



ARKANSAS

Economic Development Commission
RURAL SERVICES

APPLICATION PACKET

FISCAL YEAR 2016

GAME AND FISH WILDLIFE
CONSERVATION EDUCATION GRANT PROGRAM

DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 30, 2015

ARKANSAS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION, DIVISION OF RURAL SERVICES
ARKANSAS RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

For Questions Contact:
Wildlife Grants Analyst
900 West Capitol, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 682.6011 | 1-888-RURAL-AR
Email: RuralServices@ArkansasEDC.com
www.RuralServices.Arkansas.gov

Arkansas Economic Development Commission, Division of Rural Services and the Arkansas Rural Development Commission

The Arkansas Economic Development Commission (AEDC), Division of Rural Services (DRS), is charged with assisting rural communities with a population of 20,000 and under. Established under Act 302 of 1991, and merged with the Arkansas Economic Development Commission under Act 8 of the 2015 First Extraordinary Session, DRS assists local agencies in rural areas with information and technical assistance. Currently, more than 80% of Arkansans live in rural areas.

The Board of Directors of the Arkansas Rural Development Commission (hereafter Arkansas Rural Development Commission or ARDC) is a group of citizens from rural Arkansas. Seven of its members are appointed by the Governor, two are appointed by the Senate President Pro-Tem, and two are appointed by the Speaker of the House. Commissioners serve multiple-year terms and meet throughout the year to discuss rural issues that affect Arkansans.

The mission of these two groups is to *"Enhance the quality of life in rural Arkansas."*

One focus of the Division of Rural Services is to be a source of information for rural citizens and provide support services to rural communities. DRS publishes a quarterly newsletter that covers rural policies and topics. The Division also hosts an annual conference and local forums around the state throughout the course of the year.

In 2015, the Arkansas General Assembly passed Act 371 which amended the laws for the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Education Grant program (hereafter known as the Game and Fish Wildlife Conservation Education Grant Program). This legislation transferred the administration of the program under the control of the Division of Rural Services. The Game and Fish Conservation Education Grant Program is a partnership between DRS and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC) that converts portions of county fine money into grant funds for school conservation education programs.

General Information and Eligibility

Through the Game and Fish Wildlife Conservation Education Grant Program, the Arkansas Rural Development Commission and the Division of Rural Services, and in consultation with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, strive to enhance the level conservation education in the state by providing incentive grants. The Game and Fish Conservation Education Grant will assist school and conservation districts in the creation and maintenance of conservation education programs.

With this grant program, all school district and conservation districts are eligible to apply for assistance regardless of district size or population. The funding availability will vary by district as the funds collected are county specific. This means that only fine money collected in a certain county can be used as grants funds for that county.

Funding Availability

As funding availability is county specific, grant allocations are separate for each county. The Division of Rural Services strives to fund as many projects as possible.

What Type of Projects are Eligible

Programs eligible for funding consideration under the Game & Fish Wildlife Conservation Education Grant Program include, but are not limited to:

- Study of general fish and wildlife conservation issues
- Project WILD Workshops
- Arkansas National Archery in the Schools Program (ANASP)
- Arkansas Youth Shooting Sports Program (AYSSP)
- Hooked on Fishing - Not on Drugs (HOFNOD)
- Arkansas Stream Team
- School Yard Habitat Site Development
- Specialized AGFC conservation education/educator training workshops focused on the programs above
- Funds also may be used by educators to take students on field trips to AGFC Nature Centers, Conservation Education Centers and Wildlife Management Areas

What Type of Projects are Ineligible

Projects not eligible for funding consideration under the Game and Fish Wildlife Conservation Education Grant Program include, but again are not limited to:

- Salaries or any other compensation
- Day to day maintenance
- Building of permanent structures
- Reimbursements of any kind

Note: If you are not positive that your project is eligible, please call and speak to a Grants Analyst at 1-888-RURAL-AR or AGFC Education Division at 1-501-223-6331.

Application Process

The program operates on an annual basis. Fiscal Year 2016 applications will be accepted beginning October 1, 2015 and ending November 30, 2015. Applicants must gain the approval of their local school principal or conservation district conservationist who will be ultimately responsible for the grant should it be received.

The local school principal or conservation district conservationist must affix his or her signature to the following documents for the application to be considered complete:

- Certification letter
- Application

Applicants must submit an original application with original signatures.

Application Review and Awards Presentation

Applications are numbered and reviewed for completeness and eligibility in the order received by the Division of Rural Services. Individual proposal consultations can be arranged with staff by appointment. Applicants are encouraged to submit applications well before the deadline to allow DRS staff time to thoroughly review the application and assist applicants in correcting any deficiencies prior to the deadline.

Applications received postmarked after the deadline date will not be eligible for consideration.

