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Please stand by for realtime captions.

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For the people on the telephone, feedback. Best is to listen to either online [Indiscernible]

Please listen either by telephone or Internet. Thank you.

Programs as well. Can you hear us?

We're going to utilize the next 90 minutes if we can to -- getting input [Indiscernible] efforts. From our rancher development program. We will have a discussion and sharing some slides so [Indiscernible] we will leave most of the time for discussions. We are going to leave most of the time [Indiscernible] into the chat box the input you would like to have us [Indiscernible] could I ask everyone on the line to please mute your telephones?

We can hear someone holding a conversation right now.

Can you please mute your telephones?

We are going to go ahead and continue. Please mute your phone your telephones.

We will start with program basics. The status and future issues and your ideas. Thank you for meeting your telephones.

What is the basic purpose of this effort? [Indiscernible] please chime in at any point. The basic efforts for the Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Development Program is to provide education mentoring and technical assistance for those beginning farmers and ranchers.

Here we have a description of a beginning farmer as also described in the [Indiscernible]. The recipients -- must have a collaborative effort. This project effort is not meant for [Indiscernible] that is the way we are set up by [Indiscernible]. The efforts -- collaborations led by or including nongovernmental, community-based, school-based agricultural educations. There is a 25% match that is required for this program effort. Here are the categories we have. Standard projects, educational enhancement projects and also the clearinghouse. The amount for each is listed here.

There are BFRDP priority topics. And letter A through G are listed on the slide and letter H through letter I are listed also. With letter end, other similar subject areas of use to beginning farmers or ranchers. -- Letter end. -- E in., Societal challenge you have in your area is not listed. Within this priority topics which are set by Congress, then what you want to work on [Indiscernible] fall under priority N. Everyone has a role in terms of being able to address a

priority that is important to your stakeholders. You are not going to get any situation where we will share with you that your priorities are not accepted -- [Indiscernible] a priority you have developed through stakeholder efforts, [Indiscernible]

Now there are subsets where there is 5% of funds that will go to projects that serve socially disadvantaged beginning farmers or ranchers, limited resource beginning farmers or farmworkers desiring to become farmers or ranchers. 5% of funds will go to military veterans and we encourage coordination with AgrAbility program. The applicant does not have to address socially advantaged -- disadvantaged or military [Indiscernible] if those are not [Indiscernible] . [Indiscernible]

That is very important. The same as military veterans. You do not have to address that. If you do, you should put a strong plan in place.

As of 2016, we have funded 254 projects. Under the Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Development Program effort. And [Indiscernible] there were no solicitations because at that time [Indiscernible] on that to be release. The projects funded. For the 2017 awards, those awards have been made [Indiscernible] although we can say here is that [Indiscernible] proposals were reviewed by a peer panel and as soon as the awards are official we will make a public announcement [Indiscernible] the awards.

This map shows [Indiscernible] this shows the projects from 2014 through 2016.

What has changed since 2009? We have [Indiscernible] of proposals I had -- as high as 150 to 200% from the beginning. -- We have a new clearinghouse that is managed by the University of Minnesota under [Indiscernible]

We have a USDA wide effort on new farmers and there is a web link shown here.

That are changes here that have been made in 2017, the timing of the cycle, and the maximum size of award. We went from 750,000 to 600,000 and we want to show that [Indiscernible] disparities [Indiscernible] awards whereby if you are awarded [Indiscernible] you come back on your last year and we would like to get ideas by [Indiscernible] in the chat box what you would like to see in the next [Indiscernible] . For example, the first year in 2014, [Indiscernible] developmental grants. [Indiscernible] have your ideas shared. [Indiscernible] provide input. You can type into the chat box or send an email to the address shown on the screen or by fax's. -- Fax. The input is welcome at any time but please we will be to have it on or before June 30.

Here are the sources of BFRDP information. The webpage is shown, the funding opportunity, and from the list -- [Indiscernible - multiple speakers]

The email address is listed here and [Indiscernible] the web address is here.

Here is the contact information of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), BFRDP staff. I would suggest that you should go ahead and type your comments, suggestions, input, [Indiscernible] for today between now and 3:30. We will be happy to take your

comments if you do not mind. Type them into the chat box. Wesley? Do you have any comments or suggestions.

