CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANT FINAL PROJECT REPORT

Prepared for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Grantee Name: Zero Foodprint (formerly The Perennial Farming Initiative)
Project Title: **Restore California and Healthy Soil Carbon Fund**
Agreement Number: **NR203A750013G003**
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2. Project Summary:

This Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) project created a new funding framework for on-farm conservation practice implementation and technical assistance (TA), in order to accelerate adoption of agricultural conservation practices and improve soil health. The nonprofit Zero Foodprint (ZFP) led a team of partners to design, pilot, and scale a grant program funded by the private sector. Specifically, this program was designed to be accessible, and optimally and equitably deploy funding raised from food system businesses that commit a portion of their revenue (usually 1%) to finance conservation practice implementation. ZFP collaborated with over a hundred stakeholders and businesses to overcome adverse market conditions and spur adoption of NRCS-approved soil health practices.

Through this CIG, ZFP and its partners created the Restore California and Restore Colorado grantmaking programs, which generate and deploy private sector and consumer dollars to complement public programs such as The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), California's Healthy Soils Program (HSP), and Colorado's STAR program (Saving Tomorrow's Agricultural Resources). Restore California and Restore Colorado successfully mobilized a cross-section of food-related businesses (including restaurants, dairies, composters, and distributors) to provide catalytic resources for practice implementation and technical assistance, as a supplement or alternative to government grants.

During the grant period (April 2020 - April 2024), Restore California distributed $1,549,264.36 (including Technical Assistance) to implement 81 on-farm projects, with a modeled carbon sequestration impact total of 81,246 tonnes CO2e. Restore Colorado distributed $549,706.00(including TA) to implement 38 on-farm projects, with a modeled carbon sequestration impact total of 20,932 tons CO2e. There were three additional pilot projects in Georgia and New York, representing $41,970.32 awarded for a modeled sequestration of 56 tonnes CO2e.

3. Project Goal and Objectives:

The **Project Goal** is to address climate change by supporting carbon-sequestering agricultural conservation practice implementation with consumer dollars. The **Project Objectives** are:

Objective 1: Increase adoption of agricultural conservation practices

a. Design program to systematically award funds for agricultural conservation practice implementation (eg. contracts, scoring standards)
b. Launch pilot program (Restore CA)
c. Refine and replicate Restore funding framework (Restore CO)

Objective 2: Align market incentives with healthy soil and agricultural conservation practices

d. Develop and implement a business engagement program to collect funds
e. Collect and analyze data to optimize cost-effective carbon sequestration interventions

Objective 3: Overcome systemic challenges in consumer-facing sustainable food movement

f. Recruit restaurants, caterers, food service operations, and related businesses to

participate in voluntary program to collect funds for Restore grants

g. Recruit corporate and institutional support for Restore program and participating restaurants through preferential food procurement policies

4. Project Background:

Federal and state programs for conservation agriculture need more funding to meet demand from US farms. According to a 2021 study by the Environmental Working Group, a backlog of over 100,000 applications had not received funds through the USDA's EQIP and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). At least ten states have healthy soil funds, but the programs are underfunded and oversubscribed. Between 2016 and 2019, California's Healthy Soils Program (HSP) had deployed a total of $42 million dollars to implement healthy soil practices – more than any other state – but still less than a dollar per acre of agricultural land.

Zero Foodprint (ZFP) is a 501.c.3 nonprofit, founded in 2015 to help restaurants reduce their carbon footprints, much of which derived from the agricultural greenhouse gas emissions of ingredients. In 2019 ZFP began to collaborate with the California Air Resources Board (CARB), the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), and the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) to create a private-sector analog to the publicly-funded HSP. That year, ZFP applied for a CIG Classic grant with matching funds from Grantham Environmental Trust, and partners including the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts. (Zero Foodprint was known then as "The Perennial Farming Initiative" and Restore California was called a "Healthy Soil Carbon Fund;" this report will use the updated terms for clarity.)

