control soil erosion, improve the water quality and enhance wildlife habitat. In return, FSA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Continuous sign-up contracts are 10 to 15 years in duration.

The Food Security Act of 1985, as amended, authorized CRP. The program is also governed by regulations published in 7 CFR, part 1410. The program is implemented by FSA on behalf of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation. More detailed information on CRP is available in the FSA fact sheet, "Conservation Reserve Program" located at [www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA\\_File/2014\\_crp-general.pdf](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/2014_crp-general.pdf)

#### BENEFITS

CRP protects millions of acres of American topsoil from erosion and is designed to safeguard the nation's natural resources. By reducing water runoff and sedimentation, CRP protects groundwater and helps improve the condition of lakes, rivers, ponds, and streams. The vegetative covers also make CRP a major contributor to increased wildlife populations in many parts of the country.

#### ADMINISTRATION

FSA administers CRP while technical support functions are provided by:

- USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS);
- USDA's National Institute of Food and Agricul-

- ture (NIFA);
- State forestry agencies;
- Local soil and water conservation districts;
- Other non-federal providers of technical assistance.

#### CONTINUOUS SIGN-UP

Under continuous sign-up authority, environmentally sensitive land devoted to certain conservation practices can be enrolled in CRP at any time. Offers are automatically accepted provided the land and producer meet certain eligibility requirements. Unlike CRP enrollments under general sign-up authority, offers for continuous sign-up are not subject to competitive bidding.

The effective date of the CRP contract is the first day of the month following the month of approval. In certain circumstances, producers may defer the effective date for up to six months.

If the acreage is currently under CRP contract and is within one year of the scheduled expiration date, the effective date is Oct. 1 following the expiration date.

To offer land for continuous sign-up, producers should contact their local FSA office.

#### ELIGIBLE PRODUCERS

A producer must have owned or operated the land for at least 12 months prior to submitting the offer, unless:

- The new owner acquired the land due to the previous owner's death;
- The ownership change occurred due to foreclosure where the owner exercised a timely right of redemption in accordance with state law or;
- The circumstances of the acquisition present adequate assurance to FSA that the new owner did not acquire the land for the purpose of placing it in CRP.

**ELIGIBLE LAND**

Land must be cropland that is planted or considered planted to an agricultural commodity four of the previous six crop years from 2008 to 2013, and is physically and legally capable of being planted (no planting restrictions due to an easement or other legally binding instrument) in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity.

**ELIGIBLE PRACTICES**

The land must be eligible and suitable for any of the following conservation practices:

- Riparian buffers;
- Wildlife habitat buffers;
- Wetland buffers;
- Filter strips;
- Wetland restoration;
- Grass waterways;
- Shelterbelts;
- Living snow fences;
- Contour grass strips;
- Constructed wetlands;
- Restoration of aquaculture wetlands;
- Wildlife habitat restoration within approved State Areas for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) projects;
- Salt tolerant vegetation or;
- Shallow water areas for wildlife.

Land within an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-designated public wellhead area also may be eligible for enrollment on a continuous basis.

**PAYMENTS**

FSA provides CRP continuous sign-up participants with annual rental payments, including certain incentives and cost-share assistance:

**• Rental Payments**

◦ In return for establishing long-term, resource-conserving covers, FSA provides annual rental payments to participants. FSA bases rental rates on the relative productivity of the soils within each county and the average dry-land cash rent or cash rent equivalent as guidelines.

◦ The per-acre annual rental rate may not exceed the calculated rate determined in advance of enrollment. While continuous sign-up acceptance is not determined by a competitive offer process, producers may elect to receive an amount less than the maximum payment rate.

**• Cost-Share Assistance**

◦ An upfront signing incentive payment (SIP) up to **\$150** per acre. The one-time SIP will be made after the contract is approved and all payment eligibility criteria are met and;

◦ A practice incentive payment (PIP) equal to 40 percent of the eligible installation costs for eligible participants who enroll certain practices. The one-time PIP will be issued after the practice is installed, eligible costs are verified and other payment eligibility criteria are met.

**MORE INFORMATION**

To find more information about FSA programs, contact your local FSA office or USDA Service Center, or visit FSA online at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

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*To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay).*

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### Fiscal Year 2014 Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) Matching Payments

#### OVERVIEW

The Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP), created by the 2008 Farm Bill and continued by the 2014 Farm Bill, is part of the national strategy to reduce U.S. reliance on foreign oil, improve domestic energy security and reduce carbon pollution, while expanding markets for agricultural products made in rural America. BCAP provides incentives to farmers, ranchers and forest landowners to establish, maintain and harvest biomass for heat, power, bio-based products and biofuels.

The Agricultural Act of 2014 (2014 Farm Bill) reauthorizes BCAP with an annual mandatory funding level of \$25 million for three types of assistance:

- Establishment payments for 50 percent of the cost of establishing a new, perennial energy crop.
- Maintenance payments (annual payments) for the crop as it matures until harvest, up to five years for herbaceous crops or up to 15 years for woody crops.
- Retrieval payments (matching payments) for mitigating the cost of harvesting and transporting agriculture or forest residues (that are not otherwise economically retrievable) to the end-use facility.

In fiscal year 2014 (FY 2014), only BCAP matching payments will resume. There will be no funds in FY 2014 for the establishment of new project areas or for the expansion of existing project areas (other than the continuation of payments under existing FSA contractual obligations). The resumption of BCAP establishment and BCAP annual payments for new or expanded project areas is deferred until a later date.

#### ELIGIBLE MATERIALS

Eligible biomass materials that may qualify for BCAP matching payments are:

- Agricultural or crop residues (including herbaceous residues remaining in the field after harvest of conventional crops), including woody agriculture residues, like orchard waste, that do not have an existing market, and that are removed directly from the land in accordance with an approved conservation plan or;
- Woody forest residues removed directly from public forest land (National Forest System lands of the U. S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management public lands of the Department of the Interior) that are byproducts of preventative treatments that reduce the threat of forest fires, disease or insect infestation, and are removed in accordance with an approved forest stewardship or equivalent plan.

Biomass that is ineligible for matching payments include:

- Conventional crops (including but not limited to barley, corn, grain sorghum, oats, rice, wheat, some oilseeds, peanuts, dairy products and sugar)
- Secondary agricultural or forest residues that are the result of a processing activity (i.e. materials which, after transport and delivery to a processing or conversion facility, are separated from another product in order to be used for heat, power, bio-based products or advanced biofuels)
- Animal waste or byproducts
- Bagasse

For more details on eligible material qualifications, or ineligibility, please consult your local FSA county office.

**BIOMASS CONVERSION FACILITIES (BCFS)**

A biomass conversion facility is a facility that converts biomass into heat, power, biobased products or advanced biofuels. Previous BCF qualifications do not apply and will not be extended. BCFs must first be qualified by FSA before eligible biomass material owners may deliver the biomass materials or apply for BCAP matching payments. All eligible BCFs will have feedstock suppliers that will collect or harvest eligible biomass materials. Due to funding limitations and other factors, not every BCF applicant that meets all requirements will be selected as a qualified BCF. FSA may prioritize BCFs that have suppliers of eligible biomass materials that best meet BCAP objectives.

For more details on becoming a qualifying BCF, please consult your local FSA county office. FSA will provide qualification numbers to BCFs and post a listing of qualified facilities on the BCAP Web page at [www.fsa.usda.gov/bcap](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/bcap).

**MATCHING PAYMENTS**

The 2014 Farm Bill authorizes \$25 million annually for BCAP, requiring between 10 and 50 percent of total annual funding (or no greater than \$12.5 million) to be provided for matching payments for the collection, harvest, storage or transportation (CHST) of eligible biomass material.

