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| **CALIFORNIA**  **SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL LANDS CONSERVATION PROGRAM**  **GRANT APPLICATION**  **FOR AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENTS**  **FINAL**  **April 20, 2018**    For additional information, please contact:  **California Department of Conservation**  **Division of Land Resource Protection**  (916) 324-0850  http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/SALCP/  **STRATEGIC GROWTH COUNCIL**  (916) 322-2318  http://www.sgc.ca.gov/Grant-Programs/SALC-Program.html  BorinaJuly06 007.jpg |

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| **SALC Program At-A-Glance**  **Program**  The Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program is a component of the Strategic Growth Council’s Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program. The Department of Conservation, in conjunction with the Natural Resources Agency, administers the SALC Program on behalf of the Council.  **Funding Source**  This program is funded through the California Climate Investments Program.  **Critical Dates for Round 4**  Pre-proposal summaries due—May 22, 2018 Full Applications due—August 1, 2018  Anticipated approval of projects by the Strategic Growth Council—December 4, 2018 (proposed, subject to change)  **Contact for Questions**  Department of Conservation  Division of Land Resource Protection  Virginia Jameson, SALC Program Manager  [cfcp@conservation.ca.gov](mailto:cfcp@conservation.ca.gov)  (916) 324-0850 |

Cover Photo: Borina Farms Conservation Easement Project, Santa Cruz and Monterey counties, photo courtesy of California Farmland Conservancy Program staff. Agricultural conservation easements in this location are among the many farms and ranches protected in perpetuity by grants administered by the Department and partner organizations.

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| **Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program Grant Application for Agricultural Conservation Easements** |

Submitting an Application

This is the application form for Agricultural Conservation Easement (ACE) Grants under the Round 4 Guidelines for the Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program (Round 4 RFGA). The Round 4 Guidelines detail the background and eligibility requirements for funding under the program. Applicants should familiarize themselves with the SALC Program Guidelines prior to completing this Grant Application and refer to them for questions regarding this form. SALC Program staff are available prior to the application deadline to provide technical assistance to eligible applicants interested in submitting an application.

There will be one review cycle under the Round 4 RFGA. Multiple review cycles may occur in future years. Please see the SALC Program website for additional information.

**Initial Screening–Pre-proposals**  
Eligible applicants are not limited in the number of proposals they can submit; however, because the easement grant application process entails a significant amount of work, applicants are required to submit a pre-proposal to the Department prior to submitting an application.

A pre-proposal consists of a structured summary of the proposed easement project, preliminary title report(s) less than six months old, as well as maps of the project boundaries, location, and building envelopes, if known. A pre-proposal worksheet for the applicant’s use has been developed and is available on the Department’s website.

Department grant managers will utilize pre-proposal information to assist the applicant in determining whether the project meets the threshold for quantification of GHG benefits; identifying what, if any additional information will be needed in the full application; and ascertaining whether the project has title complexities or other issues that should be addressed prior to submitting a full application.

**Grant Application Submission**   
Please use the Grant Application Checklist found on page 5 below to ensure that all necessary materials are submitted to facilitate prompt application review. Applications that remain incomplete will not be considered for funding. Early consultation with Department staff regarding proposed easements is strongly encouraged to achieve the most efficient review process possible.

The application process for Easement grants is detailed in Section 2 of the Round 4 RFGA. Pre-proposals and applications must be submitted electronically by 11:59 p.m. on the deadlines specified in “SALC Program At-a-Glance,” located above.

Applicants are required to submit the entire application to the Department via email ([cfcp@conservation.ca.gov](mailto:cfcp@conservation.ca.gov)).

**Receipt of the digital application by the Department determines the official submittal date and time.** The SALC Program Team will acknowledge receipt of the digital application via email to the Contact Person listed on the Easement Grant Application Cover Sheet.

