FY 2011 Explanatory Notes
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Table of Contents

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Purpose Statement

The Soil Conservation Service, established in 1935, was renamed the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) pursuant to Public Law 103-354, the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6962). The NRCS mission statement – "Helping people help the land" –reflects the Agency's long-standing role in providing conservation science and technology products and services to help people make sound natural resource decisions and implement measures to conserve, maintain, and enhance the lands and natural resources that they control or manage. Through this role, NRCS helps customers to achieve that balance of productive lands and a healthy environment.

NRCS' primary customers are the individuals and groups who make day-to-day decisions about natural resource use and management on non-Federal lands. They include farmers, ranchers, and other land managers; units of government; non-profit organizations; and others involved in agriculture or natural resource management. NRCS helps these customers take a comprehensive approach to the use and protection of their soil, water, and related natural resources. These cooperative conservation activities benefit directly or indirectly all of the people of the Nation.

NRCS assists customers in the accomplishment of their conservation objectives by providing products and services through five business lines:

1. Conservation Planning and Technical Consultations. NRCS provides data, information, and technical expertise to help customers collect and analyze information to identify natural resource problems and opportunities, clarify their objectives, and formulate and evaluate alternatives;
2. Conservation Implementation. NRCS helps customers install natural resource conservation practices and systems that meet established technical standards and specifications;
3. Natural Resources Inventory and Assessment. NRCS assesses, acquires, develops, interprets, and delivers natural resource data and information to enable knowledge-based planning and decision making at all landscape scales;
4. Natural Resource Technology Transfer. NRCS develops, documents, and distributes a wide array of technology pertaining to resources assessment, conservation planning and conservation system installation and evaluation; and
5. Financial Assistance. NRCS provides cost share and monetary incentives to encourage the adoption of conservation practices that have been proven to provide significant public benefits. Financial assistance is awarded to participants who voluntarily enter into contracts, easements and agreements to conserve natural resources.

NRCS assistance to individual landowners is provided cooperatively through conservation districts, which are units of local government created by State law. NRCS works in partnership with the State conservation agencies and other State and local agencies such as resource conservation and development councils, locally elected or appointed farmer committees, Federal agencies, Tribal governments, and private sector organizations. NRCS employees help people understand the natural processes that shape their environment, how conservation measures can improve the quality of that environment, and the benefits of partnerships with their neighbors in a common approach to build a landscape that supports a productive agriculture and natural resource quality.

NRCS helps people achieve these outcomes through the following authorized and funded programs of the Department of Agriculture:

Conservation Operations is authorized by the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act of 1935, P.L. 74-46 (16 U.S.C. 590a-590f) and the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act of 1977, (16 U.S.C. 2001-2009). The purpose of Conservation Operations is to provide technical assistance supported by science-based technology and tools that help people conserve, maintain, and improve the Nation's natural resources. Conservation Operations contains four sub-accounts: 1) Conservation Technical Assistance

(CTA); 2) Soil Surveys; 3) Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting (SS/WSF); and 4) Plant Materials Centers (PMC).

1. Conservation Technical Assistance Program (CTA): The CTA Program is the cornerstone of all USDA conservation programs. The program helps private landowners, conservation districts, Tribes, and other organizations through technical assistance to plan, design and implement conservation practices, and systems. The program delivers this assistance through a national network of locally-respected, technically skilled, professional conservationists. These conservationists deliver consistent, science-based, site-specific solutions to help private landowners conserve, maintain, and improve the Nation's natural resource base. The CTA Program works in partnership with other cooperative conservation programs to leverage the Federal investment in order to achieve national priorities without duplicating local and State efforts. The program is the conservation foundation for the Nation's private lands and Tribal lands conservation assistance infrastructure and brings to bear the technical expertise to get sound conservation solutions applied on the ground.

   The CTA Program provides proven and consistent conservation technology and a delivery infrastructure for achieving the benefits of a healthy and productive landscape, and has the following purposes:
   - Reduce soil loss from erosion.
   - Solve soil, water quality, water conservation, air quality, and agricultural waste management problems.
   - Reduce potential damage caused by excess water and sedimentation or drought.
   - Enhance the quality of fish and wildlife habitat.
   - Improve the long term sustainability of all lands, including cropland, forestland, grazing lands, coastal lands, and developed and/or developing lands.
   - Assist others in facilitating changes in land use as needed for natural resource protection and sustainability.

   Specific objectives of CTA are to:
   - Provide conservation technical assistance to individuals or groups of decision makers, communities, conservation districts, units of State and local government, Tribes, and others to voluntarily conserve, maintain, and improve natural resources.
   - Provide collaborative community, watershed, and area-wide technical assistance with units of government, so they can develop and implement resource management plans that conserve, maintain and improve our natural resources.
   - Provide conservation technical assistance to agricultural producers to comply with the Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland (Swampbuster) Conservation Compliance Provisions of the 1985 Food Security Act, as amended by past and future Farm Bills.
   - Provide conservation technical assistance to decision-makers in order for them to comply with Federal, State, Tribal, and local environmental regulations and related requirements, and prepare them to become eligible to participate in other Federal, State, and local conservation programs.
   - Provide soils information and interpretation to individuals or groups of decision-makers, communities, States, and others to aid sound decision making in the wise use and management of soil resources.
   - Collect, analyze, interpret, display, and disseminate information about the status, condition, and trend of soil, water, and related natural resources so people can make informed decisions for natural resource use and management.
   - Assess the effects of conservation practices and systems on the condition of natural resources.
   - Develop, adapt, and transfer effective science-based technologies and tools for assessment, management, and conservation of natural resources.

2. Soil Surveys. NRCS helps people understand and use soils within their capability. Soil surveys provide the public with information on the properties, capabilities and conservation treatment needs of

their soil. Based on scientific analysis and classification of the soils, soil surveys include maps and interpretations with explanatory information for a county or designated area. Soil Surveys are completed for approximately 92 percent of the United States and its territories. Soil survey is the foundation of resource planning by land-users and for policy making for Federal, State, county, and local community programs. NRCS conducts soil surveys cooperatively with other Federal agencies, land grant universities, State agencies, and local units of government. The major objectives of the Soil Survey Program are to:

- Inventory and map the soil resource on all lands of the United States.
- Keep soil survey relevant to meet emerging and ever-changing needs.
- Interpret the data and make soil survey information available to meet public needs.
- Promote and provide technical assistance in the use of soil survey information.
- Lead the National Cooperative Soil Survey Program.

3. Snow Surveys and Water Supply Forecasts (SS/WSF). The SS/WSF Program collects high elevation snow data in the Western United States and provides managers and users with snowpack data and water supply forecasts. NRCS field staff collects and analyzes data on snow depth, snow water equivalent, and other climate parameters at more than 2,000 mountain sites. The program is transitioning to an automated system which provides real time data. Approximately 790 of the data collection sites are currently automated. The data are used to provide estimates of annual water availability, spring runoff, and summer stream flows. These water supply forecasts are used by individuals, Tribes, organizations, and units of government for decisions relating to agricultural production, fish and wildlife management, municipal and industrial water supply, urban development, flood control, recreation, power generation, and water quality management. The National Weather Service includes these forecasts in their river forecasting function. Reports on the snowpack characteristics are used by the ski industry, transportation departments and others to plan their seasonal work in mountain areas. The objectives of the program are to:
   - Provide reliable, accurate and timely forecasts of surface water supply to water managers and water users in the west.
   - Efficiently obtain, manage, and disseminate high quality data and information on snow, water, climate, and hydrologic conditions.
   - Provide climate data to support NRCS conservation planning tools.

4. Plant Material Centers. The Plant Materials Centers (PMCs) identify, test and evaluate the performance of plants and plant technologies to solve natural resource problems and improve the utilization of natural resources including erosion reduction, wetland restoration, water quality improvement, wildlife habitat improvement (including pollinators), streambank and riparian area protection, coastal dune stabilization, biomass production, air quality and other conservation treatment needs. The tested and proven plant materials released by PMCs are used to restore the environment to a healthy condition after natural disasters and human induced disturbances. PMCs also evaluate and develop improved technologies for the production, establishment, and management of plants used in conservation systems. PMCs release new plants to the private sector which helps to stimulate the national economy and provide the large-scale increase of seed and plants necessary for implementation of the conservation programs of the Farm Bill. Commercial sales of PMC released plants generate over $100 million a year in revenue. In addition to new plants, PMCs prepare technical documents and conduct training. There are over 2,500 documents available from the Web describing how to select and use plants for conserving or improving natural resources. The work at the 27 PMCs is located throughout the Agency carried out cooperatively with State and Federal agencies, universities, Tribes, commercial businesses, and seed and nursery associations. PMC activities directly benefit private landowners as well as Federal and State land managing agencies.

Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations includes Watershed Operations authorized by P.L. 78-534, the Flood Control Act of 1944 (33 U.S.C. 701b-1), and Small Watersheds authorized by P.L. 83-566, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1001-1008).

Through these programs, NRCS cooperates with State and local agencies, Tribal governments, and other Federal agencies to prevent damages caused by erosion, floodwater, and sediment and to further the conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water and the conservation and utilization of land. The P.L. 83-566 program is available nationwide to protect and improve watersheds up to 250,000 acres in size. Currently, there are approximately 297 active small watershed projects throughout the country. P.L. 78-534 is available only in areas authorized by Congress; these areas cover about 38 million acres in 11 States.

Objectives of the program are to provide technical and financial assistance for disaster cleanup and subsequent rebuilding; stream corridor, and floodplain restoration; and for urban planning and site location assistance to the Federal Emergency Management Agency when relocating communities out of floodplains.

Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP) is authorized by Section 216, P.L. 81-516, (33 U.S.C. 701b-1) and Sections 403-405, P.L. 95-334 (16 U.S.C. 2203-2205). The 1996 Farm Bill amended Section 403 of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-334) (16 U.S.C. 2203) by including the purchase of floodplain easements under the Emergency Watershed Protection Program.

The EWP program reduces hazards to life and property in watersheds damaged by severe natural events. An emergency exists when a watershed is suddenly impaired by flood, fire, drought, or other natural causes that results in life and property being endangered by flooding, erosion, sediment discharge or other associated hazards. The emergency area need not be declared a national disaster area to be eligible for assistance. Objectives of the program are to provide technical and financial assistance for disaster cleanup and subsequent rebuilding; stream corridor, wetland, and riparian area restoration; and for urban planning and site location assistance to Federal Emergency Management Agency when relocating communities out of floodplains. Local people are generally employed on a short-term basis to assist with disaster recovery. Activities include establishing quick vegetative cover on denuded land, sloping steep land, and eroding banks; opening dangerously restricted channels; repairing diversions and levees; purchasing flood plain easements; and other emergency work.

Watershed Rehabilitation Program is authorized under Section 14 of the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act approved August 4, 1954, as amended by Section 313 of Public Law 106-472, November 9, 2000. This program assists communities in addressing public health and safety concerns and environmental impacts of aging dams. Technical and financial assistance is provided for the planning, design, and implementation of rehabilitation projects that may include upgrading or removing the dams. The program may provide up to 65 percent of the total cost of the rehabilitation projects; Federal funds cannot be used for operation and maintenance.

Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) is authorized by Section 102 of the Food and Agriculture Act of 1962 (P.L. 87-703), (7 U.S.C. 1010-1011) and Sections 1528-1538 of the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 (P.L. 97-98). Section 383 of the 1996 Farm Bill (P.L. 104-127) (16 U.S.C. 3461) extended the RC&D program authority. Section 2504 of the 2002 Farm Bill removed the sunset provisions previously placed on this program. Section 2805 - Subtitle I of The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 states that “To improve the provision of technical assistance to councils under this subtitle, the Secretary shall designate for each council an individual to be the coordinator for the council”. RC&D improves the capability of State and local units of government and local non-profit organizations in rural areas to plan, develop, and carry out programs for resource conservation and development. RC&D plans may address land conservation, water management, community development, or other elements including energy conservation, protection of agricultural land, or protection of fish and wildlife habitats.

RC&D is initiated and directed at the local level by volunteers. A typical RC&D area encompasses multiple communities, various units of government, Tribes, municipalities, and grassroots organizations. The program serves as a catalyst for these civic groups to share knowledge and resources in a collective attempt to solve common problems facing their region. RC&D councils obtain assistance from the private sector, Tribes, corporations, foundations, and all levels of government.

Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is authorized under Section 1237 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (P.L. 99-198), as amended. Funding is provided through the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC). The Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L.110-246) reauthorized the WRP through Fiscal Year 2012 and provided for a total acreage enrollment cap of 3,041,200 acres.

WRP preserves, protects, and restores eligible wetlands. Wetland restoration and protection improves wildlife habitat and water quality, and provides flood water retention, ground water recharge, open space, and aesthetic values. NRCS enrolls lands in this program in permanent easements, 30-year easements, 30-year contracts for acreage owned by Indian Tribes, and restoration cost share agreements on private lands. The 2008 Farm Bill also provided a new enrollment type of a 30-year contract for acreage owned by Indian Tribes. NRCS enters into easements and contracts with landowners of eligible wetlands and associated buffer areas, as well as riparian areas that link two protected wetlands. NRCS and the Fish and Wildlife Service provide technical assistance for WRP.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) was re-authorized by Section 2501 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-246). EQIP provides a flexible, voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers and promotes agricultural production, forest management and environmental quality as compatible national goals to optimize environmental benefits. EQIP offers financial and technical assistance to eligible participants to install or implement conservation practices including those related to organic production on eligible agricultural land.

EQIP offers contracts with a minimum term that ends one year after the implementation of the last scheduled practices and a maximum term of ten years. These contracts provide financial assistance payments to implement approved conservation practices. Persons who are engaged in livestock or agricultural production or landowners who have an interest in an agricultural operation on eligible land may participate in EQIP. EQIP activities are carried out according to a plan of operations developed with the producer that identifies the appropriate conservation practice to address the identified resource concern(s). These practices must meet NRCS technical standards adapted for local conditions.

EQIP payment rates may be up to 75 percent of the costs of certain conservation practices. Socially disadvantaged, limited resource, or beginning farmers and ranchers may be eligible for payment rates up to 90 percent. Farmers and ranchers may elect to use a certified technical service provider instead of NRCS for technical assistance.

An individual or entity may not receive, directly or indirectly, conservation payments that, in the aggregate, exceed $300,000 during the period of FY 2009 through FY 2014. Technical assistance payments do not count against this limitation. A waiver of the $300,000 limit may be requested for projects of special environmental significance that will result in significant environmental improvements as determined by NRCS policy. At least 60 percent of funding must be targeted to practices relating to livestock production. NRCS establishes policies, priorities, and guidelines for the program and provides technical leadership and financial assistance.

Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP) was authorized by Section 2510 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-246). AWEP is a voluntary conservation program that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to implement agricultural water enhancement activities on agricultural land for the purposes of conserving surface and ground water and improving water quality. Under AWEP, NRCS enters into partnership agreements with eligible entities that want to promote ground and surface water conservation or improve water quality on agricultural lands. After AWEP project areas are approved by NRCS, eligible producers may submit a program application. All agricultural producers receiving assistance through AWEP must meet the EQIP eligibility requirements and will be subject to EQIP payment limitations.

AWEP offers contracts with a minimum term that ends one year after the implementation of the last scheduled practices and a maximum term of ten years. These contracts provide financial assistance

payments to implement approved conservation practices. Persons who are engaged in livestock or agricultural production or landowners who have an interest in an agricultural operation on eligible land may participate in AWEP. AWEP activities are carried out according to a plan of operations developed in conjunction with the producer that identifies the appropriate conservation practice that addresses the identified ground and surface water resource concern(s). These practices must meet NRCS technical standards adapted for local conditions.

AWEP payment rates may be up to 75 percent of the costs of certain conservation practices. Socially disadvantaged, limited resource, or beginning farmers and ranchers may be eligible for payment rates up to 90 percent. Farmers and ranchers may elect to use a certified technical service provider for technical assistance. An individual or entity may not receive, directly or indirectly, conservation payments that, in the aggregate, exceed $300,000 during the period of FY 2009 through FY 2014. Technical assistance payments do not count against this limitation. A waiver of the $300,000 limit may be requested for projects of special environmental significance that will result in significant environmental improvements as determined by NRCS policy. NRCS establishes policies, priorities, and guidelines for the program and provides technical leadership and financial assistance.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) was authorized by Section 1240N of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended by Section 2502 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act (P.L. 107-171) of the 2002 Farm Bill. WHIP was reauthorized under Section 2602 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-246). WHIP develops habitat for upland wildlife, wetlands wildlife, threatened and endangered species, fish, and other types of wildlife including habitat developed on pivot corners and irregular areas. NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to landowners to improve wildlife habitat on their property. NRCS enters into cost-share agreements with landowners for a minimum duration of one year after the completion of conservation practices identified in the WHIP plan of operations, but not more than ten years, providing up to 75 percent of the funds needed to implement wildlife habitat development practices. The 2008 Farm Bill authorized NRCS to use up to 25 percent of total funds to provide additional cost-share assistance of up to 90 percent to landowners who enter into 15-year agreements for the purpose of protecting or restoring essential plant and animal habitat.

Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP). Section 2401 of the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-246) re-authorized the Farmland Protection Program originally authorized by the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996. The 2003 Final Rule renamed the program the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) to better describe the lands protected by the program. FRPP protects the agricultural use and related conservation values of farmland by limiting nonagricultural uses. Eligible land includes farm or ranch land that has prime, unique, or other productive soil, contains historical or archaeological resources, or supports the policies of a State or local farm and ranch land protection program. Landowners must meet the adjusted gross income, highly erodible land, and wetland conservation requirements of the 2008 Farm Bill. NRCS facilitates and provides funding for the purchase of conservation easements with eligible State, local and Tribal governments and nongovernmental organizations that administer farmland protection programs. Eligible entities must have established farmland protection programs, established policies for title and appraisal, the staff and budget to administer the acquisition of the easement and monitor and enforce the conservation easement deed, and the matching funds at the time of application. Eligible entities that have demonstrated proficiency in administering easements in FRPP qualify as ‘certified’ eligible entities. The certified eligible entity status entitles the entities to enter into cooperative agreements in which NRCS can obligate five years of funding. NRCS can obligate three years of funding in agreements with non-certified eligible entities. The parcels submitted by the entities must be ranked and compete for funding each year. The certified entity status does not guarantee that the entity will have funding obligated in each year of the agreement. NRCS may provide up to 50 percent of the fair market value of the conservation easement; the eligible entity and the landowner must contribute at least 50 percent of the fair market value of the conservation easement. The eligible entity must contribute a minimum of 25 percent of the purchase price of the easement (the appraised fair market value minus the landowner donation) in cash. There is no limit on the amount of the landowner donation. The conservation easements are held by the cooperating entity and NRCS holds a

contingent right of enforcement in the easement. To be eligible, land must be subject to a pending offer from an eligible entity. A conservation plan must be developed for any highly erodible cropland associated with the conservation easement.

Conservation Security Program (CSP) was authorized by the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002. Title II, Subtitle a, Section 2001 amends the Food Security Act of 1985 by adding Chapter 2, Subchapter A, the Conservation Security Program. CSP is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance for the conservation, protection, and improvement of natural resources on Tribal and private working lands. The program provides payments for producers who practice good stewardship on their agricultural lands and incentives for those who want to do more. Equitable access was provided to all producers in all 50 states, the Caribbean Area, and the Pacific Basin Area, regardless of size of operation, crops produced or geographic location. CSP is a resource concern driven program, not conservation practice driven. Section 1202(a) of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 extended CSP into 2011. The program was not reauthorized by Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-246), which stipulated that a conservation security program contract may not be entered into or renewed after September 30, 2008. The Secretary shall make payments on contracts entered before September 30, 2008 using such sums as are necessary.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) was authorized by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-246), which amended the Food Security Act of 1985 to authorize the program in Fiscal Years 2009 through 2012. The purpose of CSP is to encourage producers to address resource concerns in a comprehensive manner by: (1) undertaking additional conservation activities; and (2) improving, maintaining, and managing existing conservation activities. During the period beginning on October 1, 2008, and ending on September 30, 2017, the Secretary of Agriculture shall, to the maximum extent practicable - "(1) enroll in the program an additional 12,769,000 acres for each fiscal year"; and "(2) manage the program to achieve a national average rate of $18 per acre, which shall include the costs of all financial assistance, technical assistance, and any other expenses associated with enrollment or participation in the program". The initial sign-up for the CSP program was held from August 10, 2009, through September 30, 2009.

Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) is authorized by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-246). GRP assists landowners and operators in restoring and protecting grazing uses and related conservation values. The program has a 1,220,000 acre cap. The program offers several enrollment options: permanent easements, cooperative agreements, rental contracts and restoration agreements.

Farm Service Agency (FSA) responsibilities include accepting applications; issuing payments; assessing penalties and liquidated damages as applicable; accepting, modifying and terminating rental contracts; landowner eligibility determinations on easement and rental contracts; acreage determination on rental contracts; maintaining GRP records and reports and enforcement of violations on rental contracts.

NRCS responsibilities include accepting applications, providing technical assistance to the participant, evaluating and ranking applications for rental contracts and easements, ensuring conservation treatment is in accordance to program requirements, ranking and selecting applications for funding, providing payment documentation to FSA and establishing quality assurance and control procedures to monitor land enrolled in easements or rental contracts.

Agricultural Management Assistance Program (AMA) is authorized by Section 211 of the Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-224). Subtitle I, Section 2801 (b) (2) (ii) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-246) authorizes $15 million annually for financial assistance in 16 States, as determined by the Secretary, in which participation in the Federal Crop Insurance Program is historically low. Financial assistance is provided through CCC. The 16 States designated by the 2008 Farm Bill to participate in the program are Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming. NRCS provides AMA financial assistance to producers to

construct or improve water management structures or irrigation structures; plant trees for windbreaks or improve water quality. The program also offers financial assistance to mitigate crop failure risks through production diversification or resource conservation practices, including soil erosion control, integrated pest management, and transition to organic farming.

The Risk Management Agency provides AMA financial assistance to producers purchasing crop insurance to reduce revenue risk. The Agricultural Marketing Service provides AMA financial assistance to program participants receiving certification or continuation of certification as being an organic producer.

Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program (CBWP) is authorized by Section 1240Q of the Food Security Act, as added by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110–246). Section 1240Q established the CBWP and defined the Chesapeake Bay Watershed to mean all tributaries, backwaters, and side channels, including their watersheds, draining into the Chesapeake Bay. This area includes portions of the States of Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. The program gives special, but not exclusive consideration to the following river basins: Susquehanna River, Shenandoah River, Potomac River (including North and South Potomac), and the Patuxent River. The CBWP helps agricultural producers improve water quality and quantity, and restore, enhance, and preserve soil, air, and related resources in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed through the implementation of conservation practices. These conservation practices reduce soil erosion and nutrient levels in ground and surface water, improve, restore, and enhance wildlife habitat, and help address air quality and related natural resource concerns. To carry out the CBWP, NRCS may chose to use any of the following Farm Bill programs: Wetlands Reserve Program; Environmental Quality Incentives Program; Ground and Surface Water; Agricultural Water Enhancement Program; Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program; Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program; Conservation Security Program; Conservation Stewardship Program; Grasslands Reserve Program; Agricultural Management Assistance; Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program; Healthy Forests Reserve Program; or Conservation Reserve Program as authorized under subtitle D, Title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985, 16 U.S.C. 3830–3839bb–5.

Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP) is authorized by Title V of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (P.L. 108-148) as amended by the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-246), authorized to be carried out from FY 2009 through FY 2012. HFRP assists landowners in restoring, enhancing, and protecting forest ecosystems on private lands to promote the recovery of threatened and endangered species; improve biodiversity; and enhance carbon sequestration. The four HFRP enrollment options include a 10-year cost-share agreement, a 30-year easement, a 30-year contract (for Indian Tribes only), and a permanent easement. Land enrolled in the HFRP must have a restoration plan that includes practices necessary to restore and enhance habitat for species listed as threatened or endangered or species or candidates for the threatened or endangered species list. All the options include cost-share payments for implementation of the required practices.

Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI) was authorized by Section 2707 of the Food Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-246), which establishes the CCPI by amending Section 1243 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3843). CCPI is a voluntary conservation initiative that enables the use of certain conservation programs along with resources of eligible partners to provide financial and technical assistance to owners and operators of agricultural and nonindustrial private forest lands. Eligible producers who participate in a project are identified in an approved partner agreement and have an active application in one of the eligible programs may be approved for assistance. Eligible programs include: Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP), and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). Under CCPI, NRCS enters into partnership agreements with eligible entities that want to enhance conservation outcomes on agricultural and nonindustrial private forest lands. The intent of CCPI is for the Federal Government to leverage investment in natural resources conservation along with services and resources of non-Federal partners. Six percent of funds and acres available each Fiscal Year shall be reserved to implement CCPI. State Conservationists will administer ninety percent of the funds and ten percent will fund projects based on a national competitive process.

Eligible partners include Federally recognized Indian Tribes, State and local units of government, producer associations, farmer cooperatives, institutions of higher education, or nongovernmental organizations with a history of working cooperatively with producers. The purposes of a CCPI partnership agreement, which can be no longer than five years, are to:

- Address conservation priorities involving agriculture and nonindustrial private forest land on a local, State, multistate, or regional level.
- Encourage producers to cooperate in meeting applicable Federal, State, and local regulatory requirements related to production.
- Encourage producers to cooperate in the installation and maintenance of conservation practices that affect multiple agricultural or nonindustrial private forest lands.
- Promote the development and demonstration of innovative conservation practices and delivery methods, including those for specialty crop and organic production, and precision agriculture producers.