5. Project Methods:

ZFP began by consulting technical assistance networks, state agencies, carbon sequestration experts, and dozens of farmers and food system advocates including CA Association of Resource Conservation Districts, CA Dept of Food and Agriculture, CA Air Resources Board, The Nature Conservancy, Environmental Defense Fund, The Carbon Cycle Institute, San Francisco Dept of the Environments, Santa Clara County, San Mateo County, UCANR, Marin RCD, Sonoma RCD, Gold Ridge RCD, San Mateo RCD, East Stanislaus RCD, Greater San Diego RCD, Santa Cruz, RCD, Humboldt RCD, SAGE, UC Davis, UC Berkeley, Chico State University, Kitchen Table Advisors, Community Alliance of Family Farmers, Singing Frogs Farm, Pie Ranch, TomKat Ranch, Paicines Ranch, Stemple Creek Ranch, Nicasio Native Grass Farm, Markegard Family Grass-Fed, Straus Creamery, Bioneers, Buckminster Fuller Institute, Project Drawdown, Recology, 3Degrees Inc., Regen Network, Pasture Map, Hudson Carbon, Edible Schoolyard, ReFed, Mad Agriculture, and Point Blue Conservation Science.

Synthesizing this input, ZFP designed a grant program that asks farmers and ranchers to 'name their price' to implement a given conservation practice. Using the HSP's customized COMET-Planner[1] tool to estimate greenhouse gas reductions and costs related to conservation practice implementation. ZFP developed a scoring framework to rank projects by the cost-effectiveness

[1] https://comet-planner-cdfahsp.com/

of their estimated carbon sequestration return on investment (ROI), with adjustments that serve to balance rigor, transparency, simplicity, equity, accessibility and cost-effective climate impact.

We also explored society's willingness to pay for local climate solutions through outreach and marketing to chefs and restaurants, focused on a 1% fee, from which diners could opt out. Given how COVID decimated the restaurant industry in 2020, we expanded our outreach to additional food and beverage business sectors, including consumer packaged goods. We streamlined and automated internal processes for collection of funds, grant management, and selection and contracting. We formed working connections with dozens of producers, technical assistance organizations, and natural climate solutions networks to increase participation and on-farm impact.

This project's methods are innovative in several ways. Restore grants pay for practice implementation directly, rather than retroactively rewarding these practices through price premiums for sustainably grown products. In contrast to organic certification, which relies on price signals, and currently accounts for less than 1% of US farmland, the Restore program model derives revenue from the existing food system to re-invest in conservation agriculture. The Restore program's incentive structure is therefore akin to collective action programs in the recycling and renewable energy sectors (e.g. 5 cents per beverage container or $1 per energy bill), which had not been applied to agricultural transition before this CIG project.

6. Project Results:

Overview: The project fulfilled Objective 1 (increase adoption of agricultural conservation practices), and Objective 2 (align market incentives with healthy soil and agricultural conservation practices) by successfully creating an economic framework for the private sector to provide financial support for the adoption of agricultural conservation practices; launching Restore California and Restore Colorado; and establishing additional funding streams to continue expanding the Restore program beyond the grant term. In total, the project leveraged $575,000 of federal funding into more than $2.1M in Restore funding for 131 on-farm projects during the grant period (April 2020 - April 2024). ZFP's 75 business members contributed 72.8% of Restore grant funding ($1,564,886) from this period; the remainder came from donations and other sources.

Objective 3 (overcome the challenges of consumer-facing campaigns for sustainable agriculture) required some adjustments to the planned activities. In particular, we found little traction in our effort to establish preferential procurement policies for producers engaged in soil health management (SHM). We also found a lack of Technical Assistance Providers (TAPs) and/or other partners capable of putting together "shovel ready" conservation practice implementation projects; as a result, the Restore program gradually filled the gap by serving as a general contractor of sorts, bringing all the pieces and players together to award grants (up to $25,000) to help producers to succeed in implementing conservation practices that they would not have attempted otherwise.