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| **Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program Application Components** |

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| --- | --- |
| **Agricultural Conservation Easement Applications** | |
| **Required Components:** | **Additional Components and Certifications: *These supporting documents are required if applicable*\*** |
| * Easement Grant Application Checklist * Easement Grant Application Cover Sheet * Executive Summary (1-page maximum) * Budget * Easement Acquisition Summary Sheet * Risk of Conversion Summary Sheet and Supporting Evidence * Certification of acceptance of Conditions of Funding * Detailed Characteristics of the Proposed Easement (6-page maximum) * Applicant Resolution of Support * Documentation of Public Notice * Preliminary Title Report, Underlying Documents, and Assessor’s Parcel Maps * Appraisal or estimate of easement valuation and supporting documentation * Landowner Letter of Intent * Conflict of Interest Certification * Easement Amendment Policies * Easement Monitoring Plan (3-page maximum) | * Priority Population Benefits Checklist (if claiming priority population benefits status) * Documentation of Organizational Eligibility (documents differ for nonprofit and governmental applicants) * Documentation of Co-Applicant Eligibility and Support * Letters of Support from Partners * Accreditation documents * Project Geographic Area Map(s) showing parcel boundaries, nearest Sphere of Influence, and Protected Lands * Implementation Schedule (approved proposals will require this as part of the Grant Agreement process)   **\*Applicant will provide current documents and/or certify that documents on file with the Department are current.** |

# **Easement Grant Application Checklist**

All Grant Applications must include the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Completed Easement Grant Application Checklist (*this document*) |
|  | Easement Application Cover Sheet |
|  | Executive Summary (1-page maximum) |
|  | Budget |
|  | Easement Acquisition Summary Sheet |
|  | Risk of Conversion Summary Sheet and Supporting Evidence |
|  | Certification of Acceptance of Conditions of Funding |
|  | Detailed Characteristics of the Proposed Easement (6-page maximum) |
|  | Applicant Resolution of Support |
|  | Documentation of Public Notice |
|  | Preliminary Title Report, Underlying Documents, and Assessor’s Parcel Map(s) |
|  | Appraisal or estimate of easement value with supporting docs |
|  | Applicant-Landowner Letter of Intent\* |
|  | Applicant Conflict of Interest Certification\* |
|  | Easement Amendment Policies |
|  | Easement Monitoring Plan (3-page maximum) |

Additional components and certifications:  
Please provide these supporting documents or certify that the documents on file with the Department are current.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Co-Applicant: Resolution of Support and documentation necessary to demonstrate eligibility |
|  | Priority Population Benefits Checklist (if claiming Priority Population benefits status)\* |

Additional components and certifications: *(Continued)*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Nonprofits: Documentation of Organizational Eligibility  Certify here that the most current version is on record at the Department-SALCP, or attach: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |
|  | IRS 501(c)3 status |
|  | Articles of Incorporation |
|  | Bylaws |
|  | Evidence of having adopted LTA Standards and Practices (if no co-applicant) |
|  | Applicant Adopted Policies or Statement of Purpose for the conservation of agriculture, rangeland, or farmland. |
| Local Governments (as applicant): Documentation of Organizational Eligibility  Certify here that the most current version is on record at the Department-SALCP, or attach: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |

Optional components

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Letters of support from any partners |
|  | Accreditation Documents (Land Trust Alliance or similar professional certifications) |
|  | Project Geographic Area Map showing boundaries of subject parcel(s), parcel number(s), and proximity to closest Spheres of Influence and other protected lands. |
|  | Map of Building Envelope(s) and Excluded Area(s) |
|  | Anticipated Implementation Schedule (if awarded) |

# **Easement Grant Application Cover Sheet**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Title** |  | |
| Location (County and Nearest City) |  | |
| Priority Population Status[[1]](#footnote-1) (circle one) | **Y N** | (If yes, attach Priority Population Benefits Checklist) |
| Risk Conversion Option[[2]](#footnote-2) |  | |
| Strategy and Outcome Grant Project Name (if applicable)[[3]](#footnote-3) |  | |
|  | | |
| Grant Request Amount | $ | |
| Matching Funds Pending  (include source of match)) | $ | |
| Matching Funds Committed (include source of match) | $ | |
| Total Estimated Project Cost | $ | |
|  | | |
| Applicant[[4]](#footnote-4) |  | |
| Federal Employer ID Number |  | |
| Mailing Address |  | |
|  | |
|  | |
| Contact Person |  | |
| Title |  | |
| Phone Number |  | |
| Email Address |  | |

# **Easement Grant Application Cover Sheet**

Co-Applicant Attachment (if applicable)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Co-Applicant[[5]](#footnote-5) |  |
| Federal Employer ID Number |  |
| Mailing Address |  |
|  |
|  |
| Contact Person |  |
| Title |  |
| Phone Number |  |
| Email Address |  |

Nonprofit applicants must have adopted the LTA’s Standards and Practices prior to submission of an application. Nonprofit applicants that are otherwise eligible but have not adopted the LTA’s Standards and Practices must apply with an eligible Co-Applicant.