All eligible material must be collected or harvested according to an approved conservation or forest stewardship or equivalent plan. Subject to the availability of funding, FSA will provide an opportunity to suppliers of eligible materials to enter into a contract with FSA for BCAP matching payments, at the rate of up to \$1 for each \$1 per ton delivered to the qualified biomass conversion facility, in an amount not to exceed \$20 per dry ton of the material. By law, matching payments may be made to eligible material owners for a period no longer than two years.

**SIGN-UP PERIODS FOR FY 2014**

<b>Sign-Up Category</b>	<b>Application Location</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Biomass Conversion Facility Application for Qualification	State FSA office where the facility is located	June 16, 2014 – July 14, 2014*
Eligible Material Owner Application for BCAP Matching Payments	County FSA service center where the land is located or where farm records exist	On or about July 21, 2014 – Aug. 25, 2014*
*Eligible material deliveries must occur on or before Sept. 26, 2014, unless determined otherwise by the Farm Service Agency.		

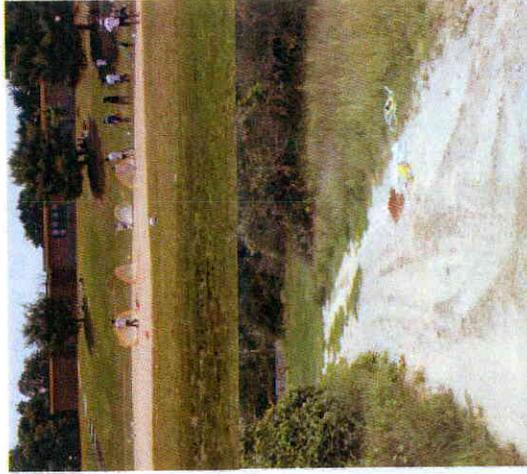
*The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.) Persons with disabilities, who wish to file a program complaint, write to the address below or if you require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) please contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities and wish to file either an EEO or program complaint, please contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish).*

*If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter by mail to U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).*

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## Promising Nest Sites

- Hard packed sandy soil
- Areas of human disturbance (**baseball diamonds**, old sand pits, trail and road edges, informal parking lots, fire-pits, etc.)
- Full sunshine
- Sparse vegetation (about 50% hard-packed soil and 50% short vegetation)
- Near a wooded area, about 200 yards (200m) or less



Typical *Cerceris* Colony Sites  
(photos by P. Careless & C. Teerling)

## What is Emerald Ash Borer?

- Small metallic green beetle (1/2" long, 1/8" wide)
- An exotic beetle from Asia
- Larva tunnels under the bark
- Attacks and kills **all** species of ash
- First found in Michigan in 2002
- Spreading **VERY** rapidly across the USA and Canada (primarily in firewood)
- Early detection is difficult. This wasp and Wasp Watchers can help.



Emerald Ash Borer

For more information visit:

[www.cerceris.info](http://www.cerceris.info)

To volunteer as a First Detector using

Cerceris biosurveillance contact:

Art Wagner (USDA)

[arthur.c.wagner@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:arthur.c.wagner@aphis.usda.gov)

ph: 608-286-3612

or

Tony Summers (UW Extension)

[asummers2@wisc.edu](mailto:asummers2@wisc.edu)

ph: 608-262-9570

## Cerceris

### Biosurveillance

How to find the wasp that hunts  
**emerald ash borer**

This native wasp is **not known to sting humans**, even when handled.



Female *Cerceris fumipennis*  
with Emerald Ash Borer

*Cerceris fumipennis* is a solitary ground-nesting wasp. The female stocks her nest with buprestid beetles, including emerald ash borer (EAB) when present.

**Biosurveillance** (observing colonies of these native wasps and collecting some of the prey they bring back) is currently the most promising way to monitor for EAB. Researchers in the United States and Canada are looking for colonies of these wasps throughout the state, and could use your help.

## Identifying Markings

- ½ - ¾ inch long
- Dark smoky brown wings
- One cream/yellow band on second segment of abdomen (near “waist”)
- Three large cream/yellow spots on face



Markings of Female *Cerceris fumipennis*  
(photos by P. Careless)

*Cerceris* is active in eastern North America during

## July and August

(*Cerceris* is pronounced: ‘ser-ser-iss’)

## How to Identify Nests

- Round hole the diameter of a pencil
- Holes go straight down (not angled into the ground)
- Surrounded by a circle of excavated soil (not all to one side like a dog would dig)
- Often tucked beside or partially under a clump of grass
- Nests may be clustered together in a colony. Colonies may contain 5-500 nests.



*Cerceris* Nests  
(photos by P. Careless)

To be suitable for EAB monitoring, a colony should be within 1000 yards (1000 m) of ash trees

## Biosurveillance

- Visit your colony mid-day, 3-4 sunny days during July and select as many nests as you can keep an eye on.
- At each nest, pin the ‘collar’ to the ground with golf tee, placing the second hole over the nest entrance.
- Wasps without prey can come and go easily through the hole (A). A wasp carrying prey will not fit through the hole (B).
- For 1-3 hours, watch as wasps return to nests. Wasps with prey can be netted in flight or caught as they try to pass through the collar. Take prey and release wasp.
- Collect a total of 50 beetles over 3-4 visits. Place beetles from each day in a baggie labeled with place and date. Beetles found on the ground may be included. Place in freezer and mail to us at end of summer.



A - Wasp Entering Nest Through Collar



B - Wasp Unable to Enter With Prey  
(photos by P. Careless & M. Bohne)



**USDA Forest Service Update**  
**Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest**  
**WTCAC Meeting, Red Cliff, June 11, 2014**  
Mary Rasmussen, 906-202-2762

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## **Forest Service Draft Ground Water Directive Release**

Notice to the head of your Tribe regarding the new Groundwater Resources directive was sent May 27, 2014 from Regional Forester Kathleen Atkinson.

The Groundwater Resources Management Manual will provide direction on the management, protection, and stewardship of groundwater resources. The directive will establish for the first time specific policy requirements to follow to ensure that groundwater is adequately addressed in agency management decisions and actions on Forest Service lands.

Tribal consultation is open until September 24, 2014. There will likely be an in-person round table forum for tribes sometime this summer. More information to come.

Background information, chapter summaries, and Questions and Answers may be found at <http://www.fs.fed.us/geology/groundwater.html>.

## **Regional Foresters Review – Head’s up**

Tribes will be formally invited to participate in a review of the Chequamegon-Nicolet by a team lead by Regional Forester Kathleen Atkinson and five other leaders. The purpose of the review is to gauge how the Chequamegon-Nicolet is doing in support of the Forest Service mission.

The goal of the review team is to meet with and listen to as many partners and employees as possible through small round table discussions. The review team will initiate dialog and discussions with the team are confidential. Based on what they hear, they will put together a final report that will provide feedback on what is going well and what areas need work.

### *Save the Dates:*

- *Tuesday, August 19 from 2-4 at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center in Ashland*
- *Thursday, August 21 from 1-3, Location TBD (somewhere in the Crandon/Laona/Carter vicinity)*

## **Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) Members Sought**

The Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest (CNNF) is seeking tribal volunteers to serve on Resource Advisory Committees (RAC). RACs recommend projects for funding under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act. The CNNF has two RACs, one serving the Chequamegon land base (west side) the other the Nicolet land base (east side).

The role of the RACs is to recommend how funds will be spent in the eight counties that allocated funds through Title II of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act. Those counties include: Ashland, Bayfield, Price, Sawyer, and Taylor on the Chequamegon side; and Florence, Forest, and Oconto on the Nicolet side.

