

# Natural Resources Conservation Service

## **Wanted: ag producers impacted by wildfire, or looking to do rangeland improvements in support of greater sage-grouse**

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## Natural Resources Conservation Service **Nevada**

### **For Immediate Release**

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### **Wanted: ag producers impacted by wildfire, or looking to do rangeland improvements in support of greater sage-grouse**

*Apply by June 21*

**Reno, Nev.**—The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is offering financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers interested in restoring lands impacted by wildfire or improving rangelands in greater sage-grouse habitat through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP).

Agricultural producers that have been impacted by wildfire or have interest in rangeland improvements are encouraged to apply for these special RCPP funds through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, or EQIP. Applications must be received before **4 p.m. on June 21, 2019** by NRCS to be considered in the last project funding period before unused funds are re-appropriated to other efforts.

Conservation practices and management actions that emphasize wildfire restoration will be prioritized (e.g., seeding, fencing, grazing deferment, fire breaks, etc.). Other practices will be included as well and may include, but are not limited to, sagebrush establishment, perennial grass and/or forb seeding, riparian or meadow enhancements, cross-fencing, off-stream watering for livestock and wildlife, and other potential practices, many of which are likely to be mutually beneficial to the producer's operation and greater sage-grouse.

Within Nevada, this RCPP effort operates under the authority of NRCS's Environmental Quality Incentives Program. EQIP is a voluntary, financial and technical assistance program that provides funding for the implementation of conservation practices that may be used to protect and enhance sage grouse habitat, manage livestock, improve irrigation efficiency and reduce soil loss.

Applicants must meet USDA program eligibility requirements for land eligibility and person eligibility. Eligibility requirements include Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) limitations for individuals and entities. Applicants must meet the eligibility criteria to be considered for ranking and funding decisions. Farm Bill programs have strict payment limits, and the amount of financial assistance producers can receive is limited to \$450,000 per farm bill cycle. Limited resource producers, beginning farmers and ranchers, or socially disadvantaged agricultural producers may be eligible for up to 15 percent higher payments, not to exceed 90 percent of the estimated cost to install the practice.

The RCPP encourages conservation partners from across the nation to join in efforts with agricultural producers to increase the restoration and sustainable use of soil, water, wildlife and related natural resources through installation and maintenance of conservation activities in selected project areas. The Greater Outcomes for Greater Sage-Grouse RCPP effort is a joint venture of Partners for Western Conservation, The Cattlemen's Association, the states of Nevada and Colorado, and Environmental Incentives, among others. In Nevada, the Greater Outcomes for Greater Sage-Grouse RCPP effort focuses specifically on providing producers an opportunity to improve their operations and greater sage-grouse habitat by utilizing USDA financial assistance through EQIP.

If interested, the Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team can provide a credit estimate of potential available credits within Nevada's Conservation Credit System (CCS), although no commitments to the CCS are necessary to participate in this RCPP opportunity. If interested in learning about the CCS, please visit <http://sagebrusheco.nv.gov/CCS/ConservationCreditSystem/>.

To learn more, contact your local NRCS office or go online to: [www.nv.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nv.nrcs.usda.gov).

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*Sage grouse flying over rangelands.*

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