I would like to apologize for all of the feedback and sound. Our usual person who knows how to run all of this had to step out and I have been seriously googling to learn how to operate the mute button. Probably the best way to handle all of these -- the feedback is to do it through the chat box because we would then get the best recording so that we can absorb all this at our own leisure. If you would like to ask questions on the telephone, I can also unmute. If I do that, please encourage -- I would encourage everyone to keep their telephones muted on their end.

I see a question from Kathy Starkweather -- what will be the priorities in regards to recipients, women, veterans, minorities etc. Dennis, please correct me if I'm wrong but I don't believe there is any intention to change. This is all legislated so the legislation has these requirements laid out. And we continue to make sure that we meet the minimum requirements and we hope that the -- the proposed BFRDP programs that focus on these groups .

The group that you would like to address, [Indiscernible] priorities -- falls into the N priority. We can [Indiscernible] those as well.

[Indiscernible] focus in priorities that are relevant to your stakeholders -- that is very important.

Bob has a request for us to move back to the slide that has the changes under consideration for 2017.

[Indiscernible] for example, we say 80,000 per year for three years which is \$240,000. If you have suggestions for a minimum amount that would be great to indicate because we would hate to get an application for \$60,000 over three years -- 75,000 over three years which we have in the past and it will be nice to have a minimum amount that [Indiscernible] can apply for.

We have another idea from Heather [Indiscernible] . Was the total funding allocation is determined and the maximum grant amount is decided on, funds the grants that meets specifications to utilize the funds and not maximize the total grants given out. Example. Last year the maximum was \$100,000. I was awarded \$20,000. Set to accept the reward we had to rework and redo the effort that was spent putting the initial grant together.

That was not in this program.

I think that is a hypothetical. That is not just an example.

[Indiscernible - heavy accent] Is that what she said?

I can see the chat -- hold on one moment everybody.

[Pause] I think it is an idea. Just everyone, please give us a moment to read through this together.

We are probably being boring hosts right now but we're getting a lot of comment and we are keeping track of all of those. But, if you have any questions, rather than suggestions, go ahead and type those as well.

Been Fugate hear the tones of Wesley -- then you get to hear the tones of Wesley and Dennis.

[Indiscernible - heavy accent] We want to thank you for taking the time to join this input webinar. Because a lot of what you have on here in terms of giving us the ideas, well transpire into the requests for applications. For example, last year when we had the input webinar, a lot of the suggestions as you see on the slide changes,[Indiscernible] to include the effort and we appreciate all you are doing [Indiscernible] suggestions. In the chat box. [Indiscernible] there are some [Indiscernible] that must change due to legislation -- for example, legislation requires that 25% of funds be allocated to nonprofit [Indiscernible] you do not have to, but it does go into [Indiscernible] in terms of funding. Depending on where you are placed in terms of funding. It does not mean that you have not been funded but it is a priority that we will look into. For example, [Indiscernible] or no match at all. That is a requirement from Congress.

Dennis, [Indiscernible] ask for when the 20 18th posting will be [Indiscernible] and that will be around December. There is always a little bit of -- sometimes it takes longer than other times but 28 December is a good estimate.

[Indiscernible] in December.

I'm going to archive the PowerPoint?

We can send it to anyone who would like to have it.

Gary's just made a comment that he says is off-topic but it is also very important. We would also like to encourage you to work with beginning farmers get them to sign up for the Census of agriculture.

Thank you Gary.

That is very important. I just saw a fantastic presentation from them and they are getting ready -- it is always a real challenge [Indiscernible] these things. Any help they can get and is very important for beginning farmers to be represented as well as possible.

If you would like to receive a copy of the slides, of the PowerPoint, please send me an email.

They are asking for your email address again.

Let me type it in.

Debodaghe@nifa.usda.gov

Also, if you are [Indiscernible] a proposal, do not plan on being [Indiscernible] please feel free to let us know of your interest.[Indiscernible] immediate proposal.

[Indiscernible - low volume]

One more year.

We have funding for fiscal year 2018 through the farm bill.

This wasn't addressed in the legislation [Indiscernible - low volume]

[Indiscernible - low volume]

Different challenges that arise from years three to six rather than years one through two.

[Indiscernible - low volume]

Colette, one think that was pointed out by a reviewer in our last cycle is that we did not get that many applications. That addressed farmers who were somewhat further along but were still technically considered beginning farmers. That is something for everyone to keep in mind as applicants.