Examples of projects that the funds are used for include, but are not limited to: road, trail and

infrastructure maintenance or obliteration; soil productivity improvement; improvements in forest ecosystem health; watershed restoration and maintenance; restoration, maintenance, and improvement of wildlife and fish habitat; control of noxious and exotic weeds; and re-establishment of native species.

Projects must be on public land, but can occur on private land if it can be demonstrated that there is a benefit to public land resources. RACs are responsible for reviewing projects for implementation.

The Forest is seeking nominations/applicants to fill numerous slots on each committee. Committee members are chosen to represent various interests (see enclosure for more information on the categories) to ensure balanced representation. Selected applicants serve a four-year term. This is not a paid position. If you are interested in participating on a RAC, please submit a completed application to: CNNF RAC Coordinator, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, 500 Hanson Lake Road, Rhinelander, WI 54501. A committee will review applications and forward candidates in each category to the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture for final selection. Applicants are subject to a background investigation.

**US Forest Service  
State and Private Forestry  
FY 2014 Great Lakes Restoration  
Initiative  
Project Proposal**

<b>Proposal Number:</b>			
State:		RFP Category:	
<b>Administration Information</b>			
Funds Requested:			
Match:			

<b>Applicant Information</b>						
<b>1</b>	<b>Project Applicant:</b>					
	<b>Contact Person:</b>					
	<b>Address:</b>					
	<b>City:</b>		<b>State:</b>		<b>Zip:</b>	
	<b>Phone:</b>		<b>Email:</b>			
	<b>EIN (Tax number)</b>					

<b>Project Information</b>						
<b>2</b>	<b>Short Title of Project:</b>					
	<b>Project Location (Community, EPA Area of Concern, and GPS Coordinates)</b>					
	<b>Federal Funding Requested:</b>					
	<b>Program Area:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Restore UCF</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Mitigate EAB</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reduce Toxics</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Develop Markets</b>	
	<b>Project Duration:</b>	<b>Requested Start Date:</b>		<b>End Date:</b>		

<b>Project Overview</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>500 characters</b> – A summary of the project that includes the scope, location, expected accomplishments, and water quality benefits.

**State Forester Concurrence**

Documentation of State Forester support of this proposal must accompany submission.

<b>Scope of Work (30 points)</b>	
<b>4</b>	<p><b>2000 characters</b> – Describe the methods employed to address the protection, maintenance or restoration of the chemical, biological or physical integrity of the Great Lakes watershed. (Note that planting efforts must include reference to a landscape plan, ANSI standards and specifications avoiding use of invasive plant species).</p>

<b>Priority Landscape (30 points)</b>	
<b>5</b>	<p><b>1000 characters</b> – Provide information on the site location and its connection to water quality, including links to the State Forest Action Plan, as well as Great Lakes Action Plan or Remedial Action Plans. Projects draining to EPA Areas of Concern are preferred.</p>

<b>6</b>	<b>Measurable Results and Significant On-The-Ground Outcomes (30 points)</b>	
	<b>List the specific water related outcomes and outputs from the project</b>	<b>Number of units expected</b>

	<b>Partnership and Collaboration (10 points)</b>	
<b>7</b>	<p><b>1000 characters</b> - List and/or describe significant partners who will be involved and their specific roles. If partners are to receive contractual amounts, please include the amounts here. Do not list partners who will not have material involvement in the project. Attach letters of support, as appropriate.</p>	

	<b>Timeline</b>	
<b>8</b>	<p><b>1000 characters</b> – Provide a brief, approximate schedule showing intermediate steps and major milestones. Please indicate if a specific start date is critical. Project time line is not to exceed two years from the date of award.</p>	

<b>Project Budget (Match not required)</b>							
		<b>Leverage<sup>1</sup></b>					
	<b>Grant</b>	<b>Non – Federal Match</b>		<b>Non-Match</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	
	<b>Federal Funds Requested</b>	<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Other Contributors</b>	<b>Applicant, Non-Federal, and/or Federal</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Party Contributor/s</b>	<b>Total project cost</b>	
<b>9</b>	<b>Personnel / Labor:</b>						
	<b>Fringe Benefits:</b>						
	<b>Travel:</b>						
	<b>Equipment:</b>						
	<b>Supplies:</b>						
	<b>Contractual:</b>						
	<b>Construction:</b>	X	X	X			
	<b>Indirect Costs<sup>2</sup>:</b>						
	<b>TOTAL:</b>						

Submit completed form to [GLRI@fs.fed.us](mailto:GLRI@fs.fed.us)

<sup>1</sup> Funds qualifying as “match” must meet the same program requirements as grant funds (e.g., program authorities, non-federal sources). Other “non-match” leveraged funds do not need to meet the same standards (e.g., may include funds for construction, funds from other federal partners).

<sup>2</sup> Indirect costs must be tied to an established rate. Waived indirect costs are an acceptable source of match.

**Request for Proposals (RFP)**  
 Fiscal Year 2014 Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry  
 Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)  
 Reply Due July 14, 2014 to [GLRI@fs.fed.us](mailto:GLRI@fs.fed.us)

**Background and Purpose**

The interagency Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) targets improvements to the most significant environmental problems within the Great Lakes basin. Through an agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency, the US Forest Service has received funding to support projects that implement strategic, priority actions within Forest Service authorities to restore, protect, and maintain the Great Lakes ecosystem. Successful projects will address near-shore health and nonpoint source pollution, invasive species, and toxic substances that impact water quality in priority watersheds or those that drain to identified Areas of Concern<sup>1</sup>. Available funds are distributed across four specific program areas:

Program Area	Estimated Funding (based on previous years)	GLRI Focus Areas
1. <b>Restore Urban and Community Forests</b> - Utilize existing management plans and tree cover assessments to plant and maintain tree canopy cover that will reduce storm water runoff and improve water quality.	\$ 120,000	Near-shore health and nonpoint source pollution
2. <b>Mitigate Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Impacts</b> - Ash tree replacement with non-host species in urban EAB quarantine areas to protect and restore biodiversity and water quality in targeted sub-watersheds, and to reduce soil erosion and nutrient runoff (esp. phosphorus).	\$1,000,000	Invasive Species
3. <b>Reduce Toxic Substances in Brownfield Sites</b> – Plant site-appropriate trees and vegetation to take up or trap certain toxic substances and restore green infrastructure that will reduce storm-water runoff.	\$1,200,000	Toxic Substances and Areas of Concern
4. <b>Develop Ecosystem Services Markets</b> – Monitor and quantify the impact of new or existing green stormwater infrastructure. Provide incentives for installing green infrastructure, promote the maintenance of privately owned forests, and/or educate the public on the value of forests in protecting the Great Lakes.	\$100,000	Near-shore health & nonpoint source pollution

**Eligibility**

State agencies, Tribal communities, non-profit organizations, academic partners, and municipalities are eligible for GLRI funding within the Great Lakes Basin of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York. **Eligible applicants must consult with their appropriate State Forester or Tribal administrator (for federally recognized tribes) to develop and submit proposals.**

The Great Lakes Watershed is defined as those areas within the United States draining (surface, overflow, or groundwater) into either: Lake Superior, Lake Michigan<sup>2</sup>, Lake Huron, Lake Erie, or Lake Ontario or draining into the St. Lawrence River west of where the International Boundary line leaves the river. A map of the watershed including eligible counties with lands in the watershed is attached.

