



# 2024 RCPP INFORMATION WEBINAR SERIES

SESSION 7: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**JUNE 20, 2024**



# AGENDA

- Announcements
- Town Hall Webinar Series Overview
- Today's Topic: RCPP Proposal Executive Summary
- Q&A

## RCPP Creating Your Proposal Webinar Series



## Session 7 Survey

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# ANNOUNCEMENTS



# INTRODUCTIONS

USDA AND METAPHASE COLLEAGUES



SARA HENDERSON



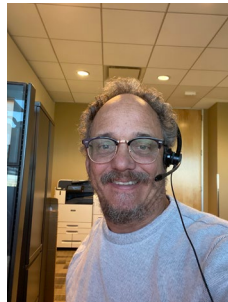
BRIE HEBRON



MARIA COLLAZO



TAMMY TIMMS



SETH FIEDLER



ERIK BEARDSLEY



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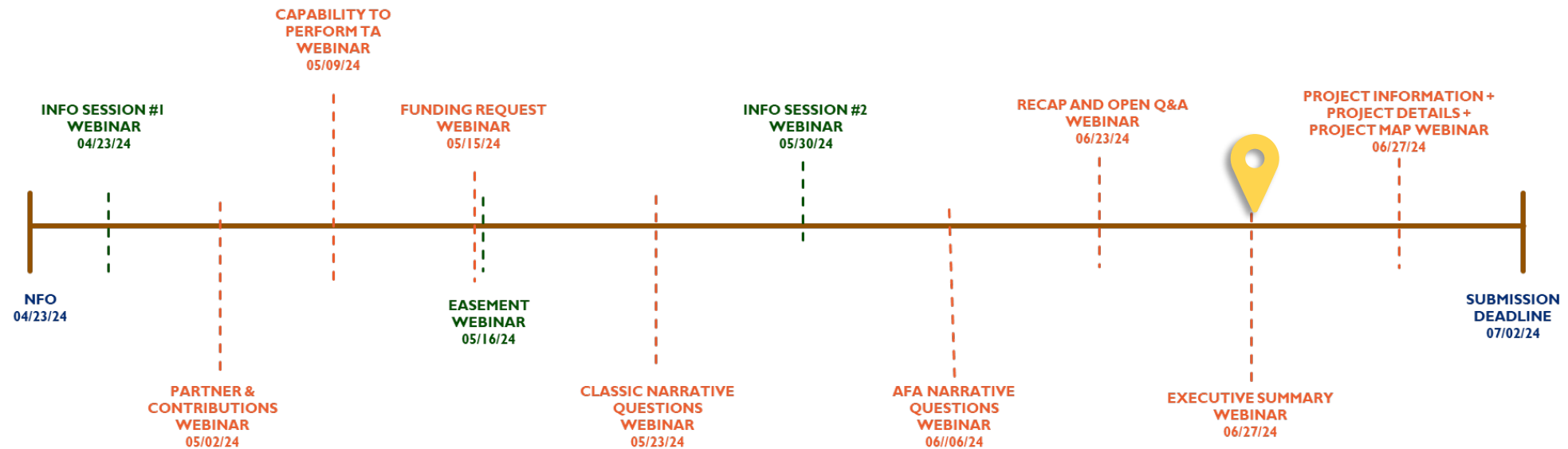
# CREATING YOUR PROPOSAL WEBINAR SERIES

OVERVIEW

# PROPOSAL SUPPORT WEBINARS

## AN 8-WEEK SERIES TO CREATE YOUR PROPSAL

Each week applicants had an opportunity to attend sessions in the Creating Your Proposal Webinar Series. Each webinar focus on a specific portion of the proposal, followed by a Q&A session. Webinar topics flow in the suggested order for proposal work.



Proposals are due in the RCPP portal by 4:59 p.m. EST on July 2, 2024.

