

Colusa Indian Community Council's
Land Nourishment Initiative
**State Water Efficiency & Enhancement Program
(SWEEP)**

Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba Counties

Notice of Funding Availability



Wayne Mitchum, Jr., Tribal Chairman
Colusa Indian Community Council

*As a Block Grant Recipient of the
California Department of Food and Agriculture
2023 Healthy Soils Program Block Grant Pilot*

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SUMMARY OF PROGRAM UPDATES

1. **Competitive process**
 - A competitive solicitation is likely to result in applications that are thoroughly developed, resulting in successful projects with fewer project revisions.
 - The first-come, first-serve process resulted in significant workload associated with rolling administrative review, disqualification of projects with some projects resubmitted multiple times without faults being corrected.
 - The competitive process will enable SWEEP technical assistance support providers to take time to work with SDFRs to submit high quality project proposals.
2. **LNI SWEEP will prioritize Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers** through a carve out of 40% of funding. SDFRs that do not receive funding in that first 40% will also compete for funds with the non-SDFR applicants.
3. **Provides an option for applicants to use the new SWEEP Project Assessment Tool** to quantify the benefits of their project instead of the two excel-based tools.
4. **Parcels that have previously been funded may receive additional funding** if the recipient does not remove the previously funded project within 10 years of installation.
5. **Strengthen limits on application submission and awards for the funding cycle.** It is incumbent upon the LNI SWEEP to distribute grant funds widely and equitably. Therefore, LNI SWEEP will limit a user to one application submission and use mailing address and contact name as two other reference points to ensure that a single individual is not receiving multiple awards within a funding cycle.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The CICC Land Nourishment Initiative (LNI SWEEP) is pleased to announce a competitive grant application process for the State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEEP). CDFA's Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation (OEFI) administers the program. SWEEP's objective is to provide financial incentives for California agricultural operations to invest in irrigation systems that save water and reduce GHG emissions.

FUNDING AND DURATION

Funding for this solicitation comes from California's General Fund as was appropriated to SWEEP through the 2022 and 2023 state budget process. Through this solicitation of SWEEP the LNI SWEEP will award approximately \$3.2 million to agricultural operations in Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Lake, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba counties investing in irrigation systems that reduce GHG emissions and save water.

- The maximum grant award is \$160,000.

- The maximum grant duration is 12 months. Recipients must complete projects no later than 12 months after the start of the grant agreement. The anticipated start date is in Fall/Winter 2024.
- LNI SWEEP plans to disburse grant funds in 1 round:
 - Round 1 funding will be awarded by December 1, 2024
- LNI SWEEP will not reimburse any costs incurred before the beginning of the grant agreement.
- LNI SWEEP reserves the right to offer an award different than the amount requested.
- LNI SWEEP will prioritize funding to applications from Colusa County but will also consider applications from Butte, Glenn, Lake, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba counties if funding is available.
- Grants are paid out on a reimbursement basis following invoice submission by awardee.
- LNI SWEEP will reserve forty percent (40 %) of the funds for farmers and ranchers who identify as belonging to a socially disadvantaged group. The 2017 Farmer Equity Act (AB 1348 (Aguiar-Curry, 2017)) defined a socially disadvantaged group as including:

The definition of a socially disadvantaged group does not include gender, gender identity, nor sexual orientation. SDFRs that do not receive funding through the prioritization process will also compete for funds with all other applicants for the remaining 60% of funding.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RESOURCES

Technical Assistance is free of cost, to all potential applicants, in Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Lake, Sutter, Yolo, or Yuba County. **CICC requires applicants to obtain technical assistance when developing a grant application for SWEEP.**

Colusa Resource Conservation District is available for FREE Technical Assistance.

Please contact Tucker Bennet at (530) 501-8159, or via email at bennett@colusarcd.org.

ELIGIBILITY AND EXCLUSIONS

California farmers, ranchers and California Native American Tribes are eligible to apply.

- An applicant must be at least 18 years old.
- An applicant cannot submit more than one application with a unique user account in the application portal. LNI SWEEP will cross reference tax identification number, mailing address and contact name to ensure that an application does not receive multiple awards.
- An agricultural operation or individual cannot receive a total cumulative SWEEP award amount of more than \$600,000 since the CDFA initiated the SWEEP program in 2014.