To be successful, proposals must conform to the **authorities** of the Forest Service Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act. Proposals addressing **Program Areas 1, 2, and 3 (see table above)** must follow Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) program authorities: “To plan for, establish, manage and protect trees, forests, green spaces and related natural resources in and adjacent to cities and towns” (<http://www.federalgrantswire.com/urban-and-community-forestry-program.html>). Proposals addressing

<sup>1</sup> Great Lakes Areas of Concern: <http://epa.gov/greatlakes/aoc/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> In Illinois, the Great Lakes Basin includes that portion of Cook and Lake Counties East of the sub-continental divide.

**Program Area 4, “Development of Ecosystem Services Markets”** may follow authorities of the UCF Program, or may follow authorities of the Forest Stewardship Program, specifically, “To provide financial, technical, educational, and related assistance to State foresters or equivalent State officials for: The delivery of information and professional assistance to owners of nonindustrial private forest lands...”

<http://www.federalgrantswire.com/forest-stewardship-program.html>.

## Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

### Minimum Requirements

- All proposed projects must lie entirely within the Great Lakes watersheds.
- Proposals must address:
  - A single Program Area (see Table, page 1);
  - Linkage to the Great Lakes Action Plan (see <http://greatlakesrestoration.us/>) or specific Remedial Action Plans for target AOCs (see <http://epa.gov/greatlakes/aoc/>);
  - Linkage to State Forest Action Plans (see <http://www.forestationplans.org/regional-state>).
- Proposals must be fully implemented in the time proposed (two (2) years from date of award)
- Eligible proposals must include documented support (*letter or e-message*) of State Forester or Tribal Administrator (for federally designated Tribes) for the project proposal.
- No match is required. However, the ability to demonstrate partnerships and to leverage funds will be an important consideration when proposals are reviewed.
- Emerald Ash Borer mitigation projects are eligible only in EAB quarantined counties (see Map in Appendix C). The focus of these projects must be restoration of tree canopy cover.
- Tree planting proposals must specify the estimated number and size of trees. The proposed planting of trees and other plant material must reference a landscape plan that includes specifications for plant selection, planting, and maintenance that meet the American Standard for Nursery Stock (ANSI Z60.1) and follow the standards described in “Principals and Practices for Planting Trees and Shrubs”, International Society of Arboriculture.
- As a minimum requirement, any tree planting proposal must use non-invasive species.
- Projects may occur only on non-federal land.
- GLRI requirements include quarterly progress reports with a final report due upon project completion.
- Awardees will be required to comply with all Federal laws and regulations related to the completion of projects as stated in the letter of award.
- Projects must post a visible project identification sign, erected as appropriate at each on-the-ground project, including: project information, GLRI, and federal agencies involved.

### Evaluation Criteria (Relative Weight)

- *Addresses near-shore water quality issues in the Great Lakes watershed or in sub-watersheds draining into the Great Lakes (30%)* – Scope of work specifically addresses the protection, maintenance or restoration of the chemical, biological or physical integrity of the Great Lakes watershed.
- *Addresses priority landscapes (30%)* – Provides a clear connection to the State Forest Action Plan as well as the Great Lakes Action Plan or Remedial Action Plans addressing water quality. Priority will be given to project proposals for work in priority watersheds and those that drain to designated Areas of Concern (<http://epa.gov/greatlakes/aoc/>).
- *Measurable results/outcomes expected (30%)* – Includes specific units of work accomplished (acres treated, trees planted, number of people reached) measured and reported as a part of the project; and includes proposed outcomes contributing to improved water quality (i.e., estimated gallons of storm water diverted or nutrient run-off reduced; phosphorus retained, etc.). Target tree canopy cover should equal or exceed current levels. Maximize return on investment.

- *Partnerships and other considerations (10%)* – Projects should identify partners that have demonstrated a commitment and add value (quantitative or qualitative) towards project planning and implementation.

**Grant Limits and Submission Instructions**

Proposals should be submitted separately under each of the four listed Program Areas.

<b>Program Area and Limits of Requested Federal Share</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
<b>1. Restore Urban and Community Forests</b>	\$ 30,000	\$40,000
<b>2. Mitigate Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Impacts</b>	\$50,000	\$100,000
<b>3. Reduce Toxic Substances in Brownfield Sites</b>	\$50,000	\$200,000
<b>4. Develop Markets for Ecosystem Services</b>	\$50,000	\$100,000

State Forestry agencies may consolidate these projects with other federal funds, but activities and accomplishments must be tracked and reported separately.

Tribal Administrators are asked to send a copy of their GLRI proposal to the appropriate State Forester, as they submit their project proposal directly to the US Forest Service ([GLRI@fs.fed.us](mailto:GLRI@fs.fed.us)).

All partner recipients of federal funds should be clearly identified in the partner section of the application: name of organization and funding amount. The work responsibilities or sub-grant objectives of partner recipients should be clearly described in the project proposal. **All proposals must include documented support (letter or e-message) of either the State Forester or Tribal Administrator.**

If you have questions, regarding the types of projects or components that can be considered, please contact your respective Field Office Representative:

*New York:*

**Terry Miller**, Durham Field Office Representative (603) 868-7694, [twmiller@fs.fed.us](mailto:twmiller@fs.fed.us)

*Ohio and Pennsylvania:*

**Robert Lueckel**, Morgantown Field Office Representative (304) 285-1540, [rlueckel@fs.fed.us](mailto:rlueckel@fs.fed.us)

*Mid-Western States:*

**Michael M. Connor**, St. Paul Field Office Representative, (651) 649-5180, [mconnor@fs.fed.us](mailto:mconnor@fs.fed.us)

Additional information may also be obtained from **Phillip Rodbell** (610) 577-4133- or [prodbell@fs.fed.us](mailto:prodbell@fs.fed.us)

Application instructions are enclosed. Please submit your proposals to [GLRI@fs.fed.us](mailto:GLRI@fs.fed.us) in electronic form, **no later than close of business on July 1, 2014.**

Program Area Information  
Fiscal Year 2013 Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry  
Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)

**Program Area: Restore Urban and Community Forests**

GLRI funds for this program area are intended to restore urban and community forests within the Great Lakes Basin. Priority will be given to grant proposals for work within priority watersheds and those that drain to designated Areas of Concern. Projects will plant and maintain tree canopy cover tiered to implementation of existing assessments, management plans and monitoring protocols with a focus on reducing storm water runoff and improving water quality. Assessment tools include but are not limited to i-Tree Eco, i-Tree Streets, Urban Tree Canopy Assessment, Hazard Tree Risk Assessment, Invasive Plant Best Management Practices, and Urban Forest Health Monitoring protocols. Visit the following websites for additional information:

[www.Forestsforwatersheds.org](http://www.Forestsforwatersheds.org); [www.itreetools.org](http://www.itreetools.org).

**Great Lakes Action Plan**

**Outcome:** This project is most closely aligned with Focus Area 3, Near-shore Health and Nonpoint Source Pollution, Goal 2: Land use, recreation and economic activities are managed to ensure that near-shore aquatic, wetland and upland habitats will sustain the health and function of natural communities; and Goal 5: A significant reduction in soil erosion and the loading of sediments, nutrients and pollutants into tributaries is achieved through greater implementation of practices that conserve soil and slow overland flow in agriculture, forestry and urban areas.

**Outputs:** Number of trees planted or maintained and estimated number of gallons of annual stormwater interception averaged over the first 40 years (conversion factor is 1,129 gallons per medium-size tree/year).

**Program Area: Mitigate Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Impact**

GLRI funds for this program area are intended to restore tree canopy lost to infestation by emerald ash borer. Replanting is critical to maintaining healthy, functioning tree canopy cover that will reduce and cool storm water flow, reduce soil erosion and nutrient runoff (esp. phosphorus), and protect water quality. Priority will be given to project proposals for work within priority watersheds and those that drain to designated Areas of Concern. Emphasis will be on working with communities and residents to mitigate EAB infestation by removing and destroying (dead or dying) ash trees and restoring diverse urban tree canopy cover on non-federal lands in urban and community areas. Target tree canopy cover replacement should equal or exceed levels prior to infestation.

