



Livestock Technical Assistance Programmatic Guidelines Updated July 2023

Description

WSCC Livestock Technical Assistance Grants for Conservation Districts to deliver technical assistance services to livestock owners & producers.

Authority

[RCW 89.08.070](#) authorizes and directs the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) to assist and guide local Conservation Districts (CD) across the state in the implementation of natural resource conservation programs. To accomplish this, the Commission has established guidelines and controls to govern the CDs' use of state funds, property, and services.

Purpose and Background

The legislature has provided funding to the WSCC to pass through to CDs to reduce or eliminate the potential negative impacts of livestock to the environment. This specifically includes bacterial, nutrient, and sediment contamination of surface waters and nutrient contamination of groundwater.

CDs across the state are variable in many ways including:

- Their technical proficiency and capacity to deliver a program of assistance,
- Number and type of livestock,
- Complexity and number of livestock operations,
- Regulatory pressures on livestock owners to manage manure appropriately, and
- Sensitive areas (e.g., surface water, ground water, and shellfish harvest areas).

Eligibility

A CD is eligible to apply for funding through this system if it:

- Meets and maintains the [Conservation Accountability Performance Program](#) – Performance Standard 1 - Compliance with Laws (required standard), and
- Identifies livestock and water quality natural resource concerns in its annual and long-range plans.

Selection Criteria

Livestock Technical Assistance Grant funding will be awarded to eligible CDs based on the following factors:

- Eligibility as described above
- Complete and timely application submittal
- Competitive review
- Given very limited funding for LTA, work that is likely to compete well for funding under the Sustainable Farms and Fields (SFF) grant program may be deprioritized for LTA. Competitive projects for SFF might include working with landowners toward developing carbon farm plans and/or identifying opportunities for climate smart practice implementation. See the [SFF program guidelines](#) for more information or contact Karen Hills at KHills@scc.wa.gov
- Ongoing need for and willingness to respond to formal or informal referrals from WSDA, Ecology, or County
- Work within watersheds with impaired waterbodies and/or groundwater recharge areas for which livestock are a significant potential contributor to impairment
- Demonstrated backlog of or ongoing work with livestock owners seeking assistance from the district with a water quality-related concern
- Access to appropriate expertise in house or otherwise demonstrated capacity to effectively use the funding within the grant period
- Performance reporting will be based on relevant metrics – Non-exclusive examples... regulatory referrals responded to, livestock owners receiving technical assistance with water quality concerns, BMPs installed, impact of BMPs, how many plans for how much funding, description of how the CD will leverage funding with other resources, and how funds will be used to meet state and local priorities

Application Process

An [application form](#) will be provided, and a solicitation period will occur as funds become available. SCC Staff and Member(s) will review the applications and make recommendations of funding to the Executive Director and/or Commission.

Definitions

Livestock

The definition of 'livestock' for these grants will be consistent with RCW 16.36.005 - (15) "Livestock" means horses, mules, donkeys, cattle, bison, sheep, goats, swine, rabbits, llamas, alpacas, ratites, poultry, waterfowl, game birds, domestic fur bearers, and other species so designated by statute. "Livestock" does not mean free ranging wildlife as defined in Title 77 RCW.

Technical Assistance

The definition of 'technical assistance' is: qualified and experienced, trained staff providing landowners/managers options for livestock management to meet desired goals and regulatory requirements. Providing:

- Sound advice based on Land Grant University research, vetted best management practice (BMP) standards from NRCS, or Professional Engineer
- Assisting with the development of Farm/Conservation or practice plans

- Assisting with the development and implementation of BMPs (Planning, Engineering, Permits, Cultural Resources)
- Assisting to secure financial assistance, if applicable

Supporting Information

[RCW 43.05.010](#)

(3) "Technical assistance" includes:

(a) Information on the laws, rules, and compliance methods and technologies applicable to the regulatory agency's programs;

(b) Information on methods to avoid compliance problems;

(c) Assistance in applying for permits; and

(d) Information on the mission, goals, and objectives of the program.

(4) "Technical assistance documents" means documents prepared to provide information specified in subsection (3) of this section entitled a technical assistance document by the agency head or its designee. Technical assistance documents do not include notices of correction, violation, or enforcement action. Technical assistance documents do not impose mandatory obligations or serve as the basis for a citation.

Dairy Farms Technical Assistance

[RCW 90.64.070](#) Duties of conservation district

(1) The conservation district has the following duties:

(a) Provide technical assistance to the department in identifying and correcting existing water quality problems resulting from dairy farms through implementation of the inspection program in [RCW 90.64.023](#);

(b) Immediately refer complaints received from the public regarding discharge of pollutants to the department;

(c) Encourage communication and cooperation between the conservation district personnel and local department personnel;

(d) Provide technical assistance to dairy producers in developing and implementing a dairy nutrient management plan; and

(e) Review, approve, and certify dairy nutrient management plans that meet the minimum standards developed under this chapter.

(2) The district's capability to carry out its responsibilities under this chapter is contingent upon the availability of funding and resources to implement a dairy nutrient management program.