LNI SWEEP will submit approved applications to CDFA to determine the progress towards this cap using tax identification numbers.

- The proposed SWEEP project must be on a California agricultural operation.
- For the purposes of this program, CDFA defines an agricultural operation as row, vineyard, field and tree crops, commercial nurseries, nursery stock production, and greenhouse operations producing food crops or flowers as defined in Food and Agricultural Code section 77911.
- Medical and recreational cannabis crops are not eligible for funding.
- The farm location and the business mailing address must be in California.
- Universities, research institutions, and state governmental organizations are not eligible for funding.
- Applications may build upon a previously funded SWEEP project directly affecting the same Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs), but recipients may not remove projects components funded by SWEEP within the previous ten years.
- Recipients may combine SWEEP funds with other incentives for the same project, such as funds from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). However, Recipients may not use SWEEP funds to cover costs funded by other federal or state grant programs.
- Projects must reduce on-farm irrigation water use and reduce GHG emissions. CDFA prohibits SWEEP recipients from using grant funds to:
 - Expand existing agricultural operations (producers must not use funding to convert additional new acreage to farmland).
 - Install new groundwater wells or increase well depth.
 - Test new technology or perform research.

EXECUTIVE ORDER N-6-22

Executive Order N-6-22 – Russia Sanctions

On March 4, 2022, Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order N-6-22 regarding Economic Sanctions against Russia and Russian entities and individuals. "Economic Sanctions" refers to sanctions imposed by the U.S. government in response to Russia's actions in Ukraine, as well as any sanctions imposed under state law. By submitting a bid, proposal, or application, Bidder/Applicant represents that it is not a target of Economic Sanctions. Should LNI SWEEP or the State determine Bidder/Applicant is a target of Economic Sanctions or is conducting prohibited transactions with sanctioned individuals or entities, that shall be grounds for rejection of the Bidder's/Applicant's bid/proposal/application any time prior to contract/agreement execution, or, if determined after contract/agreement execution, shall be grounds for termination by the State.

TIMELINE

The application period begins September 2, 2024. The deadline to submit a grant application is October 11, 2024 at 5:00 pm Pacific Standard Time. No exceptions will be granted for late submissions.

Tentative Timeline (subject to change):

Program Activity	Time Frame*
Grant Guidelines Available	August 5, 2024
Grant Workshops	August and September 2024
Grant Application Opens	September 2, 2024
Grant Application Deadline	October 11, 2024 at 5PM PST
Administrative Review	October 2024
Award Announcement	November 2024

**Dates are subject to change*

STRATEGIES FOR WATER SAVINGS AND GHG REDUCTIONS

CDFA has identified the strategies that address water conservation and GHG emission reductions from irrigation systems. Applicants should consider incorporating several strategies to achieve the required water conservation and GHG emission reductions.

Water Savings

1. Tools for Irrigation Scheduling
 - Examples: the use of soil moisture or plant sensors (USDA NRCS Conservation Practice Standard (CPS) 449 may apply) with electronic data output, the use of weather station(s) linked to an irrigation controller to ensure efficient irrigation scheduling or the use of evapotranspiration (ET) based irrigation scheduling, such as the California Irrigation Management Information System (CIMIS) to optimize water use efficiency for crops.
 - Telemetry components that allow the electronic communication between technology devices are eligible for funding through SWEEP.
 - For use of ET-based irrigation scheduling, applicants should provide sufficient documentation to show that water deliveries can be made on a consistent basis to accommodate scheduling.
2. Irrigation System Changes

- Examples: the conversion to a more water efficient irrigation method or improvement of existing method to conserve water.
 - Projects should follow USDA NRCS CPS 441, 442, 443 specifications.
 - CDFA encourages applicants currently utilizing surface water (e.g., canal or river water) to flood irrigate crops to maintain flood irrigation infrastructure along with proposed efficient micro/ drip irrigation system(s) to facilitate groundwater recharge when surface water is available for recharge.
 - Critical components of irrigation systems such as, but not limited to, flow meters, filters and pressure sensors are allowable costs.
- Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions

1. Fuel Conversion

- Examples: pump fuel conversion resulting in reduction of GHG emissions such as replacing a diesel pump with an electric pump and/or the installation of renewable energy.
- Renewable energy systems that power irrigation systems are eligible for SWEEP funding.