[Indiscernible] projects funded, 2014 through 2016, which is the map we have in our slide. You will notice that there is a lot of [Indiscernible] -- projects funded in the eastern portion of the country. And [Indiscernible] in the middle. Some of those -- [Indiscernible] populated by funding from 2017 and also [Indiscernible] to have more projects funded in the West and in the east -- and not in the central. And when you do not see projects being funded in the Middlebelt, it is not so much because of the success rate [Indiscernible] proposals do not come from those areas. So [Indiscernible] populated area. Please do not assume that the success rate is low. [Indiscernible] the stay sometimes you do not receive applications in those areas.

[Pause] The question from Colette, with the [Indiscernible] as a team proposal. Correct?

That would be [Indiscernible]

[Indiscernible - low volume]

Colette? In regard to your question, about regional learning communities, we have funded projects like that in the past. There is one right now that I cannot remember the name of but [Indiscernible] is running. That is collecting [Indiscernible] of different kinds of educational materials. I'm sorry I cannot remember the details. But, I would check [Indiscernible - multiple speakers]

[Indiscernible] that would address any challenges [Indiscernible - multiple speakers] Application.

So, we welcome more applications. The kind of project you were describing would fit into that educational enhancement team approach. And the amount of award is the same as the standard project. The only difference is that [Indiscernible] enhancement project, it can go up to 4 years. But as a standard project, [Indiscernible] you cannot go beyond three years.

Kathy has a good question. For proposal was in an almost funded position this past year -- the odds improve for being recipient, if I only collected negative comments.

That is a hard question to answer. And the reason why it is hard to answer that is each year, you may receive comment's from a different group of reviewers. All of them will have somewhat slightly different focused areas of expertise and there is always the possibility that there may have been weaknesses on a prior application that will not identified -- were not identified but will be identified in the following year. So, by all means, one should especially if they did relatively well, by all means you should be applying again. Do not just address the comments but my recommendation is to make every effort you can to strengthen in any way possible the application. Him people to get external to review the project get body you know have a really good critical eye of expertise in the beginning farmers (and get give you -- their worst or the best. And don't just take the reviewer comments. It for the comment as well to strengthen.

One thing -- in addition to those, those for great comments you don't just want to address the shortfalls, that is a no-no. A new proposal with a new beginning, that is very important. Because as Wesley mentioned, there is no your team will have the same reviewer. To that post from last year. The advantage you have for a resubmission is that you have to share what you have correct. -- Corrected. A lot of changes are made from one [Indiscernible] proposal even with submissions, from the beginning to the end treated as a new proposal. [Indiscernible] a resubmission and not just address the limitations. Address everything.

And thank on the fourth telling us about the proposal. I was just drawing a blank there. But this is an excellent example of the project and would like to fund more interesting cross national, cross national for it to Duchenne -- institution programs.

Give him seven [Indiscernible] posts. And fund on the average of two or three. For the standard projects, we get on the average of 200 applications and by the time we narrowed down the applications that are being rejected, we are down to about 154 160. On the average, the success rate is about 24 or 25%

I would like to encourage everybody to not just used that use this form but if you have since a colder feedback -- stakeholder feedback that you would like to ponder further before you send it to us, you can email me and Dennis and we will include that with the rest of the comments that we're getting today and that we have to send during things like project director meetings for during [Indiscernible] review and so forth.

The slides will be made available at some point after the webinar is over.[Indiscernible] had to step out today and she will be the one who posts them so they probably will not be available today. But they should be available soon. Give me a moment and I should be able to give you the website where they will be posted.

Basically, we will be posting them at the beginning farmer website so I will paste that into the box's. -- Box.

I will have busy -- Desiree Rucker send out an email when the slides go out -- to the different BFRDP email addresses that we have. So, Colette has suggested a national BFRDP conference .

That sounds like a fantastic idea, most definitely we will taken under consideration. Currently we have the national [Indiscernible] meetings every year and while those are great venues, I can see how if you do not have -- if you are not a project director associated with the project, you would not be coming to those meetings. This is something for us to think about.

And, -- [Pause] In the meantime, this is not a National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) conference but I've been getting a lot of emails from Kathy [Indiscernible] and so, reminding us about the changing [Indiscernible] changing hands conference with -- which will focus on farm and ranch access and [Indiscernible] so that is June 13 through 15th -- June 13-15 and that is a pretty good place to meet with other people the work in the beginning farmer area. As far as I know it doesn't cover the entire spectrum of beginning farmer issues but that is a good place to attend.

