



Consideration of Draft Solicitation Notice for Climate Bond (Proposition 4) and Nature Based Solutions Funding of the Rice Incentive Program
Staff Report

This agenda item presents the draft Solicitation Notice for the Rice Incentive Program funded by the Climate Bond (Proposition 4) and the Nature Based Solutions General Fund.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommend that the Board approve the draft Solicitation Notice for Climate Bond (Proposition 4) and Nature Based Solutions Funding for the Rice Incentive Program.

DESCRIPTION

The goal of the Rice Incentive Program is to fund rice conversion projects on areas with highly organic soils in the Delta to stop or reverse ongoing subsidence, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, maintain agricultural viability of land below sea level, and provide overwintering habitat for resident and migratory birds. The Program is intended to support farmers, including historically underserved farmers, who otherwise cannot convert their fields to rice due to inability to pay or finance high upfront conversion costs. The Program will provide funding for technical assistance on rice farming, field conversion, and other related practices.

The Conservancy will use the General Grant Guidelines, approved by the Board on July 24, 2024, to administer the Rice Incentive Program grants. The Solicitation Notice includes programmatic goals of the Program, proposal submission process and timeline, and funding considerations.

Conservancy staff will make grant funding opportunities publicly available by posting the solicitation notices on the Conservancy website and the California Grants Portal (grants.ca.gov) as well as through social media posts.

BACKGROUND

Chaptered on July 5, 2024, Senate Bill (SB) 867, the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (SB 867 93020(a)(4)) (Proposition 4 Climate Bond) provided the Conservancy with \$29 million for projects that reduce the risks of climate change impacts upon communities, fish and wildlife, and natural resources, and increase public access. This Solicitation Notice is to fund the Rice Incentive Program using \$3.5 million of the total Proposition 4 Climate Bond funds appropriated to the Conservancy in fiscal year 2025-26.

Chaptered on September 6, 2022, the Amended Budget Act of 2022 (Assembly Bill 179, Item 3875-101-0001 of Section 111) provided the Conservancy with \$36 million for projects that support Nature Based Solutions: Wetland Restoration (NBS: WR).

SUGGESTED MOTION LANGUAGE:

Move that the Board approve the draft Solicitation Notice for Climate Bond (Proposition 4) and Nature Based Solutions Funding for the Rice Incentive Program.

CONTACT

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