2. Improved Energy Efficiency of Pumps and the Addition of Variable Frequency Drives

- Examples: retrofitting or replacing pumps or the addition of variable frequency drives to reduce energy use and match pump flow to load requirements.
- USDA NRCS CPS 372 or 533 may apply.

3. Low Pressure Systems

- Examples: the conversion of a high-pressure sprinkler system to a low- pressure micro-irrigation system or lower pressure sprinkler system to reduce pumping and energy use.
- Projects should follow USDA NRCS CPS 441 or 442 specifications.

4. Reduced Pumping through Water Savings Strategies

- Example: improved irrigation scheduling leading to reduced pump operation times.

5. Reduced Nitrous Oxide Emissions

Nitrous oxide (N₂O), a potent greenhouse gas, is released from soils due to microbial processes. In irrigated settings, N₂O emissions increase because of nitrogen fertilizer applications and soil wetting. Agricultural N₂O emissions may be reduced when farmers apply less fertilizer and use micro irrigation, including sub-surface irrigation. Applicants may utilize the new SWEEP calculator tool to estimate water savings and GHG emissions reductions, including N₂O reductions associated with the proposed project. For more information see Greenhouse Gas Emission Documentation.

Other Management Practices

CDFA supports innovative projects and recognizes there is variability in irrigation systems throughout California. For this reason, applicants may propose project components that do not fit into the above strategies as long as the comprehensive project will result in estimated water savings using the SWEEP quantification tools. Examples of components that CDFA may fund through SWEEP as part of a comprehensive water-saving and GHG-reducing project include:

- On-farm water storage (e.g., rainwater capture, surface water reservoir)
- Irrigation automation
- Surface water interconnection or recycled water interconnection
- Sub-surface drip irrigation including manure effluent mixing and application systems

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

An agricultural operation can only submit one grant application. The LNI SWEEP will cross-reference information with CDFA on tax identification number, mailing address and primary contact name to ensure only one award per applicant.

If an agricultural operation is a sole proprietorship, the applicant individual should use the last four digits of their social security number (e.g., XXX-XX-1234) as their unique business identification number in their grant application. An agricultural operation must use the operation's legal business name and associated tax identification number in the application. If selected for an award, LNI SWEEP will extend a Grant Agreement to the business name provided in the application. LNI SWEEP will not transfer awards to other business names or individuals.

Applicants must include flow meters in their proposed project or demonstrate that existing flow meters measure water use at the project site. See Project Design for more specifics on project design requirements.

Applicants must use and submit the SWEEP quantification tools/report to estimate water and GHG benefits of projects. Applicants must gather baseline information such as utility records and pump efficiency tests to complete these tools.

If selected for an award, LNI SWEEP will require recipients to:

- Meet with LNI SWEEP staff associated with SWEEP for a pre-project consultation to confirm project information and discuss implementation plans. During the pre-project consultation LNI SWEEP may require the recipient to provide additional information on the proposed project (e.g., assessors maps, photographs of the site, or quotes).

- Complete a post-project verification site visit with LNI SWEEP staff associated with SWEEP, to evaluate the completed project.
- Provide post-project information or records (e.g., water use, energy use, energy generation) to an LNI SWEEP staff associated with SWEEP to evaluate project outcomes for three years after the completion of the project.
- Use and maintain the SWEEP project system for an expected project life of 10 years. See Project Implementation for more details regarding project implementation requirements.

HOW TO APPLY

The CICC uses an online application platform to receive SWEEP Grant applications.

Applicants can access the application at the CICC SWEEP webpage, www.colusa-nsn.gov/farming. Applicants must create a user account to submit a grant application. All applications, supporting documents and submissions may be subject to public disclosure through the Public Records Act.

Prior to completing the online application questionnaire, applicants are encouraged to gather all required information using Grant Application Checklist to facilitate effective and timely submission of the grant application, as well as meet with Technical Assistance Provider (Colusa RCD) to ensure their project is inline with guidelines and goals.