**Great Lakes Action Plan:**

**Outcome:** Focus Area 2, Invasive Species; Measure 2, acres managed for populations of invasive species controlled to a target level.

**Output:** Number of acres treated and/or the number of trees planted.

## **Program Area: Reduce Toxic Substances in Brownfield Sites**

GLRI funds for this program can be utilized to address contaminants and toxic substances in degraded sites through the restoration of green infrastructure and the planting of site-appropriate trees and vegetation to reduce, remove, degrade, or immobilize identified contaminants and reduce storm-water runoff. Priority will be given to grant proposals for work within priority watersheds and those that drain to designated Areas of Concern. Restoration of green infrastructure must be accomplished in accordance with a specifically designed plan with a defined end-product and end points for plantings.

### **Great Lakes Action Plan**

**Outcome:** Focus Area 1, Toxic Substances and Areas of Concern; Measure 5, pollution (in pounds) collected through prevention and waste minimization projects in the Great Lakes basin.

**Output:** Number of acres treated and/or the number of trees planted to contain or control the migration of subsurface water.

## **Program Area: Develop Ecosystem Services Markets**

GLRI funds for this program area will demonstrate the ecological and economic value of watershed restoration work. Projects will monitor and quantify the impact of new or existing storm-water/green infrastructure, and use this information in cooperation with other land management agencies and outreach experts to build an awareness and desire (markets) to implement green, storm water practices to protect the waters of the Great Lakes. For more information and examples, see: [http://www.fs.fed.us/ecosystemservices/About\\_ES/faq.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/ecosystemservices/About_ES/faq.shtml).

Successful projects in this Program Area will:

- Focus on *new/existing storm-water/green infrastructure*<sup>3</sup> developments that use trees and other vegetation to mitigate combined sewer overflow (CSO) discharge risks, or other non-point source pollution discharge;
- Create or utilize methods for quantifying the water quality benefits and their associated economic value in a way that can be utilized in real-world ecosystem market based activities in the Great Lakes watershed;
- Be scalable to larger regions or replicable in other well-defined priority watersheds to create similarly robust, measureable benefits;
- Be designed and deployed so as to be easily understood by participants, policymakers, and the public, with a well-defined and robust technology transfer effort to strategic audiences.

### **Great Lakes Action Plan**

**Outcome:** Focus Area 3, Near-shore Health and Nonpoint Source Pollution, Goal 2: Land use, recreation and economic activities are managed to ensure that near-shore aquatic, wetland and upland habitats will sustain the health and function of natural communities; and Goal 5: A significant reduction in soil erosion and the loading of sediments, nutrients and pollutants into tributaries is achieved through greater implementation of practices that conserve soil and slow overland flow in agriculture, forestry and urban areas.

**Output:** Estimated number of gallons of annual stormwater interception averaged over the first 40 years (conversion factor is 1,129 gallons per medium-size tree/year).

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<sup>3</sup>Green infrastructure may include trees, tree boxes, reforestation, cisterns, rain barrels, downspout disconnections, green roofs, roof gardens, contained planters, vegetated swales, rain gardens/vegetated infiltration basins, flow-through planters, infiltration planters, and soakage trenches.

## Application Instructions

### Fiscal Year 2014 Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)

- Project Applicant:** Identify the entity responsible for conducting the fiscal and performance accountability of the project. The project applicant in most cases will be the grant award recipient.
- Contact Person:** Provide the name(s) and contact information (address, phone, email) of the Project lead who will serve as principal contact for the project.
- Descriptive Title:** Provide short title for future reference to the project. This must be the same title used on the Application for Federal Financial Assistance.
- Project Location:** Identify the priority watershed draining to a specific Area of Concern in which project activities will be targeted, and provide GPS coordinates of project sites.
- Funds Requested:** Applicant must identify amount of federal funds being requested.
- Program Area(s):** Identify the GLRI Program Area your proposal addresses (four (4) choices).
- Project Duration:** Projected starting and ending dates, not to exceed two (2) years from date of award.
- Overview:** A short (500 character) summary of the project that includes the scope, location, expected accomplishments, and water quality benefits.
- Scope of Work:** Provide a narrative that outlines the methods employed to address the protection, maintenance or restoration of the chemical, biological or physical integrity of the Great Lakes watershed. (Note that planting efforts must include reference to a landscape plan, ANSI standards, and specifications avoiding use of invasive plant species.)
- Priority Landscape:** Provide information on the site location and its connection to water quality, including links to the State Forest Action Plan as well as the Great Lakes Action Plan or Remedial Action Plans. Projects draining to EPA Areas of Concern are preferred.
- Outcomes/Outputs** Clearly list specific relevant outcomes and outputs from the project.  
**NOTE:** Tree planting proposals must specify the estimated number and size of trees.
- Partners:** List and/or describe any significant partners who will be involved and their specific roles and contract amounts, if relevant. Do not list partners who will not have material involvement in the project. Attach letters of support, as appropriate.
- Time line:** Provide a brief, approximate schedule showing intermediate steps and major milestones. Please indicate if a specific start date is critical. Project time line is not to exceed two (2) years from the date of award.
- Budget:** Provide a proposed budget using the template provided in the application. Show primary budgeted activities and matching funds (if any). Although no match or leveraging is required, proposals that leverage other funds will receive stronger consideration.

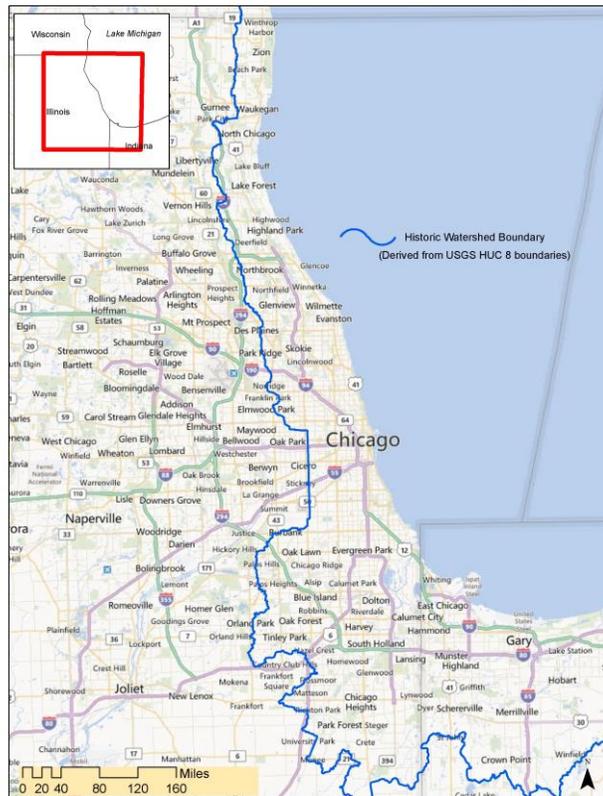
*See enclosed form.*

# Appendix A - Great Lakes Watershed Map

## Fiscal Year 2014 Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)



### Map Inset for Illinois and Indiana



*In Illinois and Indiana, for purposes of this RFP, the Great Lakes Basin includes the historic watersheds of the North Shore channel, Chicago and Little Calumet Rivers. This description was provided by EPA and supported by the IL DNR.*

Appendix B - Counties Wholly or Partially in Great Lakes Watershed  
 Fiscal Year 2014 Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry  
 Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)