The COVID pandemic necessitated a two-year extension to the grant period and a shift from a tight focus on the food service sector to a broader range of businesses. Within a year of the

lockdowns, we were able to resume recruiting restaurants to add 1% to reinvest in sustainable agriculture, but many corporate and university dining programs were closed and/or lost consumers for much longer. The crisis in food service prompted us to engage with packaged food companies, wineries, composters, etc. We believe that diversifying the Restore program's funding streams may buffer our grantmaking fund from future economic stresses and trends, and contribute to increased funding available for grants to producers.

Objective 1: Increase adoption of agricultural conservation practices.

a. Design program to systematically award funds for conservation practice implementation.

The project team began by conferring with producers and TAPs about hurdles to conservation practice implementation. In addition to the direct costs, which the Restore program addresses, we also heard about pain points in existing healthy soil grant programs; these included lack of funds for TAPs to help producers prepare applications and accessibility problems exacerbated by cultural and/or linguistic differences. Both producers and TAPs expressed confusion regarding the criteria used by California's Healthy Soils program as of 2020. In response, the Restore program was designed to be streamlined, transparent, accessible, and sensitive to producers' needs.

Restore Program Guidelines[2] were drafted in the first year of the CIG (which coincided with COVID restaurant closures), and are revised for every funding round in response to changing circumstances and stakeholder feedback. In addition to a short video of the application process, we continue to hold a webinar for every application round, as well as an open "office hours" a few weeks before applications are due. This allows continued open access and numerous applicants have expressed that this access is essential to them to understand our program and submit competitive applications.

Other notable Restore program design features include:

- *List of Approved Management Practices:* The first round of Restore California grants followed the list of conservation practices eligible for funding through the California Healthy Soils Program (HSP), for a total of 28 NRCS conservation practices available for annual croplands, perennial croplands (orchards and vineyards), and grazelands. Following the HSP's lead, Restore California also offered funding for compost application (at the time, as interim Conservation Practice Standard 808). For projects outside of California, we introduced Critical Area Planting (CPS 342) in 2023. In California, compost application was the most frequently funded practice; in Colorado tree/shrub establishment (CPS 612) was most frequently funded.

- *Standardized, Streamlined Application:* ZFP engaged in a carbon-farming task force process with 12 California Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) and the California Association of RCDs to strenuously review our process and application documents.

2 https://static1.squarespace.com/static/651f2e026fdd0102b2a44e86/t/66aac6628b99a43e34603b17/1722467939188/Restore+Grant+Guidelines+July+2024.pdf

Over multiple grant rounds, we improved the Restore grant application process.[3] A Spanish language version is available with additional translation services available upon request.

- *Eligibility and Scope:* The Restore program can be characterized as a reverse auction in which farmer/rancher applicants submit a competitive bid/grant request for practice implementation, based on NRCS or CDFA Conservation Practice Standards and a specified acreage/scope. Projects are overseen by TAPs, who validate the implementation. Restore grants are intended to lower financial barriers to conservation practice by lowering producers' costs for implementation (e.g. labor, materials, transportation). Eligible producers must be engaged in producing food for human consumption on agricultural land in program areas (e.g. California and Colorado). Applications must include project cost estimate(s) from a TA Provider (TAP) who can advise and validate proposed practice implementation; carbon sequestration estimates from the USDA-NRCS Online COMET-Planner; and a grant project bid up to $25,000. TA costs do not count toward producers' maximum grant amount, and Restore compensates TAPs directly. Property owner approval or proof of right to manage the land is required. A complete SHM plan, carbon farm plan, or conservation plan is not required.

- *Selection Process:* The Restore program awards funds for practice implementation and TA based on the cost-effectiveness of carbon sequestration of each proposal. The process of evaluating cost-effectiveness involves (1) using COMET-Planner to estimate the amount of atmospheric carbon sequestered by the total project; (2) multiplying the result by years of soil carbon impact for a given conservation practice lifespan; and (3) dividing by the total cost (ie, the grant project bid plus the TA).

