

Summary of the Growing Smarter Grants' Land Acquisition Process

1. Petition to Reclassify State Trust Land

Eligible party submits petition to the ASLD to nominate and reclassify an eligible parcel of state trust land as suitable for conservation purposes.

2. Reclassify State Trust Land

ASLD implements reclassification process; notifications, hearings, evaluations, impacts, etc. If approved, land is reclassified as suitable for conservation purposes.

(Steps 1-2 approx. one year process)

3. Withdraw Reclassified Land (opt.)

ASLD may withdraw reclassified land for sale or lease for 3-5 years to allow time for applicant to prepare management plan and raise matching funds.

Commissioner may adopt a management plan for property to allow existing and conservation uses to be coordinated to protect both uses and values.

4. Apply to Acquire State Trust Land

Eligible applicant submits application to ASLD to purchase or lease state trust land reclassified as suitable for conservation purposes.

5. Process Purchase or Lease Application

ASLD implements process to bring conservation land to public auction; comment period, surveys, appraisals, evaluations, sale or lease conditions, reviews, approvals, etc.

(Steps 4-5 approx. one year process)

6. Develop Grant Application Process

ASPB develops and implements a Growing Smarter grant program, guidelines, qualifications and application process for Land Conservation Fund monies. Grant manuals available Dec. 1999 (tentative date).

7. Apply for Growing Smarter Grant

Eligible applicant submits Growing Smarter grant application to ASPB to receive Land Conservation Funds (50/50 match required) for state trust lands. Due date for first grant applications is Feb. 26, 2000 (tentative date).

8. Evaluate Application and Award Grant

ASPB awards grants, conditional on applicant being successful at ASLD auction. Grant of money is valid for 18 months; may be extended 12 months if auction is not held. First grant awards approved in Sept. 2000.

(Steps 7-8 approx. seven month process)

9. Hold Public Auction

After final review and approval by Commissioner, ASLD advertises auction for 10 weeks, then public auction is held.

10. Land Acquired and Conserved

If successful, applicant purchases or leases state trust land with Land Conservation Funds and implements conservation management plan.

The above process refers to the purchase or lease of state trust land with Land Conservation Funds. Arizona State Parks Board (ASPB); Arizona State Land Department (ASLD).

ARIZONA'S GROWING SMARTER GRANTS

The Growing Smarter Grants and Land Conservation Fund are designed to encourage the conservation of Arizona's open space and the preservation of select parcels of state trust land in and around urban areas for open space to benefit future generations.

•consists of three fund accounts:

1. Conservation Donation Account

Monies are used to match monies in the Public Conservation Account for grant awards.

Monies come from general donations or property specific donations solicited by the Conservation Acquisition Board; this account may also include other donations, if any.

2. Public Conservation Account

Monies are used to fund the purchase or lease of state trust land and for conservation-based agricultural projects.

Per the 1998 Growing Smarter Act, the Legislature shall appropriate from the General Fund \$20 million each year for 11 years (FY 2001-FY 2011); this account may also include monies from any other designated source.

3. Administration Account

Monies are used by Arizona State Parks to administer and manage the Growing Smarter Grants.

Not more than 5% of the amount deposited in the Public Conservation Account each fiscal year or \$500,000, whichever is less, can be used annually for program administration from the investments of the Public Conservation Account. Any unobligated amount shall be credited to the Public Conservation Account.

•consists of two grant programs:

Grant Program I: State Trust Land Acquisition

The Arizona State Parks Board (ASPB) may award conditional grants to eligible applicants (the state, its political subdivisions, and certain non-profit organizations) to purchase or lease or purchase development rights of certain state trust land for conservation purposes. Funds awarded for this program must be matched equally from monies in the Conservation Donation Account or from other private or governmental sources. The grant of money is valid for 18 months and may be extended 12 months if the required public auction has not been held.

Grant Program II: Conservation-based Agricultural Management Alternatives

ASPB may award grants to individual landowners or grazing/agricultural lessees of state or federal land to implement conservation-based management alternatives using livestock or crop production practices or yield reductions to provide wildlife habitat or other public benefits that preserve open space. Not more than 10% of monies in the Public Conservation Account can be awarded each fiscal year for this program. The grant of money is valid for 18 months.

Relating to Grant Programs I and II: In any fiscal year, not more than 50% of the monies in the Public Conservation Account, with matching monies from the Conservation Donation Account, may be awarded with respect to land in any one county.