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# RCPP EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

OUTCOMES

# RCPP EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: OVERVIEW

## REQUIRED RESPONSES IN THE RCPP PORTAL

**The RCPP Executive Summary includes two components:**

1. Description of Goals and Objectives
2. Description of Expected Environmental, Economic, and Social Outcomes

**Your responses should include details about:**

- How the proposed project will address NRCS and/or CCA resource concerns in a geographic area.
- How partner contributions amplify the impact of NRCS funding.
- The Lead Partner's understanding of RCPP program requirements.
- The expertise, qualifications and capabilities the Lead Partner will bring to the project.





# WHAT DOES “ADDRESSING” CONSERVATION BENEFITS MEAN?

Conservation benefits are partner defined objectives of a project, which NRCS refines in terms of resource concerns.

NRCS Financial Assistance (FA) efforts address local resource concerns, through management practices, structural practices, and/or easements.

NRCS planning procedures and practice standards establish processes for determining acceptable treatments.

Outcomes must be assessed in terms of natural resource concerns addressed (i.e., conservation benefits provided).

# RCPP EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

## OVERVIEW

In this section you will share a brief summary of the project including project goals and objectives.

**Consider these questions as you craft your response:**

- What is the problem my project will solve?
- How does that problem align to an NRCS and / or CCA priority resource concern(s)?
- What NRCS practices/activities will be implemented to address the problem?
- What agency priority topics will be addressed?

# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES EXAMPLE ANSWERS

## RESPONSIVE VS. NON-RESPONSIVE ANSWERS



### Responsive Answer

The project objectives are to permanently protect and restore degraded wet meadows and manage grazing to improve groundwater recharge and wildlife habitat (CCA priorities) while sequestering carbon (USDA Climate-Smart priority) using targeted easement acquisitions and conservation practices. The project advances USDA Equity, Justice, and Equal Opportunity priorities through inclusion of tribal, beginning farmer veterans and socially disadvantaged stakeholders in project development and outreach planning and execution. Ecosystems restoration experts Wet Meadow Conservancy, along with NRCS certified ACEP eligible entity Big Range Trust, Happy River Conservation District certified conservation planners and outreach specialists, and ecosystem services modeling experts Western Rivers University bring 60 years of collective experience with NRCS implementation programs to ensure project success.



### Not a Responsive Answer

The diverse skills and expertise of this this partnership will ensure RCPP funds will get on the ground to address NFO priorities by protecting ranches from development, sequester carbon and improve wildlife habitat.

***General statement not supported by how and why examples.***

***Vague references to NFO criteria and project goals do not demonstrate project area knowledge or credible treatment approach.***



# RCPP EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: OUTCOMES

## OVERVIEW

In this section, briefly describe the anticipated outcomes of your project and the proposed method for measuring outcomes.

There are three types of outcomes:



**Environmental  
Outcomes  
(Required)**



**Economic  
Outcomes  
(Optional)**



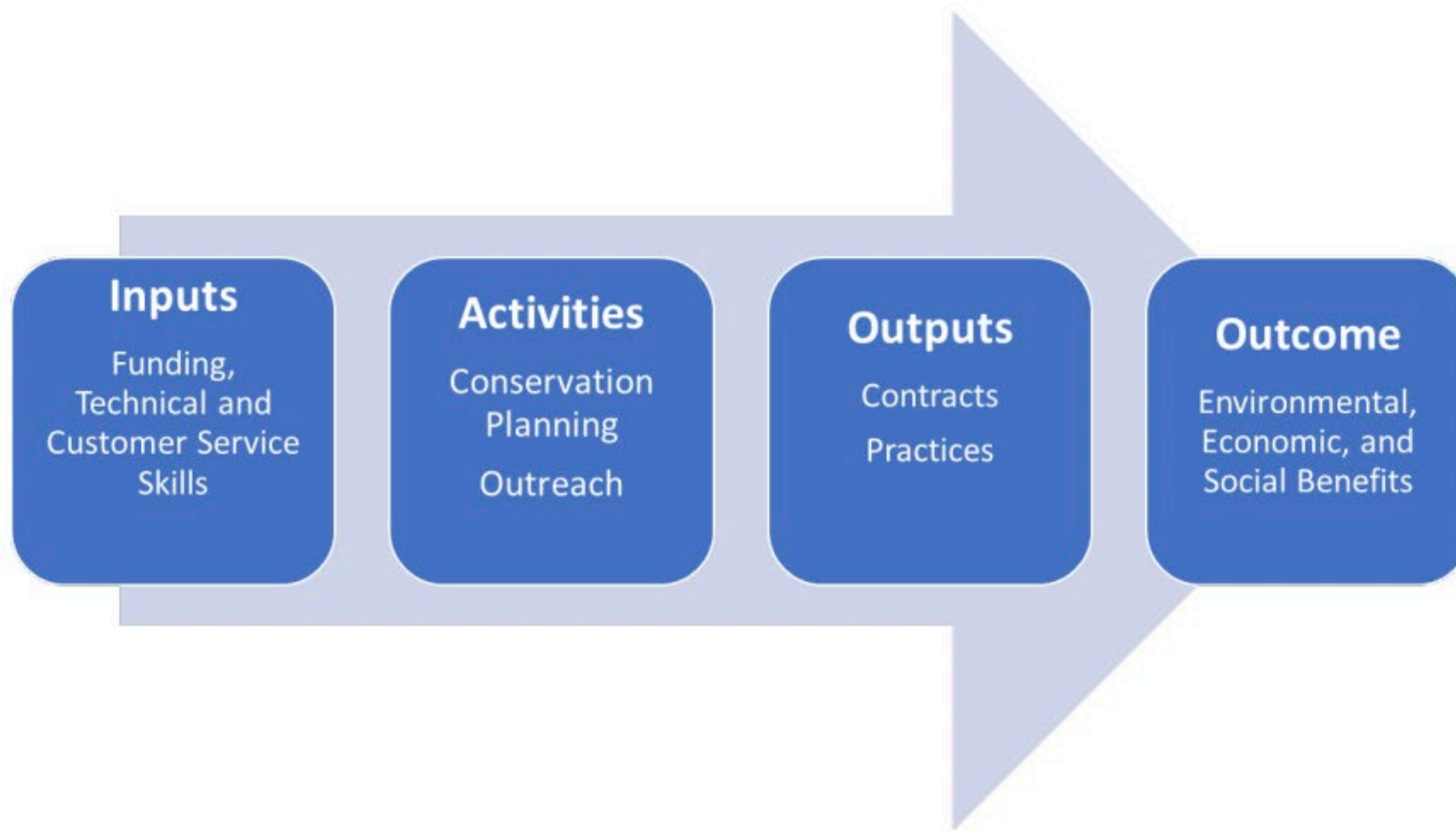
**Social Change  
Outcomes  
(Optional)**



Only environmental outcomes are required. However, inclusion of economic and/or social indicators analyses are given priority consideration in the RCPP evaluation criteria.

# WHAT ARE OUTCOMES?

Outcomes are the measurable environmental, economic and social impacts of RCPP project activities.



Examples of outcomes are:

- Pounds of nitrogen run-off avoided
- Tons of carbon sequestered
- Cost savings to producers
- Number of neighboring producers adopting a practice
- Decision factors leading to producer adoption of a soil health management system



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# WRITING ABOUT OUTCOMES IN YOUR PROPOSAL

The response should clearly show how the project deliverables connect to expected outcomes and how you will approach measuring and reporting of outcomes.

Estimates of expected project outcomes should be provided if possible.

The methodology for outcome measurement will be further developed upon award.



# ENVIRONMENTAL OUTCOMES TEMPLATE

USE WITH WILDLIFE CONCERNS, WATER QUALITY, WATER QUANTITY, AND SOIL HEALTH PROJECTS

The customizable outcomes template below might be helpful to partners as they consider how to measure, monitor or model for environmental outcomes.