Owners and operators of agricultural and nonindustrial private forest lands are eligible to apply for program benefits offered through CCPI. In order for a producer to be considered for financial assistance through a CCPI partner agreement, the land associated with a program application must be located within an approved CCPI project area. Only producers who are eligible for EQIP, WHIP or CSP may receive financial assistance through these programs.

Technical Service Provider Assistance was authorized under Section 1242 of the 1985 Food Security Act, as amended by the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002. Section 2701 of the 2002 Farm Bill amended Section 1242 of the Food Security Act to require the Secretary of Agriculture to provide technical assistance under the Food Security Act Title XII conservation programs to a producer eligible for that assistance "directly … or at the option of the producer, through a payment … to the producer for an approved third party, if available." Section 2706 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 further amended Section 1242 adding a third option to provide assistance to an eligible participant "through an agreement with a third party provider" and added the Agricultural Management Assistance Program to the list of eligible programs. Section 1242 requires that USDA establish a system for approving individuals and entities to provide technical assistance to carry out conservation programs, and establish the amounts and methods for payments for that assistance. Technical assistance includes conservation planning and conservation practice implementation.

The Secretary of Agriculture delegated authority to implement Section 1242 to NRCS. NRCS implementation objectives of the provision include: 1) policy, procedures, and processes that provide efficient, effective, and timely technical services; 2) a process where conservation program participants can take full advantage of the marketplace and obtain cost-effective delivery of quality technical services; and 3) technical services that are provided in a manner that optimizes conservation benefits. Assistance through technical service providers expands the Agency's ability to provide products and services that enable people to be good stewards of the Nation's soil, water and related natural resources on non-Federal land.

Workforce Status and Location. As of September 30, 2009, NRCS had 11,220 full-time employees with permanent appointments and 629 part-time or intermittent employees. Of this total, 408 employees are located in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area and 11,441 employees located outside of the Washington, D.C., Metropolitan Area.

Organizational Structure. NRCS is a line and staff organization. The line authority begins with the Chief and extends through regional conservationists, state conservationists, area conservationists, and is finally vested with district conservationists. Line officers are responsible for direct assistance to the public. Staff positions furnish specialized technical or administrative assistance to line officers. More than 98 percent of the approximately 3,800 NRCS offices are in the field. Staffs in these offices either provide

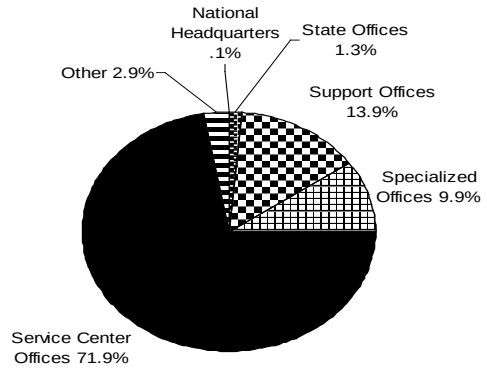
direct customer service or critical technical and administrative support. The following is a brief description of the principal functions of NRCS offices:

Customer Service Offices. Eighty-two percent of NRCS offices either provide the Agency's broad spectrum of natural resource technical and financial assistance products and services to customers, or a more focused service such as rural community development.

- Service Center Offices. Most employees provide front-line, personalized, one-on-one customer service from field offices that constitute 72 percent of NRCS offices. Employees in these offices provide customers with technical and financial assistance through the Agency's five business lines; as a result of this help, customers prevent or solve natural resource problems on their land and in their communities. Service center office staff work side-by-side with employees of the local conservation districts and State conservation agencies. These offices function as a clearinghouse for natural resource information, helping people gain access to knowledge and assistance available from local, State, regional, and national sources. Service center offices are located in all States, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Micronesia, Palau, and the Marshall Islands. Ninety-one percent of these 2,761 field offices are NRCS Service Center offices and are co-located with offices of Rural Development and/or Farm Services Agency; the remainder are program delivery offices generally located with conservation districts.
- Specialized Offices. Another ten percent of NRCS field offices (377) provide customer service that is more specialized such as the rural community development through Resource Conservation and Development offices or offices focused on delivering technical or financial assistance for water quality improvement.

Support Offices. Fourteen percent of NRCS' 3,800 offices in the field house employees who provide critical technical and administrative support to customer service offices. The other field-located offices include: 1) Area offices that provide administrative and technical support to a group of service center offices (these offices are generally used in larger States); 2) Project offices that are headquarters for watershed or river basin planning and construction activities; 3) Soil survey offices that inventory and map the soil resource on private lands resulting in current and consistent interpretations and data sets; and 4) Plant Material Centers that test, select and release plants for conservation purposes in selected plant growth regions throughout the United States.

State Offices. These 51 offices provide program planning and direction, consistency and accountability, and administration of a comprehensive soil, water, and related resource conservation program for each State, Pacific Islands Area and Caribbean Area. State offices also have the responsibility for the technical integrity of the NRCS activities; technology transfer and training; marketing of the agency programs and initiatives; and administrative operations and processing. State offices partner with other Federal and State agencies to provide solutions to State resource issues. A State Conservationist heads the NRCS organization in each State except Hawaii. In the Pacific Islands Area, which includes Hawaii, and the Caribbean Area, Directors serve a leadership role similar to State Conservationists.



National Headquarters (NHQ). NRCS assumes the departmental leadership for programs and other activities assigned by the Secretary of Agriculture, through the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment. The Chief, with the assistance of the Associate Chief and Deputy Chiefs, carries out NHQ functions. Those functions include: 1) planning, formulation and direction of NRCS programs, budgets,

and activities; 2) development of program policy, budgets, procedures, guidelines and standards; 3) leadership and coordination with other agencies, constituent groups and organizations; 4) workload assessment and operations management; 5) oversight and evaluation activities and coordination of corrective actions; and 6) strategic planning and strategic initiative development.

NHQ is responsible for the framework for national technology development and delivery within the Agency. Natural resource technology is developed and delivered through six national headquarters divisions, 11 national centers (agricultural wildlife conservation; cartography and geospatial; design, construction and soil mechanics; plant data; soil survey; water management; water and climate; information technology; employee development; geospatial development and agroforestry), and three National Technology Support Centers (NTSC). NTSCs acquire and/or develop new science and technology in order to provide cutting-edge technological support and direct assistance, and technology transfer to States, Pacific Islands Area and the Caribbean Area. These Centers also develop and maintain national technical standards and other technological procedures and references.

Accountability. NRCS accountability system includes:

- Program/operational and administrative controls, including the Accountability Information Management System (AIMS) which is both web-based and location-based. AIMS provides real time information on Agency budget, performance and results to anyone who clicks on the Accountability tab on the www.nrcs.usda.gov web-site.
- State quality assurance plans addressing State quality assurance processes, quality control issues, and producer compliance activities. Plans are updated, and findings and corrective actions are reported annually.
- The Audit tracking system that monitors the progress of various oversight activities by internal and external auditors.
- Customer conformance reviews which assess performance of clients in meeting requirements of the conservation program. Customer conformance is determined using compliance and conservation program contract reviews.
- National internal management reviews on high risk areas of concern in programs, operations management, financial management, human resources, civil rights and functional areas. Around 40 on-site reviews are usually carried out on an annual basis. Deficiency findings result in management actions directed toward eliminating the deficiencies. Thirty-nine studies were carried out in FY 2009.

In FY 2009 and continuing into FY 2010, NRCS continues upgrading the accountability software applications and hardware security to correctly safeguard all private and sensitive information and meet the requirements of the Federal Information Security Management Act.

Strategic Plan. The NRCS Strategic Plan establishes four mission goals and eight outcomes:

1. High Quality, Productive Soils
   - Soil Quality. The quality of intensively used soils is maintained or enhanced to enable sustained production of a safe, healthy and abundant food and fiber supply.
2. Clean And Abundant Water
   - Water Quality. The quality of surface water and groundwater is improved and maintained to protect human health, support a healthy environment, and enable productive use of the land.
   - Water Quantity. Water is conserved and protected to ensure an abundant and reliable supply for the Nation.
3. Clean Air
   - Air Quality. Farmers and ranchers make a positive contribution to local air quality.
4. Healthy Plant And Animal Communities
   - Grassland and Rangeland. Grassland and rangeland ecosystems are productive, diverse, and resilient, and provide a wide variety of environmental services.
   - Forest Land. Healthy forest lands that are productive, diverse, and resilient, and provide a wide range of ecosystem services.

- Fish and Wildlife Habitat. Working lands and waters provide habitat for diverse and healthy wildlife, aquatic species, and plant communities.
- Wetlands. Wetlands provide high quality habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife, protect water quality, and reduce flood damages.

NRCS leadership continues an aggressive effort to ensure effective implementation of the Agency strategic plan. That effort includes:

- Implementation of a communications strategy to reach across the Agency, USDA, and other Federal counterparts, as well as to partners, customers, and other entities.
- Definition and prioritization of critical implementation needs by Agency leadership.
- Integration of actions that support strategic priorities into business plans at National Headquarters and in States offices.
- Revision of Agency annual performance measures and personnel performance plan metrics to align clearly with strategic plan priorities and ensure a workable approach to report on progress.

Completed and On-going Audits

FY 2009 General Accounting Office (GAO) and Office of Inspector General (OIG) completed audits:

- GAO 120696 Global Positioning System (May 2008). Final report (GAO-09-325) posted in May 2009. Audit closed.
- GAO 310889 Cybersecurity Strategy Review (November 2008). Final report (GAO-09-432T) posted in March 2009. Audit closed.
- GAO 320572 Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) staffing in Iraq and Afghanistan (January 2008). Final report (GAO-09-86R) posted in January 2008. Audit closed.
- GAO 360965 Alaska Native Village Flooding and Erosion (May 2008). Final report (GAO-09-551) posted in June 2009. Audit closed.
- GAO 360978 USDA Bio-fuel Efforts (September 2008). Final report (GAO-09-446) posted in October 2009. Audit closed.
- GAO 360980 Status of Endangered Species Act Issues (August 2008). Final report (GAO-03-976) posted in December 2008. Audit warranted no recommendations. Audit closed.
- GAO-361003-Air Quality in Great Basin National Park (October 2008). Final report (GAO-09-788R) posted in July 2009. The report is a non-audit and agencies were not asked for comments. Audit closed.
- GAO 360777 USDA Civil Rights Performance (November 2006). Final report (GAO-08-755T) posted in May 2008. Audit closed.
- GAO 450241 Review of Administrative Remedies in the Federal Employee EEO Complaint Process (February 2007). Final report (GAO-09-712) posted in May 2008. Audit closed.
- GAO 460579 Critical Infrastructure Protection Coordination Issues (December 2005). Department of Homeland Security had lead for this audit. Final report (GAO-07-39) posted in October 2006. Audit closed.
- OIG 10001-1-HY Review Contract Administration at NRCS to Support Hurricane Relief Efforts (January 2006). Final report issued March 2007. Audit closed.
- OIG 10601-5-CH Review of Controls Over Technical Service Providers (October 2007). Final report issued September 2008. Audit closed.
- OIG 50099-52-TE AGI Limitations (August 2006). Audit terminated by OIG and closed July 2009
- OIG 50601-04-Hy Adequacy of Internal Controls Over Travel Card Expenditures Follow-up (November 2006). This was a follow-up audit to 50601-05-HQ, June 2003. Final report issued September 2008. Audit closed.
- OIG 50601-12-KC Hurricane Relief Initiative (NRCS and FSA) (May 2005). Final report issued November 2007. Audit closed.

FY 2009 General Accounting Office (GAO) and Office of Inspector General (OIG) on-going audits:

- GAO 360644 USDA Funding for EQIP – USDA Conservation Programs Stakeholders Views on Participation and Coordination to Benefit Threatened and Endangered Species and Their Habits (November 2007). Final report (GAO-07-35) posted on November 2007. The new EQIP allocation formula has been approved and is being used for FY 2009. GAO concerns have been addressed.
- OIG 10099-4-SF Wetlands Reserve Program Restoration Compliance (January 2006). Submitted closure documentation to OCFO approval is pending.
- OIG 10099-6-SF Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program-Review of Non-Governmental Organizations (May 2007). Submitted revised Agency response on Recommendation 3 to OIG on September 8 2009.
- OIG 10099-10-KC Homeland Security, NRCS Protection of Federal Assets (April 2002). Request for closure pending issuance of firearms policy.
- OIG 10401-2-FM FY 2008 NRCS Financial Statement (January 2008). Final report issued November 2008. Corrective actions are being taken for Recommendations 1-9.
- OIG 10601-1-At Flood Control Dam Rehabilitation (December 2006). Agency response for Recommendations 9 and 10 were re-submitted to OIG on September 14, 2009.
- OIG 10601-04-KC NRCS Conservation Security Program (CSP) (November 2006). Management decision was not reached on Recommendations 6, 8, 9, 16-19, 21 and 23. Agency response will be resubmitted in FY 2010 1st quarter.
- OIG 50099-11-SF Crop Base Acres on Conservation Easement Lands (May 2005). OCFO accepted final action for Recommendation 1 and no further reporting is necessary for this audit. The remaining recommendations are assigned to FSA.
- OIG 50601-10 -Hq Saving the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Requires Better Coordination of Environmental and Agricultural Resources (May 2005). Request for closure is pending receipt of supporting documentation.
- OIG 50601-18-Te Pasture, Rangeland, and Forage Pilot Program (March 2008). Risk Management Agency (RMA) has the lead. No findings have been reported to NRCS. No additional information is needed at this time. RMA will provide NRCS the status of closeout.
- OIG 50801-1-TE Urban Resources Partnership Program (June 1998). Submitted closure documentation to OCFO approval decision is pending.

FY 2009 GAO and OIG started or open audits:

- OIG 10601-6-KC Emergency Disaster Assistance for the 2008 Floods-Emergency Watershed Protection Plan (EWP) (January 2009). In progress. Entrance conference held on February 4, 2009.
- OIG 10703-1-KC Emergency Watershed Protection Program Floodplain Easements (April 2009). In progress. Agency response to Fast Report was submitted to OIG on September 8, 2009.
- OIG-10703-2-KC Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Operations Program (April 2009). In progress. Entrance conference held on September 15, 2009.
- OIG-10401-3-FM Audit Report: NRCS' Financial Statements for Fiscal Year 2009. Final Report issued November 2009.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Available Funds and Staff-Years

2009 Actual and Estimated 2010 and 2011

Item	Actual 2009		Estimated 2010		Estimated 2011	
	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years
Conservation Operations……	$853,400,000	6,402	$887,629,000	6,573	$923,729,000	6,208
Healthy Forests Reserve Program……	-	-	-	-	-	-
Watershed Surveys & Planning……	-	-	-	-	-	-
Watershed & Flood Prevention Op……	24,289,000	301	30,000,000	683	-	-
Recovery Act, Watersheds…….	290,000,000	67	-	397	-	-
Subtotal, Watersheds & Flood……	314,289,000	368	30,000,000	1,080	-	-
Watershed Rehabilitation Program……	40,000,000	64	40,161,000	63	40,497,000	29
Recovery Act, Rehabilitation……..	50,000,000	8	-	36	-	-
Subtotal, Water Rehabilitation……	90,000,000	72	40,161,000	99	40,497,000	29
Resource Conservation & Develop……	50,730,000	412	50,730,000	412	-	-
Total, Appropriated Funds……..	1,308,419,000	7,254	1,008,520,000	8,164	964,226,000	6,237
Carryover Funds (Available):						
Conservation Operations……..	16,365,677	-	34,502,394	-	-	-
Healthy Forests Reserve Program…….	1,274,274	-	1,195,190	-	1,195,190	-
Wetlands Reserve Program…….	2,741,796	-	2,817,287	-	-	-
Watershed & Flood Prevention Op……	563,824,463	-	356,640,362	-	-	-
Recovery Act, Watersheds……	-	-	170,117,932	-	-	-
Watershed Rehabilitation Program…….	4,907,025	-	9,946,369	-	-	-
Recovery Act, Rehabilitation…….	-	-	32,158,801	-	-	-
Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program……..	-	-	1,158,381	-	-	-
Healthy Forests Reserve Program (Mand.)…..	-	-	7,223,828	-	-	-
Colorado River Salinity…….	268,746	-	268,746	-	-	-
Water Bank Program……..	745,181	-	745,181	-	-	-
Forestry Incentives Program……	6,016,890	-	5,628,003	-	-	-
Great Plains Conservation Prog……..	547,594	-	547,594	-	-	-
Resource Conservation & Devel……	2,345,834	-	2,774,795	-	-	-
Transfer from CCC:						
Wildlife Habitat Incentives……	9,775,538	-	10,326,388	-	-	-
Total, Available Funds…….	1,917,232,018	7,254	1,644,571,251	8,164	965,421,190	6,237
Obligations under other USDA appropriations:						
Farm Security & Rural Investment Program …..	2,117,859,173	3,176	2,965,484,000	4,932	3,022,491,000	4,003
Reimbursements for technical services to:						
Emergency Conservation Program (FSA) ……..	2,315,608	31	3,168,397	28	3,168,397	28
Foreign Details & Assign. (OICD)……	-	-	-	-	-	-
Soil Survey (FS)……	70,379	1	66,906	1	66,906	1
Accelerate Soil Survey……	328,559	3	301,078	4	301,078	4
Other Planning & Application…….…….	55,897,433	538	83,447,804	759	124,223,304	1,123
PMC Operations……	90,464	1	79,973	1	79,973	1
Reimbursements for other services:						
Facilities: Rent, phone, utilities, etc……	9,626,506	1	12,676,677	-	12,676,677	-
Miscellaneous……	1,769,024	5	2,272,684	5	2,272,684	5
Total, Other USDA Approp…….	2,187,957,146	3,756	3,067,497,519	5,730	3,165,280,019	5,165
Total, Agriculture Appropriations……	4,105,189,164	11,010	4,712,068,770	13,894	4,130,701,209	11,402

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Available Funds and Staff-Years

2009 Actual and Estimated 2010 and 2011

(Continued)

Item	Actual 2009		Estimated 2010		Estimated 2011	
	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years
Other Federal Funds:						
Reimbursement for technical services for:						
Soil surveys (Interior)…….……	1,942,137	-	$1,721,596	19	$1,721,596	19
Accelerate Soil Survey……	4,049,281	43	3,643,253	38	3,643,253	38
Other: planning & application…….	6,364,026	45	24,818,723	65	4,369,716	22
Snow Survey & Water Forecast……..	-	-	-	-	-	-
Plant Materials Center Operations…….	1,120,155	10	990,261	11	990,261	11
Bureau of Land Management……..	491,319	6	435,526	5	435,526	5
Reimbursement for other services:						
Facilities: Rent, phone, utilities, etc……..	33,830	-	49,369	-	46,288	-
Cartographic job work……	1,184	-	1,620	-	1,620	-
Proceeds of sales…….	-	-	-	-	-	-
Financial assistance…….	3,768,382	-	33,098,766	-	3,121,966	-
Miscellaneous……	3,174,330	29	4,496,062	29	4,197,450	25
Total, Other Federal Funds……	20,944,644	133	69,255,176	167	18,527,676	120
Non-Federal Funds:						
Reimbursement for technical services for:						
Planning & application…….	1,471,625	16	2,018,712	15	1,998,712	15
Accelerate Soil Surveys……	1,232,623	10	1,138,458	12	1,138,458	12
Snow Survey & Water Forecast……	-	-	-	-	-	-
Plant Materials Center Operations……..	191,276	1	169,096	1	169,096	1
Cartographic job work……	-	-	-	-	-	-
A&E Contracting……..……..	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reimbursement for other non-Federal services:						
Facilities: Rent, phone, utilities, etc…….	971,892	-	1,326,134	-	1,326,134	-
Proceeds of sales……..	6,500	-	7,185	-	7,185	-
Financial assistance…….	2,093,776	-	350,000	-	-	-
Miscellaneous……	1,791,710	16	2,609,720	14	2,259,720	14
Trust funds……	207,587	-	450,000	1	450,000	1
Total, Non Federal Funds……..	7,966,989	43	8,069,305	43	7,349,305	43
Total, NRCS……..	4,134,100,797	11,186	4,789,393,251	14,104	4,156,578,190	11,565

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Permanent Positions by Grade and Staff-Year Summary

2009 Actual and Estimated 2010 and 2011

	2009			2010			2011		
GRADE	**HDQ**	**FIELD**	**TOTAL**	**HDQ**	**FIELD**	**TOTAL**	**HDQ**	**FIELD**	**TOTAL**
Senior Executive Service..	18	3	21	18	3	21	18	3	21
GS-15 ……..	82	71	153	77	68	145	82	70	152
GS-14 ……..	138	172	310	132	164	296	136	169	305
GS-13 ……..	55	526	581	53	503	556	54	517	571
GS-12 ……..	28	3,146	3,174	27	3,006	3,033	27	3,089	3,116
GS-11 ……..	23	2,451	2,474	22	2,342	2,364	23	2,407	2,430
GS-10 ……..	1	32	33	1	31	32	1	31	32
GS-9 ……..	28	1,597	1,625	27	1,526	1,553	27	1,568	1,595
GS-8 ……..	9	478	487	9	457	466	9	469	478
GS-7 ……..	4	1,480	1,484	4	1,414	1,418	4	1,453	1,457
GS-6 ……..	14	408	422	13	390	403	14	401	415
GS-5 ……..	2	409	411	2	391	393	2	402	404
GS-4 ……..	3	328	331	3	313	316	3	322	325
GS-3 ……..	3	234	237	3	224	227	3	230	233
GS-2 ……..	0	67	67	0	64	64	0	66	66
GS-1 ……..	0	39	39	0	37	37	0	38	38
Other Graded Positions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ungraded Positions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Permanent Positions	408	11,441	11,849	391	10,933	11,324	403	11,235	11,638
Unfilled Positions, end-of-year	18	1,052	1,070	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total, Permanent Employment, end-of-year	390	10,389	10,779	391	10,933	11,324	403	11,235	11,638
Staff-Year Estimate	385	10,801	11,186	486	13,618	14,104	398	11,167	11,565

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Size, Composition and Cost of Motor Vehicle Fleet

Travel by most field NRCS employees requires a high degree of mobility with frequent stops at field offices, job sites (farms and ranches) and other areas where common carrier transportation is non-existent, uneconomical or inadequate. Employees require pickup trucks and sport utility vehicles (SUV) to drive on agricultural land to provide technical assistance to farmers and ranchers, and to transport large engineering and other field equipment. NRCS vehicles are distributed among field, area and State offices in the 50 States, Caribbean and Pacific Basin. NRCS has no vehicles in Washington, D.C. Passenger vehicles are assigned to an office location. Several employees use a single vehicle, maximizing its use and minimizing the number of vehicles at a location.

NRCS requires annual vehicle inspections and certification to ensure that vehicles are safe and reliable. NRCS policy for the replacement of motor vehicles is based on economy and safety. Industry standards and experience indicate that it is economical and safe to operate vehicles beyond the minimum standards set forth in FMR 102-34.280; GSA leased vehicles are replaced based on the FMR. NRCS maximizes purchases of Alternative Fuel Vehicles.

Changes to the motor vehicle fleet. At the end of FY 2009, NRCS had 1,148 passenger vehicles in a fleet of 10,130 sedans, station wagons, vans, SUVs and trucks. The fleet size is 1,339 vehicles more than reported in FY 2008. NRCS has a GSA-leased fleet of 192 vehicles that includes 59 passenger vehicles. NRCS anticipates a decrease of 151 vehicles in the total fleet in FY 2010.

Replacement of Agency-Owned Motor Vehicles. In FY 2010, NRCS will dispose of 107 passenger vehicles that meet replacement criteria and acquire (buy/lease) 60.

Impediments to managing the motor vehicle fleet. Alternative fuel is not available at many rural, remote NRCS field locations. NRCS continues to purchase alternative fuel vehicles and to use alternative fuel as it becomes available at field locations. High fuel costs continue to impact managing the motor vehicle fleet in the most cost effective manner.

Size, Composition, and Annual Cost (in thousands of dollars)

Fiscal Year	Number of Vehicles by Type[1]								
	Sedans & Station Wagons	Light Trucks, SUV, Vans		Medium Trucks	Heavy Trucks	Ambu-lances	Buses	Total Vehicles	Annual Operating Costs
		4X2	4X4						
2008	1,068	4,509	2,992	210	12	0	0	8,791	$15,876
Change	-298	-323	+1,564	+5	-11	0	0	-2,201	+$676
2009	1,148	4,032	4,591	319	40	0	0	10,130	$11,313
Change[2]	+80	-477	+1,599	+109	+28	0	0	+1,339	-$4,563
2010	1,101	3,996	4,539	304	39	0	0	9,979	$11,144
Change	-47	-36	-52	-15	-1	0	0	-151	-$169
2011	1,107	3,941	4,697	316	39	0	0	10,100	$11,279
Change	+6	-55	+158	+12	0	0	0	+121	+$135

[1]Numbers include agency-owned and GSA-leased vehicles. NRCS does not have any commercial leased vehicles.

