

Francis, Ronald - Salt Lake City, UT

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Subject: 4-3-09 eBlast from NRCS



April 3, 2009

## **FARM AND RANCH LANDS PROTECTION PROGRAM SIGNUP ANNOUNCED**

The Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) administered by NRCS is now accepting applications for funding on a continuous basis. NRCS State Conservationist Sylvia Gillen noted that the 2008 Farm Bill provided for a continuous signup to allow eligible entities more opportunities to sign up eligible parcels. However, eligible entities must submit applications on or before June 1, 2009 to receive consideration for funding in fiscal year 2009. Funds must be obligated by July 15, 2009.

Only eligible entities may submit applications of eligible farm and ranch land. Eligible entities are State, Tribal, or local governments and non-government organizations that meet specific requirements. The entities must have an established farm and ranch land protection program, have the authority to hold and manage easements; have the capacity to acquire, manage, and enforce the easements; and the funds to match the Federal contribution.

The FRPP can provide up to 50 percent of the appraised fair market value of the easement on the farm or ranch. At least fifty percent of the appraised fair market value of the easement must be provided by the eligible entity. Landowners may accept less than the appraised fair market value of the easement; the difference between the appraised value and the purchase price the landowners are willing to accept is considered a landowner donation. The eligible entity must provide at least twenty-five percent of the purchase price in cash. The eligible entity must also secure the appraisal, survey, and title search, prepare the conservation easement deed, and pay for the closing.

Land proposed for funding in FRPP must meet one of three eligibility categories: contain at least 50 percent prime and unique farmland soils and soils of statewide and local importance; contain historic or archeological resources; or contain land that supports the farm and ranch land protection policies of state or local programs. Owners of the parcels must have an adjusted gross income of less than one million dollars and be in compliance with the USDA highly erodible land and wetland compliance requirements.

Utah applications must be made by the eligible entities to the NRCS state office at 125 S. State St., Room 4402, Salt Lake City, UT 84138. The ranking and selection of parcels for FY 2009 will take place immediately after June 1, 2009. For further information, contact Lisa Coverdale, State Program Manager, at 801-524-4565, [lisa.coverdale@ut.usda.gov](mailto:lisa.coverdale@ut.usda.gov); or Chet Fitzgerald, NRCS Program Specialist, at 801-629-0580 x12, [chet.fitzgerald@ut.usda.gov](mailto:chet.fitzgerald@ut.usda.gov).

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**Sylvia Gillen, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service**

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