

GRANT AND LOAN PROGRAMS

Grant Programs, DNRC Conservation Districts Bureau

Administrative Grants

Established in 1981, the program supplements district administrative revenues. Eligible districts must show a financial need beyond available county revenue. Eligible expenses include CD employee salaries, "310" field inspections, travel costs, and other administrative expenses. Grant money may not be used to purchase office equipment, transferred to another district or agency, or deposited in a long-term, interest-bearing account. With \$95,000 available statewide, the application deadline is mid-October, and the grants are awarded in November of each year.

HB 223 Grants

Established in 1981, this program is funded by one-half of 1 percent of the coal tax revenue. Funded projects include, but are not limited to, management programs for saline seep and weed control, streambank stabilization and erosion control, no-till equipment, water and irrigation projects, technical and administrative assistance, education, and soil survey acceleration. Grant applications are reviewed, ranked, and funded quarterly by the Resource Conservation Advisory Council (RCAC).

310 Administrative Grants

A total of \$100,000 is available each year and is distributed to CD's based on the number of 310 applications processed. Funds can be used for 310 associated costs, such as supervisor expenses, administrative salary, supplies, and equipment.

Engineering Assistance

A total of \$50,000 is available each year, awards are based on need. Funds may be used to develop 310 specifications and design criteria, engineering reviews of complex 310 projects, and other engineering services.

Legal Assistance

A total of \$50,000 is available each year, awards are based on need. Contracted attorneys are available for work as needed. Funds may be used for contract review, legal services, legal advice, legal letters and memos, legal research, CD defense, and 310 legal work.

Conservation Education Mini-Grants

\$500 grants are available for teacher-initiated classroom projects that address natural resource issues.

Watershed Planning Assistance

Up to \$10,000 is available per project or activity, for the implementation of watershed planning activities. Funds are not intended for site-specific design and construction projects or permanent staff.

Grant and Loan Programs, Resource Development Bureau

Reclamation and Development Grants Program (RDG)

The RDG program provides a minimum of \$3 million biennially for projects that reduce or eliminate impacts from mining activities, develop natural resources, and improve or protect public health, safety, welfare, and resources. To date 87 projects totaling \$14 million have been funded. Eligible applicants include units of state government and local political subdivisions. Examples of funded projects include mine reclamation research and cleanup, nonpoint pollution control, and oilwell plugging and abandonment.

Renewable Resource Grant and Loan Program

This program offers 2.0 million in grant funds for qualifying projects each biennium. It replaces the former Water Development Program. The current program offers funding for projects that encompass all renewable resources. Governmental entities, including conservation districts, may apply to the program to obtain funding for community resource-related projects including water and sewer systems, irrigation system rehabilitation, re-forestation, urban forestry, erosion control, recreation access, and groundwater assessment projects.

Rangeland Improvement Loans

Since 1979 the rangeland loan program has disbursed \$1,500,000 for 85 rangeland improvement loans. Funded projects include stock water pipelines and stock tanks, cross fencing, brush and weed management, renovation reseeding, and chiseling. With \$1,087,000 in the revolving fund, the program offers loans at 4 percent interest with a 10-year repayment schedule.

Water Quality Grant Programs, Department of Health and Environmental Sciences

Clean Water Act--Section 319

In July of 1989, Montana received EPA approval of the statewide nonpoint source (NPS) pollution management program. The 319 grant program, used extensively by conservation districts, provides financial assistance for water quality project implementation, education, monitoring, and demonstration of new technology. These funds, administered by the DEQ, can be used to cost-share landowner costs for project participation.

Grant and Loan Programs, Departments of Agriculture and Livestock

Noxious Weed Trust Fund

Funded through a statewide 1 percent herbicide surcharge and \$1.50 per vehicle weed fee, the fund has an estimated \$1.2 million available for projects in 1990. Trust fund program grants are available to communities, weed control districts, research scientists, and other individuals conducting weed management projects or

research. The grant application period is from November 1 through December 15. Contact Noxious Weed Coordinator, 444-2944.

Growth Through Agriculture--Seed Capital Loan Program

This program is designed to enhance the availability of capital for agricultural businesses. These funds are specifically intended for the commercialization and marketing of new and innovative agricultural products or processes. For more information, contact Marketing Bureau, Montana Department of Agriculture, 444-2402.

Growth Through Agriculture--Market Development Grant Program

This program is intended to benefit Montana's agricultural community by upgrading existing agricultural research capabilities, providing financial support to individual research projects, and facilitating the process of transferring research from the laboratory to the commercial marketplace. Contact Marketing Bureau, Montana Department of Agriculture, 444-2402.

Upland Game Bird Habitat Enhancement Program, Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks

In 1989, the Montana Legislature enacted legislation authorizing DFWP to establish an Upland Game Bird Habitat Enhancement Program. The program provides cost-share funds for the establishment of nesting cover, food plots, and shelterbelts for winter cover. The program is funded by a portion of the license fees collected from bird hunters and is targeted for improved habitat for pheasants, gray partridge, and sharptail. Contact the DFWP, 444-2612.