[2] Fiscal Year 2009 vehicle inventories include vehicles obtained through GSA under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). In FY09, NRCS received 537 vehicles on or before September 30, 2009.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Conservation Operations

The estimates include appropriation language for this item as follows (new language underscored; deleted matter enclosed in brackets):

Conservation Operations

For necessary expenses for carrying out the provisions of the Act of April 27, 1935 (16 U.S.C. 590a-f), including preparation of conservation plans and establishment of measures to conserve soil and water (including farm irrigation and land drainage and such special measures for soil and water management as may be necessary to prevent floods and the siltation of reservoirs and to control agricultural related pollutants); operation of conservation plant materials centers; classification and mapping of soil; dissemination of information; acquisition of lands, water, and interests therein for use in the plant materials program by donation, exchange, or purchase at a nominal cost not to exceed $100 pursuant to the Act of August 3, 1956 (7 U.S.C. 428a); purchase and erection or alteration or improvement of permanent and temporary buildings; and operation and maintenance of aircraft, [$887,629,000] $923,729,000, to remain available until September 30, [2011, of which $37,382,000 shall be for the purposes, and in the amounts, specified in the table titled "Congressionally Designated Projects" in the statement of managers to accompany this Act:] 2012: Provided, That appropriations hereunder shall be available pursuant to 7 U.S.C. 2250 for construction and improvement of buildings and public improvements at plant materials centers, except that the cost of alterations and improvements to other buildings and other public improvements shall not exceed $250,000: [Provided further, That the Secretary is authorized to transfer ownership of all land, buildings, and related improvements of the Natural Resources Conservation Service facilities located in Medicine Bow, Wyoming, to the Medicine Bow Conservation District:]Provided further, That when buildings or other structures are erected on non-Federal land, that the right to use such land is obtained as provided in 7 U.S.C. 2250a. (7 U.S.C. 2201-02; 16 U.S.C. 1101-5; 33 U.S.C. 7016-11; Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010.)

The first change in language proposes deletion of "2011, of which $37,382,000 shall be for the purposes, and in the amounts, specified in the table titled "Congressionally Designated Projects" in the statement of managers to accompany this Act" and insertion of 2012.

The second change in language proposes deletion of "Provided further, That the Secretary is authorized to transfer ownership of all land, buildings, and related improvements of the Natural Resources Conservation Service facilities located in Medicine Bow, Wyoming, to the Medicine Bow Conservation District:".

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Conservation Operations

Appropriation Act, 2010	$887,629,000
Budget Estimate, 2011	923,729,000
Increase in Appropriation	+36,100,000

Summary of Increases and Decreases
(On basis of appropriation)

Item of Change Conservation Operations:	2010 Estimated	Pay Costs	Other Changes	2011 Estimated
1. Conservation Technical Assistance	$761,707,000	+$7,119,000	+$27,618,000	$796,444,000
2. Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative	9,930,000	+148,000	--	10,078,000
3. Soil Survey	93,939,000	+1,011,000	--	94,950,000
4. Snow Survey & Water Supply Forecasting.	10,965,000	+95,000	--	11,060,000
5. Plant Materials Centers	11,088,000	+109,000	--	11,197,000
Total Available	887,629,000	8,482,000(1)	27,618,000(2)	923,729,000

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Conservation Operations

Project Statement
(On basis of appropriation)

	2009 Actual		2010 Estimated		Increase or Decrease	2011 Estimated	
	Amount:	Staff: Years:	Amount:	Staff: Years:	:	Amount:	Staff: Years:
Conservation Operations:							
Technical Assistance…….....	$729,667,000:	5,449:	$761,707,000:	5,624:	+$34,737,000:	$796,444,000:	5,304:
Grazing Lands……..	9,930,000:	80:	9,930,000:	78	+148,000:	10,078,000:	76:
Soil Surveys……..….....	92,229,000:	696:	93,939,000:	707	+1,011,000:	94,950,000:	672:
Snow Surveys……...…	10,806,000:	76:	10,965,000:	63	+95,000:	11,060,000:	61:
Plant Materials…….	10,928,000:	101:	11,088,000:	101	+109,000:	11,197,000:	95:
Total, Available……...	853,560,000:	6,402:	887,629,000:	6,573:	36,100,000:	923,729,000:	6,208:
Transfer from Congressional Relations……	-160,000:	--:					
Total, Appropriation……..…..	853,400,000:	6,402:					

Project Statement
(On basis of available funds)

	2009 Actual		2010 Estimated		Increase or	2011 Estimated	
	Amount	Staff: Years:	Amount:	Staff: Years:	Decrease	Amount	Staff Years
Conservation Operations:							
1 Technical Assistance……..	$728,272,705:	5,449:	$790,940,738:	5,624:	+5,503,262:	$796,444,000:	5,304
2 Grazing Lands……	9,930,000:	80:	9,930,000:	78:	+148,000:	10,078,000:	76
3 Soil Surveys……...	91,058,703:	696:	98,290,310:	707:	-3,340,310:	94,950,000:	672
4 Snow Surveys……	12,871,625:	76:	11,228,163:	63:	-168,163:	11,060,000:	61
5 Plant Materials……..	12,531,568:	101:	11,742,183:	101:	-545,183:	11,197,000;	95
Total, Direct Obligations…….	854,664,601:	6,402:	922,131,394:	6,573:	1,597,606:	923,729,000;	6,208
Unobligated Bal. Brought Fwd...	(-44,169,102):	--:	(-52,922,718):	--:	(+34,502,394):	(-18,420,324);	--
Prior Year Recoveries…….	(-21,423,020):	--:	--:	--:	--:	--;	--
Unobligated Expiring Balance...	(+4,562,415):	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--
Offsetting Collections…….	(-38,493,475):	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--
Reimbursements……	(+35,545,636):	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--
Change in Customer Payments.	(+9,950,227):	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--
Not Available Carried Fwd……	--:	--:	(+18,420,324)	--:	--:	(+18,420,324):	--
Unobligated. Bal. Carried Fwd..	(+52,922,718):	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--
Adjusted Appropriation…….	-853,560,000:	--:	(887,629,000)	--:	(+36,100,000):	-923,729,000:	--
Reimbursable Obligations:							
Conservation Tech. Assist...	25,579,578:	112:	26,714,000:	87:	--:	35,000,000:	106
Soil Surveys……	7,896,720:	62:	7,000,000:	78:	--:	7,000,000:	78
Snow Survey & Water……	:		:				
Supply Forecasting…….	485,698:	2:	600,000:	2:	--	600,000:	2
Plant Materials Centers…..	1,583,640:	14:	1,400,000:	15:	--	1,400,000:	15
EPA Great LakesRestorations Initiative	--:	--:	8,286,000:	19:	--	--:	--
Total Reimbursable Oblige	35,545,636:	190:	44,000,000:	201:	--	44,000,000:	201
Obligational Authority	890,210,237:	6,952:	966,131,394:	6,774:	1,597,606:	967,729,000:	6,409

Justification of Increases and Decreases

A net increase of $36,100,000 for Conservation Operations ($887,629,000 available in 2010):

1a.) An increase of $8,482,000 to fund increased pay costs.

The increase for pay will enable NRCS to maintain current staffing levels which are critical to the Agency's objective of providing adequate levels of conservation technical assistance to farmers and protecting the natural resource base on private lands. The increased pay cost funds are needed to avoid any disruption or delays in the Conservation Operations program activities and will be used to pay the increased salaries and benefits costs for the 6,208 FTE's funded in the FY 2011 budget request.

2a.) An increase of $5,000,000 for NRCS Streamlining and Integrating Business Model and Information Technology Tools to improve NRCS financial system accountability and transparency and conservation planning delivery.

The successful delivery of conservation technical assistance is inherently a field-based activity. Since 2002, increased administrative workload associated with increased financial assistance programs have significantly reduced the amount of time field staff can spend in the field during the planning process. At the same time the financial assistance funding has increased, the number of NRCS FTE's has declined.

To streamline the business processes required to support conservation planning and contract development, NRCS is designing the next generation Toolkit around the concept of a mobile planning tool that is a critical part of our delivery model in the future. NRCS envisions having field staff in the field, working with clients 65 to 80 percent of the time. Web-based applications will integrate GIS services and mobile computing so that planning and contract development will occur simultaneously as the planner is working in the field.

The streamlining effort and next generation tools will: 1) make participation in USDA's conservation programs easier for customers and the delivery of programs less complex for employees; 2) increase efficiencies by streamlining and integrating processes across business lines, and 3) ensure the continued science-based delivery of technically sound conservation products and services.

The funding will be used to 1) redesign NRCS' business processes into a more efficient and integrated model for delivering three business lines: conservation planning, conservation practice implementation, and financial assistance. Five hundred thousand dollars will be used for business process modeling teams to the develop the tools; 2) rebuild NRCS' business and science information technology applications around a service oriented architecture and shared enterprise databases to streamline IT development, eliminate duplicate data entry by the field staff, and provide a common portal for field staff to access the diverse set of IT tools needed in conservation assistance. Three million dollars will be used for IT development to include an initial set of redesigned customer self service tools that will allow clients to work with NRCS in new ways, such as applying for services on-line, certifying practice installation, and digital signature capability. This development would also include laying the foundation for automatically estimating environmental effects from conservation programs, facilitating an efficient role for NRCS in environmental market approaches; 3) build a mobile planning application around portable computing technologies that will enable the Agency's goal of having technical field staff spend 75 percent of their time in the field with clients. One million dollars will be needed to construct the basic mobile planning tool so all field staff can operate in a "disconnected mode", where they will have access to all the needed data and integrated GIS tools when in the field with clients; and 4) conduct pilots to evaluate alternative strategies for delivering financial assistance more effectively and efficiently. Five hundred thousand dollars will be used for training for rolling out newly designed technical tools.

2b.) An increase of $25,000,000 for the implementation of Strategic Watershed Action Teams (SWATs) that will be deployed to high priority degraded agricultural watersheds.

Conservation plans developed through Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) provide the mechanism through which landowners and managers identify conservation systems to address their natural resource needs, and make decisions about the appropriate financial assistance programs. This initiative identifies an innovative approach to address this issue.

NRCS envisions deploying a SWAT consisting of five to seven people, with expertise in planning, for a period of between three to five years in a specified geographic location discussed below. These teams will include Soil Conservationists, technicians and specialists and will be identified based on the needed technical expertise in each watershed. Specialists may include range specialists, engineers or biologists. The number of teams deployed for each watershed will depend on the analysis of natural resource and socioeconomic data of the region and will be decided based on a formula that NRCS will develop. The teams will work under the direction of the local District Conservationist in cooperation with the State and local Conservation Districts to provide a seamless cadre of field professionals.

The development and deployment of SWATs will greatly improve the environmental cost effectiveness of NRCS technical and financial assistance programs. The funds will enhance the Agency's capability to strategically invest in conservation and better target the Agency's financial and technical assistance programs. Because the SWATs will provide significant planning, education, and program implementation assistance, the technical assistance teams will help ensure that NRCS programs are strategically targeted and effectively integrated on a farm and ranch as well as a watershed scales.

The goal of deploying the SWAT's will be to reach every landowner in a targeted watershed eligible for NRCS programs and provide them with the technical assistance to assess their natural resource conditions and offer resource planning and program help. Emphasis in resource assessment and planning will be placed on those resource conditions that are of priority interest in the selected watershed. For instance, if a watershed has been designated a high priority for its threat to nitrogen loading, every effort will be made to emphasize high impact targeted practices for nitrogen avoidance, control and entrapment.

The total number of FTE's for this initiative that could be supported by the increase in CTA funds could be as much as 175 (or approximately 35 teams). The costs would be for salary, training, equipment and relocation in years of redeployment.

Having a concentrated number of field employees in a strategic watershed will increase the number and extent of conservation practices installed through financial assistance programs or by private landowner investment in a shorter period of time. The ability to make one-on-one contact and to follow-up will have a profound effect on conservation practices being adopted. Increased conservation practice adoption and implementation will result in faster environmental response and natural resource improvement.

To determine the future of this new approach, NRCS will evaluate the cost effectiveness of the SWATs. The evaluation will assess both the change in administrative performance (such as the technical assistance cost to deliver a program, percent of farming operations participating in a watershed, and the time to plan, design, and install practices), as well as environmental performance (such as the change in wildlife populations, water quality and quantity, and farm profitability) versus watersheds with no SWATs.

The SWATs will help NRCS work more closely and effectively with the U.S. Forest Service (FS) in that agency's efforts to also adopt a landscape-scale approach to natural resource management. This will leverage the strengths of each agency's technical skills and natural resource programs to conserve and

restore forestland, grassland, and working farmland. This coordinated, strategic approach will encompass public and private lands. Additional partnerships with other local, State, and Federal agencies, as well as private and non-profit partners, will expand the reach and success of the initiative.

During Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011, NRCS will coordinate with FS and other stakeholders and partners to identify high-priority watersheds, which may include the Bay-Delta region in California and the Upper Mississippi, in order to enhance conservation on a landscape scale across land ownerships. Smaller critical watersheds within these high-priority watersheds would be identified for the deployment of SWAT, using natural resource and socioeconomic data including:

- Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP) data.
- State-level natural resource data.
- State-level strategic conservation and land management priorities.
- Other information and priorities identified trough the NRCS State Technical Committees in cooperation with other Federal, State, and private partners.

2c.) An increase in Conservation Technical Assistance of $35,000,000 for Common Computing Environment (CCE) refresh.

The budget includes $35 million for NRCS to support the Department's efforts to modernize and upgrade the CCE for the Service Center Agencies (SCAs). This funding will be used to replace outdated components of the CCE, many of which have exceeded their expected life cycles, reduce system vulnerabilities to failure and improve the performance and effectiveness of the shared infrastructure. These improvements will allow the SCAs to better serve program participants with a more flexible and reliable IT infrastructure and enable the first system-wide refresh of the CCE since the infrastructure was implemented in 2000. In addition, as the components of the CCE are replaced, USDA will implement a right-sizing process whereby configuration changes will be made to better support the delivery of current and future programs. As part of this process, the Department will strive to improve system security, reduce the long term cost of infrastructure services, and improve service reliability.

2d.) A decrease of $37,382,000 in Conservation Technical Assistance program earmarks.

In FY 2010, Congress included over $37 million of earmarks in the Conservation Operations programs. This decrease in funding will eliminate Congressional earmarks in the Conservation Technical Assistance account. The savings from elimination of earmarks will be redirected to high priority program areas described above (2a-2c).

Natural Resources Conservation Service
Conservation Operations

Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and Staff Years
2009 Actual and Estimated 2010 and 2011

	2009		2010		2011	
	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years
Alabama……...	$12,025,893	111	$11,912,797	111	$11,158,000	102
Alaska……...	5,605,918	27	5,054,468	27	4,734,000	25
Arizona…….	7,726,352	70	8,583,469	79	8,040,000	72
Arkansas……..	11,228,921	112	12,395,801	121	11,611,000	110
California……..……...	21,219,138	174	22,776,214	184	21,334,000	168
Colorado……...	17,091,033	151	17,107,696	151	16,024,000	139
Connecticut……..	3,440,770	27	4,695,376	34	4,398,000	30
Delaware……..	1,957,725	19	2,689,970	21	2,520,000	18
Florida……..	9,799,464	90	10,349,815	92	9,694,000	84
Georgia……..……..	15,723,983	142	16,233,877	146	15,206,000	134
Hawaii……..	7,813,059	66	9,540,213	70	8,936,000	62
Idaho……..……..	10,825,479	105	11,256,791	108	10,544,000	99
Illinois……..	17,648,096	178	17,652,927	178	16,535,000	163
Indiana……..	13,202,961	128	13,049,679	128	12,223,000	117
Iowa……..	24,429,751	225	23,732,163	225	22,229,000	207
Kansas……..	20,753,792	202	23,143,370	209	21,678,000	190
Kentucky……..	14,384,367	123	14,804,146	126	13,867,000	116
Louisiana……..	10,612,070	103	11,205,724	107	10,496,000	97
Maine……	4,861,490	44	5,174,208	45	4,847,000	41
Maryland……..	5,941,174	115	6,952,253	121	6,512,000	110
Massachusetts……..	3,375,891	26	4,439,432	32	4,158,000	28
Michigan……..	12,346,120	115	12,888,882	118	12,073,000	108
Minnesota…….	16,135,569	185	16,848,604	191	15,782,000	174
Mississippi……	15,290,214	156	16,440,356	162	15,399,000	148
Missouri……	20,271,921	211	21,525,143	216	20,162,000	197
Montana……	18,143,416	194	19,257,489	200	18,038,000	183
Nebraska……...	17,268,439	176	18,465,816	182	17,296,000	166
Nevada……..	4,968,806	43	5,472,886	44	5,126,000	40
New Hampshire……	2,673,510	21	3,547,080	23	3,322,000	20
New Jersey……...	4,179,647	40	4,970,806	42	4,656,000	38
New Mexico…….	9,702,700	86	10,266,782	89	9,617,000	81
New York…….	12,485,628	100	12,949,004	106	12,129,000	97
North Carolina……..	12,179,031	102	11,814,754	102	11,066,000	94
North Dakota……	15,391,982	134	18,249,106	141	17,093,000	127
Ohio……..	12,670,699	113	12,996,503	116	12,173,000	106
Oklahoma……	16,130,890	185	16,025,143	185	15,010,000	170
Oregon……..	12,620,525	117	13,190,771	121	12,355,000	110
Pennsylvania……	11,335,665	114	11,923,524	118	11,168,000	107

	2009		2010		2011	
	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years
Puerto Rico……...	3,698,769	34	4,090,553	35	3,831,000	32
Rhode Island……	1,527,199	11	2,712,727	12	2,541,000	10
South Carolina……	7,741,047	81	8,235,968	83	7,714,000	76
South Dakota……	13,558,446	140	13,653,554	144	12,789,000	132
Tennessee…….	12,701,835	115	13,874,112	119	12,995,000	108
Texas……	45,853,665	450	47,341,977	471	44,344,000	431
Utah……..	10,220,675	82	10,864,524	85	10,176,000	77
Vermont……	3,967,240	35	4,383,509	36	4,106,000	33
Virginia……	9,819,784	95	11,409,626	99	10,687,000	90
Washington……..	11,825,113	108	12,423,537	112	11,637,000	102
West Virginia……...	8,308,697	82	8,770,556	84	8,215,000	77
Wisconsin…….	17,017,396	156	17,885,141	161	16,752,000	147
Wyoming……..	8,572,642	80	9,587,594	83	8,980,000	75
National Hdqtr……..	183,732,262	281	228,241,876	328	213,786,000	336
National Centers……...	50,040,218	249	35,627,620	177	33,371,000	162
Nat. Tech. Sup. Cent.……...	12,617,524	73	11,670,000	73	10,931,000	67
Undistributed……	--	--	1,775,482	--	61,665,000	175
Total Obligations/Est……..	854,664,601	6,402	922,131,394	6,573	923,729,000	6,208

NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE
Conservation Operations

Classification by Objects
2009 Actual and Estimated 2010 and 2011

Personnel Compensation:		2009	2010	2011
Washington, D.C.		$30,292,732	$31,628,590	$30,336,110
Field		402,623,650	420,208,410	403,036,890
11	Total personnel compensation	432,916,382	451,837,000	433,373,000
12	Personnel benefits	127,797,482	133,427,000	127,963,000
13	Benefits for former personnel	226,377	235,000	226,000
	Total Pers. Comp. & Benefits	560,940,241	585,499,000	561,562,000
Other Objects:				
21	Travel	18,498,759	19,048,000	18,276,000
22	Transportation of things	4,336,954	4,480,000	4,296,000
23.1	Rent payments to GSA	--	--	--
23.2	Rental payments to others	24,048,564	24,917,000	23,880,000
23.3	Communications, utilities, and misc. charges	8,945,523	9,214,000	8,848,000
24	Printing and reproduction	685,998	708,000	678,000
25.1	Advisory and assistance services	--	--	--
25.2	Other services	204,878,539	245,343,394	239,604,000
25.2	Construction contracts	240,702	--	--
26	Supplies and materials	13,081,207	13,425,000	12,881,000
31	Equipment	17,145,042	17,597,000	51,880,000
32	Land and structures	1,167,297	1,182,000	1,135,000
41	Grants	--	--	--
42	Insurance and loans	398,170	412,000	395,000
43	Interest and dividends	300,321	306,000	294,000
44	Refunds	-2,716	--	--
	Total other objects	293,724,360	336,632,394	362,167,000
Total, direct obligations		854,664,601	922,131,394	923,729,000
Position Data:				
	Average Salary, ES positions	$160,199	$163,403	$166,834
	Average Salary, GS positions	$64,539	$65,830	$67,212
	Average Grade, GS positions	8	8	8

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

JUSTIFICATION OF INCREASES AND DECREASES

Conservation Operations

USER FEES-PROPOSED LEGISLATION

Explanation of Proposed Legislation:

This proposal would recover approximately $19 million in FY 2011.

The Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) provides technical and financial assistance for the development of conservation plans and establishment of measures to conserve soil and water, including farm irrigation, flood prevention, and agricultural pollution control. The technical assistance provided to agricultural landowners and operators varies depending upon the complexity of the soil or water conservation resource concern. This proposal would initiate user fees for this service. Because these plans benefit landowners by providing them with individualized site-specific inventories and evaluations of soil, water, and other resources on their land, as well as design, layout and evaluation of over 167 potential conservation practices, USDA is proposing a fee based on the level of service provided.

This proposal recommends amending Section 590c of the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act of 1935 to authorize the charging of fees for particular technical assistance services. This proposal would authorize NRCS to prescribe and collect fees to cover some of the costs of providing technical assistance for completing a conservation plan for a producer or landowner.
The proposal would also authorize the fees collected to be deposited in a special fund in the Treasury, and would be available to the Secretary of Agriculture, without further appropriation, for conservation operations purposes. Estimated receipts in FY 2011 are $19 million.

The collections that will be raised by initiating these new user fees will be used to reduce appropriations needs for FY 2012.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION OPERATIONS ACCOUNT

STATUS OF PROGRAMS

Conservation Operations is authorized by the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act of 1935, P.L. 74-46 (16 U.S.C. 590a-590f) and the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act of 1977, (16 U.S.C. 2001-2009). The purpose of Conservation Operations is to provide technical assistance supported by science-based technology and tools that help people conserve, maintain, and improve the Nation's natural resources.

The Conservation Technical Assistance Program is the major delivery program within the Conservation Operations account. In addition, the account includes three other programs: Soil Survey, Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting, and Plant Materials Center. Funding in this account provides for the development and delivery of a major portion of the products and services associated with four of the Agency's five business lines: 1) Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation, 2) Conservation Implementation, 3) Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment, and 4) Natural Resource Technology Transfer. The fifth business line (Financial Assistance) is funded primarily through other programs.

Agency Strategic Plan. The strategic plan emphasizes overarching strategies for meeting natural resource goals and objectives. These strategies are cooperative conservation, watershed-based assistance, and the market-based approach. Conservation Operations provides the foundation for each of these strategies. In FY 2006, NRCS completed a new strategic plan that established long-term goals and objectives to be achieved by 2010. In cooperation with customers and partners, the strategies described in the plan will guide NRCS toward effective accomplishment of the goals. The strategic planning process assessed long-term trends and developed guidance for the Agency that will contribute to sustaining natural resources in the coming decades. In 2008, NRCS conducted a review of the plan to evaluate progress and establish objectives through 2015. The updated plan will be issued in early 2010.

The Agency's strategic plan includes six Mission Goals developed with input and advice from partners and stakeholders. The Mission Goals articulate in broad terms the benefits the Nation expects to derive from NRCS activities and programs. They are:

1. High Quality, Productive Soils
2. Clean and Abundant Water
3. Healthy Plant and Animal Communities
4. Clean Air
5. An Adequate Energy Supply
6. Working Farm and Ranch Lands

The first three goals address the land uses and resource concerns that have been the primary focus of the Agency throughout its existence and continue to be the foundation of a healthy landscape. For each of these goals, a specific, measurable objective was established for 2010. Performance measures that can be used to monitor progress toward the long-term objectives are identified for each program, including the components of Conservation Operations. Annual targets are set for each performance measure and used in the establishment of budget requests.

The last three goals address resource issues that are growing in importance as a result of current economic and demographic trends. In updating the strategic plan, the Agency has re-evaluated its role in addressing these issues. A long-term objective is being established for Clean Air. Working Farm and Ranch Lands will be addressed through an expanded discussion of the Agency's mission and vision. NRCS is adopting two Strategic Initiatives - Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation, and Energy Conservation and Sustainable Production-to address national priorities that have conservation dimensions and are of vital importance to the agriculture and forest sectors. Strategic Initiatives are core considerations in conservation planning and implementation, driving continuing advances in the products and services of all our business lines.

CONSERVATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Current Activities

Purpose. The broad purpose of the Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) Program is to provide technical assistance to private landowners, conservation districts, Tribes, local units of government, and other organizations by providing technical assistance through a national network of locally respected, technically skilled, professional conservationists. These conservationists deliver consistent, science-based, site-specific solutions to help private landowners conserve, maintain, and improve the Nation's natural resource base. The CTA Program provides the essential building blocks necessary for NRCS to assist farmers, ranchers, other landowners, local groups, Tribes, and local units of government to plan and implement natural resource conservation systems.

Agriculture and the quality of America's soil and water resources are vital to the Nation's welfare. Approximately 1.5 billion acres (79 percent of the total acres within the contiguous United States) are non-Federal land. Approximately 90 percent of these acres are cropland, rangeland, pastureland, and private non-industrial forestland. The care and health of these lands are in the hands of private individuals. NRCS and its partners cooperate in collective efforts with individuals, groups, and other agencies to put conservation on the ground, help conserve the land, increase agricultural productivity, improve the environment, and strengthen the quality of life.

National CTA Program Priorities. The following were FY 2009 National CTA Program priorities:

- Reduction in soil erosion and sedimentation on agricultural land;
- Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans (CNMP) to assist the owners and operators of animal feeding operations in addressing their conservation needs, with an emphasis on helping those owners and operators who need to comply with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) rule;
- Reduction of non-point source pollution from nutrients, sediment, pesticides, or excess salinity in impaired watersheds consistent with Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL), as well as the reduction of groundwater contamination and point source contamination from confined animal feeding operations;
- Conservation of ground and surface water resources;
- Reduction of emissions of particulate matter, nitrogen oxides (NO_x), volatile organic compounds, and ozone precursors and depleters that impair air quality in violation of National Ambient Air Quality Standards;
- Promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation and the enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat; and
- Improve the long term sustainability of all lands, including cropland, forestland, grazing lands, coastal lands, and developed and/or developing lands.