  Example: A rancher in Adams County, CO seeks $15,000 for Range Planting (CPS550) on 88 acres and Prescribed Grazing (CPS528) on 284 acres. The estimate for Technical Service Provision is $2000. The total project cost is $17,000 and the total project carbon sequestration is 200 tons CO2e. This is derived by multiplying the COMET estimate for the annual sequestration, by the NRCS benefit lifespan. The annual sequestration for Range Planting on 88 acres is 30 tons CO2e and the benefit lifespan is 5 years, for a total of 150 tons CO2e from the Range Planting portion of the project. The annual sequestration for Prescribed Grazing on 284 acres is 50 tons CO2e and the benefit lifespan is 1 year, for a total of 50 tons CO2e from the Prescribed Grazing. ZFP divides the total cost by the total sequestration ($17,000/(150+50)=$85/ton CO2e) and then we sort the projects by this overarching measure of cost-effectiveness. Examples are also provided to applicants, and available publicly on ZFP's website[4].

  California-based applications are reviewed and scored using the CDFA's online COMET-Planner tool to estimate soil and woody biomass carbon sequestration, using

[3] http://www.zerofoodprint.org/apply

[4] https://static1.squarespace.com/static/651f2e026fdd0102b2a44e86/t/65ef4b4c8b705265fad2b8e5/1710181196731/Scoring+Example.pdf

information provided with the support of technical experts. Using a free online calculator as the primary method of modeling carbon sequestration has helped producers and TAPs compare the modeled carbon impact of different conservation agriculture practices and craft their Restore grant applications accordingly.

The Restore grant program awards a 30% boost in cost-effectiveness (for ranking purposes) for circularity, meaning that applicants in the supply chain of participating ZFP business members are prioritized for selection. Historically Underserved applicants also receive a 30% boost. The purpose of these boosts is to encourage carbon insetting, scope 3 emissions reductions within supply chains, and to generally create resonance among businesses and consumers. ZFP awarded over half of the funds ($1,103,383.00 out of 2,125,730.68) to Historically Underserved producers. ZFP conducted an Equitable standards process including representatives from numerous underserved farm facing groups to "audit" our approach and explore improvements. The committee approved our processes.

- *Project Timetable:* Grantees must complete the proposed practice implementation within twelve (12) months of contract date; soil monitoring may occur up to five (5) years from final practice validation. If the project cannot be completed within the required timeframe, the grantee may be required to return any unexpended funds to the Restore program, and may become ineligible for future applications. When COVID caused one project to fall through (due to lack of labor), we added accommodations for unforeseen/ unpreventable circumstances, such as wildfire or drought, in which case grantees are eligible to apply for an extension of up to one year. Restore grants do not require soil testing, though ZFP is engaged in soil testing for about 5% of Restore projects.

- *Payment Schedule:* Grantees receive 50% of the grant amount in advance of implementation; 30% after implementation (within 30 days of submission of Project Update Form); the final 20% of grant funds are released upon verification by the TAP. Applicants who have received a prior Restore grant must have completed the project validation before being eligible for another Restore grant. Applicants are limited to one grant per funding round and a $75,000 lifetime maximum.

- *Contract Template*: ZFP engaged in meetings with legal counsel to develop a recoverable grant contract enabling the Restore grant program to integrate with prospective carbon market activity, without being constrained by such efforts. Over several grant rounds, ZFP finalized a contract characterized by a three-year term with 50% of funds deployed upon award, 30% deployed upon completion of key milestones and the final 20% deployed upon final report from a TAP. After award of the grant and prior to disbursement of funds, the grantee executes Zero Foodprint's grant funding agreement, which includes: property owner approval, detailed project scope, grant application documents, TAP approval of project scope and intent to verify completion of implementation. Zero Foodprint reserves the right to transfer the grant to the next eligible project if the agreement has not been executed within 30 days.

b. Launch pilot program (Restore CA)