**Counties Wholly in the Great Lakes Watershed**

**Indiana**

DeKalb  
 LaGrange  
 Steuben

**Michigan**

Alcona	Clare	Iosco	Marquette	Oscoda
Alger	Clinton	Isabella	Mason	Otsego
Allegan	Crawford	Jackson	Mecosta	Ottawa
Alpena	Delta	Kalamazoo	Menominee	Presque Isle
Antrim	Dickinson	Kalkaska	Midland	Roscommon
Arenac	Eaton	Kent	Missaukee	Saginaw
Baraga	Emmet	Keweenaw	Monroe	St. Clair
Barry	Genesee	Lake	Montcalm	St. Joseph
Bay	Gladwin	Lapeer	Montmorency	Sanilac
Benzie	Grand Traverse	Leelanau	Muskegon	Schoolcraft
Branch	Gratiot	Lenawee	Newaygo	Shiawassee
Calhoun	Hillsdale	Livingston	Oakland	Tuscola
Cass	Houghton	Luce	Oceana	Van Buren
Charlevoix	Huron	Mackinac	Ogemaw	Washtenaw
Cheboygan	Ingham	Macomb	Ontonagon	Wayne
Chippewa	Ionia	Manistee	Osceola	Wexford

**New York**

Erie	Jefferson	Niagara	Oswego	Wayne
Genesee	Monroe	Orleans	Seneca	Wyoming

**Ohio**

Cuyahoga	Hancock	Lorain	Putnam	Williams
Defiance	Henry	Lucas	Sandusky	Wood
Erie	Huron	Ottawa	Seneca	
Fulton	Lake	Paulding	Van Wert	

**Wisconsin**

Brown	Florence	Marinette	Outagamie	Waupaca
Calumet	Kewaunee	Menominee	Ozaukee	Winnebago
Door	Manitowoc	Oconto	Sheboygan	

## Counties Partially in the Great Lakes Watershed

### Illinois

Cook  
Lake

### Indiana

Adams  
Allen  
Elkhart  
Kosciusko  
Lake  
LaPorte  
Noble  
Porter  
St. Joseph  
Wells

### Michigan

Berrien  
Gogebic  
Iron

### Minnesota

Aitkin  
Carlton  
Cook  
Itasca  
Lake  
Pine  
St. Louis

### New York

Allegany	Cortland	Lewis	Ontario	Tompkins
Cattaraugus	Essex	Livingston	Schuyler	Yates
Cayuga	Franklin	Madison	St. Lawrence	
Chautauqua	Hamilton	Oneida	Steuben	
Chemung	Herkimer	Onondaga	Tioga	

### Ohio

Allen	Geauga	Portage	Trumbull
Ashland	Hardin	Richland	Wyandot
Ashtabula	Marion	Shelby	
Auglaize	Medina	Stark	
Crawford	Mercer	Summit	

### Pennsylvania

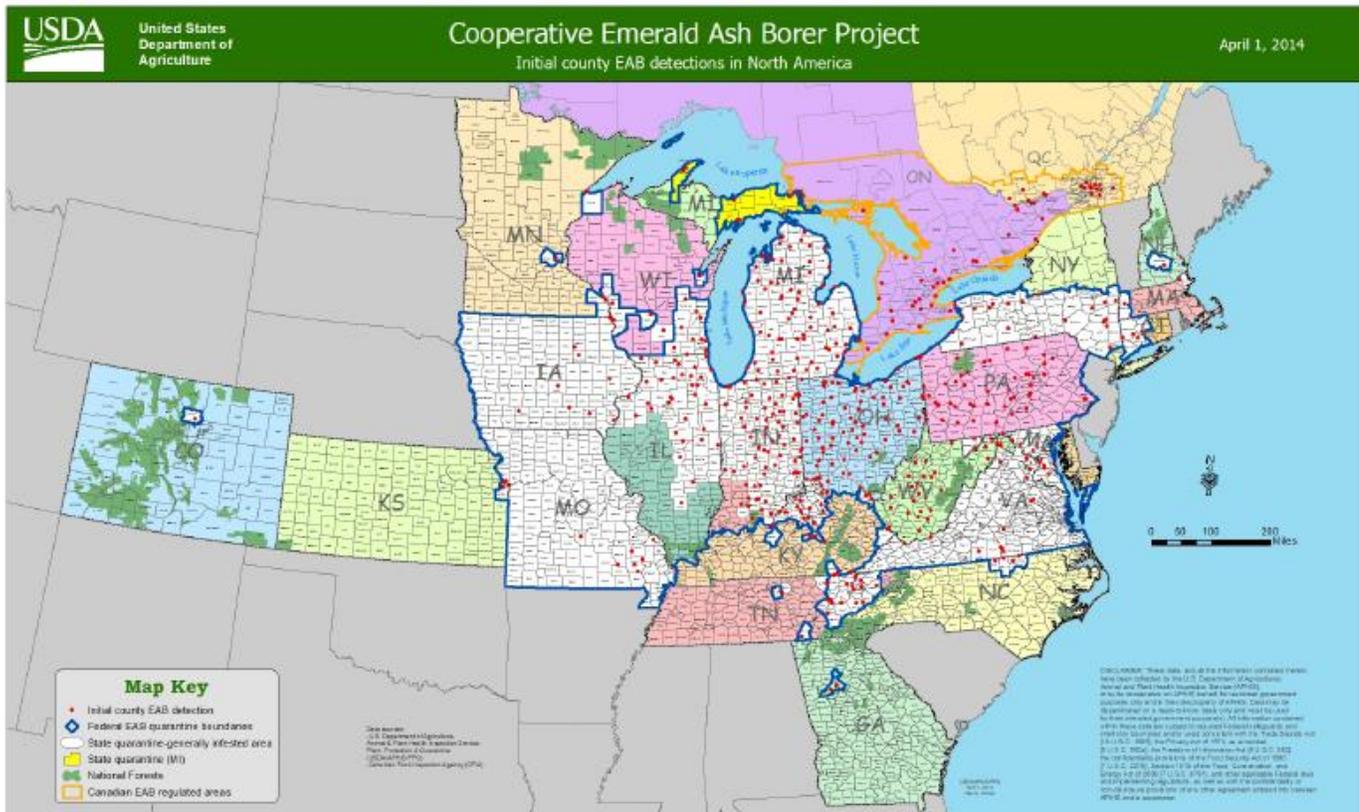
Crawford  
Erie  
Potter

### Wisconsin

Adams	Douglas	Kenosha	Oneida	Washington
Ashland	Fond du Lac	Langlade	Portage	Waukesha
Bayfield	Forest	Marathon	Racine	Waushara
Columbia	Green Lake	Marquette	Shawano	
Dodge	Iron	Milwaukee	Vilas	

Appendix C - EAB Quarantine and Non-Quarantine Counties FY 2014  
Fiscal Year 2014 Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry  
Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)

[http://www.emeraldashborer.info/files/MultiState\\_EABpos.pdf](http://www.emeraldashborer.info/files/MultiState_EABpos.pdf)



Appendix D - List of EAB Quarantine Counties in Great Lakes Basin  
 Fiscal Year 2014 Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry  
 Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)