Demand for CTA Program-delivered Products and Services. The demand for the CTA Program has increased substantially over the years as a result of:

- New technologies and conservation practices that address emerging challenges, such as nutrient management of animal feeding operations to improve water quality;
- Design of natural resource conservation systems to reduce the risk of climatic events such as drought, fire and flood, and to mitigate their effects;
- Increased awareness and concern for natural resources resulting in a broader customer base as NRCS addresses growing niche enterprises (aquaculture, specialty crops, sustainable and organic farming, etc);
- New customers such as Tribal governments, local communities, technical service providers, and non-government organizations who request NRCS expertise and assistance;
- Improvement and establishment of wetlands and wildlife habitat to address declining populations of fish and wildlife; and
- Increased requests for financial assistance programs and the need for pre-program conservation planning support for the Emergency Watershed Protection Program and the Commodity Credit Corporation-funded Farm Bill programs such as: Environmental Quality Incentives Program,

Agricultural Water Enhancement Program, Conservation Stewardship Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program, Agricultural Management Assistance Program, and the Conservation Reserve Program.

To meet this demand and address program priorities, the CTA Program supports the development and delivery of products and services to address NRCS customers associated with the following four major Agency business lines:

- Conservation Planning and Technical Consultations: NRCS provides data, information, and technical expertise that help customers collect and analyze information to identify natural resource programs and opportunities, clarify their objectives, and formulate and evaluate alternatives.
- Conservation Implementation: NRCS helps customers install natural resource conservation practices and systems that meet established technical standards and specifications.
- Natural Resources Inventory and Assessment: NRCS assesses, acquires, develops, interprets, and delivers natural resource data and information to enable knowledge-based planning and decision making at all landscape scales.
- Natural Resource Technology Transfer: NRCS develops, documents, and distributes a wide array of technology pertaining to resource assessment, conservation planning and conservation system implementation and evaluation.

Conservation on the Ground. In FY 2009, the CTA Program was the major source of technical assistance to customers for planning and applying conservation practices and systems to protect and enhance natural resources on non-Federal land. These conservation actions provide public benefits in the form of better soil quality, reduced delivery of sediment and nutrients to surface and ground waters, increased conservation of water supplies, healthier grazing and forest land ecosystems, diverse and healthier wildlife habitat, and improved wetlands condition and function. In FY 2009, the CTA Program helped meet the three NRCS Foundation Goals in the following ways:

High Quality, Productive Soils. Helping people ensure the quality of intensively worked soils is maintained or enhanced to enable sustained production of a safe, healthy and abundant food supply.

- Conservation plans for cropland written, acres: 10.2 million
- Cropland with conservation applied to improve soil quality, acres: 7.6 million
- Soil Survey Geographic Data Base (SSURGO) made available: 31 digital soil surveys covering 24.4 million acres
- Total SSURGO certified digital soil surveys made available to-date, number: 3,047

Clean and Abundant Water. Helping people ensure that the quality of surface waters and groundwater is improved and maintained to protect human health, support a healthy environment, encourage a productive landscape; and that water is conserved and protected to ensure an abundant and reliable supply for the Nation.

- CNMP written, number: 1,479
- CNMP applied, number: 1,485
- Watershed or area-wide conservation plans developed, number: 114
- Land with conservation applied to improve irrigation efficiency, acres: 753,214

Healthy Plant and Animal Communities. Helping people ensure that grassland, rangeland, and forest ecosystems are productive, diverse, and resilient; that working lands and waters provide habitat for diverse and healthy wildlife, aquatic species, and plant communities; that wetlands provide quality habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife, protect water quality, and reduce flood damages.

- Conservation plans for grazing land written, acres: 22.9 million
- Grazing lands with conservation applied to protect the resource base, acres: 15.4 million
- Non-Federal land with conservation applied to improve fish and wildlife habitat quality, acres: 9.1 million
- Wetlands created, restored, or enhanced, acres: 67,233

Grazing Lands Conservation. Private grazing lands include 405 million acres of rangeland and 117 million acres of pastureland, as well as 53 million acres of forested land. Some cropland acres are also used for grazing. Well managed grazing contributes substantially to the environmental well-being and to the agricultural economy of the United States. Healthy grazing lands benefit landowners, local community residents, and society. Healthy grazing lands yield clean water for urban and rural use, aid in flood protection, and reduce greenhouse gases through the exchange of carbon. Properly managed grazing lands reduce the impact of drought and provide aesthetic values, open space, and wildlife habitat.

Technical Assistance on Grazing Lands. In FY 2009, technical assistance provided to landowners and managers resulted in nearly 23 million acres of planned conservation systems and more than 15 million acres of applied conservation systems on grazing lands that produced an overall improvement in grazing lands health. The conservation practice "prescribed grazing" (managing the controlled harvest of vegetation with grazing animals) was applied to more than 12 million acres.

Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative. NRCS collaborates with the Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI), a coalition of producer groups and environmental organizations dedicated to the protection and improvement of private grazing lands. This initiative supported technical assistance, training, and demonstrations targeted to improve the health of grazing lands. Over 800 grazing land demonstrations were held, exhibiting grazing land technologies and management. These demonstrations involved 1,180 farms and ranches nationwide. Over 1,800 education and awareness activities (grazing land workshops, field days, and tours) with over 155,000 participants were conducted.

Clean Water Activities. NRCS is addressing key water quality issues such as the potential environmental risks posed by animal feeding operations and impairment of water resources from nutrients, sediments, and pesticides. The Agency is providing leadership to enhance coordination with the Environmental Protection Agency in areas of mutual interest related to water quality, such as the Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) Rule implementation, the Oil Spill Prevention, Controls, and Countermeasures Rule; Pesticide Drift under the Clean Water Act, and the President's Executive Order on Chesapeake Bay Protection and Restoration; and water quality credit trading.

Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans (CNMP). In FY 2009, NRCS, conservation partners, and technical service providers assisted nearly 3,800 livestock and poultry producers in the development of CNMPs for their operations. Over 4,300 CNMPs planned in previous years were applied. Nearly 42,000 CNMPs have been developed since FY 2002, with over 31,000 of those implemented. The average CNMP takes nearly 150 hours to develop NRCS employees, conservation partners and technical service providers have used over 6.3 million hours since 2002 to develop CNMPs for our Nation's farmers and ranchers.

Pathogens and Dead Animals. In FY 2009, NRCS addressed the issue of conservation and pathogens in food safety and disease control by revising its waterborne pathogen publication to reflect current science. The contract that was issued at the end of FY 2007 by California NRCS to the University of California (UC), Davis to update the NRCS publication on waterborne pathogens, was completed to the final draft stage, and at the end of FY 2009, is undergoing Agency technical review. The publication is being reviewed by NRCS technical personnel, personnel from other agencies, and experts from outside the Federal government. The publication will be completed during FY 2010. In FY 2009, UC Davis took the information from the pathogen publication and used it to develop a web-based training course for NRCS employees and technical service providers for use on USDA's AgLearn on-line training facility. These ten modules, complete with narration, are being reviewed and should be completed and available on AgLearn early during the 2010 calendar year.

Hypoxia. NRCS provided technical assistance to the Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force in its implementation of the Action Plan for reducing the size of the hypoxic zone in the Gulf, restoring and protecting the waters within the Mississippi/Atchafalaya River Basin, and improving community and economic conditions across the Basin.

Water Quality Leadership. During FY 2009, NRCS led in the development, advancement, and demonstration of new and innovative approaches to improving water quality. The following tools and activities highlight some of these advances:

- The Nutrient Trading Tool (NTT) is a web-based model that estimates the changes in nitrogen losses based on improved management practices and calculates nitrogen credits for water quality credit trading projects. In FY 2009, NRCS began validating the model on Maryland's Conservation Innovation Grant water quality credit trading project.
- NRCS partnered with Iowa State University to develop a Natural Resource Credit Trading Reference for agency and partner use in establishing environmental credit trading projects. The Reference is in final review with an expected publication date at the end of the 2009 calendar year.
- NRCS provided Departmental support to implement a new Environmental Services Markets provision of the 2008 Farm Bill through the new Office of Ecosystem Service Markets.

Natural Resources Inventory and Assessment. CTA Program funds are used to develop products and services that enable NRCS to acquire, analyze, interpret, and deliver natural resources data and information. Through this business line, the capacity for knowledge-based natural resource planning and decision-making is available at many landscape levels.

Mission Critical Analyses and Assessments. Agency, Departmental, and legislative initiatives were supported in FY 2009 by many mission critical analyses and assessments. NRCS natural resources data and information, conservation program data, and data from other Federal and non-Federal sources were essential components of these analyses and assessments. Important assessment efforts included:

- Priority Watersheds. NRCS developed National and State-level assessment protocols to identify priority watersheds with a resource-based approach for implementing financial assistance programs.
- Comprehensive Set of Environmental Indicators. NRCS is a key contributor to the Interagency Working Group on Environment and Natural Resource Indicators, sponsored by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). The Working Group is developing a comprehensive set of indicators to guide the Federal government in reporting regularly on natural resources and environmental issues.
- FY 2009 and FY 2010 Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act (RCA) appraisal process. National Resources Inventory (NRI) and related Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP) datasets and findings are being used to inform this process.

National Resources Inventory. Natural resource conditions and trends on non-Federal lands in the United States are assessed through the National Resources Inventory. The NRI is a longitudinal sample survey based upon statistical principles and scientific procedures. Non-Federal lands, accounting for more than 79 percent of the total land area in the contiguous U.S., include privately-owned land, Tribal and trust lands, and lands controlled by State and local governments. Information from NRI data and analyses provides the scientific basis for appropriate and effective conservation programs, sound agricultural policy, realistic strategic and performance plans, and national farm policy discussion through the Farm Bill process. Several pieces of legislation authorize the NRI, beginning with the Rural Development Act of 1972. The NRI was conducted on five–year cycles over a 20 year period (1977 to 1997); NRCS currently collects NRI data annually. The NRI is performed in cooperation with the Iowa State University Center for Survey Statistics and Methodology (ISU-CSSM).

- Annual NRI Data Collection. Information from the Annual NRI data collection is provided on a timely basis to support agricultural and conservation policy development and to help evaluate the impacts of policy execution and conservation program implementation. The Annual NRI data collection is designed to supply long-term trend analyses; however, it has the flexibility to gather scientific information on emerging natural resource issues. Annual NRI data collection is much more efficient than the previous five-year cycle. Every year, data are collected for a scientifically selected subset of the suite of 800,000 NRI sample sites. Rigorous quality assurance procedures are applied to the NRI estimates, and NRI data must measure up to established statistical standards. Data are not released until these conditions are met. Additionally, data must adhere to both NRCS policy, The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Policy and USDA Quality of Information Guidelines.

- 2007 NRI Database. A preliminary 2007 NRI database was created in the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2009. State and National level reviews of the estimates were completed. Final Quality Assurance and statistical processes are being conducted by NRCS and ISU-CSSM in order to deliver a final database during the first quarter of 2010. This database will provide the framework for the RCA appraisal, various USDA economic analyses conducted by the Economic Research Service, and other strategic policy initiatives.
- 2008 Annual NRI. Imagery for 2008 Annual NRI data collection has been processed. Data collection began during the second half of FY 2009 and will be completed by the end of the second quarter of FY 2010.
- 2009 Annual NRI. Imagery acquisition for the 2009 Annual NRI data collection occurred during the second half of FY 2009. The imagery will be processed and analyzed during FY 2010.
- NRI Rangeland On-site Survey. Data were collected in 20 States for the 2009 NRI Rangeland On-site Survey. Field staff used hand-held pocket PC-based data collection tools for this survey. Data editing and quality assurance activities are being conducted. A statistical database has been prepared using rangeland data collected on-site during the interval from 2003 to 2006; an analysis, report, and technical paper are being prepared. Information generated from these studies is used to assess non-Federal rangeland conditions, and to address rangeland conservation programs and policies.
- Alaska NRI. Efforts have been made to integrate Alaska into the NRI process, including development of a new sampling design and a comprehensive work plan. The original statistical design and plan are undergoing modification, as acquisition of imagery for many areas of Alaska has been very difficult. Initial data collection is targeted for completion in the third quarter of FY 2010. Release of the estimates and a report on the results are slated for the first quarter of FY 2011.
- Inter-agency Collaboration. NRCS is collaborating with the U.S. Forest Service and The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to develop a consistent methodology for assessing and monitoring all U.S. rangelands. A pilot study was conducted in a 13-county area of Oregon to show that NRI and Forest Inventory and Analysis sampling frames and data collection procedures can be merged to provide a common reporting methodology for both Federal and non-Federal rangelands. Groups such as the Sustainable Rangelands Roundtable and the Society for Range Management have consulted with the Federal agencies on this project.

Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP). CEAP is a multi-agency effort to quantify the environmental benefits associated with conservation practices implemented under the 2002 Farm Bill and other related programs. CEAP has two principal components: 1) National Assessment and 2) Watershed Assessment studies. The National Assessment is designed to provide national summary estimates of conservation practice benefits and to assess the potential for USDA conservation programs in meeting the Nation's environmental and conservation goals. Four sub-components fall under the National Assessment-cropland, wetlands, wildlife, and grazing lands. The Watershed Assessment studies are the research portion of CEAP; they provide more detailed, in-depth assessments than are possible with the National Assessment components, and build the science base for conservation. Literature syntheses are associated with each component and are under preparation for Wetlands and Grazing Lands. Current CEAP activities include:

- Cropland Component. The CEAP Cropland report for the Upper Mississippi River Basin (UMRB) was released for peer review in May 2009. This report will be published in early Calendar Year 2010. Executive summary reports for four additional river basins will be released in FY 2010.
- Wetlands Component. Riverine and depressional wetland modules are being developed for the Integrated Landscape Model, using results from CEAP-Wetlands regional and watershed studies. A prototype model is available to illustrate real-time monitoring, and simulation modeling and forecasting. The model simultaneously quantifies changes in multiple ecosystem services resulting from conservation practices and program implementation, climate change, land use and management, hydrological dynamics, and other drivers of change.
- Wildlife Component. CEAP Conservation Insight reports that present findings of regional studies have been released. These findings include the wildlife habitat benefits of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) on landscape-level grassland bird species richness, the contribution of CRP to meeting

priority short-grass prairie bird habitat objectives, and the response of northern bobwhites and other early successional bird species to the CP33 Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds conservation practice in 14 States.

- Grazing Lands Component. The grazing lands component is evaluating environmental models to provide estimates of conservation benefits on national and regional scales for the National Assessment. Five different laboratories of the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) are cooperating in this effort. The rangeland sub-component will utilize NRI on-site data to supply watershed level inputs to the selected models. The pastureland and grazed forest sub-component has tested protocols to collect field data for an analogous effort, and has begun collecting NRI data in 16 States during 2009. More than 60 scientists are involved with the development of two separate volumes of literature syntheses for rangeland and pastureland; each will be published by a professional society in 2010.
- Watershed Assessment Studies. The watershed component provides detailed assessments of conservation practices including observed and modeled environmental effects in selected watersheds. Forty-one individual watershed case studies, representing a wide array of resource issues and modeling techniques, were active in 2009. The watershed studies are making progress on developing new model components and geospatial analyses at the watershed scale to improve the accuracy of model simulations and enhance predictions of practice impacts. One new watershed study to document watershed health and the effects of conservation activities on grazing lands was funded by CEAP partner, USDA's Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service (CSREES). Final reports for nine NRCS Special Emphasis Watershed studies were submitted in 2009. These reports, which are currently in review, provide findings on the benefits and effectiveness of conservation programs and practices in addressing specific environmental concerns. Work continues in conducting a major synthesis of the findings to date on the CSREES watershed studies. Lastly, CEAP coordinated with a similar Canadian project called Watershed Evaluation of Beneficial Management Practices. At the Canadian annual investigator meeting, the CEAP Watershed Coordinator delivered the keynote presentation.

Critical IT efforts in FY 2009 by the following core Agency business lines.

Conservation Planning and Technical Consultations result in either the transfer of data, information, or a conservation plan that helps customers protect and conserve natural resources (soil, water, air, plant, and animal) within their social and economic interests.

- Customer Service Toolkit is the primary tool in this business area. Toolkit is a geographic information system (GIS) enabled enterprise application that supports conservation planning and technical assistance to landowners. Using Toolkit, NRCS field office planners "check out" customer specific data from a centralized national database along with customer folders from local file servers. The data and folders contain conservation planning information in Excel spreadsheets, Word documents, image files, and GIS shapefiles. NRCS planners use Toolkit to perform a resource inventory, analyze current land use in relation to geophysical limitations, develop alternative solutions, and prepare a final conservation plan, plan of operations, and high quality client specific maps. Toolkit is installed on over 15,000 NRCS and conservation partner computers and has been implemented in every State with 5,000 to 6,000 unique users accessing the site weekly. Toolkit is one of the first applications to be re-engineered as part of a streamlining initiative.
- The National Conservation Planning (NCP) database, integrated with the Toolkit, contains over two million conservation plans containing over 35 million practices, and 556,877 contracts. Conservation plans increased in FY 2009 by 13 percent. These plans cover 21 million land units with digital spatial data on over 13.5 million of those land units. A total of over 563 million acres are covered by conservation plans.
- A new Conservation Plug-In tool will enable technical service providers, private consultants, and other non-NRCS partners to directly access NRCS conservation planning information to record planning and application progress. Field testing was completed with positive results and NRCS established a national support contract as precursor to national rollout in FY 2010.

- Engineering Field Tools (EFT) application was deployed to about 6,000 NRCS field and district personnel. EFT is an integrated client application to facilitate, capture, and display of field survey data and design of conservation practices. In FY 2009, EFT updated the structure design and waterways modules and started new development on a terrace design function.

Natural Resources Inventory and Assessment includes the acquisition, development, interpretation, and delivery of natural resource data and information for natural resource planning, decision making, and program and policy development at multiple scales. The following improvements occurred in FY 2009:

- National Soil Information System integration with geospatial tools used at the field level.
- Soil Scientist Toolkit for improving soil scientist productivity and data quality.
- Remote Sensing Toolkit including tools for management, decision support, and communication.
- The PLANTS database web application provides self-service technology to access and retrieve plant information. In FY 2009, PLANTS had approximately 1.3 million visits per month.
- The Soil Data Mart facilitates downloading soil surveys in electronic format. It currently provides 3,113 individual soil surveys for 59 States and territories covering a total of 13,250,000 acres.
- The Geospatial Data Gateway has been integrated with the National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP) and Common Land Units (CLU) datasets in the Geospatial Data Warehouse. These elements are the authoritative datasets; they are "on demand" in the standard format and naming conventions. NAIP includes current natural color orthoimagery at one meter resolution. The CLU dataset includes farm and field boundaries for USDA service center customers. A total 250,600 orders of soil data were processed through the Resource Data Gateway. The total amount of data delivered from the Gateway has increased annually to nearly 135 terabytes in FY 2009.
- Web Soil Survey provides self-service technology to access and retrieve soils information, and includes an integrated Resource Data Viewer. It currently averages about 340,000 viewers weekly, saving staff time at local service center offices.

The Water and Climate Information System (WCIS) supports the collection, storage, quality control, analysis, dissemination of high elevation snow pack and climate data for the West, generation of water supply forecasts, the collection and dissemination of climate data with an emphasis on soil climate data throughout the United States. In FY 2009, WCIS improvements included:

- Implementation of the Visual Interactive Prediction and Estimation Routines (VIPER) program for use by the Snow Survey/Water Supply Forecasting Program. VIPER provides improved data visualization and the flexibility to use different station combinations and data records to users of water supply forecast information.
- The Agricultural Applied Climate Information System (AgACIS) is now publically accessible through the NRCS electronic Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG). Through AgACIS, users are able to access quality controlled data made available through the Regional Climate Centers from the National Climate Data Center in Asheville, North Carolina, along with specific analyses of the data including temperature, precipitation, growing season, and frost evaluations. A new program that evaluates available working days has also been developed.
- Completion of the Dugway Proving Grounds Snowpack Telemetry (SNOTEL) master station. After a multi-year effort, the process of relocating this master station, which was made necessary by increasing problems due to other radio interference at the Ogden master station. Master stations are used to receive and transmit weather data via meteorburst technology collected at remote SNOTEL and soil climate analysis network (SCAN) site locations. Purchased four master stations from MeteorComm (MCC). These four master stations, located in Ohio, Missouri, Mississippi and Montana will provide support for the SCAN network. NRCS ownership of these sites ensures proper maintenance and continuous access to remote communications.
- Data Quality Control (QC) efforts now include archived (historical) temperature and precipitation data. This methodology was developed to be flexible to user's needs, allowing for customized specification on risk tolerance and degree of confidence. QC assists water supply forecasters by providing highly accurate, updated data for hydrographic model input and quickly alerting field

personnel of sensor failures on remote data collection stations. QC of real-time or near real-time data is being pursued through Portland State University (PSU).

- Additional daily Parameter-elevation Regression on Independent Slopes Model spatial layers were made available in FY 2009 data covering the current month. This data is used in conservation planning and modeling as well as water supply forecasting.

- Continued enhancement of the Surface Water Supply Index for inclusion in National Integrated Drought Information System projects in California, Klamath Basin, and Colorado, Upper Colorado Basin, began in FY 2009 to be implemented in FY 2010.
- Expanded work in specialized Water Supply Forecasting continued in FY 2009 for Indian Tribes in Montana, Idaho, Washington, Arizona, and New Mexico. Montana had five new forecasts established for the FY 2009 water year and will expand in FY 2010.
- The National Water and Climate Center produces a weekly Drought and Snowpack update for water and natural resource managers. The report provides a "grab and go" summary that can be easily used for drought and water resource briefings. For more information, please visit the following website: http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/climate/.

Natural Resource Technology Tool Development and E-Government. Engineers, agronomists, biologists, foresters, soil scientists, economists, and other technical specialists assist the local NRCS staff and enhance the expertise that is provided to all NRCS clients. These specialists develop and transfer new technologies and a wide array of technical standards and specifications, models, and maps pertaining to conservation systems. The topics include ecological site and forage suitability, phosphorus indexes, snow fences, stream restoration, and buffer technology. Information Technology (IT) professionals translate scientific technology and standards into more accessible electronic formats. These scientists and technical specialists ensure the application of sound scientific principles in Conservation Technical Assistance Program activities.

Natural Resource Technology Transfer includes the process that evaluates, acquires, develops, and transfers conservation tools, techniques, and standards based on research and new technologies. The technology is used primarily in resource assessment, conservation planning, and conservation system installation. New or revised technology tools released in FY 2009 included:

- A new online training course was developed to help conservation professionals and others with understanding the terminology and basics of air quality, climate change, and energy and their connection to the planning and implementation of conservation practices to benefit the land.
- Basic and Advanced Prescribed Burning training provided both classroom and on-the-ground applications of prescribe fire elements such as fire ecology, prescribe burn plans, firebreak design, ignition techniques, fire equipment and safety.
- There were eight technical notes released with the latest information on Biology and Soil Quality issues. There were ten User Guides released for technology tools related to Engineering and Soil Survey.
- Updates to the Economics and Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan Handbooks were completed and training was provided. National Instructions were posted on (CNMP) Technical Criteria and Soil Climate Analysis Network Station Investment.
- The training course, "Extending Outreach to All Customers" was updated to include Farm Bill functions and policies. A pilot course was conducted with 25 participants from approximately ten States.
- A series of Stability and Integrity Technology for Earth Spillways (SITES) workshops were conducted. The software will design a dam or pond to comply with the NRCS criteria in Practice Standards 402 for dams or 378 for ponds. The SITES computer model is instrumental in the design and rehabilitation of watershed dams.
- Updated about 21 percent of 165 practice standards including revision of the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) standard with risk reduction techniques to address identified hazards related to

cultural, biological and chemical pest suppression strategies. These new and updated standards reflect evidence-based science, and help producers address critical issues.

Using program contracts, easements, or other means, NRCS provides cost share financial assistance and monetary incentives to qualified program participants to implement conservation practices. During FY 2009, NRCS underwent an Independent Audit by KPMG. In support of NRCS Audit needs, the Review of Open Obligations Tool (ROOT) was developed that allowed efficient and effective review of 196,400 open obligations. In addition to saving state and field staff hundreds of hours, the review could not have been completed in a timely manner without ROOT.

ProTracts is a web-based application that helps NRCS efficiently manage applications, contracts, obligations, payments, and performance reporting. This is the primary electronic tool used by NRCS and partners to develop and manage contracts associated with NRCS' financial assistance programs.

- Through ProTracts, NRCS employees processed 79,760 applications, 27,715 contracts, and obligated $1.1 billion in FY 2009 for four financial assistance programs: EQIP, CSP, WHIP, AMA, and CBWP. Using ProTracts, employees processed $0.9 billion in payments in FY 2009. A total of $5.1 billion
- Payments have been processed through ProTracts which currently contains $6.8 billion in obligations.
- ProTracts ranking tool was nationally deployed to provide a uniform method of evaluating and ranking contract applications. This tool provides uniform business rationale that ensures the most environmentally deserving lands receive conservation in a cost-effective manner.
- Continued use and enhancements to Fund Manager speeds both the obligation and payment process while enforcing internal controls associated with recording financial transactions. Fund Manager links ProTracts and the NRCS' accounting system. With this web application, NRCS continues to pioneer new approaches to utilize web applications to interface transactions electronically to National Finance Center and thereby speed payments to program participants.

