EAGLE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

50/50 Conservation Grant Program

Application Deadline:

- Midnight, December 15, 2026 for 2027 project implementation

ECCD Mission, Vision, and Strategic Operating Plan

Mission: The Eagle County Conservation District's mission is to represent landowners and agricultural producers by providing tools, resources and support for their stewardship of land and natural resources.

Vision: Expanding our presence to support and advocate for landowners and land users in acquiring resources, while delivering services to meet existing and emerging needs to steward natural resources.

Strategic Operating Plan: ECCD's Strategic Operating Plan lists the top priorities for the future and the goals that will move us forward to achieve our Vision.

Program Background

The 50/50 Conservation Grant program was created to help implement on-the-ground (technical) conservation projects. The program is **open to all private landowners or land managers** located within ECCD boundaries. This grant applies only to private lands and is not available for municipal or government properties. Funding is competitive and allocated annually based on availability of funds. Availability of funds will differ each year and there is no guarantee of a continuation of funds into future years.

This grant provides a **50/50 cost-share** for project expenses, up to a total project cost of $30,000. The grant will cover up to 50% of eligible costs, with a **maximum award of $15,000**. If project costs exceed $30,000, the landowner is responsible for all costs above this amount. The landowner's share may include cash and/or in-kind contributions, as allowed by the grant guidelines listed below. Projects must be completed within one year of the signed contract.

Applications will be reviewed using the Grant Scoring Rubric (LINKED HERE) by a Review Committee of ECCD Board Members and staff, who make the final funding decision. **NOTE:** ECCD will **not** award Beyond Lawn or Noxious Weed Cost Share projects, which include:

- Residential turf removal and/or residential efficient irrigation upgrade projects
- Noxious weed removal and management ONLY (May be funded as a part of a larger integrated management project)

EAGLE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

ECCD prioritizes on-the-ground technical conservation projects that support our Mission, Vision, and Strategic Operating Plan, demonstrating a benefit to the environment and/or community in one or more of the following grant categories: Land, Water, Vegetation, Wildlife or Sustainability. Some examples of projects include (but are not limited to):

Land:

- Soil health improvements such as cover cropping, compost application, reduced tillage, or erosion control
- Regenerative or climate-smart agricultural practices
- Improvements to pasture management, grazing systems, or rangeland health
- Infrastructure that supports conservation on working lands
- Projects that improve soil carbon sequestration or resilience to drought
- Demonstration or pilot projects that showcase best practices for local producers

Water:

- Water efficiency or conservation improvements
- Irrigation infrastructure improvements
- Projects that improve water quality through sediment reduction, nutrient management, or pollutant mitigation
- Wetland or riparian restoration, enhancement, or protection
- Stormwater management or green infrastructure projects
- Monitoring or assessment projects tied to on-the-ground improvements

Vegetation:

- Native plant restoration or revegetation projects
- Forest health treatments such as thinning, biodiversity enhancement, fuels reduction, or prescribed fire preparation
- Defensible space projects that reduce wildfire risk while maintaining habitat health
- Pollinator habitat creation or enhancement
- Post-disturbance restoration

Wildlife:

- Habitat restoration or enhancement for native wildlife species
- Projects that improve wildlife connectivity or migration corridors
- Measures to reduce human-wildlife conflict
- Projects that mitigate impacts of development on wildlife and natural resources

Sustainability:

- Projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions while conserving natural resources
- Demonstration projects that promote sustainable practices within Eagle County
- Composting or waste reduction initiatives

EAGLE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Applications

Applications must be submitted by one of the methods listed under Application Requirements below by midnight on the deadline listed above. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted. All applications will be evaluated equally, regardless of the dollar amount requested.

Application Requirements & Instructions

All applications must be filled out completely. Incomplete applications will not be accepted or scored. Applications must be submitted on or before the deadline and must include:

- ☐ Exhibit A (Project Scope and Deliverables)
- ☐ Exhibit B (Budget and Budget Narrative)
- ☐ Site map showing project location and proposed work
- ☐ All estimates/quotes for budget items (Exhibit B)
- ☐ Pre-project photographs

All above documents must be received by the deadline and submitted either:

- Emailed as a pdf file to Grants@ECCDistrict.org
- Printed and mailed to ECCD: PO Box 360, Eagle, 81631 (must be received before the deadline), OR
- Printed and dropped off at the ECCD office: 1286 Chambers Ave, Unit #201, Eagle

Operational Requirements to Consider

Project Timeline: Projects must be completed within 1 year of signing the contract.