APPLICATION ATTACHMENTS

Applicants must submit the following attachments with their online application:

Project design

- Completed Budget Worksheet
- Quotes for all major components
- Completed SWEEP Irrigation Water Savings Assessment Tool (MS excel) **AND** Completed GHG Calculator Tool (MS excel) **OR** the report from the SWEEP Project Assessment Tool
- Twelve consecutive months of baseline GHG emission/energy documentation for any pumps that provide water to the project location (e.g., fuel receipts or utility bills)
- Pump efficiency tests for existing pumps (test paperwork must be within the last 2 years)
- Pump specification documents for any proposed pumps

As outlined under Disqualifications, LNI SWEEP will disqualify applications that are incomplete or lacking required attachments. More details about each required attachment follows below.

PROJECT DESIGN

Applicants must submit a project design for the proposed irrigation system. Project design costs are at the expense of the agriculture operation. Applicants may utilize commonly available mapping or imagery platforms to create a holistic project design. Project designs must include the following:

- Labeled Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs)
- Schematic of the locations of proposed or improved infrastructure and technology including irrigation piping, reservoirs, pumps, and sensors
- Pertinent agronomic information, such as the crop and water source
- Location, engineering, and energy output specifications of any proposed renewable energy installations
- Location of pump and existing and/or proposed flow meters

WATER AND ENERGY USE CALCULATIONS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Applicants must submit supporting documentation to substantiate water savings and GHG reductions calculations. Specific requirements pertaining to water and GHG documentation follow.

Water Use Documentation

Applicants must complete either 1) the Microsoft excel-based SWEEP Irrigation Water Savings Assessment Tool or 2) the recently developed online SWEEP Project Assessment Tool. In addition to completing one of the required tools and uploading the tool or output report to the application, an applicant may attach supplementary information that will allow technical reviewers to refine water savings estimates. *(CDFA is using this solicitation to beta-test the new tool, accepting feedback to improve or enhance functionality and design.)*

Option 1. SWEEP Irrigation Water Savings Assessment Tool

Applicants will complete the “before” tab of the calculator to estimate baseline water use on the field with the current crop and irrigation practice and the “after” tab to estimate the projected water savings after project installation. The estimated water savings will be shown on the “Estimated Water Savings” tab of the calculator. Applicants must attach the completed excel to the application. **Note: The excel-based tool will not work on a Mac computer. Please use a PC to complete and upload this calculator to the application.**

Option 2. The SWEEP Project Assessment Tool (PAT)

CDFA developed this spatial tool in collaboration with Colorado State University to estimate both water savings and GHG emission reductions. It includes spatial layers that are important to a SWEEP project such as soil texture, assessors' parcel numbers, and legislative district. SWEEP applicants may use the resulting map as the foundation for a SWEEP project design. Applicants will complete the tool by identifying the project location and entering critical information about crops, irrigation management and systems. Visit the tool's landing page for instructions.

Greenhouse Gas Emission Documentation

To determine the impact of the proposed project on GHG emissions, applicants must use one of two available calculator tools: 1) the Microsoft-excel based Greenhouse Gas Calculator Tool developed by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) for SWEEP, or 2) the online SWEEP Project Assessment Tool. In addition to completing one of the required tools and uploading the tool or output report to the application, applicants must attach supporting documentation that will allow a technical reviewer to replicate the GHG emission calculations.

Option 1. CARB GHG Calculator Tool

CARB, in consultation with CDFA, developed this tool to estimate the potential GHG reductions from a SWEEP project. All GHG benefits relate to the energy attributed to irrigation water pumping. To complete the tool, applicants must use energy records from the previous calendar year (January through December) and other on-farm specifications (e.g., pump tests) to complete the calculator. Note that the estimated water savings is a required input of the CARB GHG Calculator Tool so applicants should estimate water savings using the provided tools before attempting to use the GHG Calculator Tool.

Option 2. The SWEEP Project Assessment Tool (PAT)

CDFA developed this spatial tool in collaboration with Colorado State University to estimate both water savings and GHG emission reductions. In addition to calculating GHG benefits that are due to changes in energy use from irrigation pumps, this tool will estimate the N₂O reductions of a project that would result from changes in crop or irrigation method. Applicants will complete the tool by identifying the project location and entering critical information about crops and irrigation systems. Depending on an applicant's existing irrigation and energy system and proposed changes, the SWEEP Project Assessment Tool may calculate greater GHG benefits than the CARB GHG Calculator Tool, impacting the application score during technical review. Detailed instructions can be found at the tool's landing page.