After staff review for completeness and eligibility, applications undergo a review process by the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission Education Department. DRS and AGFC submit funding recommendations, in the following order, to the Arkansas Rural Development Commission, Governor's Office and the Legislative Council. Following final review and approval, the grants are awarded by mail.

Reporting Requirements and Responsibilities

In compliance with Act 1009 of 1991, project funds will be expended through a fund established on the books of the district. All project expenditures, with invoices attached, shall be approved by the school principal or conservation district conservationist and remain on file in the office of the district for three years or until audited, whichever is later.

All project expenditures must be expended within one year after the date of the award. A final report, including cancelled checks and receipts of all funds expended, along with the state's portion of any unspent funds, must be submitted by the school principal or conservation district conservationist to DRS and subsequently to the Chief Fiscal Officer of the state. This must be done no more than 60 days following the project's completion or within the one year period of the grant award, whichever comes first.

Game & Fish Wildlife Conservation Education Grant Application

School/Conservation District _____ County _____

Physical Address _____

State Senator _____ Senate District Number _____

State Representative _____ House District Number _____

Principal/Conservationist Name _____

Amount for which you are applying \$ _____

Total project cost \$ _____

1.) What is the conservation project for which you are applying? (Briefly describe)

2.) List the learning objectives associated with this project.

3.) How many students will benefit from this program?

4.) Please include how you will prepare for this project? Additionally, any follow up?

5.) Have you previously received any AGFC fine funding? If yes, please explain.

6.) Are any other funding sources associated with this project?

7.) Please list any AGFC programs that your district is currently involved in. (Hunting Education, Boating Education, Youth Shooting Sports, Project Wild, National Archery in Schools, Hooked on Fishing Not Drugs, or Centers visited)

8.) List equipment, facilities, and other resources relevant to your application and their current condition. (Please attach another sheet if necessary)

Cost Estimate Breakdown

Please itemize the cost estimate for the project below as much as possible. You may add extra sheets if necessary. Backup documentation for each line, including in-kind materials and labor, is required (professional estimates, catalog/website pages, letters of intent to donate, etc.)

<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost</u>
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$\$ _____

Provide the information below with persons who are knowledgeable about the application. The third contact is for the school principal or conservation district conservationist.

Contact One (Applicant):

Name _____ Fax _____
Title _____ Email _____
Address _____ Phone _____
Phone 2 _____ Signature _____

Contact Two:

Name _____ Fax _____
Title _____ Email _____
Address _____ Phone _____
Phone 2 _____ Signature _____

Contact Three (Principal/District Conservationist):

Name _____ Fax _____
Title _____ Email _____
Address _____ Phone _____
Phone 2 _____ Signature _____

With my signature above, I do hereby certify that I have read, understand, and support the above application for grant funds through the Game & Fish Wildlife Conservation Education Grant Program. I further certify that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the rules and regulations governing the grant programs.

Additional Information needed should this application be chosen for funding:

Local Newspapers: (1) _____ (2) _____

Address: (1) _____ (2) _____

City / State / Zip: (1) _____ (2) _____

Certification Letter

Date _____

Arkansas Game & Fish Wildlife Conservation Education Grant Program
c/o Arkansas Economic Development Commission, Division of Rural Services
900 West Capitol, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Members of the Arkansas Rural Development Commission:

On behalf of the conservation/school district of _____, I am writing to request your assistance in securing a state grant under the Arkansas Game & Fish Wildlife Conservation Education Grant Program. Proceeds from the \$_____ grant, if awarded, will be used for the following project, as outlined in the enclosed application:

I designate myself, District Conservationist/Principal of _____ as the person ultimately responsible for the administration of the state grant, if awarded. Project funds from all sources will be expended through a fund established on the books of the district of _____, and all project expenditures with invoices and cancelled checks attached, in addition to copies of all application materials, will remain on file in the district office for three years or until audited (whichever is later), to assure that funds were used for the purposes for which they were made available.

If additional information is needed concerning this project, please feel free to contact me or the project's primary contact person (name) _____ at (phone number) _____.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Principal/Conservationist: _____

County: _____

Phone Number: _____

Checklist for a Complete Game & Fish Conservation Education Grant

In addition to the grant application, communities must include the following, in order, for the application to be complete. Failure to submit any of the required documents by the cycle deadline will result in an incomplete application and will not be reviewed by the Arkansas Rural Development Commission for grant consideration. Please use this sheet to double check that all required information is submitted such as:

- A signed Certification Letter enclosed with application from the principal or conservationist complete with signature and correct date and calendar year.
- Letters of public support from the community's local governing State Senator and State Representative.
- Backup documentation for all items listed in the project cost estimate.
- The original grant is mailed PLUS one copy of the entire application packet.