**Illinois**

Cook  
 Lake

**Indiana**

Adams  
 Allen  
 DeKalb  
 Elkhart

Kosciusho  
 LeGrange  
 Noble  
 Porter

St. Joseph  
 Steuben  
 Wells

**Michigan**

Alcona	Claire	Isabella	Mecosta	Roscommon
Alger	Clinton	Jackson	Midland	Saginaw
Allegan	Crawford	Kalamazoo	Missaukee	Sanilac
Alpena	Delta	Kalkaska	Monroe	Schoolcraft
Antrim	Eaton	Kent	Montcalm	Shiawassee
Arenac	Emmet	Keweenaw	Montmorenc	St. Clair
Barry	Genesee	Lake	Muskegon	St. Joseph
Bay	Gladwin	Lapeer	Newaygo	Tuscola
Benzie	Grand Traverse	Leelanau	Oakland	Van Buren
Berrien	Gratiot	Lenawee	Oceana	Washtenaw
Branch	Hillsdale	Livingston	Ogemaw	Wayne
Calhoun	Houghton	Luce	Osceola	Wexford
Cass	Huron	Mackinac	Oscoda	
Charlevoix	Ingham	Macomb	Otsego	
Cheboygan	Ionia	Manistee	Ottawa	
Chippewa	Iosco	Mason	Presque Isle	

**New York**

Allegany	Erie	Niagara	Steuben
Cattaraugus	Genesee	Ontario	Wayne
Chautauqua	Livingston	Orleans	Wyoming
Chemung	Monroe	Schuyler	Yates

**Ohio**

Allen	Erie	Lake	Paulding	Stark
Ashland	Fulton	Lorain	Portage	Summit
Ashtabula	Geauga	Lucas	Putnam	Trumbull
Auglize	Hancock	Marion	Richland	Van Wert
Crawford	Hardin	Medina	Sandusky	Williams
Cuyahoga	Henry	Mercer	Seneca	Wood
Defiance	Huron	Ottawa	Shelby	Wyandot

Appendix D - List of EAB Quarantine Counties in Great Lakes Basin  
(CONTINUED)

**Pennsylvania**

Crawford	Erie	Potter
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**Wisconsin**

Brown	Dodge	Ozaukee	Washington
Douglas	Kenosha	Racine	Waukesha
Fond du Lac	Milwaukee	Sheboygan	Winnebago



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Northeastern Area  
State and Private Forestry

11 Campus Boulevard  
Suite 200  
Newtown Square, PA 19073

File Code: 1580/3000/6500

Date: May 16, 2014

TO: Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters  
and Tribal Administrators within the Great Lakes Watershed  
(Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York,  
Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin)

**REPLY DUE: July 14, 2014**

You are invited to submit proposals for the US Forest Service Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). Estimated available funds totaling more than \$2.4 million are expected to be provided through an interagency agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency to award competitive grants in the following program areas:

Program Area	Estimated Available Funds
1. Restore Urban and Community Forests	\$120,000
2. Mitigate Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Impacts	\$1,000,000
3. Reduce Toxic Substances in Brownfield Sites	\$1,200,000
4. Develop Ecosystem Services Markets	\$100,000

More specific information is included in the enclosed Request for Proposals (RFP) and Application Form. All proposals are to be submitted electronically by 5:00 P.M. Eastern time on July 14, 2014 to: [GLRI@fs.fed.us](mailto:GLRI@fs.fed.us).

State agencies, Tribal communities, non-profit organizations, academic partners, and municipalities are eligible for GLRI funding within the Great Lakes Basin of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York. **Eligible applicants must consult with their appropriate State Forester or Tribal administrator (for federally recognized tribes) to develop and submit proposals.** Please share this RFP with your partners and others who may have interest and capability to participate in this program directed at restoring water quality in the Great Lakes.

Sincerely,

*Tony L. Ferguson*

TONY L. FERGUSON  
Area Director

Enclosures (2)

cc: NADIR; NA Field Representatives; Michael Rains, NRS; Kathleen Atkinson, R9; Mary Beth Borst, R9; Tony Erba, R9; Elizabeth LaPlante, EPA GLNPO; Ian MacFarlane, NAASF; Mark Buccowich, NA; Gina Jorgensen, NA; Phillip Rodbell, NA; Robert Witmer, NA





# Intertribal Maple Syrup Producers Cooperative

P.O. Box 379  
Bayfield, WI 54814  
[www.tribalsyrup.wordpress.com](http://www.tribalsyrup.wordpress.com)

June 10, 2014

Dear Participants,

The Intertribal Maple Syrup Producers Cooperative is an opportunity for tribal producers to gain recognition as a joint effort to represent tribal involvement in the maple syrup industry. We would like to provide education, support, awareness and access to USDA programs for tribal producers.

Historically, tribal efforts in maple syrup production for the region were reliant on native producers. It is well documented that maple sugar was an established form of commerce between tribal communities. The cultural practice in tribal communities continues today. The Cooperative seeks to identify and support those producers' current infrastructure needs.

We also seek to help to gain access to the different markets on a national and international scale, this isn't going to be an overnight effort, it's going to take continuous support to gain the recognition for maple producers to be sustainable. An important focus will be accessing equipment that is energy efficient and also saves time for producers will allow them to promote their small business and use best forest management practices.

As the group moves forward, your input will be what makes this successful. Please contact Bruce Savage, Owner/Operator Spirit Lake Native Farm at (218) 393-0512 to discuss your thoughts and feedback.

## Steering Committee:

- Paul DeMain, Lac Courte Oreille
- Gerald Jondreau, Keweenaw Bay Indian Community
- Jerome Powless, Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
- Melanie Montano, Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
- Bruce Savage, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

## Technical Support

- Coordinated effort by Spirit Lake Native Farm, Cooperative Development Services, and Intertribal Ag Council, and Catherine Joy Accede CPA



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What is RCPP?

The **Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)** is a new program that mobilizes partnerships to multiply investments to reach common conservation goals. It is important to note that a significant amount of Farm Bill Conservation Program funding will be allocated through the RCPP.

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RCPP is a new 2014 Farm Bill conservation program that:

- Furthers the conservation on a regional scale
- Encourages partners to cooperate with producers
- Provides assistance through
  - Partnership agreements
  - Program contracts or easement agreements
- Combines the purpose and functions of previous regional programs
- Utilizes new and existing programs

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### RCPP Vision

RCPP offers new opportunities for NRCS to work with partners to encourage:

- locally driven innovation
- create high-performing solutions
- accelerate the conservation mission
- launch bold ideas
- demonstrate the value and efficacy of voluntary, private lands conservation

Note commonality with WTCAC, IAC and INCA strengths.

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### Funding

**Available Funding:**

- \$100 Million of direct RCPP funding each year; plus
- 7 percent of funds from four covered programs (EQJP, CSP, ACEP, HFRP)

**Fiscal Year 2014/2015 Funding:**

- FY2014/2015 = \$394,827,180
- Short timeframe and higher level of funding indicate that this may be an advantageous year to apply.

**Estimated Future Funding:**

- FY2016 = \$260 M
- FY2017 = \$263 M
- FY2018 = \$253 M

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### Authorities

RCPP combines the authorizes of four former conservation programs:

- Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP)
- Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program (CBWI)
- Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI)
- Great Lakes Basin Program, Note this is a different program than the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI).

RCPP assistance is delivered in accordance with the rules of these "covered programs":

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
- Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)
- Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act

\*available in Critical Conservation Areas only

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### Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

ACEP is a new program that consolidates three former programs – the Wetlands Reserve Program, Grassland Reserve Program and Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program.



Agricultural Land Easements (ALE) protect the long-term viability of the nation's food supply by preventing conversion of productive working lands to non-agricultural uses.



Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE) provide habitat for fish and wildlife, improve water quality, reduce flooding, recharge groundwater, and provide recreational activities.

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### Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act

Conduct investigation and surveys to:

Determine the extent of watershed problems and needs; and set forth viable alternative solutions consistent with local, regional, and national objectives.