Supporting Documentation for GHG Calculations

Applicants must submit supporting documentation that relates to baseline energy use. Supporting documentation must be sufficient to allow for reviewers to replicate the GHG calculations. LNI SWEEP requires applicants to attach the following supporting documents:

- Utility bills, actual fuel receipts, and/or field operational logs covering the previous growing year (12 months; January to December 2023).

o In Situations where the project involves crop rotation, applicants may provide up to three years of supporting documents to substantiate a representative baseline of energy use from pumping.

o In situations where there are no baseline energy inputs for the project location, applicants will submit an attestation confirming that current irrigation systems have no energy inputs.

o Documents must capture actual, not estimated, or model led, energy use information (e.g., gallons, kWh, etc.).

o Documents Must Indicate A Specific Time Period (e.g., months/dates) for the on-farm energy use. For months with no on-farm energy use, indicate “no usage” for those months during the growing season.

o LNI SWEEP defines field operational logs as on-farm data compiled during a growing season and maintained as a common business practice by the agricultural operation to capture an actual time period (e.g., months and dates) of on-farm energy use values (e.g., gallons, kWh, etc.). LNI SWEEP does not consider documents that provide estimates to be field operational logs.

- Pump and motor specifications for proposed pumps.
- Pump efficiency tests for existing pump(s) related to the project.
 - o Pump efficiency tests should be no older than 2 years.Applicants must describe how the on-farm energy documentation attached to their application supports the baseline GHG calculation.

BUDGET WORKSHEET

Applicants must download and complete a SWEEP Budget Worksheet. The Budget Worksheet includes a breakdown of grant funds budgeted for each of the categories described below and itemization of all costs included in the proposed project. Applicants will attach the Budget Worksheet to their application in Microsoft Excel format and be consistent with the project design and application narrative. LNI SWEEP will not accept budget worksheets from past solicitations.

Quotes for Proposed Renewable Energy

If the project involves the installation of a renewable energy system, the applicant must submit a quote to verify the system capacity (kW). The quote must also itemize any tax incentives or rebates that the applicant will receive from the installation.

Budget Cost Categories:

Supplies and Equipment

Itemize the estimated purchase cost of supplies and equipment by providing a description and quantity. Supplies include all consumable materials with an acquisition cost less than \$5,000 per unit (e.g., pipes, tubing). Recipients must use supplies exclusively for the project. Equipment is an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property with a useful life of more than two years and an acquisition cost which equals or exceeds \$5,000 per unit (e.g., solar panels, irrigation pumps). Equipment must have a useful life of two years or more.

Labor

Labor costs cannot exceed 25 percent (25%) of the total SWEEP grant request. Recipients will cover labor costs in excess of 25 percent of the total SWEEP grant with cost share funding. Applicants must estimate the cost for any work on the project performed by individuals associated with a contractor. Provide a brief description of services and the cost/hour necessary for installation (e.g., labor for electrician, concrete work).

Other

Itemize the estimated cost of any other allowable expenses not covered in the previous budget categories necessary for project implementation. Project costs typically listed under this category include, but are not limited to, permits and equipment rental.

Allowable Costs

Applicants must itemize project costs and costs must clearly support installation or improvement of irrigation systems, including supplies, equipment, labor, and any other allowable cost necessary for project implementation. Project costs must be reasonable and consistent with costs paid for equivalent work on non- grant funded activities or for comparable work in the labor market.