# **Executive Summary**

This section (**one** **(1) page** maximum) should provide a brief but thorough description of:

* The proposed easement and its scope (farmland quality, location, size, and type of agricultural use),
* An explanation of the development pressure that may be impacting the surrounding area, including a summary of relevant risk of conversion option(s),
* Any additional environmental and economic co-benefits for California associated with the proposed easement acquisition, and
* Whether the landowner must meet any critical deadlines for concluding the transaction.

# **Budget**

Identify the total estimated project cost using the budget table provided here. Please round all funding requests to the nearest $100.

The applicant will be required to cover a minimum twenty-five percent (25%) of the fair market value of the easement acquisition, either through landowner donation or other match funding sources, unless the project qualifies for priority population benefit status. No match is required for easements that qualify for priority population benefits status.

Please identify all existing or potential match funders and their contributions toward the easement cost below, and note whether match funding is secured, pending, or unknown in the “Additional Explanations” section.

**Easement Acquisition Costs**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **SALCP**  **REQUEST** | **Match  Funder 1** | **(Match Funder 2)** | **Total Funding** |
| **Easement Acquisition** | $ | $ | $ | $ |
| *Subtotal* | $ | $ | $ | $ |

**Associated Costs**

*Please see page 8 of the Guidelines for a complete list of eligible associated costs. Details regarding subcontractors and staff will be entered on the next page.*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **SALCP**  **REQUEST** | **Match  Funder 1** | **(Match Funder 2)** | **Total Funding** |
| Appraisal | $ | $ | $ | $ |
| Title, Escrow, & Closing | $ | $ | $ | $ |
| Baseline Documentation | $ | $ | $ | $ |
| Staff & Subcontractors | $ | $ | $ | $ |
| Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | $ | $ | $ | $ |
| *Subtotal* | $ | $ | $ | $ |

**Total Funding**

*Use the subtotals from the tables above to complete the table below.*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **SALCP**  **REQUEST** | **Match  Funder 1** | **(Match Funder 2)** | **Total Funding** |
| Subtotal: Easement Acquisition | $ | $ | $ | $ |
| Subtotal: Associated Costs | $ | $ | $ | $ |
| Stewardship Fund  (if used as match) |  | $ | $ | $ |
| **GRAND TOTAL** | **$** | **$** | **$** | **$** |

Subcontractors and staff  
Subcontractors and staff required to accomplish the project (totaled in the Associated Costs above) should be listed in this table. Subcontractors added at a later date may be subject to competitive bid requirements.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Staff** | **RATE ($/hr)** | **HOURS** | **FUNDING REQUEST** | |
|  |  |  | $ | |
|  |  |  | $ | |
|  |  |  |  | |
|  |  |  |  | |
|  |  |  |  | |
| **Subcontractors** | | | | |
|  |  |  | $ | |
|  |  |  |  | |
|  |  |  | $ | |
|  |  |  | $ | |
| **Subtotal** | | | | $ | |

Additional explanations:

[*Please provide the source of any easement acquisition match funding, along with an explanation of how and when the match funding has been or will be secured, if known.]*

stewardship fund

Grant recipients certify that as the stewardship fund holder, they use accepted accounting practices as promulgated by the standards boards for nonprofit organizations or public agencies, as applicable. Grantees will certify their ability to effectively manage and account for those stewardship funds, whether pooled for all easements or held in separate accounts for individual easements conveyed through the Grant Agreement.

Please provide information below regarding the stewardship budget for the proposed project and how it has been calculated, as well as the applicant’s capacity to effectively manage the endowment to achieve reasonable rates of return on the investment. When managed and invested, the principal amount of the fund would be reasonably anticipated to cover the annual stewardship costs of the property in perpetuity.

