

2026 Block Grants
HSP and SWEEP
Question and Answer – 5/1/26

HSP or SWEEP Question	Question Summary	CDFA Response
HSP and SWEEP	If a proposed award amount is too high in the concept proposal, will it be rejected or will CDFA come back with an alternative dollar amount?	The dollar amount requested in the concept proposal is only an estimate based on the applicant's current plans. The full proposal will require a detailed budget that identifies funding commitments by category and includes the required payment rates. This will include hourly staff rates, anticipated travel costs, amounts allocated to on-farm projects, indirect costs, and other relevant expenses. While the concept proposal budget is an initial estimate, the full proposal will provide an opportunity to present a complete budget breakdown with all necessary details.
HSP and SWEEP	The guidelines list Special Districts that are "Irrigation Districts" as eligible Technical Assistance Providers. Does a Special District that focuses on supporting agricultural qualify as a Technical Assistance Provider?	The Canella Act defines what type of organization is eligible to provide technical assistance to the block grant recipient. The Canella Act identifies Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs), University of California Cooperative Extension, California public colleges and universities, Nonprofit organizations, Groundwater Sustainability Agencies, and Irrigation Districts as entities eligible for technical assistance funding. Special districts are not identified by the Canella Act, but special districts are identified by Prop 4 guidelines for BGR eligibility.

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HSP and SWEEP	<p>1. Is there anything specific our governing body letter of support should include?</p> <p>2. The grant procedures manual says to not use race/ethnicity-based identifiers to award preferentially. Can we set aside a certain percentage of the funding for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, including using the gender component of California's definition?</p>	<p>1) The governing body letter must indicate their willingness to participate in the specific grant program they are applying for (SWEEP or HSP) and should be on the organization's letter head.</p> <p>2) OARS advise that Block Grant Recipients work towards meeting bond funding targets though technical assistance efforts.</p>
HSP and SWEEP	Are advanced payments possible for BGRs?	Yes, advance payments are possible. Please review the Grant Award Procedures Manual – it has details on this, particularly in section 2.2.1.1 (pg. 11).
SWEEP	Joint Power Authorities can be made up of 2 water irrigation districts. I am wondering if the irrigation district farmers can still apply to the programs as beneficiaries?	Farmers and ranchers located within an irrigation district, or any other district that has received funding or is supporting a block grant, are eligible to receive on-farm project support- as long as they meet all program eligibility requirements. Joint powers authorities should also consider how they will serve a broad range of beneficiaries, rather than limiting support only to those within a specific service area.

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HSP and SWEEP	a) Can an eligible BGR applicant apply to both SWEEP and HSP? b) Can the lead organization applicant also be a partner organization for another block grant applicant?	a) Yes – these must be separate applications. b) Yes, this is allowable

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SWEEP	<p>a) When will the final guidelines for the grant be released?</p> <p>b) Is there is a specific template available for the concept proposal, or can we format in a word document the information provided in the draft guidelines?</p> <p>c) Need clarification on the term "on farm" as used in the guidelines. Our work is primarily with irrigation districts, which have a direct impact on the farmers in our area. For example, we're looking at opportunities to improve energy efficiency by rehabilitating pumps on individual farms, but we also want to enhance irrigation connections that serve the district, which would significantly aid water conservation. While these connections may not be owned by the farmers themselves, they certainly provide clear benefits to them.</p>	<p>a) The Application Guidelines are currently finalized and can be located on the program's website. The Grant Awards Procedure Manual, a manual that goes over awarded organizations procedures, will be finalized before the full proposal is released.</p> <p>b) The concept proposal application is found on the program website. At this time, it has not been converted into a PDF or Word document. Applicants can simply review the concept application itself and extract the questions into whatever format they see fit. CDFA will only accept concept applications that have been submitted by the CDFA provided MS Form.</p> <p>c) the definition of "on-farm" is the same as Grant Beneficiaries. Details can be found on page 8 of the Application Guidelines document found on our webpage. As your question is laid out, enhancing irrigation connections that serve the district, and not the farmer, is an eligible practice. Hardware should be installed on-farm for the beneficiary.</p>
HSP and SWEEP	<p>Are applicants required to conform with prevailing wage parameters?</p>	<p>OARS is looking into this and will provide an answer before grant execution. Applicants should plan for prevailing wage while CDFA seeks clarity from the Department of Industrial Relations.</p>