Examples of allowable costs include:

- Installation of photovoltaic panels to power irrigation systems
- All components of irrigation systems
- Sensor hardware and telemetry
- Software associated with sensors and weather stations
- Flow meters
- Permits

Unallowable Costs

Examples of unallowable costs, include:

- Project design costs (e.g., engineering)
- Costs associated with technical assistance or project management, including drive time and fuel cost

- Post-project service charges and maintenance costs associated with the irrigation system
- Non-labor costs (e.g., management) and fees associated with project oversight
- Labor costs in excess of 25 percent of the total SWEEP grant request
- Any labor provided by the applicant or applicant's employees (LNI SWEEP categorizes these costs as "in-kind")
- Supplies and equipment costs not related to irrigation or water distribution systems
- Tools and equipment with useful life of less than two years
- Costs associated with drilling of new or lowering groundwater wells
- Irrigation training courses
- Pump efficiency tests
- Purchase of trees, crops, or seeds
- Purchase of soil amendments or implementation of soil management practices
- Costs associated with installing a groundwater recharge basin

REVIEW PROCESS AND NOTIFICATION OF APPLICATION STATUS

ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL REVIEW

LNI SWEEP will conduct two levels of review during the grant application review process. The first level is an administrative review to determine whether application requirements were met. The second level is a technical review to evaluate the benefits of the proposal, including the potential for the project to save water and reduce GHG emissions. The technical reviewers are agricultural irrigation water system specialists and experts familiar with SWEEP.

Scoring Criteria

The technical reviewer(s) will do an in-depth evaluation of each application and will validate water and GHG calculations based upon the supporting documentation and project design provided by the applicant. Reviewers will use a fifty-point scale to evaluate the feasibility and merit of the proposed project and design, budget, estimated water savings and GHG calculations reductions. Applications must meet a minimum score of 30 to be awarded funding. Reviewers will score points based on the LNI SWEEP Technical Review Scoring Guidance outlined below:

LNI SWEEP Technical Review Scoring Guidance CRITERIA

<p>MERIT AND FEASIBILITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project design clearly identifies the following items: project location (APN and fields where project is to be installed), proposed irrigation system layout, pump locations and any fertigation and filtration stations, location of solar system, sensor locations, water sources, groundwater wells and pump discharge, crops, and acreage per crop.• The estimated project completion date is compatible with the grant duration of 12 months.• The project has merits in terms of water efficiency, GHG reductions, and economic return for the farm and the State.• The project demonstrates a deliberative and holistic effort by the applicant to improve farm water and energy efficiency.• The project has long-term viability.• The project improves farm resilience to drought and aligns with sustainable groundwater efforts and/or surface water conservation.• The project replaces or reduces diesel fuel consumption.	<p>10</p>
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<p>WATER SAVINGS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant estimated projected water savings accurately SWEEP tools and provided sufficient explanation for calculations and/or supporting documentation. • Water savings strategies are clear from the baseline scenario to the projected savings. • The proposed project will result in measurement of water use from all water sources on the impacted acreage. • The proposed project can achieve real and notable per acre water savings and maintain the water benefit over 10 years. 	<p>15</p>
<p>GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant estimated GHG reductions correctly using the SWEEP GHG calculator tool and provided sufficient explanation and supporting documentation for calculations. • The GHG calculator reflects what is included in the project design and application narrative. • The GHG reduction strategies are clear in the project design and application. • The GHG calculator acreage matches the acreage of the project design. • The proposed project will achieve real GHG reductions and maintain these GHG reduction benefits for a project life of 10 years. 	<p>15</p>
<p>BUDGET AND ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project budget worksheet provides sufficient detail on the project components. • If relevant, the project includes the appropriate number of flow meters and irrigation water management (IWM) equipment to meet the project IWM goals. • Labor costs are reasonable and do not exceed 25 percent of the total budget. • The budget does not include unnecessary or duplicative items. • The applicant provides itemized quotes to support the budget. • The applicant commits to take irrigation training during the course of the agreement or has completed training within the last two years (1 point) • The applicant indicates that they will implement one or more of the four soil management practices (1 point) 	<p>10</p>

Total Points Available 50

Irrigation Training (1 point)

Irrigation training is a critical component to irrigation management and agricultural water conservation. LNI SWEEP strongly encourages applicants to participate in an irrigation training course to maximize the benefits of a well-designed and maintained irrigation system. The scoring rubric offers applicants two points if they commit to taking an irrigation training course during the term of the grant agreement.

If an applicant commits to completing training, the irrigation training course will become part of the Grant Agreement between the agricultural operation and LNI SWEEP. Therefore, project completion will be conditional upon completing the required training course during the grant term. Recipients must provide evidence (i.e., certificate of completion) confirming attendance. LNI SWEEP encourages agricultural operations to consider having both the agriculture operation's manager and irrigator attend a training course; however, LNI SWEEP requires only one agriculture operation representative to attend. Recipients will submit an irrigation training certificate to LNI SWEEP within 30 days from the date of project verification.

