



Michael Miya, President
Ed Esajian, Treasurer
Jerred, Barba, Director
Tony DeGroot, Director
Paul Newton, Director
Nathan Heeringa, Associate Director

Special Board Meeting
May 6, 2026, 1:30 PM
870 Greenfield Ave., Hanford

1. **Call to Order**
 - a. **Flag Salute**

2. **Public Comment**
 - a. *Any person may directly address the Board at this time on any item on the agenda or any other item of interest within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board.*

3. **New Business**
 - a. SALC Pre-proposal Feedback – **Action**
 - b. HSP Block Grant Draft – **Action**
 - c. SWEEP Block Grant Draft – **Action**
 - d. May 20, 2026 Regular Meeting – **Action**

4. **Adjournment**

Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting
May 20, 2026
1:30 PM

SALC Planning Grant Pre-Proposal Review
The Central Valley Climate Adaptation and Agricultural Conservation Project

Basic Information	
Project Name	The Central Valley Climate Adaptation and Agricultural Conservation Project
Project Code	SALC25_08
Project Applicant	Excelsior-Kings River Resource Conservation District
Project County	Kings, Fresno, and Tulare
SALC Lead Staff	Sarah Nolan

Staff review is based on information provided in the pre-proposal. This pre-proposal review has been conducted to determine the project's eligibility, to identify potential project concerns, and to provide feedback prior to the June 17th application deadline. Changes in project structure may be allowed between the pre-proposal and application stage but reach out to your reviewer to discuss changes to ensure the project will still meet the program's requirements.

This pre-proposal review is not a substitute for reading and understanding the Grant Guidelines and Application materials. The Sustainable Agricultural Land Conservation Program is a competitive grant program, you may use the feedback in preparing your application. Final scoring will be based on the application and will be based on points assigned in the selection criteria. Reviewers will score the projects based on five criteria: 1) project need; 2) co-benefits; 3) proposal's evidence of collaboration; 4) planning integration; and 5) equity opportunities. Review the [Planning Grant Guidelines](#) for more details about the selection criteria. Contact SALC staff if you have any questions regarding the Grant Guidelines and Application materials or this pre-proposal feedback.

Pre-proposal Feedback

- An RCD is not an eligible applicant on its own. Please include an eligible applicant and have the RCD be the co-applicant. Examples of eligible applicants include the local county government or a local LAFCO.
- The proposed planning project aligns more with DOC's program MLRP since that program focuses more on land repurposing due to water constraints. Please reach out to them at MLRP@conservation.ca.gov for more information. They will soon issue guidelines for public comment on a new round of funding, and they would be happy to chat further about this project.
- Please include information on who would adopt this document.
- In the work plan, please indicate that the documents created for legal review and agreement creation are templates and not the actual execution of these documents.
- In the workplan and budget, please add tasks for grant management (invoicing, regular meetings with DOC, etc.).

Grant Pre-Proposal Completeness Checklist

ALL PRE-PROPOSALS MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Basic Information
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Executive Summary
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Work Plan
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Budget
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Maps of the Project Area
<input type="checkbox"/>	Priority Population Benefits Checklist <i>(required if claiming Priority Population benefits status)</i>

Pre-Proposal Eligibility Criteria

Criteria	Yes/ No	Notes
Is the proposal from an eligible applicant? Eligible applicants include: Counties, cities, local area formation commissions (LAFCOs), councils of government, municipal planning organizations, regional transportation planning agencies, groundwater sustainability agencies, special districts with land use or transportation planning authority, and federally recognized California Native American tribe or a nonfederally recognized California Native American tribe that is on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission. If the applicant is an RCD or Open Space District, have they partnered with an eligible applicant as described above?	No	The applicant is an RCD and must be a co-applicant with an eligible entity.
Is the proposal for a land use plan that is consistent with the program’s goals? - The principal goal of the SALC Program is to keep farmland in agriculture; - Further the purposes of AB 32 by supporting infill development and avoiding increases in the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the conversion of California’s irreplaceable agricultural land and resources to nonagricultural uses, particularly low-density residential development	Yes	This project does support program goals; however, the goals for this project better align with the MLRP program.
Does the proposal contain clearly stated and reportable objectives, measures of progress, and deliverables?	Yes	The work plan contains clear objectives and measures of progress.
Will the proposal avoid greenhouse gas emissions?	Yes	The proposed plan would avoid greenhouse gas emissions.

