OMB Number: 4040-0019
Expiration Date: 02/28/2025

Project Abstract Summary

This Project Abstract Summary form must be submitted or the application will be considered incomplete. Ensure the Project Abstract field succinctly describes the project in plain language that the public can understand and use without the full proposal. Use 4,000 characters or less. Do not include personally identifiable, sensitive or proprietary information. Refer to Agency instructions for any additional Project Abstract field requirements. If the application is funded, your project abstract information (as submitted) will be made available to public websites and/or databases including USAspending.gov.

Funding Opportunity Number

D-AQD-FA-22-003

CFDA(s)

15.018

Applicant Name

North Dakota Industrial Commission-Dpt. of Mineral Resources

Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project

IIJA Orphaned Well Plugging and Reclamation Project

Project Abstract

The North Dakota Industrial Commission (NDIC) Department of Mineral Resources (DMR) is seeking a $25 million State Initial Grant authorized by Section 40601(c)(3) of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL; Public Law 117-58). The NDIC will use initial grant funds to implement and carry out an orphaned well plugging and reclamation program as provided under Section 40601(c)(2) of the BIL.

The NDIC has identified several wells located on State-owned or privately-owned land in North Dakota that meet the North Dakota statutory definition of orphaned wells within Section 40601.

The NDIC has dedicated administrative staff to work on grant fund tracking, plugging program implementation and documentation, well tracking and documentation, project status tracking, staff work and mileage tracking, and state environmental impacted areas tracking. The NDIC will use 10% or less of the requested funding for these administrative requirements.

The NDIC will implement methods to identify undocumented orphaned wells in the state and properly document those wells when found.

After wells have been properly identified and within 90 days of receipt of the funds for the orphan well plugging and reclamation work, the NDIC will follow North Dakota procurement laws to bid the work and award contracts for plugging wells and reclaiming well sites. This part of the project will require a joint effort from private service companies, state government, and appropriate federal agencies. The awarded contractors will follow approved plugging procedures with guidance and oversight from State inspectors, and when appropriate, federal inspectors. The NDIC plans to work with the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for emission tracking on wells, however DEQ does not currently have the technology to test methane emissions from wells that have not been plugged or a program implemented which would allow methane emission tracking of wells after plugging. The NDIC, will utilize information from the April 2018 EPA study to estimate emissions prior to well plugging and DEQ to implement monitoring of methane emissions from a statistically representative set of wells after plugging and reclamation to demonstrate emissions reduction.

Once the well(s) are plugged, the NDIC will have the successful reclamation contractors submit reclamation plans to be approved by the state and when appropriate federal agencies. Reclamation of the well site(s) will then proceed to restore locations back to as close to original as practicable. At this time the NDIC will conduct a site review to determine if any additional emissions or water pollution remediation is needed.

Administrative staff will review all reclamation report documents and ensure work was done in accordance with the approved reclaimation procedure before final payment.

This project will benefit the state through the removal of wells that may have or could cause environmental impacts. Additionally, the project will return much needed lands back to agriculture production. The work from this project will benefit citizens in the state through employment opportunities, reduced emissions, reduced risk of ground water and surface water contamination, and land returned to recreational use and agriculture production.