Applicants may consider training resources provided on the program website at <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/sweep/IrrigationTechnicalResources.html>.

However, applicants may also select an alternative training course that best meets the needs of their operation. The applicant may submit a certified USDA NRCS Irrigation Water Management plan as evidence of completing irrigation training.

Soil Management Practices that Increase Water-Holding Capacity (1 point)

Increasing soil organic matter has multiple benefits including increased water-holding capacity of the soil and carbon sequestration. Projects that integrate one or more of the following soil management practices identified below will receive additional consideration providing the management practice(s) will not result in an increase in on-farm water demand or energy use.

- Cover cropping (USDA NRCS Conservation Practice Standard 340)
- Mulching (USDA NRCS Conservation Practice Standard 484)
- Compost application
- Resource conserving crop rotation

Any of the management practices that are indicated in the project application will become part of the grant agreement terms and incorporated into the scope of work. Awardees should follow applicable USDA NRCS Conservation Practice Standards when implementing these management practices.

FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

LNI SWEEP will consider the following criteria when developing funding recommendations for SWEEP:

1. Score
2. Previous award status – LNI SWEEP will recommend applicants that have never been awarded a SWEEP grant above equally-scoring applicants that have received a previous award.

NOTIFICATION AND FEEDBACK

Disqualifications

During the administrative review, LNI SWEEP will disqualify applications that meet any of the following conditions:

- Incomplete grant applications: applications with one or more unanswered questions necessary for administrative or technical review.
- Incomplete grant applications: applications with missing, blank, unreadable, corrupt, or otherwise unusable attachments.
- Applications requesting funding for more than the maximum award amount.
- Applications that include activities outside the grant duration
- Applications with unallowable costs or activities necessary to complete the project objectives.
- Applications that do not provide primary applicant contact information in the application.
- Applications that do not comply with Eligibility or meet Program Requirements and Restrictions.
- Applications from applicants that apply more than one time during the funding cycle.

Appeal Rights

Applicants can appeal to LNI SWEEP over any discretionary action taken within ten (10) days of receiving a notice of disqualification. The appeal must be in written form and signed by the responsible party named on the grant application, or by an agent whom the applicant has authorized in writing. It must state the grounds for the appeal and include any supporting documents and a copy of the LNI SWEEP decision being challenged. The submissions must be emailed to **XXXXXXXXXX**. If LNI SWEEP does not receive appeals within the time frame provided above, it will consider the appeal. Appeal rights are only afforded to disqualifications.

Award and Regrets Notices

LNI SWEEP will notify successful applicants of their grant award through email and will initiate the grant agreement execution process. At the time LNI SWEEP announces awards, LNI SWEEP

will also notify unsuccessful applicants. **Unsuccessful applicants may request feedback on their applications.**

AWARD PROCESS GRANT AGREEMENT EXECUTION

LNI SWEEP estimates that the process of executing a grant agreement will take several weeks up to 2 months. A LNI SWEEP staff member will contact each Recipient to schedule a pre-project consultation to confirm project site information and discuss implementation plans. LNI SWEEP may require applicants to provide additional information to confirm project location site or provide additional quotes. Following finalization of the scope of work and budget, LNI SWEEP will send the recipient a Grant Agreement package with instructions regarding award requirements including information on project implementation, verification, and payment process.

Award Timeline

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Once LNI SWEEP has fully executed the Grant Agreement, the grant recipient can begin implementation of the project if it is after or on the official project start date. During project implementation, grant recipients must maintain frequent communication with LNI SWEEP staff about the SWEEP project. LNI SWEEP staff may regularly send emails or surveys to gauge project progress in addition to quarterly invoicing. Recipients must be responsive.

Recipients are responsible for the overall management of their awarded project, ensuring all project activities, including labor associated with installation, are complete no later than **March 31, 2026**. For projects involving utility interconnection, recipients must take the necessary steps to begin the interconnection process quickly after execution of the Grant Agreement. Recipients must complete all proposed activities including activities related to cost share by the end of the grant term. Awardees must contact LNI SWEEP staff for approval if any changes to the scope of work are necessary. LNI SWEEP will work with awardees through the scope of work revision process. Applicants that deviate from the approved scope of work will not be reimbursed.