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Does the proposal support 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 that includes policies and programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions?	Yes	The proposal supports an adopted Sustainable Communities Strategy.
Does the proposal demonstrate consistency with California’s Planning Priorities? (https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=GOV&sectionNum=65041.1)	Yes	The proposal is consistent with California’s Planning Priorities.

Statement of Need (15 Points of 50)

1. Service Area: Drop down -Select all counties that would be included in the service area.

Fresno, Kings, and Tulare Counties

2. Service Area clarification: Clarify any parts of the counties indicated above that would be excluded from the service area.

Portions of Fresno and Tulare Counties with RCD's active in the farming portions of their counties that do not have agreements in place with EKRCD.

3. Describe the HSP/SWEEP-relevant resource and societal challenges that impact agricultural producers and the community in the service area. Cite references to illustrate urgency or severity of the challenges. 1,300 character max

HSP funding will address the needs of the producers in the EKRCD Kings, Tulare, and Fresno's project area by assisting the 9,924 farms, (which represent 14% of California farms), with making soil health improvements. With over 55% of the farms in the proposed service area having less than 50 acers in production, these smaller family farms have the hardest time bearing the cost of rising nutrient cost, water shortages caused by climate change, and reduced production due to soil heath degradation.

4. Describe the people (community or populations) that are negatively impacted by the resource concerns, explaining the consequences of the challenges. Explain their access (or lack thereof) to financial and technical support, now and historically. 1,300-character max

Farmers in the proposed service area are also diverse. Of the reported 20,248 producers for this region, 4,212 are owned or leased by Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers, (2017 NASS Survey.) Together, Tulare, Kings, and Fresno counties' producers are 20.8% Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers, in comparison to the Statewide average of 17.9%. (2017 NASS Survey.) The region in the geographic area covered by the proposed project boundary is incredibly diverse in both its farm size, commodities grown, and demographic makeup. According to the 2017 NASS Survey, of the 20,248 producers in the Tulare, Kings, and Fresno County, 20.8% are Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers. Further breaking down the population, of the 4212 producers reported as SDFR, 2445 identify as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish (58.1%), 152 identify as American Indian or Alaskan Native (3.6%), 1349 as Asian (32 %), 31 as Black or African American (.7%), 47 as Native American or Other Pacific Islander (1.1%), and more than one race reported 188 (4.5%). (2017 NASS Survey)

Primary (Non-English) languages spoken in the service area are Spanish, Hmong, Punjabi, Tagalog (including Filipino,) Chinese (Mandarin, Cantonese,) (Based on 2020 Census Data for CA 22)

5. Explain how funding from the SWEEP/HSP block grant can be harnessed to improve the situation, addressing the opportunity for both technical and financial assistance to make measurable positive changes. 600 characters max.

HSP funding will address the needs of the producers in the EKRCDC Kings, Tulare, and Fresno's project area by assisting a potential pool of 9,924 farms, (which represent 14% of California farms), with making and implementing healthy soil improvements. Funding from a HSP block grant would allow EKRCDC to provide soil health planning TA for producers and increase adoption of healthy soil management

Project Proposal (10 Points of 50)

1. Propose a high-level project goal that is relevant to HSP/SWEEP and that addresses the challenges that were outlined in the Statement of Need. Justify the goal, explaining how progress towards meeting the goal will benefit the service area. 600-character max

The EKRCDC Project seeks to provide farmers in its region and surrounding areas with financial support and technical assistance to address soil health planning. The CDFA HSP Pilot block grant was oversubscribed by 200%, with the second application tranche received an increased application count compared to the first. With the price to implement healthy soil practices in the region, often the greatest hardship in implementing HSP practices impacts small farms who lack the benefit of economies of scale.

2. Describe an approach to providing technical assistance that would advance the goal. Touch on the types of technical assistance that the project team would provide and an outreach strategy. 1,300-character max

Technical assistance will be provided to all producers from initial outreach to project implementation. During intake, TA will include reviewing interested producers' desires to determine if they will meet minimum scoring criteria. It will also include identifying potential projects if the producer's intended project does not meet thresholds. After a project is approved for development and application, the TAP will conduct a field inspection to confirm the need for the project/ farm conditions, as well as provide a chance to make additional recommendations.

During the application process, TAP's will provide support with HSP planning tools and review producers plans to ensure that they meet the standards for funding. For the General funding tract, TA will be limited to assistance in completing the HSP tools and application to ensure that no producer is given an unfair advantage.