Funding and Distribution: Maximum award is $15,000 and requires a 50% match contribution from the landowner. Funds will be awarded in the form of a grant contract and may be disbursed monthly on a reimbursement basis, mailed by check. Funds may only be used for eligible expenses incurred on or after the award date. Reimbursement requests must meet a minimum of $1,000. Final disbursement of funds will not be mailed until the project is completed and final report has been received.

Matching Contribution: Match requirements may be either “cash” or “in-kind” contribution. In-Kind contributions can only account for half (50%) of the total match required. See Exhibit B instructions below for more detail.

Reports: Final report due upon completion of the project, and must show progress on the metrics and deliverables listed in Exhibit A

EAGLE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Exhibit Guidelines

Exhibit A- Project Scope and Deliverables

Download or print the Exhibit A application form and answer each question thoroughly. This is the section to make your project stand out for the reviewers. In addition to meeting the minimum eligibility requirements, your narrative should illuminate the "why", "what", and "how" of your work. Provide a complete understanding of goals and objectives, background context, scope of work, methodology, funding, who will carry out the work (contractor or partners) and their capacity to complete it on time, and how outcomes will be monitored and measured.

Projects that address a greater number of natural resource concerns and demonstrate clear, measurable outcomes will receive higher scores in the evaluation process. Preference will be given to proposals that achieve the greatest overall impact, including long-term benefits to natural resources, the landscape and the community.

Exhibit B- Proposed Budget and Budget Narrative

Download the Excel spreadsheet and enter your data in the shaded **Gray, Green and Blue** cells only. Some cells contain automatic formulas to calculate totals. The budget should be detailed and include all contributions (cash and in-kind) and expenses.

Note: ECCD funds from other cost share programs cannot be used as a match. This includes ECCD's Noxious Weed Cost-Share Program, the Wolf Mitigation Program, or the Beyond Lawn Program.

This grant will award (receipts will be required):

- **Personnel:** Hired personnel (paystub or check will be required as form of receipt)
- **Professional/contracted services:** Paid contractor time to implement project activity
- **Supplies and materials:** Smaller individual items. Can include fence, seed, irrigation components, etc.
- **Equipment rental:** No-till drill, manure spreader, etc.
- **Travel**: Mileage for project-related travel (reported at the current federal rate, 72.5 cents per mile in 2026)

This grant will not award:

- Equipment purchases: Such as no-till drill, manure spreader, etc.
- Personal landowner or land manager time / labor

Match Contributions: The portion of total project costs that is contributed by the applicant or other sources outside of the Eagle County Conservation District.

- **Cash Match:** Documented purchases- with receipts available for goods, services, equipment or payroll.
    - Has to account for a minimum of 50% of total match
- **In-Kind Match:** Non-cash contributions provided by the applicant
    - Cannot account for more than 50% of total match
    - **Types of In-Kind Match:**
        - **Personal landowner/manager time / labor**: Personal time or labor to implement project activity *(must follow CSU Custom Rates for labor -page 5)*
        - **Travel**: Mileage *(reported at the current federal rate, 72.5 cents per mile in 2026)*

ECCD Contact

For more information and assistance, contact Allegra Waterman-Snow, District Manager, Eagle County Conservation District, Grants@ECCDistrict.org

EAGLE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Submission Check List

☐ **Exhibit A- Project Scope and Deliverables (Application Form)**

- ☐ Thoroughly explains the landowner's goals and objectives
- ☐ Explains the natural resource concerns being addressed and how each selected category (Land, Water, Vegetation, Wildlife, Sustainability) is addressed
- ☐ Explains why the project is needed now and what is likely to happen if it is delayed
- ☐ Describes the expected ecological benefits
- ☐ Describes how the project supports the ECCD mission, vision and Strategic Operating Plan
- ☐ Explains why the methods are appropriate (NRCS or other science-based practices) and who will carry them out
- ☐ Outlines in detail how the project will be implemented
- ☐ Provides a detailed timeline
- ☐ Describes who benefits beyond the applicant's property
- ☐ Provides how the landowner will measure the success of the project
- ☐ Completes the Deliverable Data table with specific, measurable metrics and explains monitoring and reporting

☐ **Exhibit B- Budget and Budget Narrative (Application)**

- ☐ The proposed budget table is filled out thoroughly
- ☐ The proposed budget table shows 50% match from the landowner, with at least 50% of that match being hard cash
- ☐ The budget narrative is filled out with rates, quantities and/or timeframes
- ☐ Includes quotes or estimates for all budget items

☐ **Site map showing project location and proposed work**

☐ **Pre-project photographs**

☐ **Optional: Supporting documents, examples:**

- ☐ Permits
- ☐ Site plans for irrigation projects