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# **Easement Acquisition Summary Sheet**

All fields in this section must be filled out in order for the application to be considered complete.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Title** |  | | | |
| Landowner Name(s)/ Ownership Structure |  | | | |
| Street Address of Property (or nearest cross streets) |  | | | |
| Project APN(s) |  | | | |
| Distance from nearest Sphere of Influence and City (name) |  | | | |
|  | | | | |
| Total Project Acreage  (Assessor’s Acreage) |  | Prime Farmland[[6]](#footnote-6) Acres | |  |
|  | | Irrigated Acres | |  |
| Nonirrigated / Grazing Acres | |  |
| Nonagricultural Acres | |  |
|  | | | | |
| Current Zoning/ Minimum Parcel Size | |  | | |
| Number of existing legal parcels[[7]](#footnote-7) | |  | | |
| Proposed number of easements | |  | | |
| Would proposed easement(s) prohibit further subdivision of existing legal parcels? (please explain) | | **Y N** |  | |
| Would proposed easement(s) prohibit sale of existing legal parcels separately from other parcels in easement area? (please explain) | | **Y N** |  | |
|  | | | | |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Water Rights and Source(s) |  | | | | |
| Description of the Mineral Rights Estate |  | | | | |
|  | *If Yes for items below, please explain:* | | | | |
| Third party mineral rights holder(s)? | **Y N** |  | | | |
| Oil and/or gas lease(s)? | **Y N** |  | | | |
| Severed mineral rights? | **Y N** |  | | | |
| Evidence of past mining? | **Y N** |  | | | |
|  | | | | | |
| Number of **single-family (SF) residences** currently on the property | |  | | | |
| Approximate size of each **SF residence** (square footage of living area) | |  | | | |
| Number of additional **SF residences** to be reserved in easement (if any): | |  | | | |
| Size restriction (sq ft), if any, on reserved and/or existing **SF residences** | |  | | | |
|  | | | | | |
| Number of **farm labor residential** structures/units currently on property | |  | | | |
| Approximate size of each **farm labor residence** (square footage of living area) | |  | | | |
|  | | | | | |
| **Existing Building Envelope(s)[[8]](#footnote-8)** on the property? | | | **Y N** | Approximate Acres: |  |
| **Building Envelope(s)** to be reserved (e.g., residential, ag. employee, agricultural infrastructure)? | | | **Y N** | Approximate Acres: |  |
| **Other uses[[9]](#footnote-9)** (e.g., oil and gas site, solar, communication towers) | | | **Y N** | Please list: | |

additional explanations

Risk of Conversion Summary Sheet and Supporting Evidence

To be eligible for funds, the proposed property must be considered at risk of conversion to a non-agricultural land use. The applicant must demonstrate this risk of conversion by providing supporting evidence for the selected risk option below.[[10]](#footnote-10) The Department will evaluate the supporting evidence provided and determine the number of development rights to be extinguished for purposes of quantifying greenhouse gas benefits

Please check the option below that best describes the risk to the property and describe the supporting evidence provided, such as, relevant development proposal, Certificates of Compliance, county General Plan sections, etc.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Residential Risk** | | **Description and reference to Supporting Evidence included in the Application** |
|  | 1. Agricultural land identified for development as evidenced by inclusion in a development proposal submitted to the local government, undergoing environmental review, or publicly available from controlling interests within the past 5 years. |  |
|  | 1. Agricultural land identified for potential rezoning to non-agricultural use by a jurisdiction as evidenced by a revised zoning proposal or land use plan, or undergoing environmental review, within the past 5 years. |  |
|  | 1. Agricultural land within a city’s Sphere of Influence or municipal service boundary and, if applicable, within the city’s urban growth boundary according to the city’s general plan. |  |
|  | 1. Agricultural land within a proposed expanded city boundary (annexation), Sphere of Influence, municipal service boundary, or specific plan. |  |
|  | 1. Agricultural land within two miles of a city’s Sphere of Influence or municipal service boundary, or within two miles of an unincorporated area which is zoned for or contains residential development where the average lot size is two acres or less. |  |

*Risk Options continued on next page…*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Rural Residential Risk** | |  |
|  | 1. Agricultural land that is determined to be in conformance with the Subdivision Map Act based on county-issued Certificates of Compliance. |  |
|  | 1. Agricultural land up to five miles from land developed or zoned for rural residential use (one to ten acres) in the county General Plan. |  |
|  | 1. Agricultural land within five miles of other agricultural land sold or advertised as rural home sites, rural recreational sites, or other development as evidenced through comparable sales, multiple listing services, or similar property sales tools within the last five years. |  |
| **Risk of subdivision to current zoning minimums** | |  |
|  | 1. Agricultural land located within two miles of attraction(s) such as a casino, resort, golf course, public recreation area, school or university; within two miles of a major highway intersection[[11]](#footnote-11); or within two miles of a planned road expansion project that increases vehicle capacity (e.g., additional lanes). |  |