Project implementation support and follow up will be provided by the TA staff, aiding in documentation, testing, troubleshooting, and verifying projects to ensure project goals are met. Soil tests will be taken by TA staff to ensure consistent sampling and analysis to ensure that Climate Bond goals and benefits are being achieved and measured.

3. At a high-level describe how the project team will solicit and select on farm projects. Touch on whether the selection process will be competitive or in another format and what criteria your team will use for selecting the projects. 1,300-character max

Excelsior Kings will use a multi layered solicitation and selection process to determine candidates to receive initial technical assistance and full application development. Potential applicants will be broken into categories based on their status and land holdings and with two primary tracks and a compost sub tract to apply for “HSP Grants”.

Track 1 (The SDFR fund pool) will be for socially disadvantaged farmers with less than 100 acres and will be a first come first serve basis up to 50% of the grant award total. A minimum meaningful benefits goal will be required for a successful project, and outline in the grant RGA. Technical assistance will include planning projects to meet the minimum goal.

Track 2 (General Fund pool) will be a competitive process with multiple steps to determine an applicant’s status, preference and need, with all qualifying applications ranked and selected in a single batch. Major steps are initial intake, technical analysis, application development, submission, and award.

The compost/biochar sub funding tract will be limited to 20% of total grant funds. Non SDFR Farmers wishing to only utilize these practices alone (or in combination with each other) will be required to provide cost share to ensure maximum availability of funds.

Alignment with Climate Bond (15 Points of 50)

1. Discuss the service area in terms of the opportunity to benefit DACs/SDACs and vulnerable populations (including Tribes and SDFRs). Address the demographics of the agricultural producers in the service area and discuss the opportunity to select on-farm projects that provide meaningful and direct benefits to these groups. 1,300-character max

Producers in the proposed service area are also diverse. Of the reported 20,248 producers for this region, 4,212 are owned or leased by SDFR producers, (2017 NASS Survey.) The local producer population identifies as 20.8% Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers, in comparison to the Statewide average of 17.9%. (2017 NASS Survey.) The region in the geographic area covered by the proposed project boundary is diverse in both its farm size, commodities grown, and demographic makeup. Of the 4212 producers reported as SDFR, 2445 identify as Hispanic, (58.1%), 152 identify as American Indian or Alaskan Native (3.6%), 1349 as Asian (32 %), 31 as Black or African American (.7%), 47 as Native American or Other Pacific Islander (1.1%), and more than one race reported 188 (4.5%). (2017 NASS Survey) Primary (Non-English) languages spoken in the area are Spanish, Hmong, Punjabi, Tagalog (including Filipino,) Chinese (Mandarin, Cantonese,) (Based on 2020 Census Data for CA 22) Past grant solicitations have been oversubscribed by over 200%, and NRCS partners have reported oversubscription rates of 500%+ for the region. EKRCDC's entire service area is identified as a DAC or SDAC, so any project selected will provide meaningful and direct benefits to benefit vulnerable populations.

2. Reference the criteria for “meaningful and direct benefits” and provide an explanation of how the proposed project might meet all the criteria, identifying the expected benefits.
2,500-character max

EKRCD will utilize its past experience serving SDFRs and SDAC community members to exceed the Climate Bond’s 40% funding and 25% technical assistance goals. In its CDFA HSP Pilot, 26.98% of grant applicants were identified as SDFR producers, but 50% of the grants were awarded to SDFR applicants. EKRCD is committed to maintaining these targets to provide the following four direct and meaningful benefits to its grantees. 1. Keeping farmland healthy and productive, 2. Reducing water, energy, and utility costs for production. 3. Reducing GHG emission and increasing sequestration. 4. Improving air and water quality for nearby communities.

EKRCD’s planned technical assistance will start during project concept, assessing the producer’s plans for farm improvement and matching them with program activities that will keep their farmland healthy and productive in the long term and improve the ecological outcomes such as improved air and water qualities for the local communities. By providing TA from the beginning of the project, EKRCD will have the chance to make suggestions to the project that reduce water, energy, and utility costs for the producer, as well as reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase carbon sequestration to help slow climate change. While the producer will have the final decision on the applied for grant activities, early TA will maximize the chances to achieve meaningful and direct benefits to SDFR’s and DACs.