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HSP	For grazing management practices paid for under CDFA HSP, such as prescribed grazing, fencing, watering facilities, etc., will the producer need to have a grazing management plan signed by a Certified Range Manager, or will a replan for the practices be sufficient?	For prescribed grazing practice, grazing management plan must be prepared and signed by a Certified Range Manager.
HSP and SWEEP	<p>1) For budgets for BGRs - in the budget narrative, is it permissible to use generic title as opposed to individual names?</p> <p>2) Are salary ranges allowable?</p>	<p>1) At the Concept Proposal phase, this is not at the level of detail requested. The full proposal will require a budget and budget narrative. For the narrative, the applicant can refer to the title, but we will want to include names wherever possible.</p> <p>2) The concept proposal does not require salary rates. The full proposal budget does require that we have hourly rate or salary and time commitment, and it is not a range.</p>
HSP and SWEEP	What level of detail is required for on-farm selection process?	Details of the required level of information are found within the Application Guidelines and the scoring matrix (refer to Appendix C). Keep in mind that the concept proposal application questionnaire has character limits, so keep your responses concise.

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HSP	For the County of San Diego as HSP BGR, with a TAP provider identified, can County staff also provide administrative support and/or TA during the application process if expertise is available. This would help ensure more funds are allocated to the TAP provider for direct on farm assistance.	In the case in question, the questioner appears to be aware that their organization, although it is an eligible BGR lead, is not an eligible TAP lead under the Cannella Act. In response to the question, BGRs are generally expected to provide administrative support. If the BGR is not an entity that is identified in the Canella Act as a TA provider, they must partner with one when composing their project team. Their technical assistance lead person must be employed by the TA provider, but other project personnel (including those that are not employed by the TAP-eligible organization) can contribute to technical assistance activities.
HSP and SWEEP	Where can the webinar recording and PowerPoint slides be found?	The PowerPoint and webinar are posted publicly on these webpages: https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oars/healthsoils/BlockGrantProgram.html and https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oars/sweep/block_grant.html .
SWEEP	What is the pump test requirement under SWEEP? Can you please elaborate on what that looks like and if there are any resources/reporting templates we should review?	This test should be conducted by technical personnel who understand what is needed to conduct a pump test. Each of these companies may use its own template; however, all of them will provide the required information. The SWEEP Project Assessment Tool requires that the pumping depth and the Overall Pump Efficiency (OPE) are identified through the pump test. To calculate an OPE, you need to measure multiple things are the pumping plant, including flow rate, energy use, and resistance.

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HSP and SWEEP	501(c)5 entities who partner with other eligible entities such as existing 501(c)3 or resource management entities would be welcomed as long as they are not responsible for the main financial oversight, correct?	Since a 501(c)(5) organization is considered a nonprofit, it will be an eligible TAP lead, but not as a BGR. Financial management is not meant to be split between project lead entities.
HSP and SWEEP	Are CA public universities and public, nonprofit educational entities eligible as block grant applicants, as they have 501c3 status?	Based on the description, the organizations are eligible based off 5013c status. It's up to the applicant to substantiate eligibility with supporting documentation.
HSP and SWEEP	Are the farmers subrecipients or can they be contractors?	Farmers/ranchers that the BGRs select for funding are considered the "Grant Beneficiaries". This is defined on pg. 8 in the RGA.
HSP and SWEEP	Will CDFA require a Limited Waiver of Sovereign Immunity to tribal awardees for practice implementation? WCB requires a Limited Waiver of Sovereign Immunity for grant funding to be awarded to habitat restoration on tribal lands.	At this time, CDFA is seeking guidance specifically on if we will require a Limited Waiver of Sovereign Immunity.
HSP and SWEEP	Does 40% to SDFRs mean by award amount or by project count?	The 40% SDFRs is based on number of projects. CDFA also does not require that 40% of the funds go to SDFR, you are likely referencing the SDAC/DAC/VP bond requirements

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HSP and SWEEP	Is technical assistance part of the 20% for project administration or the 80% for on-farm implementation of the total budget?	Technical Assistance is part of the 20% of the Administrative budget/category.
HSP and SWEEP	Under the grant terms what would be considered a SDFRs? Would this be applicable to new or smaller farmers/ranchers?	<p>The definition of SDFRs is in the RGA on pg. 32: "Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (SDFRS): defined in the 2017 Farmer Equity Act as a farmer or rancher who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities. These groups include all the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o African Americans o Native Indians o Alaskan Natives o Hispanics o Asian Americans o Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders" <p>This does not include new or small farm operations in the definition.</p>
HSP and SWEEP	Is the 20% admin cap inclusive of indirect costs?	Yes. Please see Appendix E of the RGA for more guidance.
HSP and SWEEP	Can you please clarify the 40% percentage requirement for SDFRs, DACs, SDACs, and VPs?	The Climate Bond specifies that 40% of funds must provide direct and meaningful benefits to DACs, SDACs and vulnerable populations (including SDFRs and Tribes)

