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U.S. Department of Agriculture

Farm Service Agency

Conservation and Environmental Programs Division

Biomass Crop Assistance Program

Section 9010 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113– 79) amends Section 9011 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8111) and re-authorizes BCAP.

Announcement No.: **CEPD – 2016 – 22**

For Fiscal Year 2016

Date Issued: **August 19, 2015**

Proposals must be submitted electronically via the Grants.gov website.
Details are provided under Part III.



ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE: Request for Proposals

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER: CEPD – 2016 – 22

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NUMBER: 10.087

DATE: Proposals must be received on Grants.gov by 5:00 pm (Eastern time) on **November 6, 2015.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Section 9010 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113-79) (2014 Act) amended Section 9011 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8111) and re-authorized the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) to support the establishment and production of eligible crops for conversion to bioenergy in selected project areas and to assist agricultural and forest land owners and operators with the collection, harvest, storage, and transportation of eligible material for use in a biomass conversion facility.

BCAP project area proposals designate a delineated geographic area where eligible bioenergy crops can be established and produced. Subsequent to a BCAP project area designation by the FSA, certain producers within the BCAP project area may apply for crop establishment cost-share payments and annual payments, as detailed in Part V (A) of this announcement.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) provides timelines, eligibility information, substantive content requirements for proposals, submission instructions, review criteria, and award administration information necessary to determine whether and how to submit a BCAP project area proposal.

The regulations at 7 CFR part 1450 govern BCAP.

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Part I—Background and Program Authority

A. Background

Section 9010 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113-79) (2014 Act) amended Section 9011 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8111) and re-authorized the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP), first authorized by 9001 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Pub. L. 110-246), to support the establishment and production of eligible crops for conversion to bioenergy in selected project areas and to assist agricultural and forest land owners and operators with the collection, harvest, storage, and transportation of eligible material for use in a biomass conversion facility.

The 2014 Farm Bill specifies the annual amount of funds authorized for BCAP and specifies how funding may be allocated among various activities. Specifically, the 2014 Farm Bill provides mandatory funding of \$25 million for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, and specifies that the Secretary must use not less than 10 percent, nor more than 50 percent, of the funding for each fiscal year for BCAP matching payments. The \$25 million each fiscal year is subject to sequestration or other reductions through the appropriations process. Appropriations for fiscal year 2016 may further limit funds available for BCAP.

B. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Obligation

Executive Order 13112 mandates that the United States government must “prevent the introduction of invasive species and provide for their control and to minimize the economic, ecological, and human health impacts that invasive species cause.”

Consistent with this mandate, FSA analyzed the expected environmental and socioeconomic impacts and benefits of certain BCAP feedstocks, specifically, hybrid poplar and willow (woody species), switchgrass (perennial herbaceous species), and forage sorghum (annual herbaceous species), in a Final BCAP Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) (http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/bcapfinalpeis062510.pdf). On October 27, 2010, FSA published a Record of Decision (ROD) (75 FR 65995) which stated that BCAP project area proposals involving feedstocks not analyzed in the Final BCAP PEIS must include a project area specific Environmental Assessment (EA). The project area specific EA must identify regionally and locally significant features and resources and the potential for effects to those resources from the proposed project area implementation, including the introduction of the feedstock of concern. If certain mitigation measures could be undertaken to avoid significant effects, those measures should be detailed in the project area EA. The project area EA must be developed and submitted consistent with the regulations at 40 CFR § 1501.4(c).

FSA will use the project area EA to determine if the receipt of Federal funds will constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment and if an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) needs be prepared. If FSA determines that the submitted EA is consistent with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. 4321-4347, the regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR parts 1500-1508), and FSA regulations for compliance with NEPA (7 CFR part 799), then FSA shall publish a FONSI or mitigated FONSI to solicit public input on the proposed BCAP project area.

Executive Order 12898 mandates that each Federal agency must make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health, environmental, economic and social effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations, particularly when such analysis is indicated during the NEPA process. The Executive Order emphasizes the importance of NEPA's public participation process, directing that each Federal agency shall provide opportunities for community input during the NEPA process.

Consistent with this mandate and as stated above, FSA will solicit public comment by publishing FONSI for project area specific EAs involving feedstocks not analyzed in the Final BCAP PEIS.

C. Authority

Section 9010 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113-79).

Part II—Timetables, Eligibility, and Proposal Format Checklist

A. Timetables

Due Date: BCAP project area proposals must be received by Grants.gov by 5:00 pm (Eastern time) on November 6, 2015.