To ensure the meaningful and direct benefits to SDFR’s and DACs exceed the Climate Bond’s goals, both proposed funding tract’s (SDFR and General Fund pool) will utilize award selection strategies to maximize success. The SDFR fund pool will have a fixed 40% funding minimum of grant awards to ensure the benefit goals are met. Utilizing a pass/fail rubric for the SDFR fund pool requiring a minimum benefit outcome for all four benefit areas will ensure that SDFR and (S)DAC’s benefiting project are selected and implemented as quickly as possible.

The competitive General Fund Pool will also incorporate direct and meaningful benefits to a (S)DAC through as a category in its scoring and ranking matrix, to elevate projects that meet direct and meaningful benefit goal chances for selection.

3. Identify several specific project strategies or activities related to outreach, technical assistance, and on-farm project selection that would support meeting Climate Bond funding targets. 1,300-character max

Outreach methods and efforts will work on several levels. Initially, the EKRC D HSP project will be reaching out to minority industry groups, NRCS Offices, Farmers Markets, Commodity Groups, offices in the projects footprint with project information and details for dissemination. A series of workshops /outreach events and field demonstration days will be held, with a live multilingual demonstration of the TA process for the SDFR funding tract to familiarize prospective producers with the application development process. They will demonstrate the steps of the farm assessment, identifying concerns, planning solutions, and completing the application process that will be used for the SDFR funding tract, so that producers can be educated on the process and know what to expect. The events will also serve as enrollment opportunities of prospective clients for initial TA assessment and eventual project development, and will provide, at a minimum, an adequate number of projects to meet the Climate Bond funding target.

The General Fund Pool will have a series of outreach events with referral network partners, field days, webinars, and media advertising will occur to educate potential applicants about available TA, program requirements, scoring rubric and selection criteria.

Capacity and Partnerships (10 points of 50)

1. Describe the experience of the Lead Applicant and partners (Subrecipients) in managing a large project. Provide examples of past projects and reflect on the project team's capacity to administer a block grant. 1,300-character max

Excelsior Kings RCD. EKRCDC was formed in 1990 and has worked closely with the Kings County NRCS to help address the needs of producers in its district, and provide riparian restoration, river health monitoring, and managing water supplies on the Kings River and its tributaries. As a recipient of a CDFA HSP Block Grant, EKRCDC has had success in awarding 40 producers with grants and assistance in partnership with CDFA and is familiar with the requirements of administering a CDFA grant. EKRCDC has also been awarded a CDFA WETA grant, assisting local producers with pump testing and distribution uniformity testing to help identify where irrigation improvements can be made.

Kings County Farm Bureau Dusty Ference will be managing the HSP Block grant for EKRCDC. Running a county Farm Bureau for 10 years successfully for has equipped him with skills in operational management, organizational budgeting, project milestone tracking, and project leadership. He is also versed in interviewing candidates, human resource management, and working with overseeing boards to achieve their goals. Dusty also plans, budgets, contracts, and runs 10+ grower outreach and educational events per year, with attendance ranging from 10 participants to 500+ participants at their larger fundraising events.

2. Describe the qualifications of the project team related to technical expertise in conservation agriculture technical assistance (soil health and or irrigation water management). Provide the names, if possible, of the expert(s) that will lead technical assistance and describe their anticipated role and availability to support the project for the duration of a block grant. 1,300-character max

Excelsior Kings RCD has hired Dusty Ference, the Kings County Farm Bureau to act as the General Manager and lead technical assistance coordination for the grant.

Innovative Ag's TSP staff have been providing technical assistance to farmers and ranchers for over 15 years, working at an individual level with producers on over 350 NRCS conservation plans. With a CPAg and 3 staff CCA's who also are NRCS TSP's focused on soil health and nutrient planning, their technical staff have been at the forefront of private conservation planning. They have also been involved in several nonprofit technical service efforts on a contract basis, offering their TSP's at below market rates. Having previously provided the technical expertise to a non-profit for CDFA TAP program and provide seminars on applying for HSP grants at no cost to help increase interest in the HSP program and educating producers how to prepare for completing applications. Innovative Ag's team is familiar with the processes and rules supporting producers in a TAP capacity and have been assisting producers privately with planning HSP projects successfully for 7 years.