In August 2020, Restore California launched with four pilot grants. Across the CIG grant period, Restore California grants totaled $1,549,264 (including funding for Technical Assistance) across 81 farms and ranches in 23 California counties: Colusa, El Paso, Kern, Kings, Los Angeles, Madera, Marin, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Monterey, Napa, Riverside, San Benito, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, San Diego, San Joaquin, Solano, Sonoma, Sutter, Venture, and Yuba.

c. Refine and replicate Restore funding framework

By the end of the first year of the grant period, Zero Foodprint had settled on a standardized process of running the Restore program and was preparing to launch Restore Colorado as a separate funding pool. In 2021, Restore Colorado launched with five pilot grants, totalling $60,000 (Colorado-based nonprofit Mad Agriculture provided TA for the pilot at no cost to the Restore program). During the CIG grant period as a whole, Restore Colorado grants totaled $534,496 across 36 farms and ranches in 23 Colorado counties: Adams, Alamosa, Arapahoe, Boulder, Chaffee, Conejos, Delta, Denver, Eagle, El Paso, Elbert, Fremont, Garfield, Jefferson, Larimer, Logan, Mesa, Montrose, Phillips, Pueblo, Rio Grande, Routt, and Saguache.

In 2022, we explored additional territory with two grants in Georgia (Newton and Barrow counties) totalling $28,378 and one in New York (Dutchess County), totalling $13,592. We were unable to establish ongoing funding and partnerships for projects in Georgia and New York.

Objective 2: Align market incentives with healthy soil and agricultural conservation practices

d. Develop and implement a business engagement program to collect funds

ZFP conducted research on behavioral psychology, choice architecture, local ordinances and public goods fees to optimize our funding for Restore grants. ZFP settled on a hybrid approach of business participation through 1% of revenue with multiple suggested pathways including simple opt-out fees. Over the course of the grant, ZFP expanded financial participation pathways to include other forms of item specific or time-bound campaigns. We established multiple financial pathways ranging from estimated payments via ACH and automatic invoicing, with periodic true-ups, to monthly invoicing, and established accounting systems to coordinate collections with business members.

e. Collect and analyze data to optimize cost-effective carbon sequestration interventions

ZFP created and maintains a comprehensive Restore program database[5], including participating farms, locations, costs, conservation practices and more. Our hope that this data could be used to create a standardized carbon farm plan framework proved infeasible, due to cost, particularly in contrast to COMET-Planner, which is free. Organizations such as The Carbon Cycle Institute

[5] List version available online https://static1.squarespace.com/static/651f2e026fdd0102b2a44e86/t/670564017f126520b5e675ea/1728406529545/Zero+Foodprint+Restore+Farm+Projects+-+October+2024+-+Farm+Projects.pdf

and certain Resource Conservation Districts are engaged in Carbon Farm Planning, and many Conservation Districts and NRCS staff can create Conservation Plans. While these bespoke planning processes are labor/finance intensive, there was no standard middle-ground between COMET and a full, farm-specific plan.

ZFP's Restore grants can serve as the cost share with other grant programs. The reverse auction structure ensures optimal deployment of funds because the Restore program is never under- or over-paying for implementation. While there was no standard price or carbon sequestered ROI for each practice, certain practices "rose to the top" in terms of cost-effective sequestration, notably compost application. In California, over 90% of grants involved compost application in some form, whether on rangeland, annual farmland, and/or perennial farmland. In Colorado, by contrast, only 9 out of 36 grants involved compost; Restore CO funded tree/shrub establishment fifteen times (42%).