# **Certification of Acceptance of conditions of funding**

This Certification must be signed by the President of the applicant’s Board of Directors, or similar governing body. An unsigned Certification Sheet may be cause for rejection of the application. By signing this Certification, the applicant [and co-applicant] is/are declaring that:

* All required attachments are included with this Application;
* The signature affixed hereon and dated certifies compliance with all the requirements of this solicitation;
* The signature below is that of the authorized signer and authorizes the verification of this certification;
* Clear title to the agricultural conservation easement can be conveyed at close of escrow;
* The applicant and seller of the agricultural conservation easement agree to restrict the use of the land in perpetuity;
* For projects on irrigated cultivated lands, the easement will prohibit permanent restrictions of agricultural use on existing irrigated cultivated lands, except for those lands that are within or adjacent to riparian or wetlands areas or complexes. For projects on irrigated pasture, non-irrigated pasture, and rangeland, restrictions will only be allowed if the restrictions are required by the match funder(s), if the match funding is at least fifty-one percent (51%) of the funding for the easement acquisition, and if the restrictions do not substantially prevent agricultural uses on the property;
* The total purchase price of the proposed easement shall not exceed the appraised fair market value of the easement;
* The easement appraisal will comply with the Department’s published Overview and Preparation of Agricultural Conservation Easement Appraisals;
* The appraisal used to establish the easement value must be approved by DGS and the Department;
* The easement acquisition will be completed within 2 years of grant agreement signature;
* The applicant has acquired Terra Firma insurance for its easement portfolio or carries alternative insurance sufficient to defend the easement; and,
* The applicant uses accepted accounting practices as promulgated by either the Financial Accounting Standards Board or any successor entity for nonprofit organizations, of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board or any successor entity for public agencies, to the extent those practices do not conflict with any requirement for special districts in statute for local governmental financial affairs.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Applicant | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Authorized Signature |  | Name/Title (Print or Type) |  | Date Signed |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Co-Applicant (If Applicable) | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Authorized Signature |  | Name/Title (Print or Type) |  | Date Signed |

# **Detailed Characteristics of the Proposed Project**

This section should be used to explain attributes of the proposed easement, the applicant’s capabilities, and regional policies that are relevant to the goals of the Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program. This section should not exceed **six (6) pages**. Please answer the following questions, maintaining the lettering format below.

1. Describe how the project supports the implementation of an adopted or draft Sustainable Communities Strategy or, if a Sustainable Communities Strategy is not required for a region by law, a regional plan[[12]](#footnote-12) that includes policies and programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Be sure to provide references to the specific goals, objectives, or policies that your project supports.
2. Is the parcel proposed for conservation expected to continue to be used for, and is it large enough to sustain, commercial agricultural production? Is the land in an area that possesses the necessary market, infrastructure, and agricultural support services? Are the surrounding parcel sizes and land uses likely to support long-term commercial agricultural production?
3. What agricultural infrastructure exists on the property? Describe irrigation systems, any permanent crops, agricultural employee housing, other housing, agricultural buildings and facilities.
4. Describe any economic co-benefits that may result from the conservation of this property (e.g., retention of local jobs and agricultural revenue; food production for local, national, and/or international markets; retention of entrepreneurial opportunities; reduction in spending on municipal services for dispersed development).
5. Describe any environmental conservation values or co-benefits that may result from the conservation of this property (e.g., open space, viewshed, habitat, riparian corridor, groundwater recharge, carbon sequestration potential via management practices).
6. Describe any additional co-benefits that may result from the conservation of this property (e.g., contributions to the preservation of food security, reductions in food waste, promotion of greater understanding of agriculture’s importance among Californians).
7. Is the property within strategic proximity to other permanently protected property (e.g., other agricultural conservation easements, habitat conservation easements, or other fee-title protection)?
8. Is the property part of a Conservation Area Protection Plan, regional conservation program, or mitigation plan (other than a Sustainable Communities Strategy)? If so, please identify how the project meets the goals of the larger plan.
9. Describe any on-farm conservation management practices[[13]](#footnote-13) that the landowner has incorporated or is in the process of incorporating on the property to build soil health for carbon sequestration.
10. Describe any on-farm management practices that the landowner has incorporated or is in the process of incorporating on the property to improve water use efficiency, conservation, and reduction, increase use of recycled water, support groundwater recharge, or reduce reliance on groundwater.
11. Does the property have adequate water availability and water quality for agricultural purposes? Is the property subject to any known agricultural constraints due to soil or water contamination?
12. Is the property subject to other threats of conversion beyond those identified using the risk options? If so, describe.
13. If this application is being submitted in conjunction with a Conservation Strategy and Outcomes grant, what strategy is being pursued through that process? How would the proposed easement meet the Conservation Strategy and Outcomes project’s intended goals?