Late Submission: BCAP project area proposals submitted after the due date will not be considered for funding.

B. Eligibility – Who May Submit a Proposal

Projects areas are proposed to support the development of an economically and environmentally sustainable biomass industry to produce heat, power, biobased products or biofuels through the development of biomass feedstock.

BCAP project areas must be submitted by a Project Sponsor, which may be either a group of producers or a biomass conversion facility (BCF).

A BCF is a facility that produces or proposes to produce heat, power, advanced biofuels or biobased products.

Please note that because a project will be limited to a designated geographic area, **only** eligible land within a project area will be eligible to be enrolled under a BCAP contract. See 7 C.F.R. 1450.204 and 7 C.F.R. 1450.2 for the definition of “eligible land.”

C. Incomplete Proposals

Incomplete proposals will not be reviewed or considered for funding. Project area proposals that require an EA and do not submit a draft or final EA with their proposal, at the time of submission, will be considered incomplete proposals.

D. Proposal Content Checklist

1. Proposal Content Checklist. Each proposal **MUST** contain the following elements:
 - a) Title page;
 - b) Table of contents;
 - c) One-page Abstract (from Exhibit 1), which includes;
 - (i) Activities. Provide a summary of the proposal that briefly describes proposed project area and feedstock proposed to be funded under BCAP; and
 - (ii) Objectives, performance, and other resources. Include objectives and tasks to be accomplished, the amount of funding requested, how the work will be performed, whether organizational staff, consultants or contractors will be used, and whether other resources will be used;
 - d) Project proposal (Exhibit 1);
 - e) Completed BCAP-1 form, with applicable attachments;
 - f) Completed BCAP-20 form;
 - g) Completed BCAP-21 form;
 - h) Completed BCAP-22 form;
 - i) Letter of commitment from a BCF, near the project area, stating the facility will use the eligible crops intended to be produced in the proposed BCAP project area;

- j) Evidence that BCF has sufficient equity available to operate, if it is not operational at the time the project area proposal is submitted;
- k) Evidence that the BCF has all permits in order, or evidence that all permits will be approved by the time the facility is in operation;
- l) Other information that provides CCC a reasonable assurance that BCF will be in operation by the time the eligible crops are ready for harvest;
- m) A GIS shapefile that outlines the specific geographic boundaries physically located within the United States, described in definite terms; such as watershed boundaries, mapped longitude and latitude coordinates, major highway region or counties.

The Geographic Information Systems (GIS) shapefile for the proposed project area must define each project area boundary as a polygon or set of polygons. A GIS shapefile contains the component files .dbf (attribute data), .prj (projection information), shp (shape format of feature geometry), .shp.xml (geospatial metadata), and .shx (shape index format).

- Project sponsors must name the shapefile `bcap_<code>_a_<prj >.shp`. Code is an abbreviation for the full BCAP project area name, and prj is the type of projection.
- The following illustrates how shapefiles for a hypothetical BCAP project area named Energy Crop All (eca) that are in a geographic coordinate system (GCS) would be named:
 - `bcap_eca_a_gcs.dbf`
 - `bcap_eca_a_gcs.prj`
 - `bcap_eca_a_gcs.shp`
 - `bcap_eca_a_gcs.shp.xml`
 - `bcap_eca_a_gcs.shx`

Note: Submit all shapefiles in the Projected Coordinate System, Universal Transverse Mercator System.

- Shapefile creators should retain multiple polygons and identifying attributes if the file created is based on a feature set such as counties or watershed boundaries. Do not merge separate polygon features into 1 large polygon.

- The following attributes should be included within the polygon shapefile provided.

Name	Type	Length	Data Example
FID	Object Id	Default	
Shape	Polygon	Default	
Type	Text	25	BCAP
Name	Text	255	Energy Crop All
Code	Text	10	Energy Crop All

- The project sponsor shall zip the files and then submit them with the project area proposal upload to grants.gov.
- The zipped file shall include the State name where the majority of the project area is located and BCAP project area name.

Part III—Proposal Delivery/Submission Instructions and Deliverables

A. Preparing and Submitting a Proposal via Grants.gov

All proposals must be submitted online via the Grants.gov web site by the closing date and time indicated in Part II above.

Please note that the electronic submission system is relatively complex for first-time users and involves several preliminary registration steps to be taken before the proposal can be submitted (go to www.grants.gov and click on the “Get Registered” link in the red Applicants section on the left side of the page).