Objective 3: Overcome systemic challenges in consumer-facing Sustainable Ag campaigns

f. Recruit Restaurants, Caterers, Food Service Operations, and other related businesses to participate in voluntary program to collect funds for Restore grants

The initial proposal for this project quoted the National Restaurant Association's finding that "in 2018, the California restaurant industry had gross revenues of $97 billion." But by the time our grant period began in April 2020, the restaurant sector had changed dramatically, due to COVID-19. As a result, ZFP pivoted by developing and deploying a number of approaches to engage businesses in its membership program, including customized software for customer relationship management (CRM), which has amassed 1,302 prospects, ranging from restaurants to composters to consumer packaged food and beverage brands. The monthly email newsletter had 3,261 subscribers as of April 15, 2024. ZFP leadership also reached potential business members by speaking at dozens of conferences and events. Additional thought leadership in sustainable food systems, regenerative agriculture and public-private collaboration around natural climate solutions was achieved through participation on related nonprofit boards and industry organizations (James Beard Foundation, Culinary Institute of America - Sustainable Business Leadership Council, Association of Compost Producers, RegenScore, and more). By the conclusion of the grant period, 75 businesses were contributing to Restore programs. Zero Foodprint maintains a public member directory[6] of participating businesses.

g. Recruit corporate and institutional support for Restore program and participating restaurants through preferential food procurement policies

This objective was not met, due in part to the COVID pandemic and its aftermath, which substantially slowed recruitment efforts. In 2020-2021, there were simply not enough participating restaurants for corporations and institutions to use a preferential food procurement policy. At the same time, food spending by corporations and institutions was severely curtailed. Instead of creating a Restore California restaurant and food service operations database which would enable corporations and both local and state governments to easily prioritize participating

[6] https://www.zerofoodprint.org/member-directory

restaurants and food service operations in their procurement decisions, we developed and maintained a web-based directory of participating businesses. Zero Foodprint is still in the outreach phase for corporations, universities and hospitals as business members rather than as sources of preferential procurement.

COVID-related disruptions to the food-service sector also contributed to lower than expected revenue generation from member businesses. As a result, Restore CA and CO are growing but still funded in part by private grants and philanthropy; we anticipate reaching "critical mass" to achieve a self-sufficient operating budget through collaboration with trade groups, corporations, and other business leaders.

7. Project Outputs:

- *Conservation Practice Implementation:* 120 Restore grants were awarded for on-farm conservation practice implementation between April 2020 and April 2024. 90% of the California projects included compost application, and overall, Restore grants funded 21 Compost Application projects on Annual Cropland, 40 Compost Application projects on Perennial Cropland, and 32 Compost Application projects on Rangeland.

- *Conservation Practice Funding:* Restore grant awards totaled $2,125,731, out of $5,911,802 total requests for funding (36.3%). ZFP's 75 business members contributed 73.6% of Restore grant funding ($1,564,886); the remainder came from donations and other sources.

- *Modeled Carbon Sequestration:* Following COMET-Planner and/or Ryals & Silver[7]conservation practices implemented as a result of the Restore program total 104,679 metric tonnes of modeled CO2e sequestration over the complete lifespan of the awarded and implemented practices.

- *Media:* During the grant period, the Restore program (highlighting the involvement of producer grantees, business members, Zero Foodprint, and other partners) was featured in 104 pieces of earned media. See Appendix for links to print, online, video, and audio highlights.

- *Storytelling and Communications:* ZeroFoodprint.org website updated to include full suites of engagement around businesses, consumers, farmer resources and storytelling. Site traffic grew to an average of 4,400 site visitors each month by the end of the grant period. Grew email newsletter list to 3,261 contacts. Total social media followers grew to 13,000 over the CIG grant period. Marketing and recruitment materials include postcards (for use at participating businesses), t-shirts, window clings, etc.

[7] Ryals, R. and Silver, W.L. (2013), Effects of organic matter amendments on net primary productivity and greenhouse gas emissions in annual grasslands. Ecological Applications, 23: 46-59. https://doi.org/10.1890/12-0620.1

- *Software*: Zero Foodprint conducted a needs assessment and researched off the shelf software solutions for grant management, grant applications, database management, and contract management. Ultimately landing on publicly available tools including Airtable, MiniExtensions, Formstack, Docusign, and Zapier to manage the application, contracting, and grant lifecycle management, including automated document generation, notifications and correspondence. ZFP also created version 1.0 of a carbon sequestration "insetting" registry with RegenNetwork. See Appendix for screenshots from database.