# **Applicant Resolution of Support**

The applicant is required to submit a signed resolution of support from its board of directors or similar governing body authorizing the submittal of an easement grant application to the SALC Program. The resolution should further authorize entrance into a grant agreement and the purchase of an agricultural conservation easement using SALC funds, in the event the project is awarded funding.

# **Documentation of Public Notice**

In order to ensure local support for the project, the applicant must notify the local government’s Planning Director about their application to the program via letter. The letter should indicate the applicant’s intent to apply for a grant to acquire an agricultural conservation easement, the Department’s contact information in case the local government has concerns, and the date of the proposed Council meeting at which the easement application will be considered for approval. The notification should include the applicant and not the landowner’s name. Please include a signed copy of the letter with your application.

# **Preliminary Title Report and Assessor’s Parcel Map(s)**

A preliminary title report that is less than six (6) months old must be submitted with the application. This title report should be accompanied by all relevant underlying documents and associated assessor’s parcel maps. Underlying documents can be submitted as hyperlinks in the preliminary title report or as a separate file.

In the space below, please describe how you intend to address any potential title concerns, as well as your timeframe for doing so.

# **Appraisal**

A current appraisal is not a required component of the Application. However, the applicant must provide support for the easement acquisition value identified in the Budget section. This support may be in the form of a preliminary or complete appraisal, or a detailed estimate for the anticipated cost of the easement and material to support the valuation estimate. The Department reserves the right to require that a current easement appraisal accompany the grant application if, in its sole discretion, it determines that insufficient data is available to support an estimate.

The SALC Program will only fund the appraisal that is approved by the state and used for the actual acquisition. This cost will only be covered if the project is approved for funding and reimbursement for the appraisal cost is sought in this Application.

For more information, please refer to page 20 of the Round 4 RFGA,

# **Applicant-Landowner Letter of Intent**

The applicant must provide a letter co-signed by the applicant and landowner that outlines certain details of the proposed transaction, preliminary steps, and the intent to proceed with the transaction. This letter should address the following items:

* Landowner’s pursuit of sale of the easement is voluntary.
* The easement will be granted in perpetuity.
* No government agency has conditioned the issuance of an entitlement to use on the landowner’s granting of the proposed easement

Sample documents are posted on the Department website.

# **Conflict of Interest Certification**

The applicant must provide certification that no conflict of interest or appearance of conflict of interest exists for any members of their Board of Directors/Trustees as it relates to the proposed agricultural conservation easement. Governmental applicants may submit a resolution from the governing body that no conflict of interest exists. Governmental applicants should refer to Government Code §§1090-1099 for more information on potential conflicts and policies.

Sample certification documents are posted on the Department website.

# **Easement Amendment Policy**

This document is important for transparency and to ensure that the applicant’s Board of Directors has considered the circumstances under which they would potentially allow any future amendments to easements. A board-approved copy of the applicant’s easement amendment policy should be included with the application.

# **Easement Monitoring Plan**

The applicant, who will become the easement holder, must submit a plan that describes how the easement will be monitored following its completion. The plan must address all of the following (**three (3) page** maximum):

* The plan for compiling a baseline conditions report. This report must be reviewed and approved by the Department, with a final hardcopy submitted at the close of escrow.
* The process and frequency of monitoring.
* Who will be responsible for monitoring if not the applicant.
* How monitoring documents will be archived.
* How the Stewardship Fund budget reflects the costs of monitoring and any necessary enforcement.
* The plan for managing the Stewardship Fund.

# **Map of Building Envelope(s) and Excluded Area(s)**

If building envelope(s) is/are to be designated within the easement area, applicants should submit a map depicting the location and size/dimensions of the proposed envelope(s). Building envelopes must be designated around existing residences, as well as sites for proposed future residences.

Similarly, if certain areas of the property are to be excluded from the easement, applicants should identify the location of such proposed exclusions on the map. Please attach a map of the proposed building envelope(s) and excluded area(s) associated with the project, if any.