Compliance Status Reviews for Highly Erodible Land and Wetlands. Compliance status reviews are conducted on farm and ranch tracts designated as having received USDA benefits subject to the Highly Erodible Land (HEL) or Wetlands Conservation (WC) provisions, or both. A compliance status review is an inspection of a tract to determine the USDA participant's compliance with the HELC/WC Provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended, as a condition for receipt of certain USDA benefits. The NRCS compliance status review process requires employees to make an on-site determination when a violation of the HELC/WC provisions is found, and ensures that only qualified NRCS employees report violations. Analysis of FY 2009 compliance reviews will be available after February 2010. In FY 2008, approximately 1.5 percent, 333 of the 22,755 tracts reviewed, were found to be in non-compliance. Of these, 211 tracts had Highly Erodible Land Conservation violations and 122 tracts had Wetland Conservation violations. Penalties for non-compliance range from a Good Faith exemption from the Farm Service Agency (FSA) that allows the producer one year to correct the violation, to FSA determining the producer is ineligible for any government payment and must pay back any current year funding.

Highly Erodible Cropland Conservation Compliance. Participants in USDA programs are required to protect their fields from excessive soil erosion, (sheet and rill, wind, and ephemeral gully), by complying with HEL regulations found in the provisions of 16 U.S.C. §§ 3801; 3811-3814. USDA participants accomplish this by implementing a conservation system that provides for either a substantial reduction in soil erosion, or when sodbusting native vegetation, a system that results in no substantial increase in soil erosion on Highly Erodible Cropland. NRCS classifies about 101.1 million acres of cropland as HEL, 27 percent of the Nation's 370 million acres of cropland.

Reviews were conducted on 22,755 tracts (over 3.3 million acres). Of the total HEL tracts in compliance, 880 tracts were issued variances or exemptions as provided by statute. All tracts with a variance or exemption were re-evaluated during the 2009 crop year to ensure that an appropriate conservation system is

being used. Of the total variances, 397 tracts were issued due to a minimal effect determination on the total conservation system effectiveness. The (FSA) county committees granted Good Faith exemptions where a violation was reported for 67 (7.6 percent) tracts.

Wetlands Conservation Compliance. Title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985, 16 U.S.C. §§ 3801; 3821-2824 defines NRCS' responsibilities in wetlands conservation which includes determinations, appeals processing and resolution, mitigation and restoration plans, minimal effect exemptions, and scope and effect evaluations for installation of new drainage systems and maintenance of existing systems.

During 2008, wetlands were present on approximately 53 percent (12,084 of 22,755) of the randomly selected tracts on which compliance reviews were conducted. One hundred twenty-two wetland tracts were not in compliance.

CTA Program Funds Customer Assistance. Through CTA, NRCS provided technical assistance to 82,912 customers in FY 2009 helping them to plan and apply conservation measures on the land. This is about 57 percent of the Agency's customer contacts for conservation planning or implementation.
NRCS serves, either directly or indirectly, all of the people of the Nation. However, the people who make decisions about natural resource use and management on non-Federal lands are the primary customers. They include individuals, groups, Tribes, and units of government. NRCS provides the technical assistance and science-based information customers need to make good decisions about their natural resources. To achieve its mission, NRCS provides services to four main customer groups:

- Farmers and ranchers, people who own, operate or live on farms and ranches;
- Other members of the private sector who support production agriculture and conservation;
- Government and units of government including Tribes with responsibility for natural resource use and management; and
- Non-profit organizations whose mission aligns with aspects of natural resource management.

These major customer types need different products and services, delivered in different ways. Within each major customer category, there are customer segments that have differing needs.

CTA Program Leverages Technical Assistance. NRCS field staff work in partnership with over 8,100 State Agency and conservation district personnel to assist customers with their conservation planning and implementation needs. Non-Federal partners contributed an estimated $387 million in funds and services to support these joint conservation efforts in FY 2009. This leveraging is made possible through mutual agreements that establish a conservation partnership with State Governments, local soil and water conservation districts, Tribes, and other conservation organizations to formulate and implement an integrated conservation program. By working with partners, NRCS ensures that the conservation goals of the landowner, local government, State agencies, and national interests are achieved.

Technical Service Providers and Agriculture Conservation Experienced Services. NRCS expanded its technical assistance capability with Technical Service Providers (TSP) and Agriculture Conservation Experienced Services (ACES) workers in FY 2009.

TSPs are individuals and organizations that are qualified and certified to provide specific technical services for conservation planning and application. These TSPs have expanded and accelerated NRCS' ability to plan and apply conservation practices to enhance, restore or conserve the Nation's soil, water and related natural resources on non-Federal land. In FY 2009, NRCS:

- Signed agreements or renewed the certification of 423 individual TSPs and 21 businesses. There are now more than 1,110 individual TSPs and 88 businesses certified and available to help program participants apply conservation. In FY 2009, $47 million was obligated through TSPs.

- The most common plans and practices implemented with the technical assistance of TSPs included nutrient management plans, conservation crop rotations, pest management plans, upland wildlife

habitat management, prescribed grazing, residue and tillage management, Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans, and livestock waste storage facilities.

- Forty seven percent of the financial obligations under this initiative were made to private sector TSPs. Programs accounting for the majority of the FY 2009 obligations included: Environmental Quality Incentives Program, 36 percent, Watershed Rehabilitation Program, 17 percent, Conservation Reserve Program 7 percent, and the Wetland Reserve Program, 6 percent. The remaining obligations were distributed among approximately twenty other conservation programs.

ACES has evolved from a three year pilot project to utilizing experienced workers to help agency employees address high workload goals and better serve our customers. It is a cost effective opportunity to obtain the services of experienced workers on a temporary basis through an agreement with eligible nonprofit organizations. NRCS has obligated $7.6 million in ACES.

International Assistance. During FY 2009, NRCS employees participated in 33 assignments with 14 foreign countries that improved the management and conservation of natural resources globally. NRCS is recognized worldwide as the premier enabler of natural resource conservation. International activities involve both short and long-term technical assistance and leadership for the development of natural resource conservation programs and projects. Additionally, NRCS facilitates the exchange of conservation technology with countries that face soil and water conservation issues similar to those in the United States. NRCS participates in international meetings and professional societies to share NRCS conservation technology and to broaden the knowledge and professional capability of NRCS staff.

Reimbursed Technical Assistance: NRCS provides reimbursable short-term technical assistance to foreign countries where the primary benefit is to the receiving country. In FY 2009, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) reimbursed NRCS approximately $103,500 for assistance to Afghanistan and Iraq. The reimbursement paid for two NRCS employees who provided training to new USDA personnel selected for Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom and four two-month details in Afghanistan supporting U.S. military/civilian Provincial Reconstruction Teams. FAS reimbursed the Agency $12,400 for a soil survey project in the United Arab Emirates. USAID through FAS also reimbursed NRCS $11,500 to help train Mexican personnel in plant materials.

Long Term Details: Through Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, USDA improves the natural resources in the rural provinces which results in a more secure and stable environment. NRCS provided training in planning, designing, and implementing erosion control, streambank stabilization, forestland and rangeland management, and soil and water conservation programs that puts thousands of local civilians to work restoring and rehabilitating their respective country's environment. During FY 2009, 11 NRCS employees served as advisors to Afghanistan and ten employees served in Iraq. These were 12-month assignments. Total salaries were $1.2 million for employees in Afghanistan and $1.9 million for Iraq. All salaries were paid by non-NRCS USDA or the Department of State.

Other FY 2009 International Assistance:

- Pacific Basin. One conservationist in the Pacific Basin provided technical services and leadership in initiating, developing, and coordinating natural resource programs in the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of Palau. NRCS spent nearly $400,000 on these long-term assignments.
- Border Issues. NRCS collaborated on border issues with agricultural producers and Resource Management Agencies in Canada and Mexico. NRCS collaborated on issues including water quality, range management, biological diversity, aquatic resource management, hydraulic modeling, plant materials, snow survey forecasting, stream restoration, and waste and nutrient management.
- Hosted Foreign Visitors. NRCS employees hosted approximately 100 foreign students, technicians, scientists, administrators, and farmers from 31 countries and enabled them to transfer applicable methods to their home countries.

NRCS Scholarship Programs. NRCS participates in the USDA/1890 National Scholars Program (1890), USDA Public Service Leaders Scholarship Program (PSLSP), NRCS Asian Pacific Islander Scholars (API) and the NRCS Tribal Scholars to support the Agency's Human Capital Initiative. These scholarship opportunities strengthen the conservation partnership with State Colleges and Land Grant Institutions and help attract outstanding students from underrepresented groups to pursue careers in agriculture and natural resource sciences. In FY 2009, NRCS sponsored nine 1890 scholars, two PSLSP, and four API scholars. Of the fifteen scholars, six graduated from various programs and were non-competitively converted into the NRCS workforce.

NRCS Outreach Partnerships. NRCS partners with the 1890 Land Grant community and participates in the USDA 1890 Task Force Initiatives. NRCS collaborates with selected 1890 Land Grant Colleges and Universities to broaden the transfer of technologies through the 1890 Centers of Excellence to the communities they serve through the Biological and Agricultural Systems Engineering programs, and the 1890 National Scholars Program. The Centers of Excellence supported by NRCS focus on Air and Water Quality (Florida A&M University), Grasslands (Langston University), Geographic Information System and Remote Sensing (Lincoln University), Savannah River Environmental Sciences (South Carolina State University), and Plants and Water Quality (Virginia State University). NRCS continues to achieve results as the initiatives meet unique conservation needs and challenges while implementing new site-specific technology and developing comprehensive resource plans.

NRCS has partnered with community based organizations through contribution agreements to assist new immigrant and specialty crop farmers with record keeping needs and applied technology to help increase the adoption of conservation measures and systems on their operations. This work was done with Hispanic and Asian farmers in several States, including Florida, California, Arkansas, and Washington.

Small, Limited Resource, and Beginning Farmers and Ranchers. With technical and financial assistance geared to their unique needs, NRCS helps small, limited resource, beginning, and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers maintain the economic viability of their farm operations while conserving natural resources. The Agency works to ensure that there are no barriers or obstacles to prevent this group of farmers and ranchers from fully participating in NRCS programs or receiving technical assistance.

- In FY 2009, $136 million in EQIP was approved to reach 1,034 limited resource and 4,049 beginning farmers and ranchers to implement sound conservation practices on 1,401,639 acres of working land. Cost-share rates from Farm Bill conservation programs are up to 90 percent under this initiative. NRCS approved 36 percent of the applications received from these groups compared to 29 percent for the general applicant pool.
- In FY 2009, NRCS approved 1,462 socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers for EQIP contracts totaling $43 million. NRCS approved 40 percent of the applications received from potential socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, as compared to 29 percent for the general applicant pool.

Through grants NRCS provided $500 thousand to five Centers of Excellence in Fiscal Year 2009. These grants focused on:

Air and Water Quality (Florida A&M University);
Grasslands (Langston University);
Geographic Information System and Remote Sensing (Lincoln University);
Savannah River Environmental Sciences (South Carolina State University); and
Plants and Water Quality (Virginia State University)

NRCS continues to achieve results as the initiatives meet unique conservation needs and challenges while implementing new site-specific technology and developing comprehensive resource plans.

Assistance to American Indians and Alaska Natives (AIAN). NRCS established three conservation partnerships with Tribes during FY 2008: (1) A new contribution agreement with Intertribal Agricultural

Council to provide basic tax instruction and education to Tribes and Tribal operators who wish to participate in NRCS conservation programs. (2) A new contribution agreement in the amount of $15,000 with the Tohono O'odham Community College to establish a garden for producing native food and plant materials. (3) Two new and one renewed Tribal Conservation District mutual agreements between the Secretary of Agriculture and three Tribes – one in Alaska (Kwethluk), one in Nevada (Ely Shoshone) and another in Arizona (Hopi). Currently there are 33 recognized Tribal Conservation Districts nationwide.

- NRCS is sponsoring three USDA Native American Tribal scholarships in the amount of $45,000. The tribal scholars are attending the following schools: (1) Northwest Indian College, Washington State; (2) Haskell Indian Nations University, Kansas; and (3) Montana State University.
- NRCS rolled out the "Tribal Consultation, A Guide for Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Employees" at the annual American Indian Alaska Native Annual Employee 2009 Training Conference and via a national instruction to all employees. The guide is intended to assist NRCS managers and staff whose duties include coordination of NRCS programs and consultation with American Indians and Alaska Natives Sovereign Nations.
- Worked collaboratively with department of Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs to develop Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) contract language for WRP program dealing with the new 30 year contracts on tribal land and other Farm Bill program components. As a result, four agreements were executed in Nebraska, encompassing 2,200 acres and $2.2 million with four Tribes.
- Offices Serving Tribes: As of October 2009, NRCS has 45 full-time offices on Tribal lands and approximately 230 Tribal liaisons assisting 562 Federally-recognized Tribes.
- Program Participation: In FY 2009, NRCS awarded 488 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contracts to Tribes and Tribal members in the amount of $21.4million. The American Indian and Alaska Natives received 2.9 percent of the total contracts funds approved for EQIP.
- NRCS awarded 52 Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) contracts to Tribes and Tribal members in the amount of $3.1million. The American Indian and Alaska Natives received 6.1 percent of the total contract funds approved for WHIP.
- NRCS awarded one Agricultural Management Assistance Program contract to a Tribe in the amount of $21,189 and one Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative contract in the amount of $1,800.
- NRCS awarded 12 Agricultural Water Enhancement Program contracts to Tribes and Tribal members in the amount of $1.5million. American Indian and Alaska Natives received 2.5 percent of the total funding.

<u>Accountability and Management Improvements</u>. NRCS took a number of steps to improve accountability and management in FY 2009, which included:

- Focusing on twelve key risks and twenty-five Quality Assurance categories in ten operations management reviews that resulted in follow-up and oversight of these risks and categories.
- Developed nationwide scorecards of Agency key priorities and risk areas to monitor for improvement in efficiency and effectiveness.
- Conducted eight program assessments, four oversight studies, ten Operations Management Reviews, four administrative reviews, and thirteen civil rights reviews resulting in corrective action plans.
- Conducted Highly Erodible Cropland Conservation and Wetlands Conservation Compliance on 22,755 tracts.
- NRCS has undergone the first stand-alone Agency financial audit with corrective actions being taken during and subsequent to the audit process.
    - The audit indicated that NRCS must improve its accounting and financial practices and procedures.
    - NRCS has conducted a thorough review of all current obligations, existing policies, and procedures. NRCS is also strengthening the organizational structure of the Financial Management area.
    - Since completion of the initial audit, NRCS has completed a review of 100 percent of all open obligations, trained employees on policies and procedures, and conducted twenty State reviews to ensure compliance with open obligation policies. In addition, NRCS

Financial Management Division and the Oversight and Evaluation Staff completed evaluations in 20 States on the validity of the Open Obligation Review completed by the Agency.
    - Future planned actions include the development of policies, training, and quality assurance activities related to undelivered orders, unfilled customer orders, proper accrual and disbursement procedures, real property management, accounting procedures, and agreements with non-Federal partners.
    - For NRCS partners, the financial procedures instituted as a result of the audit will potentially cause some changes, particularly in the handling of leases for office space and the frequency of submitting invoices and progress reports for agreement payments.
- Implemented a standard State quality assurance plan process to ensure nationwide internal controls are followed in Operational Management Reviews.
- Developed an audit tracking system for tracking progress on recommended actions and to facilitate a process to analyze weaknesses identified in all audits.
- Continued to upgrade Agency accountability software applications and hardware security to correctly safeguard all private and sensitive information, including Personally Identifiable Information (PII), in compliance with the Federal Information Security Management Act and National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Special Publication (SP) 800-53.
- Conducted a customer service survey resulting in improvements in the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program.
- Developed the Integrated Data Enterprise Analysis (IDEA) web application which is an integrated conservation planning, financial management and Geographic Information System that contains management information that reduces workload.

SOIL SURVEY

Current Activities

Purpose. Understanding and managing soil as a strategic natural resource helps sustain the health and economy of the Nation. Soil survey is an essential tool for regional and local conservation planning that allows people to manage natural resources. The NRCS Soil Survey Program is mandated to:

- Inventory and map the soil resource on all lands of the United States.
- Keep soil surveys relevant to meet emerging and ever-changing needs.
- Interpret the data and make soil survey information available to meet public needs.
- Lead the National Cooperative Soil Survey Program.

Scientists and policy makers use soil survey information in studying climate change and evaluating the sustainability and environmental impacts of land use and management practices. Soil Surveys provide input data that computer simulation models use to predict the dynamics of carbon, nutrients, and water in soils. Soil surveys are used by planners, engineers, farmers, ranchers, developers, and home owners to evaluate soil suitability and make management decisions for farms, home sites, subdivisions, commercial and industrial sites, wildlife and recreational areas, etc.

National Cooperative Soil Survey. NRCS is the lead Federal agency for the National Cooperative Soil Survey (NCSS), a partnership of Federal land management agencies, State agricultural experiment stations, private consultants, and State and local units of government. NCSS promotes the use of soil information, and develops policies and procedures for conducting soil surveys and producing soil information. NRCS provides the scientific expertise to enable the NCSS to develop and maintain a uniform system for mapping and assessing soil resources which allows soil information from different locations to be shared regardless of which agency collects it. NRCS provides most of the training in soil survey to Federal agencies, and assists with their soil inventories on a reimbursable basis.

Standards and Mechanisms for Soil Information. NRCS is responsible for developing the standards and mechanisms for soil information on national tabular and spatial data infrastructure required by Executive Order 12906. In the last few years, NRCS has been perfecting a National Soil Survey Information System (NASIS), and producing publications that are accessible to the public through the internet http://soils.usda.gov. In FY 2003, NRCS developed the Soil Data Warehouse to archive soil survey data and the Soil Data Mart to distribute data to the public. In FY 2005, NRCS established the Web Soil Survey internet site. This became the primary way of distributing published soil surveys, making it easier to keep soil information current with continual public access.

Key Elements of the Program. The primary focus of the Soil Survey Program is to provide current and consistent map interpretations and data sets of the soil resources of the United States. The Soil Survey Program has recently been restructured into 143 Soil Survey Offices covering the United States. Their focus is to provide a current, readily available and more useful soil resource inventory, while still completing the initial soil survey mapping. This includes providing useful information to the public in a variety of formats (i.e., electronic and web-based). The program will continue to focus on maintaining quality soil information and helping people understand and use the soil resource in a sustainable manner. Key program elements include:

- Mapping. Mapping procedures are managed based on physiographic, rather than administrative boundaries. Soil surveys, based on natural landscape boundaries rather than political boundaries, are more efficient to produce, and provide consistent, quality data for assessing and planning the use and protection of landscape units (watersheds or ecosystems). Physiographic surveys provide consistent data that can be used easily by landowners with holdings in multiple jurisdictions, or by community, State, or regional planners. A primary challenge is to complete the initial soil survey for the entire country. This challenge also includes completing surveys on American Indian land holdings as well as public lands controlled by the Forest Service, United States Military, United States Fish and Wildlife Refuges, Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service. Public lands are important to include with private lands when planning land use and conservation for watersheds, landscapes, or ecological sites. NRCS is working cooperatively within the NCSS to accomplish these goals.
- Rapid Assessment of Soil Carbon for Conservation Planning. Soil carbon sampling and analysis will be conducted in FY 2010 and FY 2011 to provide data on carbon stocks for the United States by soil groupings, land use and management.
- Information Management. NASIS, a part of the NCSS information system, is where soil scientists develop, manage, and deliver soil information to the public. Digital soil surveys enable customers to use electronic soil data in geographic information systems for generating maps tailored to their needs and performing complex resource analyses. NRCS delivers these data via the internet.
- Web Soil Survey. In FY 2009, Web Soil Survey was basically in a maintenance status. Only minor changes were made to the application. A feature was added to allow selected internal users to run various metrics reports to show what types of output are being requested most frequently and for what areas of the country. Work has commenced on a new version that is expected to be released in the first quarter of FY 2010.
- Digital Soil Surveys. The NCSS develops and maintains two scales of soil surveys:
  - Soil Survey Geographic Data Base (SSURGO) is used primarily by landowners, townships, counties or parishes, and watershed hydrologic units for planning and resource management. It is the most detailed level of soil information.
  - United States General Soil Map (STATSGO) is used primarily for multi-county, State, river basin planning and resource management and monitoring.
- Technical Soil Services. The soil technical assistance function focuses primarily on providing diversified products and assistance in using soil information through USDA service centers. The National Technical Soil Services Handbook will be released in FY 2010.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress

Acres Mapped. Soil surveys have been prepared on over 2.1 billion acres. During FY 2009, NRCS soil scientists mapped or updated 37.2 million acres, and another 299,000 acres were mapped or

updated by other Federal, State, and local agencies in cooperation with NRCS. State, local, and other Federal agencies involved in the NCSS provided about nine percent of the funds and seven percent of the personnel services used to produce soil maps and interpretative data. Soil mapping priorities are directed toward completion of all previously unmapped private lands and updating mapping and interpretations to meet current user needs and requirements.

- Soil Survey accomplishments on American Indian and Alaska Native lands. NRCS invested $1.0 million in FY 2009 to accelerate soil survey mapping on American Indian and Alaska Native lands, resulting in 2.1 million acres mapped or updated. In addition, three survey areas were published and two surveys digitized with significant American Indian lands (>500 acres/survey area).
- Digitized Soil Surveys. During FY 2009, NRCS and NCSS partners digitized 31 soil surveys to national digitizing standards. A total of 3,047 digitized surveys are now available. This is part of an initiative to digitize all modern soil surveys. National digitizing standards for soil surveys have been developed that are consistent with Federal Geographic Data Committee standards.
- Soil Surveys Released. Soil surveys for 39 counties or survey areas were released in FY 2009, representing 23.1 million acres. In addition to hard copy, most of these surveys were published on the Web Soil Survey internet application for public access.
- Soil Surveys Used Interactively Online. In FY 2009, the Web Soil Survey website logged over 1.5 million user visits and over 460 million hits. In FY 2009, the users per day averaged over 4,100.
- Technical Analysis and Tool Development. The Soil Survey Laboratory (SSL) of the National Soil Survey Center provides analytical support which includes research and methods development and testing, as well as analyses to support on-going soil survey activities around the Nation. In FY 2009, SSL performed over 200,000 analyses and continued its efforts to provide timely data delivery. The SSL developed a method to measure particle size in gypseous soils, developed and is deploying an active carbon kit for field use. SSL added new standard methods to support soil quality and dynamic soil property evaluations. The NSSC awarded four competitive research grants to NCSS cooperators to investigate problems pertinent to soil survey update and enhancement. The SSL Methods Manual, a companion document intended for field use, will be released in FY 2010.
- Research in Soil Geography. NSSC and National Geospatial Development Center have collaborated since 2005 to support research and development into the science of hydropedology and digital soil mapping as defined by the International Union of Soil Science. This research is generally conducted collaboratively with NCSS, University partners, and related institutions.

National Cooperative Soil Survey Progress

Utilization of Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR). In Massachusetts the Soil Survey program is utilizing GPR equipment for soil/bedrock depth determinations. Currently there are two update surveys nearing completion in Massachusetts, (Franklin and Plymouth counties). GPR was used in both updates to determine the depth to bedrock within select bedrock controlled map units. Approximately 100,000 points of observation were collected in these bedrock units over the course of five days in the field. This saved the Agency approximately $250,000 compared to conventional hand excavation methods in these bedrock controlled uplands that would have taken weeks to complete. The GPR improves accuracy because stones and boulders in the soil profiles can often be mis-interpreted as depth to bedrock with hand methods.

Soil Survey Assists Transportation Planners. Louisiana NRCS Soil Scientists conducted two one-day workshops for employees from the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD). Because highway construction and maintenance activities deal directly with soil materials, the value of LADOTD employees understanding the full potential of using the soil survey database is paramount. The workshops concentrated on accessing data from the Web Soil Survey and the Soil Data Mart. Emphasis was placed on building specialized queries to extract information from the soils database that is not available from standard reports. As a result, the soil survey data for all Louisiana parishes have been downloaded, for employee use, to the LADOTD central server.

Yakama Nation uses Soil Survey for identifying important habitat. The northern spotted owl is one of many Federally protected species found within the boundaries of the Yakama Indian Reservation in

Washington State. In an effort to identify areas which will be able to support and sustain the dense mature forests spotted owls and a host of other species depend upon, the Yakama Nation is exploring a variety of land management practices designed to balance their resource, forest management and cultural objectives. Of the many approaches the Yakama Nation is currently exploring the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), combined with spotted owl data and a detailed National Cooperative Soil Survey Database. GIS is proving to be highly valuable in indicating where redevelopment and long-term maintenance of dense forest might be most attainable. Using soils data correlated to spotted owl nest sites and movement relocations based on radio telemetry has provided improved resolution on owl distribution and preferred habitat. In addition, the soils data further allowed identification of optimum sites for the development and management of site that have the potential to become future spotted owl habitat. They believe that the cool moist zones identified in the soil survey will increase in importance to nesting spotted owls if the environment of the core demographic area changes due to global warming.