- *Events (hosted):*

    - ~ 300 individual and group calls with producer applicants and TAPs
    - ~ 900 outreach meetings to recruit business members and other stakeholders
    - ~ 40 virtual and in-person staff trainings for new business members
    - ~ 24 info sessions hosted introduce the program to potential business members
    - Restore Grant Info Sessions: Nov. 2021 (57 attendees); July 2022 (36 attendees); June 2023 (85 attendees); Jan. 2024 (23 attendees); April 2024 (83 attendees)
    - Restore Grant Webinar/Office Hours: July 18th, 2023 (16 attendees); September 2023 (12 attendees)

- *Events (attended):*

    - SWCS International Annual Conference (2021, attendee)
    - Regenerative Food Systems Investment, Denver (2022, 2023 - speaker)
    - James Beard Chef Summit, Houston (2022 - speaker)
    - CARCD Annual Conference (2021 - speaker, 2022 - speaker)
    - US Composting Council (Austin 2021 - speaker, Burlingame 2022 - speaker)
    - CA Resource Recovery Association. (2022 - speaker, 2023 - speaker)
    - Grass-Fed Exchange, Sonoma (2021 - speaker)
    - Expo West, Anaheim (2022 - speaker, 2023)
    - CA Climate Policy Summit, Sacramento (2023 - speaker)
    - Napa Valley Grape Growers, Napa (2023 - speaker)
    - Chef's Roll, San Diego, CA (2023 - speaker)
    - NRDC Chef's for Healthy Soil Fly-in, Washington, DC (2023 - speaker)
    - LA Chefs Conference, Los Angeles, CA (2023 - speaker)
    - NYT Climate Forward, NYC (2023 - speaker)

8. Project Impacts:

Of the 342 applications received by the Restore program during the CIG grant period, 35.9% were awarded. These 120 Restore grants funded practice implementation on 22,691 acres of US agricultural land (including annual cropland, perennial cropland, and rangeland). 61.3% of Restore funding went to Historically Underserved Producers (i.e., Beginning; Socially Disadvantaged; Veterans; and Limited Resource producers) and 32.7% went to producers who identify as BIPOC (note that these categories may overlap, e.g., Socially Disadvantaged veterans).

Total funding collected from business members was significantly less than anticipated, because our business model was based on pre-pandemic statistics. Still, nearly three-quarters of Restore grant funding was raised by participating businesses, and this grant laid the ground for the Restore program to have a much larger impact on conservation practice funding through ongoing public-private partnerships extending past the grant term. This program and the Restore fund continues on its own beyond the term of this Conservation Innovation Grant, and is on track to provide millions of dollars from the private sector to conservation agriculture in the years to come.

Ranking projects according to their modeled carbon return on investment enabled the Restore program to fund 62.1% of the total modeled carbon sequestration requested by applicants.

The most frequently funded conservation practices were:

Practice Name	**Grants Awarded***	**Acres Impacted**
Compost Application - Perennial Crop (CDFA practice standard)	39	1960.2
Cover Crop (CPS 340)	32	1467.9
Tree/Shrub Establishment (CPS 612)	24	92.7
Compost Application - Annual Crop (CDFA practice standard)	20	150.9
Compost Application - Rangeland (15 tons/acre)	16	296.8
Hedgerow Planting (CPS 422)	15	893.7
Compost Application - Rangeland (CDFA practice standard)	14	990.7
Prescribed Grazing (CPS 528)	12	7486
Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (CPS 380)	11	13.9
Range Planting (CPS 550)	11	1026.3
Forage and Biomass Planting (CPS 512)	8	427.6
No-Till (CPS 329)	7	966
Conservation Cover (CPS 327)	6	69
Mulching (CPS 484)	4	37
Reduced-Till (CPS 345)	4	2428.9

***** This column represents the number or times a practice was funded by Zero Foodprint as

awarded projects can include multiple practices.

Funding by practice is not available as grants are awarded based on total practice implementation, and does not distinguish between funding for a specific practice.

9. Appendix:

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