**Section 1523.60 Ecosystem** **Vision Plan Grants**

a) Ecosystem Partnerships are expected to use sound information based upon good science in developing Vision Plans. Vision Plans will provide guidance on ecosystem-based natural resource protection, maintenance and enhancement and be used to prioritize funding opportunities for further planning and project grants. Subject to sufficient funding, the Department will annually allocate a prescribed dollar amount for the development of Vision Plans by Ecosystem Partnerships. The amount allocated for a Vision Plan Grant shall be commensurate with the needs identified in the scope-of-work. The scope-of-work will provide information consistent with subsection (b) of this Section.

b) The Vision Plan Framework describes the steps that an Ecosystem Partnership needs to take to make sound natural resource planning and management decisions by using good science. It also guides Ecosystem Partnerships through the steps to be taken to develop and organize a Vision Plan document. The Vision Plan Framework specifically provides guidance on the development of a social inventory for the partnership area; development of a cultural resource inventory; assessment of physical and biological natural resource information; identification of issues and concerns; development of a purpose and vision statement; identification of goals, objectives, strategies, and action items; identification of ecosystem based best management practices to help solve identified problems; development of a work plan and implementation strategy; development of a monitoring strategy for tracking plan implementation; encouragement to use volunteer support to conduct physical project monitoring using established protocols; development of a public/stakeholder participation summary and creation of an executive summary.

c) Ecosystem Partnerships interested in developing a Vision Plan must submit a letter requesting consideration for an Ecosystem Vision Plan Grant to the Conservation 2000 Administrator. The Conservation 2000 Administrator will review the request and send a Vision Plan Framework application packet to the applicant. The packet will include the Vision Plan Framework, the Program Guidance and other materials that could be used to help guide the planning process. At minimum, every applicant must submit a scope-of-work that addresses tasks outlined in the Vision Plan Framework and that identifies:

1) The purpose.

2) The expected outcomes.

3) The plan development process, including: the tasks required to complete the planning process, members of the planning team, party or parties responsible for writing the plan, and the primary liaison with the Ecosystems Program of the Department.

4) Any data needs.

5) Resource and economic concerns to be addressed, including ecological values, socioeconomic values, and protection and management issues, so far as they may be known.

6) Coordination efforts with other local, regional, or State agencies, institutions, or organizations.

7) Subgrantees or subcontractors.

8) A timetable for project completion.

9) An itemized budget.

(Source: Amended at 27 Ill. Reg. 1144, effective January 9, 2003)