*“With the RCPP investment of **A dollars** matched by **B partner contributions** over **C year(s)** we have made a lasting improvement to the biodiversity of the **D (geographic region)** over **initial benchmark E** by improving **F acres** habitat and increasing our {priority species} population by **G** to a naturally sustainable size that will benefit the region for **H years.**”*

- **A = Total RCPP funds dispersed over C period of time**
- **B = Partner contributions (cash and in-kind)**
- **C = Defined number of years**
- **D = Defined geographic area in the RCPP agreement**
- **E = benchmark conditions developed for the outcome from the partnership agreement. Each outcome should have a benchmark against which to measure E and F.**
- **F = Acres of wildlife habitat improvement practices for the RCPP project**
- **G = to be modeled or estimated figures based on the best professional judgement of a scientific expert**
- **H = Connected to reference in F (define assumptions such as regeneration time, lifespan, population dynamics, etc.)**

# ECONOMIC OUTCOMES (OPTIONAL FOR RCPP)

Economic indicators can quantify the financial impacts conservation practices on a farm, ranch, or forestland.

Economic indicators that may be used to report outcomes include (but are not limited to):

- Conservation cost effectiveness—the cost to the producer of practice implementation vs. conservation benefits.
- Economic/financial benefits—the impact of conservation implementation on net profit, the value of farmland/farm assets, etc.
- Valuation of ecosystem benefits—benefits to downstream beneficiaries, local economies, etc.



Partners measuring economic outcomes will need to collect financial information from producers and measure baseline economic indicators at the outset of the project, and then evaluate change in those economic indicators over time.

# SOCIAL OUTCOMES (OPTIONAL FOR RCPP)

Social outcomes analyses consider the factors that go into a producer's decision to undertake conservation activities, how that producer's decision influences other producers, and any broader impacts on communities. Factors included in evaluation may include (but are not limited to)

- Characteristics of producers and forestland owners
- Farm, forest, or ranch characteristics
- Perceptions of characteristics of practices
- Social capital of project participants
- Community characteristics
- Timing of conservation adoption
- Evaluation of management capabilities
- Conservation adoption motivations
- Technical assistance needs
- Information/Education needs
- FA needs to motivate conservation adoption



Partners measuring social outcomes should measure baseline social indicators at the outset of the project and then evaluate change in those social indicators over time. In measuring social outcomes of an RCPP project, partners should maintain a focus on the factors motivating or influencing landowners and communities to adopt—and maintain-- conservation approaches.



# OUTCOMES EXAMPLE ANSWERS

## RESPONSIVE VS. NON-RESPONSIVE ANSWERS



### Responsive Answer

The project will expend \$X million of RCPP funds combined with \$Y million in partner contributions to over a six-year period to restore and manage 24 targeted wet meadows in the Happy River Watershed. Benchmark conditions to be measured at treatment sites include background soil carbon dioxide respiration, soil organic carbon content, soil water holding capacity, estimated sediment transport and undesirable plant species composition. Data will be collected annually at each site following restoration. The expected 1,500 acres of restored wet meadows will sequester about X tons of carbon, increase groundwater recharge capacity by Y acre feet, improve Z acres of improved wildlife habitat. Data will be collected following NRCS, Regional Water Control Board and international climate change protocols will be modeled by Western Rivers University.



### Not a Responsive Answer

The project will spend \$X million in RCPP funds with 1:1 partner cash and in-kind match to increase soil carbon storage by 20 percent, improve habitat, reduce erosion, and recharge groundwater on about 1,500 acres. We will look at the studies mentioned in scientific articles and design our data collection and modeling tools after we get funded.

***General response does not demonstrate partner program understanding, or well thought-out outcome.***

# RESOURCES

## Support for Your Proposal

- [Your State Coordinator](#)
- [RCPP FY2024 Proposal Guide for Partners](#)
- [RCPP Outcomes Guidance](#)

## Tools for Working With Your State Coordinator

- [RCPP State Conservationist Questionnaire](#)



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## Q&A

PLEASE SHARE YOUR QUESTIONS IN THE CHAT



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