It is virtually impossible to complete the process of electronic submission for the first time if you start just a few days before the due date.

All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a Dun and Bradstreet Universal Data Numbering System (DUNS) number. The DUNS number must be included in the data entry field labeled "Organizational DUNS" on the SF-424 form.

Instructions for obtaining a DUNS number can be found at the following website:
<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html>

In addition to having a DUNS number, applicants applying electronically through Grants.gov must register with the federal System for Award Management (SAM). Step-by-step instructions for registering with SAM can be found here: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>

All applicants must register with SAM in order to apply online. Failure to register with SAM will result in your proposal being rejected by Grants.gov during the submission process.

If you have completed a prior application, you may already have completed the registration process. Please allow sufficient time for the proposal to be submitted electronically and allow time for possible computer delays.

A proposal received after the closing date and time will not be considered for award.

For registered applicants, to submit a proposal:

- Go to www.grants.gov (proposals will ONLY be accepted from this site). Information about submitting a proposal using Grants.gov can be found on the Grants.gov website with supplementary materials.
- Go to the “Apply for Grants” then “Download a Grant Application Package.”
- Search for the application package using CFDA number 10.087 or funding opportunity No. USDA-CEPD-2016-22

Part IV—Proposal Review

A. Evaluation Criteria

Evaluated proposals will be ranked based on merit. Each proposal will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. The dry tons of the eligible crops, as defined in section 9011(a)(4) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, as amended by the 2014 Act, proposed to be produced in the project area and the probability that the material will be used for BCAP purposes, including input on per acre production and the number of suitable acres within the project area;
2. The dry tons of renewable biomass projected to be available from sources other than eligible crops grown on contract acres, including input on the return to producers generally and in comparison to competing land uses;
3. The anticipated economic impact of the proposed project area;

4. The opportunity for producers and local investors to participate in the ownership of the biomass conversion facility associated with the proposed project area;
5. The participation rate by beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers;
6. The impact on soil, water, and related resources, including if applicable a copy of the project area specific EA; if FSA agrees with the context, analysis and findings in the EA then it will issue a FONSI and publish for a 30-day public comment period;
7. The variety of biomass production approaches within a project area, including agronomic conditions, harvest and postharvest practices, and monoculture and polyculture crop mixes;
8. The range of eligible crops among project areas, including the diversity of feedstock proposed compared to current feedstocks already approved in BCAP project areas;
9. Previous receipt of funding;
10. Previous performance in achieving targeted acreage; and
11. Outreach plan for producer signup and capacity for successful producer outreach.

An interagency review panel will conduct a merit review based on the evaluation criteria. The views of the individual reviewers will be used by CCC to determine which proposals will be recommended for funding. Final approval of proposals recommended for award will be made by the FSA Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs (Deputy Administrator).

B. Funding Level

Of the \$25 million in mandatory funding Congress provided for BCAP for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, 10 to 50 percent is reserved for matching payments, leaving between \$22.5 and \$12.5 million annually for project areas. Project area proposals that exceed \$22.5 million, the maximum amount of funding anticipated for FY 2016, will not receive consideration.

C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

During the interagency review process, care will be taken to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may affect review or evaluation.

Names of an individual project sponsor submitting a proposal, proposal content, and interagency review evaluations will be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of the

interagency reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire review process. Therefore, the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants.

D. Access to Review Information

A summary of the panel comments will be available upon request to the applicant after the review process has been completed.

Part V—Award Administration Information

A. Project Proposal Incentive Information

1. General

After a project has been approved, eligible persons and legal entities as defined at 7 C.F.R. 1450.203, may be eligible to receive any of following:

- technical assistance to establish and maintain desired biomass feedstock crops;
- conservation, forest stewardship, or equivalent plan that would cover the acres enrolled in BCAP, including required management and harvest measures; and
- annual rental payments for up to:
 - 5 years for annual and perennial crops; or
 - 15 years for woody biomass; and
 - establishment assistance of 50 percent or capped at \$500/acre or \$750/acre for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, of the eligible establishment costs for perennial crops.

Annual rental payments may be based on the following:

- a weighted average soil rental rate for cropland;
- the applicable marginal pastureland rental rate for all other land except for nonindustrial private forest land;
- for forest land, the average county rental rate for cropland as adjusted for forest land productivity for nonindustrial private forest land; or
- any incentive payment as determined by CCC, as applicable.

Assistance may also be provided to re-establish eligible crops if the crop fails and the producer is not at fault as determined by CCC, subject to the availability of funds.

