



# Block Grant Pilot Program

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POTENTIAL FRAMEWORK FOR HEALTHY SOILS PROGRAM (HSP) AND  
STATE WATER EFFICIENCY AND ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM(SWEEP)

## Listening Session Agenda

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Welcome and Background

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Introductions from CDFA

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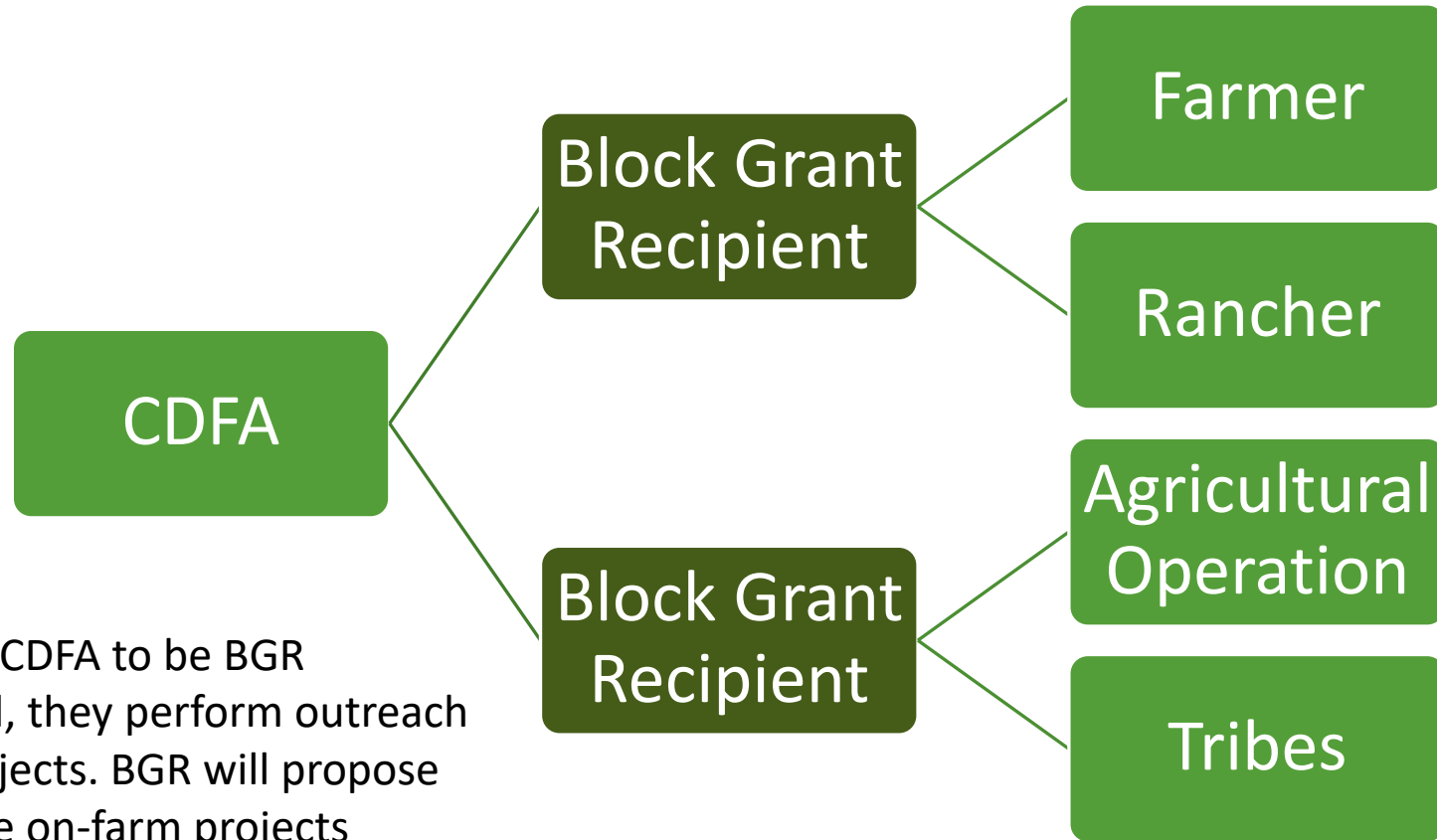
Presentation of Block Grant  
Concept

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Discussion Questions and  
Additional Feedback

# Potential Program Structure

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Organizations apply to CDFA to be BGR  
After they are awarded, they perform outreach  
and select on-farm projects. BGR will propose  
how they will select the on-farm projects

Listening Session



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graph TD; A[Listening Session] --> B[Prepare Draft Request for Grant Applications]; B --> C[Public Comment Period]; C --> D[Review of Feedback];
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Prepare Draft Request for  
Grant Applications

Public Comment Period

Review of Feedback

Plan for  
Receiving  
Feedback

# Potential Benefits



Enable greater administrative efficiencies and overcome resource constraints



Response to feedback from stakeholders on current program structure



Address farmer equity with greater program flexibility and Technical Assistance opportunities