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HSP and SWEEP	Are DAC/SDAC projects by property address or by farmer address?	Applicants will use the SDAC mapping tool developed by CNRA for climate bond funded projects to determine if the project is located within an SDAC. The location of the on-farm project will be the indicator of where the project is located, not the address or residence of an applicant.
HSP and SWEEP	Where in the concept proposal should applicants include a breakdown of the budget, and what level of detail is expected at this stage?	The dollar amount requested in the concept proposal is only an estimate based on your current plans. The full proposal will require a detailed budget that identifies funding commitments by category and includes the required payment rates. This will include hourly staff rates, anticipated travel costs, amounts allocated to on-farm projects, indirect costs, and other relevant expenses. While the concept proposal budget is an initial estimate, the full proposal will provide an opportunity to present a complete budget breakdown with all necessary details. You can find a detailed preview of the Concept Proposal Questions in the RGA, indicating the level of detail, starting on pg. 13: https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oars/healthysoils/docs/block_grant_application_guidelines-request_for_grant_applications.pdf

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HSP and SWEEP	Does the 20% budget cap for Admin + TA support also include time needed for TAP to provide technical assistance and verification of awarded implementation projects (between award notification and project completion/verification)? In another way, is 80% of the awarded budget need to be paid directly to producers	Yes, any TA activity will be part of the TA budget and will be expensed from the TA budget - 20 % of Administrative category. Yes, 80% of the awarded projects are paid directly for practices performed by the producers.
SWEEP	For the pump test, are all projects required to have a pump test?	When the on-farm applicant submits an application to a BGR, a pump test is needed if the baseline scenario has a pump. In rare cases, projects without pumps can apply and receive funding as long as they show GHG savings using the SWEEP Project Assessment Tool.
HSP and SWEEP	Are applicants limited to submitting a single application, or may they submit one application to HSP and another to SWEEP within the same funding cycle? Does this apply to farmers/ranchers applying for grants?	BGR applicants can submit an application to HSP and SWEEP programs separately. Applicants can only submit one application per program (SWEEP/HSP). Farmers/Ranchers/Growers are not applying during this period - that will be during the awarded BGRs solicitations (estimated early 2027).
HSP and SWEEP	Given that the concept proposal budget number is an estimate, is it allowable if the final budget total is slightly different from the concept proposal total provided, as some budget details get more finalized?	Yes, this is allowable.

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HSP and SWEEP	Can you please clarify if there is any restriction about a TAP organization being written into several concept proposals on different regional teams? Or submitting one proposal as a lead applicant and also being included as a TAP on a separate concept proposal?	A TA entity can participate as a partner on multiple applications/grants, however entities should consider their capacity for assisting several parties. Definitions of eligible entities can be found in the Request for Grant applications, starting on pg. 6. BGRs may serve as the TAP Lead Organization if they are identified in the Canella Act: https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oars/healthsoils/docs/block_grant_application_guidelinesrequest_for_grant_applications.pdf
HSP and SWEEP	When would we expect to hear back on the concept proposal and how much time will we have between then and when the full proposal will be due?	Full Proposal notification is estimated June 2026, with the full proposals estimated to be due in August 2026.
HSP and SWEEP	Are partnership letters or agreements required during the concept proposal phase?	No, not during the concept proposal phase.
HSP and SWEEP	For on-farm grant beneficiaries, how would the project years be defined?	These timelines will be dependent on the awarded Block Grantees grants, their individual solicitations and awarding timelines.