3. Describe existing networks of organizations or individuals that the project team would rely upon to support the project (for example, through outreach, or through mentorship and consultation). 600-character max

EKRCD's existing network of partners/agencies that will be leveraged for outreach and consultation include: Mid Kings GSA, Laguna Irrigation District, Tulare Lake Drainage District, and Delta View Water Association, West Goshen Mutual Water District, Lakeside Irrigation District, Liberty Water District, Murphy Slough Association, Riverdale Public Utility District, Riverdale Irrigation District, Westland's Water District, Greater Kaweah Irrigation District, American Farmland Trust, Point Blue, Kings River Land Trust. Nisei Farmers League, Self Help, UC Extension in Tulare, Kings, and Fresno.

Statement of Need (15 Points of 50)

1. Service Area: Drop down -Select all counties that would be included in the service area.

Fresno, Kings, and Tulare Counties

2. Service Area clarification: Clarify any parts of the counties indicated above that would be excluded from the service area.

Portions of Fresno and Tulare Counties with RCD's active in the farming portions of their counties that do not have agreements in place with EKRCDC.

3. Describe the HSP/SWEEP-relevant resource and societal challenges that impact agricultural producers and the community in the service area. Cite references to illustrate urgency or severity of the challenges. 1,300 character max

SWEEP funding will address the needs of the producers in the EKRCDC Kings, Tulare, and Fresno's project area by assisting the 9,924 farms, (which represent 14% of California farms), with making irrigation and efficiency improvements. The project area contains portions of the San Joaquin Kaweah, Tulare Lake Kings, Westside, and Tule Subbasins, all of which are identified as Critically Over drafted in the California's Groundwater - Update 2020 (Bulletin 118). Furthermore, the Kaweah, Tulare Lake, and Tule Subbasins Groundwater Sustainability Plans were deemed inadequate in 2022 by Department of Water Resources, indicating that the region has not shown enough progress in reaching sustainability goals for groundwater. With over 55% of the farms in the proposed service area having less than 50 acers in production, these smaller family farms have the hardest time bearing the cost of upgrading their irrigation system to be the most efficient with a limited supply of water. Many farms in the region still are managed on their surface gravity system, which are fed by surface supplies from the Kings, Kaweah, and Tule River drainages that historically terminated in the Tulare Lakebed.

4. Describe the people (community or populations) that are negatively impacted by the resource concerns, explaining the consequences of the challenges. Explain their access (or lack thereof) to financial and technical support, now and historically. 1,300-character max

Farmers in the proposed service area are also diverse. Of the reported 20,248 producers for this region, 4,212 are owned or leased by Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers, (2017 NASS Survey.) Together, Tulare, Kings, and Fresno counties' producers are 20.8% Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers, in comparison to the Statewide average of 17.9%. (2017 NASS Survey.) The region in the geographic area covered by the proposed project boundary is incredibly diverse in both its farm size, commodities grown, and demographic makeup. According to the 2017 NASS Survey, of the 20,248 producers in the Tulare, Kings, and Fresno County, 20.8% are Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers. Further breaking down the population, of the 4212 producers reported as SDFR, 2445 identify as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish (58.1%), 152 identify as American Indian or Alaskan Native (3.6%), 1349 as Asian (32 %), 31 as Black or African American (.7%), 47 as Native American or Other Pacific Islander (1.1%), and more than one race reported 188 (4.5%). (2017 NASS Survey)

Primary (Non-English) languages spoken in the service area are Spanish, Hmong, Punjabi, Tagalog (including Filipino,) Chinese (Mandarin, Cantonese,) (Based on 2020 Census Data for CA 22)

5. Explain how funding from the SWEEP/HSP block grant can be harnessed to improve the situation, addressing the opportunity for both technical and financial assistance to make measurable positive changes. 600 characters max.

SWEEP funding will address the needs of the producers in the EKRCDC Kings, Tulare, and Fresno's project area by assisting a potential pool of 9,924 farms, (which represent 14% of California farms), with making irrigation and efficiency improvements. The project area contains portions of the San Joaquin Kaweah, Tulare Lake Kings, Westside, and Tule Subbasins, all of which are identified as Critically Over drafted in the California's Groundwater - Update 2020 (Bulletin 118).

Project Proposal (10 Points of 50)

1. Propose a high-level project goal that is relevant to HSP/SWEEP and that addresses the challenges that were outlined in the Statement of Need. Justify the goal, explaining how progress towards meeting the goal will benefit the service area. 600-character max

The EKRCDC Project seeks to provide farmers in its region and surrounding areas with financial support and technical assistance to address water supply, increase irrigation efficiency, access to surface water supplies, and prepare for drought. With 1,912,459 acres of land under irrigation in the proposed project area, 4,212 of 20,248 producers identify as SDFR producers, and of the 9,924 farms, 55% (or 5461) farms are less than 50 acres. SGMA, overdraft, subsidence, and limited surface connections all combine to impact the region, often with the greatest hardships landing on the small farms.

