

Oklahoma Conservation Commission

FY27 District Innovation Growth (DIG) Program

The Oklahoma Conservation Commission is pleased to announce an opportunity for Conservation Districts to receive up to \$10,000 for special innovative projects throughout the state. The total allocation for this program will not exceed \$50,000 to be spent during the fiscal year 2027. Ideally, funds will be awarded to at least 1 district in each of the 5 areas; however, all districts will be evaluated together. The number of approved projects per area and awarded dollar amounts may vary due to proposal amounts, scope and impact of projects, and volume of applications.

This is a competitive process, with creativity and innovation being major factors in the evaluation of proposals. Finalists may be required to participate in a web interview and project presentation with members of the selection committee before final awards are made. Progress reports and a presentation at next year's OACD area meeting will be required from the funded districts.

Awarded districts will receive funds in installments. Payment timelines will be based on demonstrated need, proposed budget, and actual expenditures once the project is underway. Districts will be required to enter into a program agreement with the OCC before receiving the award funds and must provide progress reports with an account of all project expenses according to the schedule listed below.

To encourage innovative ideas, project eligibility guidelines are minimal; however, proposals must be for a project that meets the district's conservation mission, is outside of the district's current normal course of business, and involves district director participation. A district that applied previously, but did not get funded, can apply again for the same project; however, improvements to the proposal should be made, the latest guidance followed, and new application form used. A previously funded district can apply for the new program year for a new project or for another phase of their previous project, but only if all aspects of the previous project have been finalized (implementation, payments, progress reports, etc.) or are on course to be completed as required; an additional phase proposal cannot be for anything that was included in the original funded project. Projects cannot be for employee salaries or bonuses. Awarded funds may not be used for employee compensation, gift cards, cash awards, or giveaway items.

Only one application per district may be submitted.

All qualified Conservation Districts in the state of Oklahoma are urged to apply.

Think outside the box!

How to Apply

1. Complete the fillable application form.
2. Submit completed application and any other documentation as one PDF file attachment sent via e-mail to your Area District Coordinator (ADC) before 4:30 pm on October 1, 2026.
3. Receive an email confirmation of your project submission.

How your Application will be Evaluated

- Innovation - *Proposal is creative and shows innovation.*
- Justification - *Proposed activity/actions reach beyond the basic operational requirements of the district.*
- Benefits - *Project benefits conservation and stewardship efforts.*
- Staff and Director Capacity - *Current staff and directors have the capacity to complete the project.*
- Director and Partner Involvement - *Directors must participate; partner involvement is optional.*
- Implementation Process and Objectives - *Processes and milestones are clearly identified.*
- Budget - *An itemized list of all costs associated with the project are provided; matching funds (if any) and a timeline for expenditures are also included.*
- Sustainability - *The district will be able to maintain activities beyond the program period lifespan/the project will last beyond the program period.*
- Application is Complete - *All sections of the application are complete; letters of support are included if partners are involved; director signature acknowledges the board's commitment to the proposal.*
- District Deliverables - *The District is currently in good standing with the OCC; pre-claims, minutes, and other documents are being submitted correctly and timely.*
- Professionalism - *The proposal is neat; spelling and grammar are correct; writing is clear and concise.*

Timeframe

October 1, 2026	Proposal due to your ADC
October 31, 2026	Finalist interviews complete, if necessary
November 2026	Finalists selected, announced at area meetings, project implementation begins
December 31, 2026	All funds awarded, program agreements signed, and payment timelines finalized
January 15, 2027	Progress and expense report due
April 15, 2027	Progress and expense report due
July 15, 2027	Progress and expense report due
November 1, 2027	Final project and expense reports due
November 2027	Area Meeting presentations by the districts that were awarded funds

Questions

For questions regarding the DIG Program or proposal submission, please contact your Area District Coordinator:

- Area I, Lacie Landers (lacie.landerson@conservation.ok.gov, 580-290-0585)
- Area II, Tammy Curry (tammy.curry@conservation.ok.gov, 405-593-2298)
- Area III, Rhonda Bowman (rhonda.bowman@conservation.ok.gov, 918-859-6112)
- Area IV, Amy Weathers (amy.weathers@conservation.ok.gov, 405-882-0504)
- Area V, Lisa Grey (lisa.grey@conservation.ok.gov, 918-863-6114)