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HSP and SWEEP	Regarding SDFR requirement - what is considered an appropriate way to prove this data? Do block grant recipients have to have farmers fill out an application that asks for demographic information, or will census info qualify?	This is self-identification. The demographic survey CDFA is developing is optional.
HSP and SWEEP	What is CDFA's timeline for conducting BGR trainings & finalizing ranking selection with BGRs?	This is the proposed timeline (subject to change): Concept Proposal Opens: April 2026 Full Proposal Notification: June 2026 Full Proposal Close: August 2026 Award Notification: September 2026 Award Execution: January 2027 The dates for conducting BGR trainings after awarding have not been finalized yet.
HSP and SWEEP	Can you please clarify the definition of a "demonstration day"? How many are required during the grant term?	Demonstration Days can be similar to field days. More guidance on this will be provided in the Demonstration Day Summary Template (in development). One demonstration day is required per grant term, but BGRs are encouraged to hold more as relevant.
HSP and SWEEP	Could you please confirm that if we have a NICRA, we can use that rate for indirect costs?	Yes

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HSP and SWEEP	Is the staff time required to develop the required 1 demonstration field day and 3 case studies from funded on-farm projects also expected to come out of the 20% budgeted towards Admin + TA time?	Yes.
SWEEP	Are water wells replacements included in this program?	No - SWEEP does not fund this.
HSP and SWEEP	Could you also please clarify, is the requirement to do 1 field day per block award? For example, if there are 5 partners all serving as TAPs for different regions under one Block grant proposal, do each of them need to commit to a field day or just one event for the whole block proposal team?	The requirement is 1 demonstration day per the grant term, however BGRs are encouraged to hold more as able.
HSP and SWEEP	Are the UCANR TAP services to be paid as part of the BGR funding or are they paid outside of that? If the former, will that be at a rate set or pre-negotiated by CDFA, or will it be up to individual BGRs to attempt to negotiate a favorable rate or lower overhead? If Community Education Specialists are to accompany BGR staff to individual farmer sites, is that something that needs to be budgeted for, and if so, is there a standard rate?	The UC ANR Community Education Specialists are funded through a separate agreement and should not be paid through the block grant.

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HSP and SWEEP	<p>Can the 70/30 allocation apply only to contractors, or whether it also limits the share of the administrative budget that can flow to subrecipients? Specifically, can the BGR use a portion of its administrative allocation to pay a subrecipient for tasks such as outreach coordination, farmer engagement, and meeting logistics — beyond the 30% subcontractor (TAP) allocation?</p>	<p>This was adjusted so 30% is only applicable to contractors - it is not applicable for subrecipients.</p>
HSP and SWEEP	<p>Two lead applicants serving a 10-county region would like to work in tandem and share staff across 2 block grant proposals to serve a large geographic region and create continuity across CSA programming at a regional level. Are complimenting regional block grants that work in tandem to create a comprehensive CSA programming narrative and producer experience allowable? Can key personnel be shared across multiple block grant proposals? To afford staff sharing across the wider region, are complimentary budgets between the 2 HSP block grants permissible? Can complimenting HSP</p>	<p>Each application will be reviewed and scored independently, without consideration of any plans to partner with another Block Grant Applicant. The award will be \$2-\$4 million</p>

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	block grant proposals cover the same geographic area?	
HSP and SWEEP	If we have a state indirect rate and a federal indirect rate, how would we select which to use? is it up to us?	You will be required to provide supporting documentation to substantiate the indirect cost rate. Prop 4 allows four different paths to indicate the indirect cost rate. Indirect costs are described in Appendix E of the Application Guidelines. The applicant will decide which supporting documentation to submit during the full application.
HSP	Will soil sample costs be capped at \$50/sample as in previous block grant program? Is it allowable for TAPs to be reimbursed for soil analysis, if they provide that service to the awarded farmer?	There will not be a cost cap, and it is allowable for TAPs to be reimbursed for this work.