New Tool for Soil Survey Mapping. Since 2005, NRCS soil scientists in Vermont have been collaborating with Dr. Xun Shi of Dartmouth College to develop and implement an automated, knowledge-based approach to soil mapping. The major focus of this effort is a computer software called Soil Inference Engine (ArcSIE). This automated mapping approach consists of four major components: a GIS database containing information about environmental conditions at each location in the mapping area; a knowledge base containing soil-landscape models built by local soil scientists; an inference engine that utilizes environmental data and expert knowledge to predict soil conditions; and a fuzzy representation scheme (using a raster data model) to depict predicted soil conditions. ArcSIE provides the user interface and links between these components, as well as tools for result validation, terrain analysis, preand post-processing for data, and data format conversion. The success of this project is largely due to the availability of high resolution (1m) elevation data from Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR). The bare earth elevation model from LiDAR and the terrain attributes derived from it constitute the most important environmental data layers used to characterize the soil formative environment. In addition, hillshades from this data provide extremely detailed visual representation of landforms and soil parent materials, far superior to any previously available imagery. The Area Vermont-based soil survey staff has utilized ArcSIE to map over 230,000 acres in Essex County since 2007.

Soil Survey used for Siting Wind Turbines. With the push to search for renewable energy solutions for the United States, the state of Rhode Island is actively pursuing the option of utilizing the wind power that is abundant in much of the coastal area of the state. A map of wind energy throughout the state combined with soil survey data identifying areas of limitation including hydric soils and areas limited by seasonal high water table, bedrock, or slope. This use of soil survey data in planning is a prime example of the ongoing use of soil survey for emerging interpretations and has enabled the State of Rhode Island to focus planning efforts only on land that would be suitable for wind turbine footings, saving both time and money.

Soil Survey Saves Local Government Expense. Idaho NRCS has provided the State Tax Commission and county governments soil survey data including forest productivity data that has helped them make fair assessments of properties. In 2009, NRCS was contacted by a northern Idaho tax assessor who needed soil maps and forest habitat types on several hundred thousand acres of private lands within a National Forest boundary. He did not think any of this work had been done and was willing to contract with NRCS to map the soils on all the acres of private lands and then hire foresters to correlate the soil types to forest habitat types. This would have been a costly and lengthy project for a sparsely populated county to fund. Idaho NRCS told the assessor that NRCS had been working with the Forest Service for over a year on extensive database work in order to complete the private lands which had already been mapped. Idaho NRCs provided preliminary soil maps and habitat types to review and utilize until the completed soil survey became available showing how Federal agencies can work together to provide needed products to the public.

SNOW SURVEY AND WATER SUPPLY FORECASTING

Current Activities

Purpose. The Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting (SSWSF) Program provides water and climate information, and technology support for natural resource management in the 12 western States (Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Utah, and Wyoming). The National Water and Climate Center (NWCC) located in Portland, Oregon provides leadership and technology support to the States, and directly provides water supply forecasts.

Water and Climate Monitoring. Snowmelt provides approximately 50-80 percent of the streamflow in the West. The NRCS conducts snow surveys and provides information that helps Federal, State, and local agencies, power companies, irrigation districts, and the Provincial Governments of British Columbia, Alberta and the Yukon Territory make sound water management decisions. Natural resource data is collected by NRCS from 950 manual snow courses and 790 automated Snowpack Telemetry (SNOTEL) sites in the 12 western States, and a few additional sites located in South Dakota. The SNOTEL and snow course data are used along with data from 485 stream gages, 432 reservoirs throughout the West. NRCS has 1,760 climatological observing stations that are integrated to create basin and watershed analyses and water supply forecasts for 663 water supply forecast points using an automated database and forecasting system.

SNOTEL. The SNOTEL network increased to 790 sites in FY 2009. SNOTEL collects the vast majority of the critical, high-elevation snowpack and climate data used to estimate water yields in the mountainous west; and plays a key role in forecasting flooding and other life-threatening snow related events by providing hourly precipitation, temperature, and snowpack depletion information. Snowpack information enables emergency management agencies to effectively anticipate and mitigate flood damage months in advance of the spring snowmelt. This data is also useful in the anticipation and mitigation of the effects of drought.

SNOTEL Data Quality. The National Water Climate Center (NWCC), in partnership with Oregon State University, has completed a program-wide quality control review of SNOTEL temperature and precipitation data collected since 1982. Quality control assists water supply forecasters by providing highly accurate, updated data for hydrographic model input as well as quickly alerting field personnel of sensor failures on remote data collection stations. Quality control of real-time or near real-time data is being pursued through Portland State University (PSU).

Master Stations Relocation and Purchase. Master stations are used to receive and transmit weather data via meteorburst technology collected at remote SNOTEL and Soil Climate Analysis Network (SCAN) site locations. The process of relocating the Ogden master station to the Dugway Proving Grounds was completed in FY 2009. Relocation of this station was necessary due to increasing problems with radio interference at the Ogden location. NRCS also purchased four master stations to provide support for the SNOTEL and SCAN networks. The SCAN network is funded through cooperative Federal and non-Federal partnerships and managed through the NWCC. Along with SNOTEL information, SCAN information, collected through 151 sites in 40 States, supports drought monitoring and mitigation activities as part of the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS), flood risk assessments, crop productivity, disease and insect infestation modeling and a wide variety of NRCS Global Change research activities; as well as provides data for soils research, water balance models, watershed planning and weather forecast models NRCS ownership of these sites ensures proper maintenance and continuous access to remote communications.

Water and Climate Services. The Water and Climate Services Branch provides water supply forecasts for the Western United States and climate services for the entire Nation.

Water Supply Forecasts. Water supply forecasts are produced from January through June in partnership with the National Weather Service. During the FY 2009, forecast season, the SSWSF Program issued

12,399 seasonal water supply forecast information products. Major cooperators include the Bureau of Reclamation, Corps of Engineers, Bonneville Power Administration, State and local agencies, power utilities, irrigation districts, Tribal Nations, Canada, and Mexico. Work on developing specialized water supply forecasts for Tribal Nations in Montana, Idaho, Washington, Arizona, and New Mexico continued in FY 2009 with five new forecast points established in Montana. Among other uses, water supply forecasts are used:

(1) by irrigators to make effective use of limited water supplies for agricultural production needs,
(2) by the Federal government in administering international water treaties with Canada and Mexico,
(3) by State governments in managing intrastate streams and interstate water compacts,
(4) by municipalities in managing anticipated water supplies and drought mitigation,
(5) by reservoir operators to satisfy multiple use demands,
(6) to mitigate flood damages in levied areas and downstream from reservoirs, and
(7) to support fish and wildlife management activities associated with species protection legislation.

Western Water Supply - Water Year FY 2009 in Review.

- Precipitation: The major impact during this Water Year was centered over California. As the second year of La Nina was weakening, California entered its third year of drought with state-wide average precipitation departures ranging from 60 to 80 percent of normal. Southern California showed promise of breaking their drought in November and December with exceptional precipitation totals from January through April, precipitation across the entire State was less than 50 percent of the long-term average. However, in May and June, excessive precipitation fell from Arizona and Northern California to the Great Basin. The summer Southwest Monsoon failed to materialize over Arizona and resulted in Tucson receiving only 47 percent of its average precipitation for the months of June-September. Monsoonal moisture resulted in nearer average precipitation over New Mexico. For the remainder of the West, the Water Year was generally above 110 percent of normal precipitation over southern Idaho and along the Northern and Central Rockies. Most of the Pacific Northwest averaged 90 percent of normal for the Water Year. Regionally, March had the largest monthly positive departure from normal for the Northern Tier States, May the largest positive departures over the Cascades, and August the largest positive departures over eastern Oregon and Western Idaho.

- Snowpack: The 2009 Water Year was near the long term average over much of the West. Exceptions were noted over the Cascades, Northernmost Tier States, southeast Utah, southern Rockies, Sierra Nevada Range, and the mountains in Central Arizona and Southwest New Mexico, where amounts were generally 80 percent of normal. Above normal amounts of greater than 110 percent of normal were recorded over Southern Idaho, Eastern Nevada and Northeast Wyoming. On January 1, snowpack was greater than 150 percent of normal over the 4-Corner States. By February, the snowpack anomalies reversed between the 4-Corner States and the Great Basin and Intermountain West. This pattern remained essentially unchanged for the rest of the snow accumulation season. Snowpack was helped somewhat with below average temperatures mostly over the Northern States and hindered by above average temperatures over the Southern States, as noted by the seasonal temperature departures. The fall temperatures averaged 3˚F above normal across the West. Winter temperatures averaged 2˚F below normal over the Pacific Northwest and Northern Tier States, but were 2˚F above normal over the Southwest. Spring temperatures were 2˚F below normal over the Pacific Northwest and Northern Tier States and 2˚F above normal over Arizona and the Southern half of the Rockies. Summer temperatures were 3˚F above normal over the Pacific North west and 3˚F below normal over the northern half of the Rockies.

- Streamflow: Snowpack and precipitation information are the primary drivers of the water supply outlooks. Therefore, the forecasts tracked the ups and downs of the season. In most regions the outlook fluctuated from well above normal flows over the 4-Corner States at the beginning of January to below normal flows by the beginning of May. The reverse situation occurred over the Northern Rockies as cooler than normal temperatures slowed the season snow melt. Near normal forecast flows dominated much of the Pacific Northwest at the start and end of the forecast season while California

and western Nevada outlooks were calling for below normal flows during the entire winter and spring. Additional water supply forecast information can be found at http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov.

Water Supply Forecasting Technology Development. Use of the Visual Interactive Prediction and Estimation Routines (VIPER) program was implemented for the FY 2009 water season. VIPER provides improved data visualization and the flexibility to use different station combinations and data records by users of water supply forecast information.

Climate Services Technology Development.

- Agricultural Applied Climate Information System (AgACIS). is now publically accessible through the NRCS electronic Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG). Through AgACIS, users are able to access quality controlled data made available through the Regional Climate Centers from the National Climate Data Center in Asheville, North Carolina, along with specific analyses of that data including temperature, precipitation, growing season and frost evaluations.
- Geo-spatial data products. Additional daily Parameter-elevation Regressions on Independent Slopes Model (PRISM), and geographical Information System (GIS), data layers were made available in FY 2009. Through a partnership between NRCS and the PRISM Group at Oregon State University, GIS temperature and precipitation data layers are developed which can be used in conservation planning, water supply forecasting and other climatological modeling analyses.
- Surface Water Supply Index (SWSI). Enhancement of the Surface Water Supply Index for inclusion in NIDIS projects in California, Klamath Basin, Colorado, and Upper Colorado Basin continued with the goal of implementation in FY 2010.

Information Systems. The database and forecast system maintained by the NWCC Information Systems supports a wide variety of software used for water supply forecasting, water and climate data analyses, and other products used in water resource management and related natural resource conservation activities at NRCS. NWCC websites containing snow survey data, water supply forecasts, soil moisture data and other products recorded over 2.4 million visits with 17.7 million files downloaded during FY 2009. The views and downloads of the information from State NRCS websites are similar to the information from other sites such as the National Weather Service website which utilize Snow Survey data. The NWCC has developed and is implementing a failover plan for all data collection and product production activities.

PLANT MATERIALS CENTERS

Current Activities

As part of the NRCS Plant Materials Program, the Agency operates and provides technical assistance to 27 Plant Materials Centers (PMCs), throughout the United States (U.S.). The PMCs provide effective vegetative solutions to conservation problems and resource issues such as energy independence and climate change. The network of PMCs is the only national organization of its kind positioned to find and test vegetation to address our Nation's natural resource challenges. The PMCs (1) develop technology for the effective establishment, use, and maintenance of plants, (2) assemble, test, select, and release stock to provide for the commercial production of plants to protect and conserve our natural resources, (3) study and characterize plant attributes to provide data and information important in operation of predictive models and effective management of climate impacted plant resources, and (4) provide appropriate training and education to NRCS staff, partners, and the public.

NRCS operates 25 of the PMCs; State or local governments operate two with NRCS funding and/or technical assistance. NRCS owns the land where 12 PMCs operate while Conservation districts, State agencies, nonprofit institutes, or other entities own the land where the other 15 PMCs operate. Each PMC has a service area defined by ecological boundaries, and addresses high-priority conservation concerns within their service area. When coordinating across service areas, PMCs have the ability to evaluate vegetative technology and solutions which will impact large regions of the U.S.

Development and use of plant technology is one of NRCS' foundation products and services. PMCs are placing special emphasis on the following activities that are aligned with the USDA and NRCS Strategic Plans, and specific conservation concerns within each PMC service area:

1. Climate Change - Protection and revegetation of land greatly affected or completely devastated by hurricanes, floods, wildfires, and other natural disasters; control of introduced weeds, and restoration of areas where weeds have invaded;
2. Wildlife Habitat - Plant materials technology support for wildlife species of concern, such as sage grouse, quail, and pollinators;
3. Energy Independence - Continued development of plants useful for biofuels, such as switchgrass as well as non-traditional biomass crops;
4. Ecosystem Health (biodiversity) - Protection of grazing and other natural resources (range, pasture, and forestland) by developing productive, longer-lived, drought tolerant native varieties, and managing desirable native plants to control the spread of noxious weeds;
5. Sustainable Soils - Reduction of erosion from cropland by selection of cover crops, and development of systems for their use to provide winter cover on fields with low residue crops;
6. Clean Water - Improvement and protection of the quality of surface and groundwater by development of filter strips between cropland and streams, plants and technology for bio-terraces, and artificial wetlands for removing pollutants from waste water; creation, restoration, or management of wetlands; and,
7. Clean Air - Development of plants and plant technology for mitigation of air quality concerns in the vicinity of poultry, swine, and beef operations.

PMC plant materials, plant technology, and management practices are key products and services used by customers in the successful implementation of other USDA conservation programs and initiatives such as the Environmental Quality Incentive Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program, Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative, and the Conservation Reserve Program. With plants and plant technology, PMCs improve grazing lands, wetland and wildlife conservation habitat, buffers and riparian areas, and areas susceptible to soil erosion. PMC plants and technology slow the spread of invasive species and improve critical habitats for threatened and endangered species.

Examples of Recent Progress

Comparative Plant Testing. During FY 2009, over 10,300 plant collections were comparatively evaluated in more than 66,000 plots by the PMCs. The final evaluation of new plants and cultural methods is made on farms and ranches under actual use conditions. These field tests are now underway at over 2,200 sites. Plants were evaluated for protecting range, pasture, and forest resources; cropland cover crops; wetlands; plants useful for biofuels; stabilizing critical areas such as sand dunes, streambanks, and shorelines, road cuts and fills, utility corridors and surface mined lands; introducing grass hedges, buffer strips, replacement of annual forage plants with perennials, and wind breaks to protect cropland; and mitigation of air quality concerns. Current emphasis is placed on the collection and evaluation of native plant materials for these uses.

Plant Releases for Commercial Production. NRCS released 16 new plants to commercial growers during FY 2009. These 16 join approximately 600 other PMC conservation plant releases used in conservation programs. PMCs select and then distribute plants for conservation uses to the commercial sector for sale to the public. PMCs do not sell or give plants directly to the public. Production by commercial seed growers and nurseries of about 450 of these plant releases has a market value of more than $100 million per year. A recent analysis of the commercial and ecological benefits of NRCS conservation plants showed that the Plant Materials Program returns $3.65 for every $1 invested.

Plant Releases and Technology Products. Written technical notes, Field Office Technical Guide and web-postings, and oral presentations transfer new information to end-users. Fiscal Year 2009 accomplishments include:

Major Item Measured	Sub-item Measured	# Units
Plant Releases	Cultivar releases	3
	Selected releases	11
	Source Identified releases	2
	Total Releases	**16**
Written Technology Transfer	Technical Notes & Articles	108
	Brochures & Flyers	44
	Plant Guides & Fact Sheets	70
	Popular Articles & Progress Reports	200
	Refereed publications	11
	Published symposia & posters	23
	Other types of documents	35
	Total Written Technology Transfer	**491**
Oral Technology Transfer	Training Sessions	161
	Tours presented	111
	Field Days conducted	6
	Local/State presentations	138
	Regional presentations	85
	National/International presentations	33
	Total Oral Technology Transfer	**534**

Plants for Solving Conservation Problems. The Plant Materials Program places emphasis on using plants to solve conservation problems. A few representative examples will illustrate this effort.

- Plants for energy independence. To meet energy and global climatic concerns, PMCs are investigating native plants with greater above- and below-ground biomass with potential for sequestering more carbon and reducing the amount of atmospheric carbon dioxide. At the same time, plants with more biomass show promise for use as an alternative fuel. PMCs in Michigan, New York, Kansas, Texas, New Jersey, Washington, Idaho, Arizona, California, Montana, and Colorado are a few of the PMCs involved in this work.
- Wildlife. Resource conservation and land management practices place emphasis on creating favorable habitat for wildlife species while providing suitable forage for their use. During the past year, Centers in Georgia, Michigan, Missouri, New York, and Hawaii have been active in this area.
- Pollinators. The need for increased habitat for native pollinator species is becoming critical. PMCs have installed demonstration plantings, hosted workshops and developed publications to promote increased habitat. PMCs have also released plants having value for pollinators. Many PMCs, including those in California, Oregon, Montana, Arizona, Texas, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Maryland, and Florida are leading this work.
- Weeds. Exotic, noxious weeds pose a serious threat to the integrity and health of natural ecosystems throughout the country. PMCs conduct studies that strive to either control or suppress weeds, or to find suitable replacements for invasive species once control is achieved. Centers in Washington, Montana, Florida, and New Mexico have worked with problem species such as yellow starthistle, cheatgrass, knapweed, Canada thistle, and cogon grass.
- Wetland Restoration. Wetlands continue to be an important environmental concern, with a critical need for plant materials suited to their restoration and maintenance. PMCs in Louisiana, Michigan, New Jersey, and Idaho have worked on this problem.
- Plants to reduce climate change impacts and the effects of wildfires. The Plant Materials Program provides materials and technology to help protect property from the risks of wildfires, as well as methods and materials to enable improved rehabilitation of both private and public lands after fires occur. Assistance is actively provided by PMCs or specialists in Idaho, Washington, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, California, Nevada, and Montana.

Cooperation with Other Agencies and Partners. PMCs cooperate with other Federal and State agencies, agriculture experiment stations, State departments of natural resources, conservation, wildlife, and seed and nursery associations improves the quality and efficiency of plant identification, testing and evaluation, and encourages commercialization of NRCS plants and technology. Employees of other government agencies and conservation districts collect thousands of plants annually to find valuable species for solving conservation problems. The cooperation also extends to the testing and promotion of new materials and technology. PMCs are working extensively with the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Forest Service, and the Bureau of Land Management on the restoration of degraded rangeland and the revegetation of lands scarred by wildfires. PMCs in the eastern United States are working with the ARS to test the nutrition and regrowth of native grasses for use as forage in pastures. Additionally, PMCs and the National Park Service continue an excellent cooperative effort to revegetate disturbed sites in parks with local native plant materials. This effort has been used as a prototype for developing comparable projects with other cooperators. These partnerships and other similar ones expand the efforts by PMCs to accomplish work which would not be possible by PMCs acting alone.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations

The estimates include appropriation language for this item as follows (new language underscored; deleted matter enclosed in brackets):

Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations

[For necessary expenses to carry out preventive measures, including but not limited to research, engineering operations, methods of cultivation, the growing of vegetation, rehabilitation of existing works and changes in use of land, in accordance with the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (16 U.S.C. 1001-1005 and 1007-1009), the provisions of the Act of April 27, 1935 (16 U.S.C. 590a-f), and in accordance with the provisions of laws relating to the activities of the Department, $30,000,000, to remain available until expended, of which $22,111,000 shall be for the purposes, and in the amounts, specified in the table titled "Congressionally Designated Projects" in the statement of managers to accompany this Act: *Provided*, That not to exceed $12,000,000 of this appropriation shall be available for technical assistance.] *(7 U.S.C. 2209b,2225; 16 U.S.C. 1001-1005, 1007-1009; Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010.)*

The change in language reflects the budget proposal to provide no funding for this account.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations

	Watersheds Authorized by PL-535	Small Watersheds Authorized by PL-567	Total Watershed and Flood Prevention
Appropriations Act, 2010…….	$5,146,000	$24,854,000	$30,000,000
Budget Estimate, 2011……..	--	--	--
Decrease in Appropriations……..	-5,146,000	-24,854,000	-30,000,000

Summary of Increases and Decreases
(On basis of appropriation)

Item of Change	2010 Estimated	Pay Costs	Program Changes	2011 Estimated
Watershed & Flood Prevention – Regular Appropriation:				
1. Watershed Oper. Auth. by PL-534……	$5,146,000	--	-$5,146,000	--
2. Small Watershed Auth. by PL-566……	24,854,000	--	-24,854,000	--
Total Available……..……..	30,000,000	--	-30,000,000(1)	--

Project Statement
(On basis of appropriation)

Program	2009 Actual : Amount:	2009 Actual : Staff: Years:	2010 Estimated : Amount:	2010 Estimated : Staff: Years:	Increase : or : Decrease :	2011 Estimated : Amount:	2011 Estimated : Staff Years
Watershed & Flood Prevention – Regular Appropriation:							
1. Watershed Operations	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Authorized by PL-534:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
(a) Technical assistance…	$930,000:	12:	$1,030,000:	13:	-$1,030,000:	--:	--
(b) Financial assistance….	6,711,000:	--:	4,116,000:	--:	-4,116,000:	--:	--
Subtotal, PL-534……..	7,641,000:	12:	5,146,000:	13:	-5,146,000:	--:	--
2. Small Watersheds	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Authorized by PL-566:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
(a) Technical assistance….	5,703,800:	49	7,032,000:	84:	-7,032,000:	--:	--
(b) Financial assistance…..	10,944,200:	--:	17,822,000:	--:	-17,822,000:	--:	--
Subtotal, PL-566……	16,648,000:	49:	24,854,000:	84:	-24,854,000:	--:	--
Total, Appropriation…….	24,289,000:	61:	30,000,000:	97:	-30,000,000:	--:	--

Program	2009 Actual Amount	2009 Actual Staff Years	2010 Estimated Amount	2010 Estimated Staff Years	Increase or Decrease	2011 Estimated Amount	2011 Estimated Staff Years
Watershed & Flood Prevention – Supplemental Appropriations:							
1. Emergency Watershed	:	:	:	:		:	:
Protection Operations:	:	:	:	:		:	:
(a) Technical assistance…	--:	240:	--:	586:	--:	--:	--
(b) Financial assistance….	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--
Total, Appropriation…….	--:	240:	--:	586:	--:	--:	--

Project Statement
(On basis of available funds)

Program	2009 Actual Amount	2009 Actual Staff Years	2010 Estimated Amount	2010 Estimated Staff Years	Increase or Decrease	2011 Estimated Amount	2011 Estimated Staff Years
Watershed & Flood Prevention – Regular Appropriation:							
1. Watershed Operations	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Authorized by PL-534:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
(a) Technical assistance	$989,669:	12:00	$1,724,362:	13:00	-$1,724,362:	--:	--
(b) Financial assistance:	2,102,010:	--:	12,395,000:	--:	-12,395,000:	--:	--
Subtotal, PL-534……	3,091,679:	12:00	14,119,362:	13:00	-14,119,362:	--:	--
2. Small Watersheds	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Authorized by PL-566:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
(a) Technical assistance	7,433,829:	49:00:00	12,542,000:	84:00:00	-12,542,000:	--:	--
(b) Financial assistance	11,987,560:	--:	27,576,000:	--:	-27,576,000:	--:	--
Subtotal, PL-566…….	19,421,389:	49:00:00	40,118,000:	84:00:00	-40,118,000:	--:	--
Total Direct Obligations……..	22,513,068:	61:00:00	54,237,362:	97:00:00	-54,237,362:	--:	--
Unobligated balance	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
brought forward……	(-34,460,006)	--:	(-84,937,453)	--:	(+24,237,362)	(-60,700,091)	--
Prior Year Recoveries……..	(-11,191,970)	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--
Offsetting Collections…….	(-11,130,585)	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--
Reimbursements……	(+4,583,515)	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--
Chg in Customer Payments	(-30,962,475)	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--
Not Available Carried Fwd	--:	--:	(+60,700,091)	--:	:	(+60,700,091)	
Unobligated balance	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
carried forward……..	(+84,937,453)	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--
Adjusted Appropriation…….	-24,289,000	--:	-30,000,000	--:	(-30,000,000)	--:	--
Reimbursable obligations:		:	:	:	:	:	:
1. Watershed Operations	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Authorized by PL-534:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
(a) Technical assistance	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--
(b) Financial assistance	-133,448:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--
Subtotal, PL-534……	-133,448:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--
2. Small Watersheds	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Authorized by PL-566:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
(a) Technical assistance	3,062,131:	26:00:00	3,200,000:	26:00:00	-3,200,000:	--:	--
(b) Financial assistance	1,654,832,:	--:	1,800,000:	--:	-1,800,000:	--:	--
Subtotal, PL-566…….	4,716,963:	26:00:00	5,000,000:	26:00:00	-5,000,000:	--:	--
Total Reimb. Obligations.	4,583,515:	26:00:00	5,000,000:	26:00:00	-5,000,000:	--:	--
Obligational authority……..	27,096,583:	87:00:00	59,237,362:	123:00:00	-59,237,362:	--:	--

Program	2009 Actual Amount	Staff: Years	2010 Estimated Amount	Staff: Years	Increase: or : Decrease:	2011 Estimated: Amount:	Staff: Years:
Watershed & Flood Prevention – Supplemental Appropriation:							
1. Emergency Watershed Protection Operations:							
(a) Technical assistance.	$37,933,508:	240:	$84,404,000:	586:	-$84,404,000:	--:	--:
(b) Financial assistance.	205,320,282:	--:	247,999,000:	--:	-247,999,000:		--:
Subtotal, EWP……	243,253,790:	240:	332,403,000:	586:	-332,403,000:	--:	--:
Unobligated balance…….. brought forward……	(-529,364,457):	--:	(332,403,000):	--:	(+332,403,000):	--:	--:
Prior Year Recoveries……	(-43,178,808):	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:
Offsetting Collections……	(-2,692,462):	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:
Reimbursements……	(+1,127,729):	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:
Chg in Customer Payments	(-1,548,792):	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:
Not Available Carried Fwd	--:	--:		--:	--:	--:	--:
Unobligated balance carried forward……..	(+332,403,000):	--:		--:	--:	--:	--:
Adjusted Appropriation….	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:
Reimbursable obligations:							
1. Emergency Watershed Protection Operations:							
(a) Technical assistance.	214,668:	--:	3,922,170:	4:	-3,922,170:	--:	--:
(b) Financial assistance.	913,061:	--:	16,720,830:	--:	-16,720,830:	--:	--:
Subtotal, EWP……	1,127,729:	--:	20,643,000:	4:	-20,643,000:	--:	--:
2. EPA Great Lakes Restoration Initiative:							
(a) Technical assistance.	--:	--:	871,400:	3:	-871,400:	--:	--:
(b) Financial assistance.	--:	--:	3,485,600:	--:	-3,485,600:	--:	--:
Subtotal, EPA……	--:	--:	4,357,000:	3:	-4,357,000:	--:	--:
Total Reimb. Obligations.	--:	--:	25,000,000:	7:	-25,000,000:	--:	--:
Obligational authority…..	244,381,519:	240:	357,403,000:	593:	357,403,000:	--:	--:

Justification of Increases and Decreases

(1) A net decrease of $30,000,000 for the Watershed and Flood Prevention Operation Program ($30,000,000 available in 2010):

a) A decrease of $5,146,000 for Watershed Operations Authorized by PL-534 ($5,146,000 available in 2010):

The fiscal year 2011 budget proposes to terminate funding for this program. Congress has earmarked this program in recent years, therefore the Agency is limited in its ability to prioritize projects on merit-based criteria. Since most program benefits are highly localized, the Agency anticipates that those PL-534 projects not yet completed will continue to receive local support from project sponsors.

b) A decrease of $24,854,000 for Small Watersheds Authorized by PL-566 ($24,854,000 available in 2010):

The fiscal year 2011 budget proposes to terminate funding for this program. Congress has earmarked this program in recent years, therefore the Agency is limited in its ability to prioritize projects on merit-based criteria. Since most program benefits are highly localized, the Agency anticipates that those PL-566 projects not yet completed will continue to receive local support from project sponsors.

