

Can I also enroll in local programs in addition to this program?

Possibly. In some cases, you may “stack” this funding on top of other cost-share programs for delivery of multiple environmental benefits. A Partnership Specialist can assist you in determining the best use of cost-share dollars.

Can I design my own practice?

Depending on the practices you choose, there may be some engineering or specific design standards required. If so, an engineering firm will work with you to create plans and possibly handle construction.

What do you do with the environmental benefits that my land generates?

This program may sell the environmental benefits from Best Management Practices (BMPs) installed or implemented on your land in order to recoup the investment. The environmental benefits remain tied to the geographic region and industry from which they are generated.

How much funding will I receive and where is the funding coming from?

Funds are provided in the form of a Payment Package that incorporates the value of environmental benefits from BMPs over 5 years. These upfront start-up funds help you cover the cost of practice implementation. Conservation Innovation Fund (CIF) combines funding for this program from a mix of private and public sources.

How are the funds disbursed?

If you implement the BMP yourself, CIF disburses the Payment Package directly to you. If a Program Contractor is completing the work, the Payment Package will be used to pay the Program Contractor. If project costs exceed the Payment Package, you are responsible for paying the Program Contractor for the remaining costs required to complete the project. If the Payment Package exceeds project costs, CIF disburses the remainder directly to you.

Why do I have to provide historical farm information?

Historical information is needed to accurately model the environmental benefits of the BMP and thus, increase their likelihood of sale.

How long is this commitment?

You would sign a 5-year contract with the Conservation Innovation Fund. After 5 years, you may enter into contract extensions at 5 year intervals for up to an additional 15 years and receive credit payments annually.

Can the generated environmental benefits be used by companies to offset pollution elsewhere in their business?

No. The environmental benefits from your BMPs are unique because they exist within a specific supply shed. An entity who buys these environmental benefits cannot use them to offset pollution elsewhere in their business.

What happens if I can't use my practice for some reason?

This is dependent upon the practice and the reason. Be in touch with your Partnership Specialist to discuss further.

Will my farm be evaluated for a Riparian Forest Buffer and what happens if my farm needs one?

CIF's mission is to improve the environment so we evaluate all farms to see if a Riparian Forest Buffer (RFB) is needed to help reduce runoff into local waterways. If your farm is identified as needing a RFB, then a member of the program's team will reach out with next steps. The RFB along with exclusion fencing and crossing (if needed) will be provided at no cost. Riparian Forest Buffers have a 25 year commitment.

Why are certain practices only available for beef or dairy cattle, or in certain watersheds?

CIF pays for 5 years of anticipated benefits upfront, and relies on models to estimate those benefits. If CIF does not have a model for certain livestock practices and/or specific geographies, anticipated benefits cannot be accurately predicted. CIF hopes to expand eligibility in future rounds.