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HSP and SWEEP	<p>A) Are complimenting regional block grants that work in tandem to create a comprehensive CSA programming narrative and producer experience allowable? B) Can complementary block grants, that are working together, cover the same service area?</p> <p>C) Can complementary block grants have personnel that can be shared across the block grants? Can this include a complimentary budget for staff that is shared across the block grants? D) As CDFA is prioritizing portfolio balance across the state, what will be the process for applicants to adjust geographic scopes between concept and full proposal stages?</p> <p>E) What is the timeline for BGR trainings? Will trainings take place before contract execution with the opportunity to backdate contract execution?</p> <p>F) Are salary ranges, rather than specific hourly rates, allowable for budget narrative job titles? Are salary & fringe benefit ranges and estimated amount listed by line item allowable, rather than listing hours by title?</p>	<p>A) Each application will be reviewed and scored independently, without consideration of any plans to partner with another Block Grant Applicant. The award will be \$2-\$4 million. Complimenting regional block grants will not be taken into consideration when selecting projects.</p> <p>B) This is a competitive solicitation. Each application will be evaluating independently.</p> <p>C) This is a competitive solicitation. Each application will be evaluated independently. An individual may support multiple block grants as long as they are not serving as a Grant Project Manager. The Grant Project Manager, the person with primary responsibility for the block grant, may manage only one agreement at a time. Supporting staff should ensure they have the capacity to provide services across multiple block grants and meet all expected timelines.</p> <p>D) The process in which CDFA will undergo portfolio balancing is described on page 17 of the Application Guidelines. The section describes the factors that CDFA may include but are not limited to. Applicants will identify their service area during the concept proposal and may adjust their service area when they submit a full proposal.</p> <p>E) CDFA provided BGR trainings will happen once the grant has been executed. Please review the GAP's Onboarding section.</p> <p>F) No, the full proposal will require you to indicate the annual base salary, fringe benefits rate, and full time equivalent when providing services to the block grant.</p> <p>G) I believe this question is asking about the financial review of an application and not which documents are required to be submitted for reimbursement from an awarded entity. Page 25 of the Application Guidelines has a list of the required information needed to perform a Financial Review.</p>

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	G) Our project leads bank with their respective counties and will need to communicate the bank statement request to county accounting departments. What documentation and level of detail is required?	
SWEEP	If a water irrigation district is a TAP provider as part of the SWEEP BGP team, would that exclude its farmers from applying as a beneficiary to the SWEEP BGP?	No, they would not be excluded

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HSP	Where is the Required Documents Checklist to use as a cover letter?	The template is linked in the MS Forms application and can be found here: https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oars/sweep/docs/2026_block_grant_concept_proposal_checklist.pdf .
HSP and SWEEP	<p>Is an Indigenous-led nonprofit started by a Tribal Band eligible for these grants? Can you please provide clarification on the Tribal Set Asides mentioned in the Climate Bond Block Grant Draft Application Guidelines.</p> <p>Do you know when the grant guidelines for the Tribal set asides will be available?</p> <p>Can you please let me know when the application deadline is and where to find the application packet?</p>	<p>The current HSP and SWEEP solicitations are both open to tribes. SWEEP has a tribal set aside of \$4M in the current solicitation. There are not separate Tribal grant guidelines for the current SWEEP solicitation. HSP does not have a tribal set aside in the current solicitation.</p> <p>HSP, in collaboration with other CDFCA programs, will be doing tribal outreach over the summer to develop a modified version of the programs specifically for a \$4M tribal set aside we plan to release in early 2027. We chose to go this route with only HSP because we know there is Tribal interest in adding to/modifying HSP soil health practices to include cultural practices.</p> <p>If you are looking to access tribal set-asides, ensure that your organization is eligible by carefully reading the footnote on page 7 of the Request for Grant Applications.</p> <p>The concept proposal deadline is 5/15/2026. We opened concept proposals in early April. We will invite full proposals in June.</p>

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HSP	<p>1. In the HSP Practice Guidelines document, you refer to eligibility using terms like "Cropland," "Orchard," and "Grazing land," among others. Do you have definitions for what constitutes or classifies those lands for determining recipient eligibility? I ask this question regarding smaller community or non-profit operations or those on tribal reservation land, which may have mixed or multiple land uses. 2. Is "Prescribed Indigenous Burning" expected to be a practice under the HSP program? If Prescribed Indigenous Burning, or any new practice in general, becomes an eligible practice, would Block Grant Recipients selected before its inclusion be able to select these kinds of projects? 3. Are the funds that beneficiaries are able to request from the BGR strictly limited to what is outlined in the Practice Guidelines document? If not, what other budget line items can beneficiaries request? Are there any further guidelines or limits that a BGR should be aware of?</p>	<p>1. There will be definitions of systems in the final Practice Guidelines, as there were in previous HSP RGAs. What is generally the key issue is how particular areas of fields are described in the HSP RePlan tool's mapping. For mixed systems, it may be necessary to create small areas of fields which are assigned to different system types. The question of a field's or land manager's eligibility for award is separate from its system and is described in the "How to Participate in HSP" document. Non-profits and Tribes are both eligible Beneficiaries. 2. Prescribed Indigenous Burning is not in the HSP Practice Guidelines for this block grant solicitation. A practice of that type may be included in the planned, future Tribal HSP Block Grant Solicitation. 3. HSP BGRs can only support farmers financially for practices that are included in the HSP Practice Guidelines and that follow the standards described there. In this way, HSP is different from SWEEP.</p>