The grant recipient, the grant recipient's authorized representative or LNI SWEEP staff will initiate all communications (oral and written) related to the grant activities including reimbursements.

Recipients must install the project on the parcels (APNs) identified in the Grant Agreement's Scope of Work (SOW). LNI SWEEP will withhold all or any portion of the grant funding or terminate the Grant Agreement if the recipient fails to install a project on the APNs identified in the scope of work.

LNI SWEEP may conduct an on-site visit and inspection of records, upon reasonable notice at any time during the project term. The purpose is to determine whether deliverables are being met and evaluate project progress. LNI SWEEP may require recipients to submit financial

records and project documentation to ensure that Recipients use SWEEP funds in compliance with the Grant Agreement terms and conditions.

PAYMENT PROCESS

SWEEP is a reimbursement-based grant program. LNI SWEEP will provide the grant recipient with the necessary grant award and invoicing documents for the reimbursement process. LNI SWEEP processes reimbursements on a quarterly basis and requires supporting documentation of actual costs associated with the purchase and/or installation of project components. LNI SWEEP will withhold 10 percent from the total grant award reimbursement until the verification requirement is complete and meets the expectations agreed upon in the Scope of Work.

Advanced Payments

If selected for funding, recipients may be eligible for an advance payment of up to 25 percent (25%) of the grant award, subject to the provisions of Section 316.1 “Advance Payments” of the California Code of Regulations, Division 1, Chapter 5. If appropriate justification is submitted and the recipient follows grant management requirements, LNI SWEEP may issue additional advance payments in accordance with CDFA regulations.

PROJECT VERIFICATION

Following project implementation, the grant recipient must inform the assigned grant specialist that the project is complete and operational. A LNI SWEEP staff specializing in SWEEP, will then initiate the verification process. The verifier will visit the project site and inspect the completed project to ensure design specifications were met and the system is working effectively. In addition, the verifier will take photographs to document project completion. The grant recipient or a documented authorized representative of the agricultural operation must be present during the time of verification. If LNI SWEEP determines that remote verification is required, the grant recipient will submit geotagged photos of critical project components so that LNI SWEEP can verify that the project is complete on the intended APN. LNI SWEEP must complete the project verification by April 30, 2026. Recipients must allow sufficient time for verification.

POST-PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

Project Outcome Reporting

LNI SWEEP requires all recipients to maintain documentation related to the funded project, including energy and water use documentation and to be responsive to requests for information about the project. In the three years after project completion, LNI SWEEP may request information about the use and maintenance of the project and may request water and energy records associated with the project site.

LNI SWEEP will consider failure to provide project-related documentation to SWEEP staff or LNI SWEEP designee as non-performance. In the event of non-performance, LNI SWEEP may take any action deemed necessary to recover all or any portion of the grant funding and may deny eligibility for future funding.

STATE AUDIT AND ACCOUNTING REQUIREMENTS

In addition to SWEEP program requirements, awarded projects may be subject to State Audit and Accounting Requirements listed below.

Audit Requirements

Projects are subject to audit by LNI SWEEP and/or the State annually and for three (3) years following the final payment of grant funds. If the project is selected for audit, LNI SWEEP will contact the recipient in advance of audit-related requests or visits. The audit shall include all books, papers, accounts, documents, or other records of recipient, as they relate to the project. The recipient must make available all project expenditure documentation for an audit, whether paid with grant funds or other funds.

The recipient must have project records, including source documents and evidence of payment, readily available and must provide an employee with knowledge of the project to assist the auditor. The Grantee must provide a copy of any document, paper, record, etc., requested by the auditor.

Accounting Requirements

The recipient must maintain an accounting system that:

- Accurately reflects fiscal transactions, with the necessary controls and safeguards.
- Provides a good audit trail, including original source documents such as purchase orders, receipts, progress payments, invoices, employee paystubs and timecards, evidence of payment, etc.
- Provides accounting data so the total cost of each individual project can be readily determined.

Records Retention

Recipients must retain records for a period of three (3) years after final payment and at least one (1) year following an audit.