# **Additional Components and Certifications**

For the following items, please attach the requested documents or certify on the Grant Application Checklist that the most recent versions of these documents have been submitted and are on file at the Department.

Please see Section 2, page 18 of the Round 4 RFGA for more information about these components.

**Priority Population Benefits Checklist (AB 1550)**  
This checklist is to be used by applicants claiming to provide a benefit to a priority population. Benefits must address a common need to a disadvantaged community. The chosen approach must be identified on the checklist and accompanied by supporting documentation that a disadvantaged community need is being met. This checklist will be available on the Department website.

Documentation of Organizational Eligibility  
Documentation of Internal Revenue Service 501(c)3 status from nonprofit applicants, along with the organization’s Articles of Incorporation and By Laws documenting the principal charitable or public purposes of the nonprofit organization; a statement describing the organization’s goals and purposes; a description of the beneficiaries of the organization’s programs; and a statement describing the organization’s commitment to conservation of agricultural land resources.

**Letters of Support from Partners**  
The applicant may submit letters of support from local officials, agricultural groups, conservation organizations, or other entities with an interest in conserving farmland through agricultural conservation easements in order to strengthen their application. These letters are optional for basic ACE grant applications but are required for joint Strategy and Outcome/ACE grant requests.

**Accreditation Documents**  
The applicant may submit documentation of fiscal and professional expertise to demonstrate their technical capacity to hold permanent conservation easements. This may take the form of Land Trust Alliance Accreditation or similar certifications.

**Evidence of adoption of Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices**  
Applicants must have adopted the Land Trust Alliance (LTA) Standards and Practices prior to submission of an application. Organizations that are otherwise eligible but that have not adopted the LTA’s Standards and Practices must apply with an eligible co-applicant.

**Project Geographic Area Map**  
The applicant may submit maps depicting the proposed easement parcel boundaries relative to Important Farmland data, nearest Sphere of Influence, priority planning areas, and other protected lands in the vicinity[[14]](#footnote-14). If the applicant can document additional conserved lands or resource values that support the proposal they are encouraged to provide supplemental maps.

In the event that proposed easement boundaries are complicated (i.e., includes multiple or unusually configured APNs) a map that identifies the outer boundaries of the proposed site may assist in the grant evaluation process.

1. Please refer to the CalEnviroScreen maps of the highest ranking disadvantaged communities available at: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/capandtrade/auctionproceeds/535investments.htm> or <http://oehha.ca.gov/ej/ces2.html> and to the 2017-18 SALC Program Guidelines for further information. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Refer to Appendix A of the Round 4 SALC Program Guidelines. Including the risk option number will suffice. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. This field is only applicable if applying for a SALC Program Conservation Strategy and Outcome grant and using an agricultural conservation easement to fulfill an administrative requirement. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Refer to Section 2 of the Round 4 SALC Program Guidelines for a complete list of “Eligible Applicants”. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Refer to Round 4 SALC Program Guidelines Glossary for the definition of a “Co-Applicant”. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Prime Farmland as mapped by the California Department of Conservation [Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program](https://authoring.consrv.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Index.aspx). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Please confirm this information with the relevant County Planning Department. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The term “building envelope”, also known as a farmstead area, refers to an area delineated in the easement within which the structures on the property are located and building may occur. Building envelopes must be designated around existing residences, as well as sites for proposed future residences. Applicants are encouraged to submit a map showing the general location, size and shape of proposed or existing building envelopes. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Other uses listed here are subject to review and approval by the Department. In order to be considered in the easement, other used must be included here. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Risk options are discussed in Appendix A of the Round 4 SALC Program Guidelines. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Department should they require assistance in understanding or documenting the risk of conversion facing the proposed property. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Refer Round 4 SALC Program Guidelines Glossary for major highway intersection definitions for the purposes of the SALC Program. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. See Round 4 SALC Program Guidelines, pages C-4 and C-5, for definitions of “Sustainable Communities Strategy” and “regional plan” used by the SALC Program. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. See Round 4 SALC Program Guidelines, page C-2 for the definition of “conservation management practices” used by the SALC Program. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Protected lands databases can be found at the following sites:

    National Conservation Easement Database: <http://nced.conservationregistry.org/>

    California Protected Areas Database: <http://www.calands.org/data>

    California Conservation Easements Database: <http://www.calands.org/cced> [↑](#footnote-ref-14)