*Note: Only available in RCPP Critical Conservation Areas*

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### Program Authorities and Adjustment of Terms

- RCPP allows some flexibility in covered program rules in order to achieve high priority outcomes noted in the Announcement for Program Funding (APF).
- Partners may request that program adjustments provided they are within the scope of the statutory and regulatory program authorities.

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### Funding Pools

**Allocation Between National, CCAs, and State**

Funding Year	2014/2015
National (40%)	\$ 157,930,872
CCA (35%)	\$ 138,189,513
State (25%)	\$ 98,706,795
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 394,827,180</b>

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- USDA United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service
- ### National Funding Pool
- Priority will be given to multistate projects.
- National priorities for Fiscal Year 2014/2015:
1. Water quantity
  2. Water quality
  3. Soil health
  4. At risk species habitat
  5. Air quality
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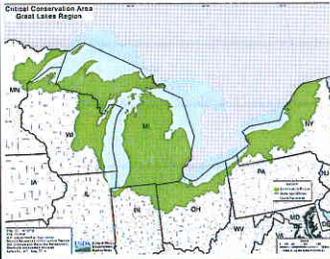
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**Critical Conservation Areas**  
**RCPP**

### Great Lakes Region

**Resource Concern Priorities**

- Water Quality Degradation
- Inadequate Habitat for Fish and Wildlife

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**Critical Conservation Areas**  
**RCPP**

### Mississippi River Basin

**Resource Concern Priorities**

- Water Quality Degradation
- Insufficient Water
- Inadequate Habitat for Fish and Wildlife

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### State Funding Pool

Project applications submitted for consideration through the state funding pool should address at least one of the national priorities or a State identified priority. Applications for the State funding pool must also be submitted to Jimmy Bramblett as well as [RCPP@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:RCPP@wdc.usda.gov)

**Wisconsin Natural Resource Priorities:**

1. Water Quality Degradation
2. Soil Erosion
3. Soil Quality Degradation
4. Inadequate Habitat for Fish and Wildlife
5. Degraded Plant Conditions
6. Livestock Production Limitation
7. Excess Water and Insufficient Water
8. Air Quality
9. Insufficient Energy

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## Proposals

- Applicants must identify **one** specific funding pool (i.e. National, Critical Conservation Area, State) in which to compete in accordance with the criteria established in this notice.
- Only one application is to be submitted per project. However, applicants may submit more than one application, as long as the proposals are for distinctly different projects. If an applicant wishes to submit multiple applications, the applicant must identify and provide clear evidence that project activities under one application are distinct from any other application.

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## Announcement for Program Funding (APF)

*45 page document posted on Grants.gov*

*Note: RCPP is technically not a grant program, however the Grants.gov website provides the platform for announcing the program.*

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Natural Resources Conservation Service

## Proposals

- Project areas may be defined by geo-political boundaries, watershed boundaries, agricultural land uses, or regional natural resource concerns.
- The project area does not need to be contiguous, but the geographic boundaries need to be described.
- The project must address at least one identified priority.
- All projects will be equally evaluated, regardless of size.

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## Eligible Partners

Eligible partnering organizations include:

- An Indian Tribe;
- An organization or entity with an established history of working cooperatively with producers on agricultural land, as determined by NRCS, to address –
  - Local conservation priorities related to agricultural production, wildlife habitat development, or nonindustrial private forest land management, or
  - Critical watershed-scale soil erosion, water quality, sediment reduction, or other natural resource issues
  - WTCAC, IAC, INCA, RTOCs would all fall under this category
- An agricultural or silvicultural producer association or other group of producers;
- A state or unit of local government;
- A farmer cooperative;
- A municipal water or wastewater treatment entity;
- An institution of higher education;

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## Land Eligibility

The following land, including Tribal land, is eligible for enrollment in the RCPPP:

- Cropland
- Grassland
- Rangeland
- Pastureland
- Nonindustrial private forest land
- Other land incidental to agricultural production (including wetlands and riparian buffers) on which significant natural resource issues could be addressed under the program.

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## Measures of Success

NRCS will measure the environmental successes of RCPPP through the following four criteria:

1. Solutions
2. Contributions
3. Innovation
4. Participation

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### Measures of Success

1. **Solutions.** NRCS will invest in projects that generate near-term results that are **measurable** from environmental, economic, and social perspectives. Both partners and NRCS staff will be involved with documenting the outcomes of these conservation investments.

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### Measures of Success

2. **Contributions.** NRCS specifically will promote leveraging of other Federal and non-federal resources. The agency goal is to ***at least double the total investment in conservation***, including cash and in-kind contributions from both Federal and non-Federal sources.

*USDA plans to invest up to \$1.2 billion over the next 5 years.  
USDA Goal: Partners match investment to equal \$2.4 billion.*

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### Measures of Success

3. **Innovation.** NRCS will select innovative projects that integrate multiple conservation approaches to deliver comprehensive and measurable solutions.

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### Measures of Success

4. **Participation.** NRCS will seek to maximize the number of organizations that participate in and contribute to projects as compared with predecessor programs (such as the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative).

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### Leveraging Funds

- RCPP requires significant contributions from the partners.
- The "significant contribution" that partners must bring to selected projects can include in-kind contributions, such as outreach, monitoring, conservation planning, and producer assistance. Partners may also include administrative services that they provide in the calculation of their contribution to the project. Partners should consider the total benefit they expect to bring to the project.
- **Priority will be given to those applications that significantly leverage non-Federal financial and technical resources.** NRCS has a goal of leveraging an amount equal to the Federal investment; therefore, partner applications that meet or exceed the amount requested from NRCS (direct or in-kind) will be the most competitive.

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### Funding Through APF will be provided to Eligible:

- Partners for the provision of financial assistance (FA) and technical assistance (TA) or both
- Producers or landowners through program contracts or easement agreements;
- Entities through agreements for the purchase of ACEP Agricultural Land Easements;
- Partners for the provision of TA

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### Funding

NRCS funds may not be used for the partner's administrative expenses (for example, rent, utilities, space used by staff, copies, phones, IT support, etc., that are used by all staff and not directly related to the project).

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### Partnership Agreements

- Partnership agreements may be in **duration from 1 to 5 years** in length; as identified by the partner in their proposal application.
- NRCS will conduct a **competitive process** to select applications for partnership agreements.
- The **criteria** used in evaluating project proposals is listed in the APF and will be on the website.
- Multistate projects will have a lead state selected for each project to develop and enter into the partnership agreements, using a national template.

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### Partner Responsibilities

Partners are responsible for:

- Defining the scope of the project
- Conducting outreach and education
- Assisting landowners and producers with NRCS applications
- Leveraging NRCS financial or technical assistance
- Conducting and providing an assessment of the project costs and conservation effects
- Other duties as specified in the partnership agreement.

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### Dates/Deadlines

<b>Wednesday, June 18</b>	<b>10-11am CST</b>	<b>National Q/A Webinar</b>
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Preproposal applications due: \*July 14, 2014  
 Announcement of selected preproposals: July 28, 2014

*Full proposals will be accepted only from applicants who are notified at the end of the preproposal review process that their application has been identified for further evaluation.*

Full proposal applications due: \*September 26, 2014  
 Announcement of selected full proposals: October 17, 2014  
 Project agreements are signed: October 30, 2014

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### Wisconsin NRCS RCPP Contacts

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### Opportunities and Barriers

- This is the way that a significant amount of Farm Bill Conservation funding will be allocated.
- The 2014-2015 funding is double what we expect in future years, and the timeframe for proposals is short, therefore this may be a very good year to apply.
- The competitive advantage for proposals with significant Non-federal match is a potential barrier to Tribal participation
- The work carried out by WTCAC, IAC and INCA may fit in very well with the goals of the RCPP.

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