# **Conservation Acquisition Grant Application**

**Applying**

This is the application form for Agricultural Conservation Acquisition (Acquisition) Grants under the Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program Guidelines (Guidelines). The Guidelines detail the background and eligibility requirements for funding. Applicants should familiarize themselves with the Guidelines prior to completing this grant application and refer to them for questions regarding this form. SALC staff are available prior to the application deadline to provide technical assistance to eligible applicants interested in applying.

**Initial Screening – Pre-proposals**

Applicants are required to submit a PHASE ONE and PHASE TWO pre-proposals to the Department, and receive a determination of “Eligible” on their Phase Two Preproposal prior to submitting an Application. Please refer to the SALC website for additional information.

**Grant Application Submission**

Please use the Grant Application Checklist to ensure that all necessary materials are submitted. Incomplete or Not Ready applications may not be evaluated or considered for funding at the sole discretion of the State. Early consultation with SALC staff regarding proposed projects is strongly encouraged to achieve the most efficient review process possible.

Refer to the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for critical dates and instructions on how to apply.

**Acquisition Grant Application Checklist**

Required Components

All grant applications must include the following:

Application Cover Sheet

Pre-Proposal Review Response

Acquisition Summary Sheet

Narrative Questions

Applicant Resolution of Support

Letter to Planning Director

Appraisal or Support for Estimated Easement Value

Updated Preliminary Title Report, Underlying Documents, Assessor’s Parcel Maps, PTR Review Sheet *(if requested)*

Revised Project Boundary Map *(if requested)*

Revised Building Envelope(s) Map and Excluded Area(s) Map *(if requested)*

Associated Costs Budget Table

Additional Components

*Applicants may submit the following as relevant to their application:*

Proposed Interest Holder Resolution of Support *(if relevant)*

Priority Population Benefits Assessment Tool *(required if providing a priority population benefit)*

Maps that show property characteristics relevant to the project

**Acquisition Grant Application Cover Sheet**

Note to applicant: Text within brackets are examples and guiding text only. Please delete prior to submitting the full application. You can click directly in the grey text box. The font will automatically change to Calibri and the text will be a royal blue color.

**Basic Information**

Project Title:

Real property interest to be acquired:  Easement  Fee

Number of Easements:

Located within a [priority population](https://webmaps.arb.ca.gov/PriorityPopulations/):  **Y**  **N** *[Census tract number]*

Priority Population Status:  **Y**  **N** *[If yes, attach Priority Population Benefits Assessment Tool]*

**Project Funding**

A: SALC Acquisition Request Amount:

B: SALC Associated Costs Request:       *[Up to $60,000]*

C: SALC Management Plan or Carbon Farm Plan Request:       *[Up to $10,000]*

Name or organization of qualified preparer:

D: SALC Total Grant Request (A+B+C):

Match Amount *(toward easement value only)*:

Matching Funds Source:       *[i.e., NRCS-ACEP, WCB-CAPP, etc.]*

Status of Match:

Does all or a portion of the match come from another California Climate Investments program?: **Y**  **N**

If yes, List:

Estimated Easement Fair Market Value:

Estimated Fee Title Fair Market Value *(Fee acquisitions only)*:

**Applicant Information**

Applicant:

Contact Person:

Title:

Email Address:

**Co-Applicant/Intended Interest Holder Information**

***(complete if applicable; delete if not applicable)***

Name:

Contact Person:

Title:

Email Address:

**Preproposal Response(s) (*complete if applicable; insert “n/a” if not applicable*)**

Clearly respond to all concerns identified by SALC staff during the Phase Two pre-proposal review (if any):

Has any project information provided during the previous phases of review changed? If so, describe below (for example; project acreage, etc.):

**Acquisition Summary Sheet**

All fields in this section must be filled out for the application to be considered complete.

**General Information**

Project APN(s):

**Project Acreage**

Total Project Acreage (Assessor’s Acreage):

Prime Farmland Acres:

Farmland of Statewide Importance:

Irrigated Acres:

Non-irrigated / Grazing Acres:

Non-Agricultural Acres:

**Landowner/Lessee Demographics**

Items in the demographics section should be completed for the landowner or lessee who farms or ranches the property. For properties farmed or ranched by the landowner but where ownership of the property is held by more than one individual or by a company or trust, complete this section for the individual(s) who manage(s) the day-to-day operations of the farm/ranch. Information on gender, race, and ethnicity is for informational purposes only and will not be considered in project selection.