Status of PL-534 watershed projects:

Status of Operational Projects	2009	2010	2011
Active sub-watersheds	71	70	--
Projects continuing post-installation assistance	206	207	--
Total operational sub-watersheds	277	277	--
Inactive projects	91	91	--
De-authorized projects	25	25	--
Total sub-watersheds	393	393	--

Status of PL-566 watershed projects:

Status of Operational Projects	2009	2010	2011
Land treatment projects	94	83	--
Structural projects	143	125	--
Land treatment and structural	60	52	--
Subtotal active projects	297	260	--
Projects in post-installation assistance	1,063	1,084	--
Inactive Projects	190	200	--
Project Life Completed	42	50	--
De-authorized projects	158	158	--
Total operational projects	1,750	1,752	--
New projects approved during year	6	2	--

.

Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and Staff Years
2009 Actual and Estimated 2010 and 2011

	2009		2010		2011	
	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years
Alabama	$8,717,673	8	$3,144,665	3	--	--
Alaska	815,679	3	7,747,183	12	--	--
Arizona	33,941	--	4,359,000	--	--	--
Arkansas	6,359,827	8	4,203,343	15	--	--
California	13,836,605	13	6,412,885	3	--	--
Colorado	12,900	--	64,030	--	--	--
Connecticut	84,895	1	2,852,039	5	--	--
Delaware	--	--	--	--	--	--
Florida	29,885,190	14	11,432,800	8	--	--
Georgia	542,997	--	2,351,200	--	--	--
Hawaii	3,744,839	4	8,834,877	24	--	--

	2009		2010		2011	
	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years
Idaho……	3	--	--	--	--	--
Illinois…….	1,532,598	2	1,202,000	1	--	--
Indiana ……	9,582,013	7	867,048	1	--	--
Iowa ……	28,061,804	20	54,805,425	42	--	--
Kansas ……	1,105,693	3	632,238	1	--	--
Kentucky ……	13,454,850	18	8,414,778	15	--	--
Louisiana ……	28,200,734	19	5,457,301	4	--	--
Maine …….	199,075	--	30,588	--	--	--
Maryland ……..	61,608	--	--	--	--	--
Massachusetts …..	1,031,223	--	--	--	--	--
Michigan ……	478,244	1	145,648	--	--	--
Minnesota ……..	847,399	2	492,800	--	--	--
Mississippi ……	12,371,158	37	9,365,033	22	--	--
Missouri ……	43,135,824	55	39,347,664	77	--	--
Montana ……	--	--	200,000	--	--	--
Nebraska …….	1,246,153	1	--	--	--	--
Nevada ……...	--	--	--	--	--	--
New Hampshire ….	116,419	--	76,469	--	--	--
New Jersey …….	7,665	--	--	--	--	--
New Mexico ……..	7,224,688	9	86,000	1	--	--
New York ……..	977,584	1	7,673,828	16	--	--
North Carolina ……	1,066,788	3	2,427,039	1	--	--
North Dakota ……..	1,124,966	1	1,124,155	1	--	--
Ohio ……	993,063	1	150,200	1	--	--
Oklahoma ……..	12,074,106	13	3,122,424	15	--	--
Oregon ……	417,682	--	--	--	--	--
Pennsylvania …….	1,067,498	3	672,045	1	--	--
Puerto Rico ……	--	--	--	--	--	--
Rhode Island……..	141,435	--	2,000,000	2	--	--
South Carolina …..	659,333	2	701,086	2	--	--
South Dakota ……	2,227	--	2,352,039	--	--	--
Tennessee ……..	2,760,874	5	4,128,908	6	--	--
Texas …….	17,117,412	22	15,094,702	50	--	--
Utah ……..	4,125,733	6	34,191,062	34	--	--
Vermont ……	56,717	--	2,015,579	--	--	--
Virginia …….	280,120	1	159,217	1	--	--
Washington ……	74,390	1	20,000	--	--	--
West Virginia …….	6,046,649	12	15,847,642	9	--	--
Wisconsin ……..…	2,620,972	1	2,516,362	--	--	--
Wyoming…..….....	555,081	2	85,874	--	--	--
National Hdqtr……	408,470	2	605,105	3	--	--
National Centers….	4,061	--	--	--	--	--
Nat. Tech. Sup. Cent….	500,000	--	--	--	--	--
Undistributed…….	--	--	119,228,081	307	--	--
Total Obligations/Est….	265,766,858	301	386,640,362	683	--	--

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations

Classification by Objects
2009 Actual and Estimated 2010 and 2011

Personnel Compensation:		2009	2010	2011
Washington, D.C.		$287,926	$311,480	--
Field		21,731,258	30,836,882	--
11	Total personnel compensation	22,019,184	31,148,362	--
12	Personnel benefits	6,019,171	8,586,000	--
13	Benefits for former personnel	--	--	--
	Total pers. comp. & benefits	28,038,355	39,734,362	--
Other Objects:				
21	Travel	1,328,125	1,847,000	--
22	Transportation of things	7,060	11,000	--
23.1	Rent payments to GSA	--	--	--
23.2	Rental payments to others	1,145,344	1,145,000	--
23.3	Communications, utilities, and misc. charges	--	--	--
24	Printing and reproduction	--	--	--
25.1	Advisory and assistance services	51,706,621	--	--
25.2	Other services	16,349,490	20,458,000	--
25.2	Construction contracts	630,530	83,258,000	--
26	Supplies and materials	756,739	1,046,000	--
31	Equipment	1,620,203	2,225,000	--
32	Land and structures	20,890,932	28,477,000	--
41	Grants	143,269,680	208,403,000	--
42	Insurance and loans	8,000	14,000	--
43	Interest and dividends	15,779	22,000	--
44	Refunds	--	--	--
	Total other objects	237,728,503	346,906,000	--
Total, direct obligations		265,766,858	386,640,362	--

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations

SUMMARY OF RECOVERY ACT FUNDING

Program	2009	2010	2011
Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations	$145,000,000	--	--
Watershed Floodplain Easements	145,000,000	--	--
Total Available	290,000,000	--	--

Project Statement – Recovery Act
(On basis of available funds)

Program	2009 Actual: Amount	2009 Actual: Staff Years	2010 Estimated: Amount	2010 Estimated: Staff Years	Increase or Decrease	2011 Estimated Amount	2011 Estimated Staff Years
1. Watershed & Flood Prevention Recovery							
Technical Assistance	$5,109,366	34	$24,876,096	199	-$24,876,096	--	--
Financial Assistance…	34,949,777	--	80,064,761	--	-80,064,761	--	--
Total Direct Obligations…	40,059,143	34	104,940,857	199	-104,940,857	--	--
Unobligational balance…							
brought forward……	--	--	(-104,940,857)	--	(+104,940,857)	--	--
Prior Year Recoveries…	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Unobligational balance							
carried forward…	(+104,940,857)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Adjusted Appropriation	(145,000,000)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Reimbursable Oblig…	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Obligational Authority	40,059,143	34	104,940,857	199	-104,940,857	--	--
2. Watershed Floodplain Easements Recovery							
Technical Assistance	$5,093,694	33	$23,906,306	198	-$23,906,306	--	--
Financial Assistance	74,729,231	--	41,270,769	--	-41,270,769	--	--
Total Direct Obligations	79,822,925	33	65,177,075	198	-65,177,075	--	--
Unobligational balance…							
brought forward……	--	--	(-65,177,075)	--	(+65,177,075)	--	--
Prior Year Recoveries……	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Unobligational balance…							
carried forward……	(+65,177,075)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Adjusted Appropriation	145,000,000)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Reimbursable Oblig……							
Obligational Authority	79,822,925	33	65,177,075	198	-65,177,075	--	--
Total Direct Obligations	119,882,068	67	170,117,932	397	-170,117,932	--	--

Program Implementation Activities:
Goals and Coordination Efforts:

This voluntary program provides assistance to sponsoring local organizations of authorized watershed projects, planned and approved under the authority of the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act of 1954 (P.L. 83-566), and designated watersheds authorized by the Flood Control Act of 1944 (P.L. 78-534) (referred to as "Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (WFPO).") NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to States, local governments and Tribes (as project sponsors) to implement authorized watershed project plans for the purpose of watershed protection; flood mitigation; water quality

improvements; soil erosion reduction; rural, municipal and industrial water supply; irrigation water management; sediment control; fish and wildlife enhancement; and wetlands and wetland function creation and restoration. There are over 1,500 active or completed watershed projects.

Floodplain easements restore, protect, maintain, and enhance the functions of the floodplain; conserve natural values including fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, flood water retention, ground water recharge, and open space; reduce long-term Federal disaster assistance; and safeguard lives and property from floods, drought, and the products of erosion. Landowners retain several rights to the property, including quiet enjoyment, the right to control public access, and the right to undeveloped recreational use such as hunting and fishing.

Objectives:

The objective of The American Recovery Reinvestment Act (ARRA), WFPO funds is to provide watershed project sponsors with financial and technical support that will allow completion of mitigation obligations or structural repairs, or that involve land treatment projects. ARRA funds will also be used for new construction projects that are already authorized for construction, are environmentally beneficial, and that are owned or operated by sponsors that are ready and able to begin work.

For floodplain easements, the objective is to enroll floodplain lands that will link or extend other floodplain or riparian conservation easements or protected areas, provide benefits to Federal or State listed threatened and endangered species, result in flood damage reduction, and are not likely to involve environmental or legal complications.

Delivery Schedule:

WFPO milestones:

1 USDA approval of funding recommendations: April 2009
2 Allocation of funds to NRCS State Offices: April 2009
3 Total obligation of all WFPO funds: September 2010

Floodplain easement milestones:

- Application period closes: May 2009
- Projects ranked: April 2009
- Offers to purchase easements made: July 2009
- Easements recorded and closed: February 2010
- Easement restoration funds obligated: September 2010
- Easement restoration completed: December 2010

Performance Measures:

	Performance Target		
	2009 Actual	2010 Target	2011 Target
Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations			
Number of jobs created or saved	900	2,317	--
Flood prevention or mitigation measures installed, number	--	17	149
Watershed Floodplain Easements			
Number of jobs created or saved	942	1,216	--
EWP floodplain easements closed, acres	--	35,000	--

Note: Jobs created or saved were developed by using IMPLAN, designed by the USDA Forest Service, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and USDI Bureau of Land Management.

Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and Staff Years
2009 Actual and Estimated 2010 and 2011

	2009		2010		2011	
	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years
Alabama	$1,657,082	1	$2,498,292	6	--	--
Alaska	155,739	1	1,238,230	2	--	--
Arizona	--	--	--	--	--	--
Arkansas	1,443,693	1	928,307	4	--	--
California	6,630,966	1	18,010,434	19	--	--
Colorado	1,978,947	3	1,873,241	5	--	--
Connecticut	31,001	--	--	--	--	--
Delaware	--	--	--	--	--	--
Florida	3,351	--	--	--	--	--
Georgia	2,453,255	--	646,963	5	--	--
Hawaii	109,074	1	4,041,262	11	--	--
Idaho	25,750	--	420,127	1	--	--
Illinois	2,912,944	2	3,765,944	8	--	--
Indiana	6,730,048	3	5,212,645	16	--	--
Iowa	13,510,578	3	8,411,980	23	--	--
Kansas	1,740,470	1	2,293,962	6	--	--
Kentucky	2,844,718	1	5,344,492	13	--	--
Louisiana	2,589,872	3	3,624,297	5	--	--
Maine	59,227	--	589,596	1	--	--
Maryland	19,862	--	--	--	--	--
Massachusetts	3,075	--	--	--	--	--
Michigan	437,970	1	59,130	1	--	--
Minnesota	1,484,309	3	349,734	1	--	--
Mississippi	5,973,997	4	3,994,189	15	--	--
Missouri	4,091,121	2	3,646,127	23	--	--
Montana	596,518	1	242,800	1	--	--
Nebraska	1,826,138	1	2,733,682	11	--	--
Nevada	1,035	--	--	--	--	--
New Hampshire	351,813	--	59,809	1	--	--
New Jersey	631,989	--	113,175	1	--	--
New Mexico	28,877	--	1,411,123	2	--	--
New York	217,212	2	825,649	9	--	--
North Carolina	465,860	2	5,258,398	8	--	--
North Dakota	5,762,165	1	2,277,878	1	--	--
Ohio	1,245,173	4	5,351,924	6	--	--
Oklahoma	1,886,245	1	4,644,375	13	--	--
Oregon	1,201,535	--	1,074,235	3	--	--
Pennsylvania	10,616,310	2	1,754,073	9	--	--
Puerto Rico	7,017	--	--	--	--	--
Rhode Island	538,444	--	2,710,856	5	--	--
South Carolina	107,539	2	1,019,133	2	--	--
South Dakota	1,575,859	--	267,468	3	--	--
Tennessee	3,407,273	3	10,581,881	22	--	--
Texas	8,530,189	3	13,261,438	29	--	--
Utah	2,104	--	--	--	--	--
Vermont	3,209	--	--	--	--	--

	2009		2010		2011	
	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years
Virginia……..….	382,826	1	625,928	5	--	--
Washington…….……...……..	1,350,129	1	740,023	3	--	--
West Virginia……...……	669,859	4	10,164,567	24	--	--
Wisconsin……...…….	19,793,015	6	4,332,856	18	--	--
Wyoming……..……..	--	--	--	--	--	--
National Hdqtr…….…….....	1,659,414	1	2,061,323	11	--	--
National Centers…….……....	137,272	1	396,791	4	--	--
Nat. Tech. Sup. Cent…..…….……	--	--	--	--	--	--
Undistributed…….…….……	--	--	31,259,595	41	--	--
Total Obligations/Est…….…..……	119,882,068	67	170,117,932	397	--	--

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
WATERSHED AND FLOOD PREVENTION OPERATIONS

STATUS OF PROGRAM

Current Activities

Background. Flood Prevention Authorized by Public Law 534. The Flood Control Act of 1944 authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to install watershed improvement measures to reduce flood, sedimentation, and erosion damages; further the conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water; and further the conservation and proper utilization of land. Flood prevention work is authorized in the 11 watersheds designated in the Flood Control Act of December 22, 1944.

Detailed sub-watershed work plans are prepared for P.L.-534 flood prevention projects in cooperation with soil conservation districts and other local sponsoring organizations. These plans outline soil and water management problems in sub-watersheds, proposals to alleviate these problems, the estimated benefits and costs, cost sharing, and operation and maintenance arrangements.

Watershed Operations Authorized by Public Law 566. The Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act of 1954 provides for cooperation between the Federal government and the States and their political subdivisions in a program to prevent erosion, floodwater, and sediment damage; to further the conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water; and to further the conservation and proper utilization of land in authorized watersheds. NRCS has the responsibility for administration of the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act and the work authorized under the Flood Control Act. This includes responsibility for administering the installation of land treatment measures and works of improvement in authorized watersheds on Federal and non-Federal land by arrangement with the administering agency.

Program Similarities. The P.L.-534 and P.L.-566 program authorities have similar objectives. The planning criteria, economic justifications, local sponsorship requirements, cost-sharing criteria, structural limitations, and other policies and procedures of the two programs generally parallel each other.

Program Technical and Financial Assistance. Watershed improvement measures are installed through:
1. Land treatment measures. NRCS assures that a program of proper land use and treatment will be carried out as a basic requirement for assistance in the development of flood prevention sub-watersheds or watershed projects. NRCS provides landowners and operators with technical assistance to accelerate the planning and application of land treatment measures that help achieve project objectives. This accelerated assistance is in addition to that received under other conservation programs.

Installation costs may be shared with Federal funds when land treatment measures are installed primarily to achieve environmental and public benefits, such as surface and ground water quality improvement, water conservation, and flood mitigation. The cost-share rate of this financial assistance may not exceed the rate of assistance for similar practices under other conservation programs of USDA. This work is accomplished through project agreements with local sponsoring organizations or through long-term contracts between the landowner and NRCS. In the first case, the local sponsors arrange for and accomplish the work by contract or force account. NRCS makes payments to the local sponsoring organizations as the land treatment measures are installed. In the long-term contract situation, landowners contract directly with NRCS.

2. Easements and construction activities. In addition to land treatment, these projects may involve a wide variety of other works of improvement: floodwater retarding dams, flood-proofing of buildings located in a floodplain, floodplain easements; water supply and water conservation; stream channel restoration; grade stabilization and sediment control; fish and wildlife habitat; water-based recreation, and other similar measures. Detailed construction plans, designs, and specifications are prepared for these measures by NRCS or by the private sector, and by the local sponsoring organization.

NRCS provides all construction funds for flood mitigation and an equitable share of the cost of installing works of improvement for agricultural water management, fish and wildlife, water quality, or recreational development. The latter includes the cost of basic facilities for public health and safety, access to recreational areas, and use of the recreational development. Local organizations must pay all costs of works of improvement for other purposes. In addition, local organizations must acquire water right permits and furnish land, easements, and rights-of-way for all structural measures. However, up to one-half the cost of land, easements, and rights-of-way allocated to public fish

and wildlife and recreational developments may be paid with P.L.-534 or P.L.-566 funds. Financial assistance may also be provided for the purchase of conservation easements at a Federal cost share rate of 50 percent to 99 percent.

3. Technical assistance. Technical assistance is provided for flood mitigation, agricultural water management, water quality, and for water resource development or improvement for public fish and wildlife and recreational purposes, either directly by NRCS, or by the local organizations with advances or reimbursement from the Federal government. NRCS may also supply up to one-half the cost of engineering assistance required for the installation of basic facilities for public fish and wildlife and recreational development. Conservation measures can be installed using a variety of contracting methods. Contracts may be administered by NRCS using formal contracting procedures or by the sponsoring local organizations. Local sponsoring organizations must operate and maintain the completed works of improvement on non-Federal lands for the length of time that the project is economically evaluated. This period of time is usually between 25 and 100 years.

Program Benefits. Flood prevention and other annual benefits to the environment and communities from P.L.-566 and P.L.-534 that occurred in FY 2009 are shown below.

Monetary Benefits

- Agricultural Benefits (not related to flood control): $404 million. Benefits associated with erosion control, animal waste management, water conservation, water quality improvement, irrigation efficiency, change in land use, etc.
- Non-Agricultural Benefits (not related to flood control): $877 million. Benefits associated with recreation, fish and wildlife, rural water supply, water quality, municipal and industrial water supply, and incidental recreation uses, etc.
- Agricultural Flood Protection Benefits: $320 million. This value includes all crop and pasture damage reduction benefits as well as all other agricultural damage reduction benefits.
- Non-Agricultural Flood Protection Benefits: $425 million. Non-agricultural flood damage prevented to roads, bridges, homes, and other structures that exist in the floodplain.

Benefits to Natural Resources

- Acres of nutrient management: 671,483
- Tons of animal waste properly disposed: 4,722,731
- Tons of soil saved from erosion: 89,892,119
- Miles of streams and corridors enhanced, or protected: 47,374
- Acres of lakes and reservoirs enhanced, or protected: 2,511,522
- Acre-feet of water conserved: 1,842,102
- Acres of wetlands created, enhanced, or restored: 278,939
- Acres of upland wildlife habitat created, enhanced, or restored: 9,142,277

Social and Community Benefits

- Number of people: 48,273,800
- Number of farms and ranches: 180,998
- Number of bridges: 61,639
- Number of public facilities: 3,650
- Number of businesses: 46,583
- Number of homes: 608,578
- Number of domestic water supplies: 27,833

Status of Flood Prevention Projects Authorized by P.L.-534. Because the authorized flood prevention projects include relatively large areas, work plans were developed on a sub-watershed basis. As of September 30, 2009, the total planning job was about 94 percent completed, with 397 work plans completed that include approximately 30 million acres. The following table summarizes the status of sub-watershed planning by authorized project:

Flood Prevention Projects	Total authorized area	Sub-watersheds and other areas with planning potential		Work plans developed through 9/30/09	
	Acres	No.	Acres	No.	Acres
Buffalo Creek, NY [a/]	279,680	3	279,680	3	279,680
Colorado (Middle),TX	4,613,120	17	3,703,520	17	3,703,520
Coosa, GA,TN [a/]	1,339,400	16	1,174,650	16	1,174,650
Little Sioux, IA	1,740,800	124	1,050,093	121	1,033,578
Little Tallahatchie, MS	963,977	18	625,274 [b/]	18	625,274
Los Angeles, CA [a/]	536,960	10	127,627 [c/]	10	127,627
Potomac, MD,PA,VA,WV	4,205,400	31	4,205,400	30	3,094,543
Santa Ynez, CA	576,000	5	50,743 [d/]	5	50,743
Trinity, TX	10,769,266	36	10,769,266	36	10,769,266
Washita, OK, TX	5,184,362	57	5,184,362	57	5,184,362
Yazoo, MS	7,661,278	104	3,955,124	84	3,955,124
TOTAL	37,870,243	421	31,125,739	397	29,998,367

a/ The Buffalo Creek Watershed was completed and closed in 1964 and reopened in 1992 for repairs. The Coosa Watershed was completed and closed in 1981. The Los Angeles Watershed is completed.
b/ Excludes 96,501 acres of Sardis Reservoir area, and 304,000 acres in minor watersheds needing only land treatment measures.
c/ Includes National forest and other lands, for which the Forest Service has been assigned program responsibility.
d/ Excludes 195,818 acres of reservoir area.

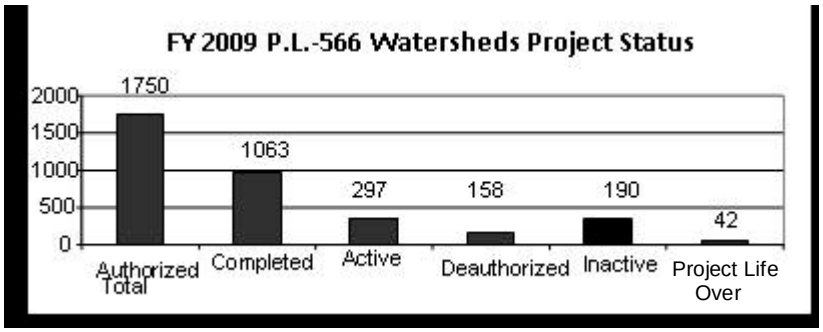
The estimated Federal cost for each watershed and total Federal obligations through FY 2009:

Flood Prevention Project	Estimated Total Federal Cost	Obligations (cumulative $)
Buffalo Creek Watershed, NY (Complete)	$7,827,746	$6,287,347
Middle Colorado River Watershed, TX	71,111,062	63,062,555
Coosa River Watershed, GA and TN (Complete)	18,999,247	18,264,485
Little Sioux River Watershed, IA	98,581,921	93,538,419
Little Tallahatchie River Watershed, MS	69,501,448	76,322,835
Los Angeles River Watershed, CA	60,597,017	60,297,017
Potomac River Watershed, MD, PA, VA, and WV	150,217,206	145,384,300
Santa Ynez River Watershed, CA	41,386,536	40,786,536
Trinity River Watershed, TX	331,241,632	211,165,950
Washita River Watershed, OK and TX	202,491,055	192,720,603
Yazoo River Watershed, MS	252,957,352	251,468,563
TOTAL	$1,304,912,222	$1,159,298,610

Status of Watershed Projects Authorized by P.L.-566. Watershed Project Plans are prepared by local sponsoring organizations with assistance from NRCS. The plans are submitted to NRCS with requests for Federal funding authorization. Watershed projects involving an estimated Federal contribution in excess of five million dollars for construction, or construction of any single structure having a capacity in excess of 2,500 acre-feet of water storage require authorization by Congressional Committee. Watershed projects are

limited to 250,000 acres and cannot include any single structure which provides more than 12,500 acre-feet of floodwater detention capacity, or more than 25,000 acre-feet of total capacity. The Chief of NRCS authorizes the use of Watershed Operations funds for all other projects.

