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The Climate Trust partners on two USDA conservation grants

Projects to drive adoption of innovative practices for nation's growers, ranchers

Portland, Ore.— The Climate Trust is part of two teams that recently were awarded U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG).

“Helping devise methods and incentives to drive adoption of innovative agricultural practices is a win for everyone—producers, markets, and conservationists, not to mention our environment,” said Ben Vitale, president of The Climate Trust. “We feel privileged to partner with such innovators as The Fertilizer Institute and Ducks Unlimited to unlock the potential for carbon financing in the agricultural sector.”

The largest CIG award this year was a \$1.429 million grant for the “Smart Nitrogen Application Demonstration Project” operated by The Fertilizer Institute, in collaboration with The Climate Trust, CamCo, ClimateCHECK, the International Plant Nutrition Institute, USDA’s National Laboratory on Agriculture and the Environment, National Corn Growers Association, Michigan State University and Colorado State University.

The project will develop a framework for generating nitrous oxide emission reductions created when corn and soybean producers in Iowa and Illinois enhance nutrient management practices. The project will recruit and enroll an estimated 100 producers to use the right nutrient source at the right rate, the right time, and in the right place. The effort will also evaluate and test leading methodologies including those considered by the Alberta nitrous oxide emissions protocol (NERP), the American Carbon Registry protocol (ACR) and the Verified Carbon Standard protocol (VCS).

Separately, Ducks Unlimited, Inc., in collaboration with The Climate Trust and The Nature Conservancy, was granted a \$161,000 CIG award for its “Avoided Grassland Conversion Project.” The project will implement a method for measuring and issuing carbon credits for the carbon storage benefit of protecting native prairie grasslands that would otherwise be converted to cropland on 10,000 acres in North Dakota and 15,000 acres in South Dakota. This pilot project will be the first time a methodology for avoiding grassland conversion will be submitted for review to the VCS.

“These projects demonstrate how environmental incentives help rural farm livelihoods as well as our fragile climate,” Vitale said. “That’s one key reason the CIG awards are so valuable. We feel privileged to be playing a role in pioneering solutions for tomorrow with our partners.”



About The Climate Trust

The Climate Trust is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with over 10 years of carbon market experience. Our mission is to provide expertise, financing, and inspiration to accelerate innovative climate solutions that endure. In order to arrest the rise in greenhouse gas emissions and to avoid the most dangerous impacts of climate change, The Climate Trust works to accelerate project implementation, develop financing solutions, and establish a supportive policy environment in the renewable energy, agriculture, forestry, energy efficiency and transportation sectors. For more information, please visit www.climatetrust.org.

About The Fertilizer Institute

The Fertilizer Institute continually strives for science-based solutions that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. TFI is currently leading an effort to increase the use of fertilizer best management practices that address the right nutrient source supplied at the right rate, the right time, and in the right place (4R Nutrient Stewardship). For more information, please visit www.tfi.org.

About Ducks Unlimited

Ducks Unlimited is the world's leader in wetlands and waterfowl conservation. Ducks Unlimited mission is to conserve, restore, and manage wetlands and associated habitats for North America's waterfowl. These habitats also benefit other wildlife and people. For more information, visit www.ducks.org/.

About USDA Conservation Innovation Grants

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service uses Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) to invest in innovative, on-the-ground conservation technologies and approaches with the goal of wide-scale adoption to address water quality and quantity, air quality, energy conservation, and environmental markets. In 2011 nine CIG grants worth about \$7.4 million for large-scale greenhouse gas mitigation projects were awarded out of the 43 proposals received. For more information, please visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/cig/index.html.