

Northeast Ecosystem Services Assessment Fellow SCOPE OF WORK

INTRODUCTION

With the right support, regional adoption of production practices that provide ecosystem services at scale can increase farm profitability and sustainability, position agriculture as a leader in climate change mitigation/adaptation, build the resiliency of rural and urban communities, and increase the appeal of agricultural professions to a wide range of young people.

The Association of Northeast Extension Directors (NEED) and the Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (NERA) have come together with the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development to move the northeast region's Land Grant Institutions and partners towards providing this support. The Fellow's work is the first critical element of this effort, which will culminate in the delivery of a working Northeast Ecosystem Services Symposium in November 2021.

Over five months, the Northeast Ecosystem Services Assessment Fellow (the Fellow) will work in coordination with the Northeast Ecosystem Services Symposium Planning Committee (Planning Committee) and the Extension Foundation to research and produce an assessment of ecosystem services practices, policies, and relevant organizations in the northeast region. The assessment will build capacity and expand the portfolio of the Cooperative Extension and Agricultural Research Station Systems to support and encourage producers to deliver ecosystem services on working lands.

For the purposes of this project the northeast region includes Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and West Virginia.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Fellow will be funded to complete and deliver a longitudinal assessment of the relevant agriculture, animal production, and agro-forestry related (henceforth ag-related) ecosystem services practices, policies, programs, and organizations in the northeast region. This assessment will include information on:

- The **organizations** working to support, subsidize, and reward the implementation of ecosystem services practices across ag-related enterprises in the northeast region. This includes the funding they make available and the

programs they deliver. Entities will include but are not limited to state Cooperative Extension Services, Agricultural Experiment Stations, the Northeast Climate Hub, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

- Current **state and federal policies and programs** that reward ag-related producers for the ecosystem services they provide.
- The ecosystem services **practices** that are most relevant to northeast ag-related enterprises at various production scales. For example, soil health, pollinator support, and biodiversity.
- The **ways producers are increasing their revenue** by leveraging and/or marketing the ecosystem services they provide.

The completed Assessment will:

- Inform the design and audience of a series of virtual listening sessions and the Working Symposium.
- Increase the knowledge of Northeast LGU Extension and Research, partners, and producers on current northeast agricultural ecosystem services activities, opportunities, and gaps.
- Integrate fragmented knowledge for future program, practice, and policy design.
- Encourage dialogue between producers, LGU Extension and Research programs, and policy makers.
- Along with the results from the virtual listening session and following working symposium, inform the potential development of funding streams, and integrated extension and research activities, policy proposals, and more. opportunities, and challenges.

DELIVERABLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The selected Fellow will be expected to deliver a final written landscape assessment in the form of an ePublication and any background datasets created by 01 August 2021.

The Fellow will also be expected to:

- Complete regular check-ins with Extension Foundation personnel.
- Attend monthly Northeast Symposium Planning calls and report on progress upon request.
- Present the landscape assessment findings and data to NEED, NERA, invited personnel, and partners through at least one online professional development opportunity.

The Fellow will be encouraged to submit/adapt all or part of the Assessment work as a publication to a peer reviewed journal in addition to the Extension Foundation ePublication.

COMPENSATION

The selected Fellow will receive \$10,000 to be utilized before 01 August 2021 to complete the listed deliverables.

REPORTING & OVERSIGHT

The Fellow will be responsible for the assessment as the primary author, with oversight provided by the Extension Foundation and the Planning Committee. The Extension Foundation will provide technical assistance, serve as the publisher of the ePublication, and assist in the development of the web-based data repositories. The Extension Foundation will also provide technical support and marketing for the Fellow's professional development offering.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants should submit a proposal (500 words or less) and CV (or multiple CV's if proposing a Fellow team) by 5pm ET, April 5, 2021.

Proposals should address how the Fellow will undertake the work detailed above and will utilize \$10,000 provided to support that work. Funds may:

- support the work of a single Fellow.
- support the work of two individuals from one or two institutions who will work together, sharing the effort, each receiving an appropriate percentage of the funds related to their effort.
- support the work of a single Fellow providing subsequent guidance and oversight to a doctoral student or post-doctoral fellow.

The Fellow, or all members of the proposed Fellow team, must hold or be pursuing a relevant Ph.D. The Fellow, or at least one member of the Fellow team must be employed at a Land Grant University in the northeast region. The Fellow may be on sabbatical.

Proposals & CV(s) should be submitted through the Extension Foundation portal: <https://registry.extension.org/210774609478870>

For additional questions feel free to contact:

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