2. Describe an approach to providing technical assistance that would advance the goal. Touch on the types of technical assistance that the project team would provide and an outreach strategy. 1,300-character max

Technical assistance will be provided to all producers from initial outreach to project implementation. During intake, TA will include reviewing interested producers' desires to determine if they will meet minimum scoring criteria. It will also include identifying potential projects if the producer's intended project does not meet thresholds. After a project is approved for development and application, the TAP will conduct a field inspection to confirm the need for the project/ farm conditions, as well as provide a chance to make additional recommendations.

During the application process, TAP's will provide support with SWEEP planning tools and review producers bids to ensure that they meet the standards for funding.

While TA will be identical for both funding tracts, during the application process for farmers participating in the General funding tract, TA will be limited to assistance in completing the SWEEP tools and application to ensure that no producer is given an unfair advantage.

Project implementation support and follow up will be provided by the TA staff, aiding in documentation, testing, troubleshooting, and verifying projects to ensure project goals are met.

3. At a high-level describe how the project team will solicit and select on farm projects. Touch on whether the selection process will be competitive or in another format and what criteria your team will use for selecting the projects. 1,300-character max

Excelsior Kings will use a multi layered solicitation and selection process to determine candidates to receive initial technical assistance and full application development. Potential applicants will be broken into categories based on their status and land holdings and with two primary tracks to apply for “HSP/SWEEP Grants”.

Track 1 (The SDFR fund pool) will be for socially disadvantaged farmers with less than 100 acres and will be a first come first serve basis up to 50% of the grant award total. A minimum meaningful benefits goal will be required for a successful project, and outline in the grant RGA. Technical assistance will include planning projects to meet the minimum goal.

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DRAFT

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EKRCD will utilize its past experience serving SDFRs and SDAC community members to exceed the Climate Bond’s 40% funding and 25% technical assistance goals. In its CDFA HSP Pilot, 26.98% of grant applicants were identified as SDFR producers, but 50% of the grants were awarded to SDFR applicants. EKRCD is committed to maintaining these targets to provide the following four direct and meaningful benefits to its grantees. 1. Keeping farmland healthy and productive, 2. Reducing water, energy, and utility costs for production. 3. Reducing GHG emission and increasing sequestration. 4. Improving air and water quality for nearby communities.

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2. Describe the qualifications of the project team related to technical expertise in conservation agriculture technical assistance (soil health and or irrigation water management). Provide the names, if possible, of the expert(s) that will lead technical assistance and describe their anticipated role and availability to support the project for the duration of a block grant. 1,300-character max

Excelsior Kings RCD has hired Dusty Ference, the Kings County Farm Bureau to act as the General Manager and lead technical assistance coordination for the grant.

Innovative Ag's TSP staff have been providing technical assistance to farmers and ranchers for over 15 years, working at an individual level with producers on over 350 NRCS conservation plans. With a CPAg and 3 staff CCA's who also are NRCS TSP's focused on irrigation and nutrient planning, their technical staff have been at the forefront of private conservation planning. They have also been involved in several nonprofit technical service efforts on a contract basis, offering their TSP's at below market rates. Having previously provided the technical expertise to a non-profit for CDFA TAP program and provide seminars on applying for SWEEP grants at no cost to help increase interest in the SWEEP program and educating producers how to prepare for completing applications. Innovative Ag's team is familiar with the processes and rules supporting producers in a TAP capacity and have been assisting producers privately with planning SWEEP projects successfully for 7 years.

3. Describe existing networks of organizations or individuals that the project team would rely upon to support the project (for example, through outreach, or through mentorship and consultation). 600-character max

EKRC's existing network of partners/agencies that will be leveraged for outreach and consultation include: Mid Kings GSA, Laguna Irrigation District, Tulare Lake Drainage District, and Delta View Water Association, West Goshen Mutual Water District, Lakeside Irrigation District, Liberty Water District, Murphy Slough Association, Riverdale Public Utility District, Riverdale Irrigation District, Westland's Water District, Greater Kaweah Irrigation District, American Farmland Trust, Point Blue, Kings River Land Trust. Nisei Farmers League, Self Help, UC Extension in Tulare, Kings, and Fresno.