2. Responsibilities for Project Sponsors

Project sponsors whose proposals are selected will be responsible for submitting annual compliance reports and adhering to any applicable mitigation and monitoring plans associated with the project area. Following selection, project area sponsors will be required to enter into cooperator agreements with CCC that govern data collection and data sharing responsibilities.

B. Reports

1. Deadlines

Performance reports will be required from all project sponsors with awarded proposals and are due annually each September 30. FSA shall develop cooperator agreements for each project area that will outline, in detail, any environmental reporting and monitoring requirements and any data sharing provisions.

2. Contents of Performance Reports

Project area sponsors whose proposals are selected for project area designations by FSA under this program are responsible for managing and monitoring the project, program, sub-award, functions, and activities related to the selected proposal. Performance reports must generally contain brief information that compares accomplishments to the objectives stated in the proposal, and that also:

- a. Documents the status of biomass conversion facility operations including but not limited to, current daily feedstock consumption and output volumes;
- b. Identifies all tasks and provides documentation supporting the reported results;
- c. If an original schedule of operation start-up was provided in the proposal and is not being met, discusses the problems or delays that may affect completion of the project area;
- d. Lists objectives for the next reporting period; and
- e. Discusses compliance with any special conditions on the use of biomass from the designated project area.

All reports submitted to FSA and CCC will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law.

Part VI—General Provisions

A. Cost Principles, Audit, and Administrative Requirements

In addition to the regulations governing BCAP at 7 CFR part 1450, this award is subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, as adopted and supplemented by 2 C.F.R. Part 400, which are incorporated herein by reference.

B. Additional Regulations

The proposed project area designation is subject to the following additional regulations, as applicable:

1. 2 CFR part 25, Universal Identifier and System of Award Management;
2. 2 CFR part 180, OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement), as adopted and supplemented by 2 CFR part 417, Nonprocurement Debarment and Suspension;
3. 2 CFR part 415, General Program Administrative Regulations;
4. 2 CFR part 418, New Restrictions on Lobbying;
5. 2 CFR part 182, Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance), as adopted and supplemented by 2 CFR part 421, Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance); and
6. 7 CFR part 1b – National Environmental Policy Act.

C. Additional General Terms and Conditions

Availability of USDA information

Section 2004 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (16 U.S.C. 3844(b)) and Section 1619 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8791) generally prohibit USDA from releasing certain information, including geospatial information, regarding an agricultural operation. All approved BCAP project area sponsors will be required to sign a cooperator agreement with FSA to become a cooperator under section 1619 to provide for data sharing, reporting, and monitoring.

Civil rights

CCC prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity funded by USDA. (Not all prohibited basis will apply to all programs and/or employment activities. BCAP will also be administered in accordance with all other applicable civil rights law.

Fiscal integrity

The recipient will notify FSA of all concerns relating to the administrative or financial aspects of the award, such as misappropriation of Federal funds.

Performance evaluation

CCC will incorporate performance criteria in the project area acceptance documents and will regularly evaluate the progress and performance of the designated project area.

Publication requirements

Publication of project results or any portions thereof are subject to prior review by FSA. Appropriate credits to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency, must be in any formally published article(s) unless FSA determines a disclaimer is more appropriate.

Part VII—Supplemental Information

A. Contacts

For Further Information Contact –

For questions specific to BCAP’s policy and provisions, please contact Kelly Novak:

- Email Kelly.Novak@wdc.usda.gov and in the Subject Line type: BCAP 2016 Proposal;
- Telephone (202) 720-4053; or
- Mail to:

Kelly Novak
BCAP Program Manager
USDA/FSA/CEPD/STOP 0513
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250-0513.

For questions specific to the environmental requirements and NEPA, please contact Nell Fuller:

- Email nell.fuller@wdc.usda.gov and in the Subject Line type: BCAP 2016 Proposal;
- Telephone (202) 720-6303; or
- Mail to:

Nell Fuller
USDA/FSA/CEPD/STOP 0513
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250-0513.

For questions specific to GIS requirements and shape files, please contact David Taylor:

- Email david.taylor@wdc.usda.gov and in the Subject Line type: BCAP 2016 Proposal;
- Telephone (202) 720-6255;

For other questions related to Grants.gov and the proposal upload process, please contact Kelly Novak:

- Email kelly.novak@wdc.usda.gov or
- Telephone at (202) 720-4053.