Regional support networks for farmers and ranchers

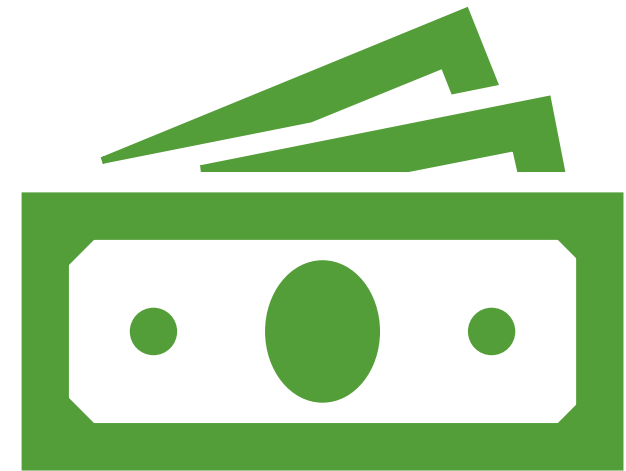


Capacity building through local partnerships

# Funding Proposal

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- Total funds available: ~\$40 M HSP and ~\$50 M SWEEP
  - Separate solicitations for SWEEP & HSP
- Funding Cap per organization: \$5 Million
  - Limit on administrative expenses
- Minimum award of \$2 M
- Funding Cap per on-farm grant:
  - \$100,000 for HSP
  - \$200,000 for SWEEP
- Grant Terms:
  - 4 Years for HSP
  - 3 Years for SWEEP



Managing partnerships

Disbursing the funding to farmers and ranchers

Selecting on-farm projects

Tracking project progress

Tracking of expenditures

Tracking of reporting metrics

Completing invoicing and reporting

## Examples of Administrative Costs



# Technical Assistance

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- Cap of \$100,000 per year for 3 years (per AB 2377)
- TA Providers are non-profits, RCDs, UCCE
- Fulfill the requirements of AB 2377
  - Prioritize farms and ranches of 500 acres or less
  - 25% of funding to support SDFRs
- TA providers can be recipients of the block grant funds or they could be contracted by the recipients of the block grant funds.
- Examples of TA activities: outreach, developing plans with producers, gathering documentation, coordinating with vendors, facilitating communication with BGR, providing training or support to the growers during implementation



# Potential Eligibility

## Applicant Organization

- California-based non-profits organizations
  - RCDs,
  - Irrigation Districts,
  - GSAs,
  - Air Pollution control districts,
  - Universities and ag colleges, Land Trusts
  - Tribes
- ✓ Partnerships - Community education specialists, agricultural cooperatives

## On-Farm Grant Beneficiaries

- Farmers and ranchers including ag operations associated with Tribes, non-profits, urban farms, community gardens

## Potential Requirements

- Technical Assistance Required (AB 2377 (2018))
- Controls for Conflicts of Interest
- No charges for services
- Every block grant awardee commit to at least 25% of support to SDFRs
- Prioritize and track projects that benefit AB 1550 Priority Populations, SDFRs

# Evaluation Criteria



Qualifications



Partnership



Merit and Feasibility of Workplan



Statement of Need



Geographic Consideration



Equity and multilingual services



Budget

# On-Farm Projects

## Block Grant Recipient Identifies Projects

- Perform outreach – required
- Propose a process to prevent conflict of interest
- Identify projects through a process that can be competitive or non-competitive
- Provide CDFA with Project Summary and Benefit Quantification

## CDFA Confirm Requirements Met & Eligibility

- Review APN and fields
- Review if one grant per solicitation cycle
- Review eligible practices
- Review benefit quantification

## Practices

- Adopt existing HSP practices and payments
- Custom SWEEP projects - OEFI to track water and GHG strategies

# Reporting Requirements

Ongoing communication, as on-farm projects are enrolled

- On-farm summary for projects entering program, GHG calcs (& water savings), project design and letter of commitment from growers

Quarterly Progress Report

- TA metrics and expenditures
- Admin activities
- On-farm project close outs

Final Report

- Total Practice Metrics
- Total Equity Metrics

# Payment Process

## Advances and Reimbursements

### Block Grant Recipients will:

- Receive up to 25% advance payments with justification
- Multiple advances may be requested
- Submit invoices at least quarterly, no more than monthly





Feedback

## Discussion Questions

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Are block grants a concept that appeals to you? Would you apply to be a block grant recipient?

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How do we make sure to address geographic distribution and make sure that funds make it to regions of California without existing organizations with capacity?

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How would recipients propose to identify and select the farmers to work with? (competitive application or another type of process such first-come, first-served)

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What conflicts of interests should we safeguard against or how can we prevent cronyism (which could be unintentional)?

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What else should CDFA take into account when considering block grant frameworks?