Dennis, do you have any suggestions for national meetings that people might like to attend since we don't really have a single beginning farmer/reacher national meeting the way we have with small form -- farm meeting.

I suggested the [Indiscernible] changing hands which is in June.

That's a good one.

It doesn't focus on all aspects of beginning farming as far as I understand.

It is once every four years.

The next will not be until 2020.

And something that we can take under consideration, --, but that is regional also. I would say it is more of a national [Indiscernible] [Indiscernible - muffled audio] instead of every year.

Is something that we will have that is not really beginning farmer focused but will be nationwide -- we will have some discussion of beginning farmers at the 30th anniversary [Indiscernible] conference which is in 2018. Summer of 2018. But again, that is not beginning farmer.

Thank you Colette Will be a lot of other fantastic stuff at that conference as well. -- There will be.

We are threatening to drag Jill out of retirement for that event.

[laughter]

I recently attended back in November or December -- the [Indiscernible] sustainable agriculture conference which had a beginning farmer/reacher focus -- rancher focus and I'm not sure if that is every 4 years or every single year. Of course it doesn't focus on all groups but that may be another conference that is national for people to attend. Or to think about.

[Pause] In addition to any comments that you may have, if you have a chance to look at the [Indiscernible], I would like to see some changes for what we had from 2017. Please feel free to share them. Again, [Indiscernible] any of the requirements, if they are not legislatively mandated, if they are [Indiscernible] from legislation we cannot make changes. But as far as other requirements we can always look into them and make changes as appropriate.

We will be here for another 27 minutes. So please feel free to share any input, suggestions. And we will look at them very closely.

One other conference that comes to mind is the professional [Indiscernible] conference. That is held every first week in December. [Indiscernible] area to look into.

And also, I may use to host one. -- Used to host one. I'm not sure if it is every year or not. -- [Indiscernible] used to host one.

While I have the attention [Indiscernible] I would like to add this and that the average small and medium-sized farm [Indiscernible] until July 28 which is the closing date and we have -- we have [Indiscernible] component and also integrated component -- please, if you know of anyone who is interested from academia, nonprofit, individuals, we will welcome your proposals. The maximum amount you can apply for his \$500,000. And it can be for three years, four years, or five years. Again, [Indiscernible] and [Indiscernible] additional submissions. Is July 28. Have a question for everyone. I believe I received one comment. And that is at the minimum [Indiscernible] where would you like to see us -- the minimum amount of request for the proposal. And what would you like to see is the maximum? We went from 750,000 to 600,000, mainly because we did not have -- there were very few applicants being funded [Indiscernible] with \$750,000 maximum. We brought it down to \$600,000. And that seems to work very well. But again, I know there are two different types of standards, the last project in the small project's. -- Projects.

As I mentioned earlier in the presentation, the quality of proposals we have been receiving go back [Indiscernible] have increased tremendously. Compared to 2014 or 2015. [Indiscernible] quality has increased tremendously and we have more organizations applying so we appreciate all the good work that everyone is doing. And again, if you are not going to be submitting a proposal, we will be happy to have you as a reviewer [Indiscernible] but [Indiscernible] from that project.

One of the requirement that we brought into play last year in terms of eligibility is to have institutions, organizations, and tilt the last year a project [Indiscernible] before they apply. I believe there were comments already that we are going to look at very closely. [Indiscernible] [

Indiscernible] that we have[Indiscernible] projects that have the expertise [Indiscernible] being funded.

[Indiscernible] on funding for BFRDP. The question was asked earlier -- we have \$18 million for next year. And we are going to be asking for proposals [Indiscernible] for [Indiscernible] as well. And I believe this is in 2019. That we can ask for clearing house. But for the 2018, we have \$18 million. And we're hoping that we have [Indiscernible] [Indiscernible] authorized. In 2019.

Otherwise, we may be gone one year with that funding as we do on 2013. We hope that does not happen.

We have four more minutes to go. Please, if you have any final comments questions, concerns, please share them and we will be happy to address them.

Thank you. Thanks to everyone for your participation today.

As you come up with ideas, please share them with myself or Dennis via email.

[Indiscernible] most of July we will be working on the applications. We hope it will be at least some untimely December. We have the funds. The funds are already there [Indiscernible] in 2018. That is not a problem. We need to [Indiscernible] to be ready in December.

Thank you all.

[event concluded]