The property is farmed/ranched by:

Landowner

Lessee

Both

The person who farms/ranches the property lives in:

A [disadvantaged community](https://ww3.arb.ca.gov/cc/capandtrade/auctionproceeds/lowincomemapfull.htm)

*Census tract number:*

A [low-income household](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayText.xhtml?lawCode=HSC&division=26.&title=&part=2.&chapter=4.1.&article=#:~:text=39713.,communities%20described%20in%20Section%2039711.) *(refer to Health and Safety Code section 39713(d)(1))*

*Annual Household Adjusted Gross Income* (*Applicants may be asked to provide proof of landowner/lessee income, including tax return information, for verification upon request:*

A [low-income community](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayText.xhtml?lawCode=HSC&division=26.&title=&part=2.&chapter=4.1.&article=#:~:text=39713.,communities%20described%20in%20Section%2039711.) *(refer to Health and Safety Code section 39713(d)(2))*

*Census tract number:*

None of the above

The person who farms/ranches the property is:

A beginning farmer

A Veteran

None of the above

The gender of the person who owns the property is:

Female

Male

Non-binary

Do not wish to identify/does not apply

The gender of the person who farms/ranches the property is (if different from above):

Female

Male

Non-binary

Do not wish to identify/does not apply

The race/ethnicity of the person who owns the property is *(check all that apply)*:

African American

Native American

Alaskan Native

Hispanic

Asian American

Native Hawaiian

Pacific Islander

White

Other\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Do not wish to identify/does not apply

The race/ethnicity of the person who farms/ranches the property is *(check all that apply if different from above)*:

African American

Native American

Alaskan Native

Hispanic

Asian American

Native Hawaiian

Pacific Islander

White

Other\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Do not wish to identify/does not apply

**Sale and Subdivision**

Would proposed acquisition prohibit further subdivision of existing legal parcels?:  **Y**  **N**

If no, Explain:

Would proposed acquisition prohibit sale of existing legal parcels separately from other parcels in the project area?:  **Y**  **N**

If no, Explain:

**Water and Mineral Rights**

Water Rights and Source(s):

Third party mineral rights holder(s)?:  **Y**  **N**

Explanation:

Severed mineral rights?:  **Y**  **N**

Explanation:

Evidence of past mining?:  **Y**  **N**

Explanation:

**Existing and Reserved Single-family Residences**

Number of single family **(SF) residences** currently on the property:

Approximate size of each **SF residence** (square footage of living area):

Number of additional **SF residences** to be reserved in easement (if any):

Size restriction (sq. ft), if any, on reserved and/or existing **SF residences**:

**Existing Farm Labor Residences**

Number of farm labor residential structures/units currently on property:

Approximate size of each farm labor residence (square footage of living area):

**Building Envelopes**

**Existing Building Envelopes** on the property?

Number:

Approximate Acres (each):

**Additional Building Envelope(s)** to be reserved (e.g., residential, ag. Employee, agricultural infrastructure)?

Number:

Approximate Acres (each):

If the location(s) of the additional Building Envelopes have not been identified, will the deed language establish a process for the identification of the future building envelope(s)?  **Y**  **N**

**Additional Information**

Other Existing Reserved Rights (e.g., non-agricultural commercial uses, oil and gas site, solar, communication towers)

Please list:

Other Proposed Reserved Rights (e.g., non-agricultural commercial uses, oil and gas site, solar, communication towers)

Please list:

Any critical deadlines?:  **Y**  **N**

If yes, please describe:

**Narrative Questions**

This section should be used to explain attributes of the proposed acquisition that are relevant to the goals of SALC. This section should not exceed **six (6) pages**. Please answer the following questions, maintaining the format below.

1. Provide a brief but thorough description of the proposed project and its scope (farmland quality; location; size; whether landowner or lessee-operated; if lessee-operated, the length of the lease; etc.) Describe how the proposed project will support long-term, economically viable, commercial agricultural production, including whether the property has adequate water availability and water quality for agricultural purposes.
   1. Describe current agricultural uses. Include types of products produced, acreage utilized, number of cow/calf pairs, whether it is a seasonal or year-round operation, etc.;

* 1. For projects where the purpose is to conserve tribal cultural resources, describe how the project supports sustainable management of cultural resources of historical importance to the tribe.

* 1. If not currently in agricultural use, provide a plan (including three-year timeline) for how agricultural uses will be implemented and sustained on the property, and describe what parts of the plan the landowner has implemented.

1. Describe how the project will support infill and compact development and is likely to be converted to non-agricultural uses in the near future.

1. Describe how the project meets one or more of the following program goals:
   1. contributes to carbon neutrality
   2. supports sustainable land management
   3. supports coordinated land use planning
   4. builds climate resilience
   5. reduces risk from extreme climate events
   6. contributes to the State’s effort to combat climate change
   7. safeguards the State’s economic sustainability and food security
   8. protects biodiversity

1. Describe how the acquisition will advance equity and opportunity in one or more of the following ways:
   1. Provides meaningful benefits to a priority population as identified using California Air Resources Board’s [Priority Population Benefits Assessment Tool for Land Conservation](https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/auction-proceeds/ccidoc/criteriatable/criteria-table-landcon_draft_2021-05-03.pdf).

* 1. Is led by or supports California Native American tribe’s ownership of, co-management of, and access to natural lands and Indigenous cultural resources on the property.