B. Reference Links

For access to grants.gov application web site: www.grants.gov

For converting documents to PDF: <http://grants.gov/assets/PDFConversion.pdf>

For access to Grants.gov application guide:
<http://www.grants.gov/assets/ApplicantUserGuide.pdf>

For access to FSA's web site: www.fsa.usda.gov

For further information about BCAP: www.fsa.usda.gov/bcap

C. Definitions

In addition to the definitions for the BCAP under the regulations at 7 CFR part 1450, this definition also applies:

Indian Tribe or national tribal organization is any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska Native village or regional or village corporation as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (85 Stat. 688) (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.

Any inconsistency between the original printed document and the disk or electronic document shall be resolved by giving precedence to the printed document.

-- END OF PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT--

EXHIBIT 1

PROJECT PROPOSAL OUTLINE

A. Abstract

Provide an abstract of the project, **not to exceed 1 page**, which includes the following:

- Activities. Provide a summary of the proposal that briefly describes proposed project area and feedstock proposed to be funded under BCAP; and
- Objectives, performance, and other resources. Include objectives and tasks to be accomplished, the amount of funding requested, how the work will be performed, whether organizational staff, consultants or contractors will be used, and whether other resources will be used over the lifetime of the project.

B. Existing Conditions

Provide a discussion of existing conditions, **not to exceed 4 pages**, includes:

- why the project area is of State or national significance based on the criteria in this paragraph
- a detailed map outlining the geographic area of the proposal in an electronic shapefile format as described in subparagraph D, Part II of the request for proposals
- a description of:
 - the various biomass activities and land uses within the project boundary, such as cropland, range land, forest, urban, etc., including a summary of all land uses within the watershed/project area
 - farm and forest land demographics within the project boundary watershed, including number of farms, types of farms, number of NIPF landowners, average size of farm by type, etc.
 - a detailed description of relevant:
 - environmental factors, including the following:
 - precipitation
 - soil
 - important geological features
 - vegetation patterns
 - wildlife
 - water resources
 - air quality
 - Federally-listed endangered and threatened species
 - economic factors, including the following:
 - Federal or State assistance or tax benefits being provided to the project area present and future
 - historical account of biomass commodity in project area
 - number of existing biomass producers
 - competitive supply chain or existing market.
- Completed BCAP-22 form will be used to establish the existing condition

C. Agriculture and Forestry Related Impacts

This analysis, **not to exceed 4 pages**, must include the following:

- magnitude of agriculture-related and forestry-related environmental impacts
- expected socio-economic impacts and description of potential supply chain impact
- past and projected future trends in agricultural and forestry impacts
- nature of any health-related agricultural or forestry impacts
- past, ongoing, and projected future efforts to address agricultural and forestry impacts through State and Federal programs, including the number of acres in the project area currently under CRP, EQIP, GRP and WRP ACEP, and the Forest Legacy Program.

D. Project Objectives

BCAP project proposals shall include, **not to exceed 2 pages**, specific and measurable project objectives over the lifetime of the project.

Example: Implementation of the project will increase the project area per acre yield by 4,000 tons per year resulting in additional biomass feedstock supply values at of \$2 million per year and resulting in the addition of 70 mm BTU's.

Documentation on the derivation of these objectives must also be included.

E. Project Description

The project description, **not to exceed 10 pages**, must address each of the following:

- the amount of eligible material as defined in Section 9011(a)(6) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, as amended by the 2014 Act, to be produced in the project area and the probability that the material will be used for BCAP purposes
 - Include input on per acre production and the number of suitable acres within the project area
- the amount of material projected to be available from sources other than eligible crops grown on contract acres
 - Include input on the return to producers generally and in comparison to competing land uses.
- the anticipated economic impact of the proposed project area
- the opportunity for producers and local investors to participate in the ownership of the biomass conversion facility associated with the proposed project area
- the participation rate by beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers
- the impact on soil, water, and related resources
 - Include a copy of the Final EA; if FSA agrees with the context, analysis and findings in the document then it will issue a FONSI and publish for a 30-day public comment period