* 1. Provides secure land tenure for a period of 10 or more years for farming or ranching on the property to a beginning or veteran farmer or rancher, or a farmer or rancher who is a member of a Federally recognized or non-federally recognized California Native American tribe on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission.

1. Describe how the acquisition provides co-benefits beyond the program goals, including environmental, economic, public health, or other co-benefits. Please include how the project would not result in substantial burdens to residents of disadvantaged and low-income communities, such as physical or economic displacement of low-income or disadvantaged community residents or businesses, including small businesses, and/or women- or minority-owned businesses; or increased exposure to toxics or other health risks.

1. *(For projects where the property is located in a critically overdrafted basin):* What is the individual groundwater allocation for the property and what measures has the landowner/lessee taken to ensure that the current and proposed agricultural operation on the property will remain within that allocation? If individual allocations have not been developed within the groundwater basin, what is the sustainable yield for the groundwater basin and are the property’s agricultural operations considered within the basin’s sustainable yield?

1. *(For projects where the proposal is for fee title acquisition*): How will the property be utilized for agricultural use? Do you plan to lease or sell the property and in what time frame will that occur?

*a.* If the proposal is for fee title acquisition, would you be willing to prioritize the sale or lease of the property to a socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher? (The answer to this question will not be considered in your project’s score.)

**Applicant Resolution of Support**

The applicant is required to submit a signed resolution of support from its board of directors or similar governing body authorizing the submittal of a grant application to the SALC. The resolution must:

* Authorize the submittal of an acquisition grant application to SALC;
* Authorize entrance into a grant agreement with the Department for the project and agree to accept the template terms and conditions, available in Appendix F of the Guidelines, if the project is awarded funding;
* Certify that no conflict of interest or appearance of conflict of interest exists for any member of the applicant’s Board of Directors, or Council as relates to the project; and,
* Authorize a designated individual to execute tasks, such as signing documents, related to the application, grant agreement, and acquisition, if the project is awarded funding.

**Notification Letter to the Planning Director**

The applicant must provide written notification to the local government’s Planning Director about the application. The letter should indicate the applicant’s intent to apply for a grant to acquire an agricultural conservation easement, the Department’s contact information in case the local government has comments, and the anticipated date of the Strategic Growth Council meeting at which the easement application is proposed to be considered for approval. The notification should include the applicant and not the landowner’s name.

**Preliminary Title Report and Assessor’s Parcel Map(s)**

If an updated preliminary title report or associated documents was requested as part of the pre-proposal feedback, provide an updated preliminary title report for review.

**Appraisal/Support for Estimated Acquisition Value**

A current appraisal is not a required component of the application. However, the applicant must provide support for the acquisition value identified in the application cover sheet. This support may be in the form of a preliminary or complete appraisal, or a detailed estimate for the anticipated cost of the acquisition, and material to support the valuation estimate. SALC reserves the right to require that a current appraisal accompany the grant application if, in its sole discretion, it determines that insufficient data is available to support an estimate.

SALC will only fund the appraisal that is approved by the state and used for the completed acquisition.

**Project Boundary Map and any Excluded Area(s) Map**

If the applicant has revised the project boundary following receipt of pre-proposal feedback, or if the project boundary has changed, provide an updated boundary map (PDF format) with the application.

Applicants may also submit maps depicting the proposed project boundary relative to Important Farmland data, nearest Sphere of Influence, priority planning areas, and other protected lands in the vicinity. If the applicant can document additional conserved lands or resource values that support the proposal, they are encouraged to provide supplemental maps to that effect.

Applicants are encouraged to provide GIS shapefiles of any data included in their maps.

**Building Envelope(s)**

If the applicant has revised the building envelopes or excluded areas associated with the project following receipt of pre-proposal feedback, provide an updated building envelope and excluded areas map (PDF format) with the application.

Building envelopes must be designated around existing residences, as well as sites for proposed future residences.

**Priority Population Benefits Assessment Tool (AB 1550) – OPTIONAL**

This checklist is to be used by applicants claiming to provide a benefit to a priority population. Benefits must address a common need to a disadvantaged community. The chosen approach must be identified on the checklist and accompanied by supporting documentation that a disadvantaged community need is being met. This checklist will be available on the Department website.

Projects must satisfy at least one criterion in Step 1, one criterion in Step 2, and one criterion in Step 3, and the benefit claimed must meet the need identified to be considered to provide direct, meaningful, and assured benefits to priority populations, receive priority population status through SALC, and count toward statutory investment minimums. Documentation must be provided to support all claims and will be evaluated by SALC in consultation with CARB.

**Management Plan / Carbon Farming Plan - OPTIONAL**

If the applicant is requesting reimbursement for a Management Plan or Carbon Farming Plan, provide a description of who the proposed preparer is and how they meet the required qualifications. Refer to Appendix E in these Guidelines. If the proposed preparer of the Management Plan or Carbon Farming Plan is unknown at this stage, state “unknown at this time.” Projects indicating “unknown at this time” may receive a lower readiness ranking.