- the variety of biomass production practices within a project area
- the range of crops among project areas including the diversity of feedstock proposed compared to current feedstocks already approved in BCAP Project Areas
- previous receipt of funding
- previous performance in achieving targeted acreage
- capacity for successful producer outreach, number of acres targeted and expected yields to be contracted in the proposed project area
- number of acres targeted and expected yields to be contracted in the proposed project area
- length of time for project implementation
- an analysis of the likelihood that project objectives will be met
- description of the committed BCFs, in addition to BCAP-1 and the feasibility study described in subparagraph I
- simple pay back calculation for return on investment (ROI) could be calculated as such: $ROI = (\text{gain from investment} - \text{cost of investment} / \text{cost of investment})$
- basic information on facility operations over time (hours/day, days/year) information on:
 - existing electric service to the facility, data on consumption, peak and average demand, and monthly/seasonal use patterns
 - existing heating and cooling equipment, including type, capacities, efficiencies, and emissions
 - other project area-specific issues, such as expansion plans or neighborhood considerations that might impact the proposed new system design or operation; or environmental impacts
 - the availability of infrastructure and rail and road service to the facility site
 - a flowchart of BCF's proposed interaction with the project area feedstock supply
- the likelihood that the project will attract sufficient acreage to obligate funds by September 30, 2016 in order to meet the project's objectives

F. Cost Analysis

Project proposals must include a thorough discussion of project costs, **not to exceed 8 pages**, that addresses the following:

- total estimated project costs, including, annual payments, establishment payments, matching payments, BCF infrastructure investments, and community infrastructure investments by fiscal year (October through September)
- a breakdown of all the costs among Federal, State, or local government agencies and private sector contributions
- thorough justification for any incentive payments that producers might receive
- BCAP forms to include in this section:
 - BCAP-20 form
 - BCAP-21 form

G. Monitoring Project Area

Project proposals must include a proposed business operations monitoring and evaluation plan, **not to exceed 2 pages**, which can be used to measure the success of the project.

The proposed monitoring plan for the project area is to include the following:

- a description of the data to be collected and methods to be used to carry out the monitoring plan
- delineation of responsibilities for carrying out the monitoring plan
- provision of annual reports to describe monitoring results
- provision for project modification if objectives are not being met.

H. Public Outreach and Support

Project sponsor is responsible for outreach which shall include, as applicable, the following:

- producers
- biomass industry groups in the State
- farm groups
- farm cooperatives
- ethanol industry
- power industry including Rural Cooperative Power Utilities
- forest industry groups
- leaders of Indian Tribes or national tribal organizations
- conservation and environmental groups
- beginning, socially disadvantaged, and limited resource farmers and ranchers

Project proposals must provide a discussion, **not to exceed 2 pages**, of the nature of public support, especially from Producers.

The proposal should provide evidence of early staging for outreach and community participation, such as listing of producer or community meetings already executed.

This must include a program for public outreach over the duration of the project.

I. Feasibility Study

It is highly recommended that the project sponsor include an acceptable feasibility study, **not to exceed 50 pages**, on behalf of BCF(s) that submitted a commitment letter. Those applicants that submit an acceptable feasibility study will be prioritized for approval.

The biomass conversion feasibility study must be conducted by an independent qualified consultant, which has no financial interest in BCF, and demonstrates that the renewable biomass system of BCF is feasible, taking into account the economic, technical, and environmental aspects of the system.

An acceptable feasibility study **MUST** include the following specified components:

- an executive summary, including resume of the consultant, and an introduction/project overview (brief overview of project location, size, etc.)
- an economic feasibility determination, including information:
 - about the project site
 - on the availability of trained or trainable labor
 - on the availability of infrastructure and transportation to the site
- a technical feasibility determination, including a report that:
 - is based upon verifiable data and contains sufficient information and analysis so that a determination may be made on the technical feasibility of achieving the levels of energy production that are projected in the statements
 - identifies and estimates project operation and development costs and specifies the level of accuracy of these estimates and the assumptions on which these estimates have been based
- a financial feasibility determination that discusses the following:
 - the reliability of the financial projections and assumptions on which the project is based including all sources of project capital, both private and public, including Federal funds
 - projected balance sheets and costs associated with project operations
 - cash flow projections for 3 years
 - the adequacy of raw materials and supplies
 - a sensitivity analysis, including feedstock and energy costs, product/coproduct prices
 - risks related to the project
the continuity, maintenance, and availability of records
- a management feasibility determination
 - recommendations for implementation
 - the environmental concerns and issues of the system
 - the availability of feedstock, including discussions of:
 - feedstock source management
 - estimates of feedstock volumes and costs
 - collection, pre-treatment, transportation, and storage
 - impacts on existing manufacturing plants or other facilities that use similar feedstock
- the feasibility/plans of projects to work with producer associations or cooperatives including estimated amount of annual feedstock from those entities
- documentation that any and all woody biomass feedstock cannot be used as a higher value wood-based product.