After authorization, technical and financial assistance may be provided to local sponsoring organizations for installation of works of improvement specified in the plans.



New P.L.-566 Watershed Projects Authorized For Funding. Six new projects were authorized for funding under the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (P.L. 83-566) in Fiscal Year 2009.

STATE	NAME	FEDERAL COST	LOCAL COST	TOTAL COST
Colorado	Beaver Creek Watershed	$3,603,900	$4,654,300	$8,258,200
Idaho	Southern Washington County Water Quality Project	4,919,400	9,409,000	14,328,400
Louisiana	Red Bayou Watershed	2,725,450	1,521,150	4,246,600
South Carolina	South Darlington Watershed	638,735	409,650	1,048,385
Virginia	North Fork Powell Watershed	1,242,000	558,000	1,800,000
Wyoming	Kaycee Flood Prevention Project	850,800	105,500	956,300
TOTAL		$13,980,285	$16,657,600	$30,637,885

Unfunded Federal Commitments (Total Backlog of Projects). The backlog is the unfunded Federal commitment or funding needed to install the remaining measures in the existing 297 active watershed projects. The current backlog is $1.25 billion. When installed, these floodwater dams, reservoirs, and other conservation practices will reduce flood damages in 320 communities, provide agricultural water supply in 80 communities, improve water quality in 132 stream segments, install water conservation measures in 25 projects, and enhance, restore or create wildlife habitat in 45 projects. In addition to the sponsors' request for FY 2010 funds, the following summary indicates the Federal funds necessary to complete all remaining measures:

Unfunded Federal Commitment to Authorized Watershed Projects

State	P.L. 566 ($)	P.L. 534 ($)	Total ($)
Alabama	$15,424,000		$15,424,000
Alaska	9,351,600		9,351,600
Arizona	9,414,421		9,414,421
Arkansas	87,260,454		87,260,454
California	43,718,000		43,718,000
Colorado	3,860,130		3,860,130

Unfunded Federal Commitment to Authorized Watershed Projects

State	P.L. 566 ($)	P.L. 534 ($)	Total ($)
Connecticut	4,526,200		4,526,200
Florida	1,238,720		1,238,720
Georgia	5,209,772		5,209,772
Hawaii	34,058,300		34,058,300
Idaho	12,586,255		12,586,255
Indiana	7,179,000		7,179,000
Iowa	46,229,900	9,000,004	55,229,904
Kansas	59,915,000		59,915,000
Kentucky	6,120,160		6,120,160
Louisiana	5,775,000		5,775,000
Maine	50,000		50,000
Maryland	450,000		450,000
Minnesota	1,347,524		1,347,524
Mississippi	14,585,500	45,664,100	60,249,600
Missouri	63,509,000		63,509,000
Montana	7,362,500		7,362,500
Nebraska	5,472,300		5,472,300
New Mexico	57,597,000		57,597,000
New York	12,587,557		12,587,557
North Carolina	22,303,280		22,303,280
North Dakota	14,430,300		14,430,300
Ohio	15,790,000		15,790,000
Oklahoma	251,600,800	19,678,800	271,279,600
Oregon	3,929,796		3,929,796
Pennsylvania	8,135,000		8,135,000
South Carolina	13,000		13,000
Tennessee	29,480,477		29,480,477
Texas	105,854,000	139,200,000	245,054,000
Utah	390,860		390,860
Vermont	186		186
Virginia	9,552,146		9,552,146
West Virginia	22,779,000	26,089,563	48,868,563
Wyoming	5,436,955		5,436,955
Pacific Basin	6,313,000		6,313,000
Total	**$1,010,837,093**	**$239,632,467**	**$1,250,469,560**

Loan Programs Under P.L.-534 and P.L.-566. Both programs provide for loans and loan services to finance the local share of the costs of installing, repairing, or enhancing works of improvement and water storage facilities, purchasing sites or rights-of-way, and for related costs in approved watershed and flood prevention projects. Repayment with interest is required within 50 years after the principal benefits of improvements first become available. The interest rate is not to exceed the current market yield for outstanding municipal obligations with remaining periods to maturity on obligations of similar maturity. For a single plan for works of improvement, the amount of the loan may not exceed ten million dollars. Loans are financed through the Rural Utilities Service.

There are currently 58 borrowers who are holding loans with an unpaid principal amount of $13.7 million. Over the life of the program, 495 loans have been made at a value of almost $176 million. Congress did not appropriate funds in FY 2009 to provide new loans under this program.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress

Hawaii: Lower Hamakua Ditch Watershed. The Lower Hamakua Ditch Watershed Project is located in the Hamakua coast area of the Island of Hawaii. Authorized in 1999, the project is sponsored by the State of Hawaii Department of Agriculture, the Mauna Kea Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Hamakua Soil and Water Conservation District. This project will increase the availability and reliability of agricultural water to diversified farmers and ranchers along the Hamakua coast through the repair and restoration of the Lower Hamakua Ditch. The 25-mile Lower Hamakua Ditch was completed in 1910 and was used and maintained by the sugar industry until the bankruptcy closing of the Hamakua Sugar Company in 1994.

Since 2001, design and construction have resulted in the installation of two water storage reservoirs, two pipeline distribution laterals, repair or replacement of 31 flume structures, modification of 3 intake structures, realignment of the Hakalaoa Falls Tunnel, and reconstruction of 2 historic redwood flumes. Remaining construction elements include the repair of ditch linings, exclusion fencing, a Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system, eight distribution lateral systems, and on-farm land treatment practices. Full project completion is anticipated in 2017. This project will help to expand the diversified agricultural base in Hamakua and to promote economic revitalization of the Hamakua coast.

Kentucky: Pigeon Roost Watershed. Kentucky NRCS in cooperation with the local sponsors (City of McKee, the Jackson County Fiscal Court, and the Jackson County Conservation District) recently completed construction of the Pigeon Roost Flood Retarding Structure No. 3 (FRS 3) in Jackson County, Kentucky. Pigeon Roost FRS 3 is the 200th floodwater retarding structure built in Kentucky under the PL-566 and the Pilot Watershed Programs. FRS 3 is also the fourth flood protection structure built in the Pigeon Roost Watershed that reduces flooding of residential and businesses properties in the City of McKee, Kentucky. This watershed structure provides over $167,000 of annual agricultural flood damage reduction benefits, over $685,000 of annual non-agricultural flood damage reduction benefits, and provides floodwater protection to over 850 residents of the City of McKee.

Texas: Elm Creek (Cen-Tex) Watershed (Site 34). Elm Creek (Cen-Tex) Watershed was authorized in 1975 and comprises an area of 324 square miles in the Brazos River Basin in Central Texas. The watershed drains portions of McLennan, Bell, Falls, and Milam Counties. Thirty -four of the forty-three floodwater retarding structures that were planned have been constructed.

Site 34, completed on June 18, 2009, has a drainage area of 8,115 acres and a construction cost of $2.9 million. There are seven sponsoring local organizations of the overall Elm Creek Watershed project; however the primary sponsors of Site 34 are Elm Creek Watershed Authority, Central Texas Soil and Water Conservation District and Milam County. The primary purposes of Site 34 are reduction in downstream flood damages and reduced damages caused by sediment. Site 34 provides over $155,000 in average annual benefits, which includes benefits to seven bridges and 120 farms. Site 34 also reduces annual sedimentation by 19,400 tons, and provides enhancement/protection to eight miles of streams, 72 acres of wetlands and 5,200 acres of upland habitat.

Wyoming: Allison Draw Flood Control Project. Average annual benefits of $359,600 are being realized on the Allison Draw Flood Protection Project located in Wyoming's southeast corner, near Cheyenne. Allison Draw is not a perennial stream and is a small watershed of 11,500 acres fed by groundwater in the lower section. Years ago, since the drainage does not have water year around, developers constructed housing and provided business locations. Eventually, the shift in land use closed the stream channel. While normally the stream is dry, a significant rain storm would place up to 289 homes and businesses at risk of flood damage. In 1993, the Plan/Environmental Impact Statement was developed, and the final phase of the project was completed in 2009.

A three mile flood channel was constructed to contain the 25 year level storm. Adjustments were made to the alignment of the channel to mitigate moving many buildings that were originally planned for removal. The project includes a greenway, walking paths, rest benches, and three playground areas. Three highway road crossings were completed by the Wyoming Highway Department. The costs of flood damage have been reduced dramatically and this economically depressed area is now recovering with new residences and businesses being constructed. The community college, which is located in the project area, is seeing strong enrollment.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
EMERGENCY WATERSHED PROTECTION PROGRAM

STATUS OF PROGRAM

Current Activities

Background. Congress established the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program to respond to emergencies created by natural disasters. The EWP Program, an emergency recovery program, relieves imminent hazards to life and property caused by floods, fires, windstorms, and other natural occurrences. All projects undertaken, with the exception of the purchase of floodplain easements, must be sponsored by a legal subdivision of the State. This includes any city, county, general improvement district, conservation district, Native American Tribe, or Tribal organization as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. NRCS is responsible for administering the program.EWP Program funds have restrictions. The EWP Program cannot solve problems that existed before the disaster or improve the level of protection beyond what existed prior to the disaster. It cannot fund operation and maintenance work, or repair private or public transportation facilities or utilities. The work cannot adversely affect downstream water rights, and funds cannot be used to install measures not essential to the reduction of hazards. Funds cannot be used to perform work on measures installed by another Federal agency.**EWP Recovery Program Administration.** All EWP Program work must reduce threats to life and property, and must be economically, environmentally, and socially defensible, and technically sound. NRCS may bear up to 75 percent (90 percent within limited resource areas as identified by the U.S. Census data) of the construction cost of emergency measures. The remaining 25 percent (10 percent within limited resource areas) must come from local sources as cash or in-kind services.Public and private landowners are eligible for assistance but must be represented by a project sponsor. Sponsors are responsible for providing land rights to do repair work and securing the necessary permits. Sponsors are also responsible for the local cost share and the installation of work. EWP Program work is not limited to any one set of prescribed measures. NRCS makes case-by-case investigations of the need. EWP Program work includes removing debris from stream channels, road culverts, and bridges; reshaping and protecting eroded banks; correcting damaged drainage facilities; repairing levees and structures; reseeding damaged areas; and purchasing floodplain easements.

The EWP Program is dependent upon supplemental appropriations from Congress. In FY 2008, USDA provided NRCS $490,464,000 from discretionary funding provided by a Congressional supplemental appropriation.

Floodplain Easements. Congress established the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program to respond to emergencies created by natural disasters. Section 382 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (P.L. 104-127), amended the EWP Program to provide for the purchase of floodplain easements as an emergency measure. Since 1996, NRCS purchased floodplain easements on agricultural lands that qualify for EWP Program assistance. Floodplain easements safeguard lives and property from floods, drought, and the products of erosion through the restoration, protection, management, maintenance, and enhancement of the functions and values of floodplains, including the conservation of natural values, flood water retention, and erosion control.

NRCS may purchase EWP Program easements on any floodplain lands that have been impaired within the last 12 months or that have a history of repeated flooding (i.e., flooded at least two times during the past ten years). Under the floodplain easement option, a landowner offers to sell a permanent conservation easement that provides NRCS with the full authority to restore and enhance the floodplain's functions and values. In exchange, a landowner receives the least of one of the three following values as an easement payment: 1) a geographic area rate established by the NRCS State Conservationist; 2) the fair market value

based on an area-wide market analysis or an appraisal completed according to the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practices (USPAP); or 3) the landowner offer.

The easement provides NRCS with the full authority to restore and enhance the floodplain's functions and values. NRCS may pay up to 100 percent of the restoration costs of the easement. Restoration efforts include both structural and non-structural practices. To the extent practicable, NRCS actively restores the natural features and characteristics of the floodplain through re-creating the topographic diversity, and providing for the re-establishment of native vegetation. The landowner is provided the opportunity to participate in the restoration efforts. Landowners retain several rights to the property, including quiet enjoyment, the right to control public access, and the right to undeveloped recreational use such as hunting and fishing. At any time, a landowner may obtain authorization from NRCS to engage in other activities provided that NRCS determines it will further the protection and enhancement of the floodplain easements.

In FY 2009, NRCS made $72 million available for floodplain easement purchases in four Midwestern States affected by flooding in the summer of 2008.

Additional information on EWP is available on the NRCS website at:
http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/ewp/index.html

EWP Recovery Program Status and Accomplishments for FY 2009

General:		Outputs:	
Disaster Events Funded (Number)	42	Debris Removed (Feet)	597,406
Disaster Events Unfunded (Number)	55	Streambank Stabilized (Feet)	544,231
Completed Projects (Number)	85	Land Protected (Acres)	18700
Costs:		People Benefited:	
Technical Assistance	$11,686,158	Minority (Number)	432,505
Financial Assistance	$71,222,402	Other (Number)	1,315748
Local Contribution	$11,132,029	Total (Number)	1,748,253
Total Costs	$94,040,589		
		8(a) Contracts:	
Benefits:		Number	29
Outcomes:		Value of 8(a) Contracts	2,433,846
Public Buildings Protected (Number)	238		
Private Buildings Protected (Number)	5,083	Total Benefits:	
Roads Protected (Miles)	5,286	Economic	$505,707,207
Utilities Protected (Number)	424		
Value of Property Protected	$743,089,186	**Cost/Benefit Ratio**	1.0:5.3

Selected Examples of Recent Progress

Kentucky - May Flood Event 2009: Governor Steve Brashear declared a State of Emergency on May 10, 2009, in eastern Kentucky due to a devastating flood event that affected 12 counties. The Governor requested and received a Presidential Declaration and Federal Emergency Management Agency assistance.

NRCS damage assessment teams entered the affected area on May 11, 2009, to complete initial damage assessments shoulder-to-shoulder with county judge executives, and their emergency management officer. The initial reports from NRCS indicated this was the worst storm-related damage NRCS observed in 20 years. Flooding had severely damaged or destroyed over 400 homes, and mudslides had blocked numerous roads. More than 150 homes were damaged or destroyed by a tornado that had also resulted in three deaths and several people hospitalized. In some instances, mobile homes were washed downstream, then piled up against bridges and broke apart. More than 21,000 people were without water due to mudslides and severe bank erosion had damaged or broken water mains (many waterlines are run along or across streams), and numerous roads were severed or threatened to cave in from bank erosion. Some shelters had to be

evacuated due to flooding. The Governor mobilized the National Guard to evacuate people, deliver water, and protect homes.

By May 15, 2009, NRCS had completed damage estimates in seven counties that totaled nearly $5million. One million in financial assistance was authorized by NRCS so work could begin over the weekend on several critical sites.

- In Pike County Kentucky, a bridge collapsed into the stream. The EWP Program assistance provided funding so debris that included rocks, mud, and a damaged bridge, could be removed and the county could restore temporary access. One hundred and seventy thousands dollars in financial assistance was made available to remove debris and allow eight families to access their homes.

- In Pikeville County, a road bank had washed away and caused the road to slip. This road provides access to over 500 homes, and damage had disrupted school bus and emergency rescue traffic. Under the EWP Program, $330,000 is being provided to clear the mudslides and trees from the stream, and redirect the stream channel away from the road back to its original path.

- At Southside elementary school, EWP Program is providing assistance to remove stream debris from the access road, alleviating a major flooding threat to the school.

In each of these situations, NRCS has designed all the necessary engineering solutions, surveyed the area for impacts to unknown archeological resources, consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to avoid impacts to threatened and endangered species, and provided onsite construction inspection.

North Dakota. Swan Buffalo Creek Dam No. 12, locally known as Absaraka Dam, was constructed in 1960 under the PL-566 Small Watershed Program. It controls 13 square miles of drainage area in southeastern North Dakota and protects high valued agricultural land in the Red River Valley, a few farmstead homes along Swan Creek, and several township roads.

Due to near record snowfalls during the 2008winter and the subsequent snowmelt runoff, Absaraka Dam experienced auxiliary spillway flow in late March of 2009. This flow resulted in erosion along the southern edge of the spillway that began to migrate, or head-cut, upstream toward the crest section. This head-cut moved to within approximately 30 horizontal feet of the level crest section, threatening a complete breach of the structure and potential downstream area flooding.

The auxiliary spillway flow subsided after a few days due to below-freezing temperatures, but the threat to the structure remained. Several inches of water remained in the watershed from unmelted snow, and then additional snowstorms occurred in late March and early April. A barrier system was installed on April 10, 2009 and April 11, 2009 under the EWP Program to protect the eroded area of the auxiliary spillway from further erosion. Auxiliary spillway flow began again on April 12, 2009, and continued through April 15, 2009. Without this barrier system in place, it is highly likely the head-cut would have migrated further upstream through the level crest section and caused a catastrophic failure of the dam. Potential loss of life and property was averted due to the efforts made through the EWP Program.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Watershed Rehabilitation Program

The estimates include appropriation language for this item as follows:

Watershed Rehabilitation Program

For necessary expenses to carry out rehabilitation of structural measures, in accordance with section 14 of the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (16 U.S.C 1012), and in accordance with the provisions of laws relating to the activities of the Department, [$40,161,000]$40,497,000, to remain available until expended. (16 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.; Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010.)

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Watershed Rehabilitation Program

Appropriations Act, 2010…….....	$40,161,000
Budget Estimate, 2011…….……	40,497,000
Increase in Appropriations……...	336,000

Summary of Increases and Decreases
(On basis of appropriation)

Item of Change	2010 Estimated	Pay Costs	Program Changes	2011 Estimated
Watershed Rehabilitation Program……...	$40,161,000	+ 336,000(1)	--	$40,497,00

Project Statement
(On basis of appropriation)

	2009 Actual		2010 Estimated		Increase or	2010 Estimated	
Program	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years	Decrease	Amount	Staff Years
Watershed Rehabilitation:							
Technical Assistance…….	$33,050,000	64	$17,200,000	63	+$336,000	$17,536,000	29
Financial Assistance……..	6,950,000	--	22,961,000	--	--	22,961,000	--
Total , Appropriation……	40,000,000	64	40,161,000	63	336,000	40,497,000	29

Project Statement
(On basis of available funds)

Program	2009 Actual Amount	2009 Actual Staff Years	2010 Estimated Amount	2010 Estimated Staff Years	Increase or Decrease	2011 Estimated Amount	2011 Estimated Staff Years
Watershed Rehabilitation:							
Technical Assistance…	$25,263,450	64	$25,633,000	63	-$8,097,000	$17,536,000	29
Financial Assistance….	11,223,780	--	24,474,369	--	-1,513,369	22,961,000	--
Total Direct Obligations...	36,487,230	64	50,107,369	63	-9,610,369	40,497,000	29
Unobligated balance brought forward…….	(-4,329,029)	--	(-9,946,369)	--	(+9,946,369)	--	--
Prior Year Recoveries…..	(-2,692,447)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Offsetting Collections…..	(-510,629)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Reimbursements.....	(+1,098,506)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Change in customer Payments	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Not Available Carried Fwd	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Unobligated balance carried forward……	(+9,946,369)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Adjusted Appropriation…	-40,000,000	--	-40,161,000	--	(+336,000)	(40,497,000)	--
Reimbursable Oblig……..	1,098,506	--	--	--	--	--	--
Obligational Authority….	37,585,736	64	50,107,369	63	-9,610,369	40,497,000	29

Justification of Increases and Decreases

(1) A net increase of $336,000 for Watershed Rehabilitation ($40,161,000 available in 2010) consisting of:

(a) An increase of $336,000 to fund increased pay costs.

This increase supports achieving the Agency's strategic goals and objectives of reducing risks from flooding to protect individual and community health and safety. The increased pay cost funds will be used to pay salaries and benefits for existing staff.

Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and Staff Years
2009 Actual and Estimated 2010 and 2011

	2009		2010		2011	
	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years
Alabama	$230,212	--	$29,459	--	$24,700	--
Arizona	7,241,167	5	12,875,000	5	12,102,100	3
Arkansas	9,956	--	60,000	--	50,200	--
California	--	--	--	--	--	--
Colorado	22,000	--	428,000	3	358,200	1
Connecticut	9,189	--	20,000	--	16,700	--
Georgia	420,250	4	375,000	2	313,800	2
Indiana	--	--	--	--	--	--
Iowa	--	--	46,000	--	38,500	--
Kansas	1,235,000	--	140,000	--	117,200	--
Kentucky	302,325	--	78,070	--	65,300	--
Louisiana	29,937	--	--	--	--	--
Massachusetts	821,526	1	149,400	1	125,000	1
Michigan	--	--	--	--	--	--
Minnesota	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mississippi	1,006,463	3	2,312,400	4	2,080,000	1
Missouri	219,021	--	569,079	--	476,200	--
Montana	--	--	--	--	--	--
Nebraska	954,001	5	835,000	5	698,700	2
Nevada	--	--	83,600	--	70,000	--
New Hampshire	20,000	--	1,486,600	--	1,421,400	--
New Jersey	49,774	--	106,000	--	88,700	--
New Mexico	629,625	1	619,116	1	518,100	1
New York	190,443	1	56,838	--	47,600	--
North Carolina	--	--	334,400	--	279,800	--
North Dakota	833,905	5	1,066,000	5	952,400	1
Ohio	102,110	1	357,541	1	300,400	1
Oklahoma	6,839,609	14	12,887,200	18	11,967,500	4
Oregon	--	--	40,000	--	33,500	--
Pennsylvania	977,971	1	771,280	1	645,400	1
Puerto Rico	--	--	--	--	--	--
South Carolina	176,161	--	10,705	--	9,000	--
South Dakota	--	--	--	--	--	--
Tennessee	144,458	1	185,000	1	154,800	1
Texas	4,230,056	4	1,944,485	4	1,627,200	2
Utah	713,559	1	460,000	1	384,900	1
Virginia	2,012,141	4	492,439	4	412,100	2
West Virginia	460,465	--	1,295,646	--	1,084,200	--
Wisconsin	69,604	--	400,000	--	334,700	--

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Watershed Rehabilitation Program

	2009		2010		2011	
	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years
Wyoming	116,625	1	151,253	1	126,600	1
National Hdqtr	5,962,838	9	3,927,778	3	3,286,600	3
National Centers	398,987	3	312,874	3	261,800	1
Nat. Tech. Sup. Cen	57,852	--	28,366	--	23,700	--
Undistributed	--	--	5,172,840	--	--	--
Total Obligations/Est	36,487,230	64	50,107,369	63	40,497,000	29

Classification by Objects
2009 Actual and Estimated 2010 and 2011

Personnel Compensation:		2009	2010	2011
Washington, D.C.		$1,108,012	$1,101,320	490,770
Field		4,015,417	3,904,680	1,846,230
11	Total personnel compensation	5,123,429	5,006,000	2,337,000
12	Personnel benefits	1,393,673	1,362,000	636,000
13	Benefits for former personnel	--	--	-
	Total pers. comp. & benefits	6,517,102	6,368,000	2,973,000
Other Objects:				
21	Travel	329,142	319,000	153,000
22	Transportation of things	48,587	48,000	23,000
23.1	Rent payments to GSA	--	--	--
23.2	Rental payments to others	349,592	340,000	163,000
23.3	Communications, utilities, and misc. charges	122,414	118,000	57,000
24	Printing and reproduction	15,590	16,000	7,000
25.1	Advisory and assistance services	9,225,074	--	--
25.2	Other services	9,306,014	17,457,000	13,696,000
25.2	Construction contracts	7,574,713	21,866,000	20,514,000
26	Supplies and materials	234,761	228,000	109,000
31	Equipment	754,099	732,000	351,000
32	Land and structures	--	--	--
41	Grants	2,002,706	2,608,369	2,447,000
42	Insurance and loans	1,010	1,000	1,000
43	Interest and dividends	6,426	6,000	3,000
44	Refunds	--	--	--
	Total other objects	29,970,128	43,739,369	37,524,000
Total, direct obligations		36,487,230	50,107,369	40,497,000

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Watershed Rehabilitation Program

SUMMARY OF RECOVERY ACT FUNDING

Item of Change	2009	2010	2011
Watershed Rehabilitation Program…….	$50,000,000	--	--

Project Statement – Recovery Act
(On basis of available funds)

Program	2009 Actual Amount	2009 Actual Staff Years	2010 Estimated Amount	2010 Estimated Staff Years	Increase or Decrease	2011 Estimated Amount	2011 Estimated Staff Years
Watershed Rehabilitation:	:	:	:	:	:	:	
Technical Assistance……	$3,516,199:	8	$6,483,801:	36	-$6,483,801:	--:	--
Financial Assistance……	14,325,000:	--:	25,675,000:	--:	-25,675,000:	--:	--
Total Direct Obligations…..	17,841,199:	8	32,158,801:	36	-32,158,801:	--:	--
Unobligated balance	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
brought forward……	--:	--:	(-32,158,801)	--:	(+32,158,801)	--:	--
Prior Year Recoveries……	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--
Unobligated balance	:	:	:	:	:	:	
carried forward…..……	(+32,158,801)	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--
Adjusted Appropriation…..	(50,000,000):	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--
Reimbursable Oblig.…..……	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--:	--
Obligational Authority…….	17,841,199:	8	32,158,801:	36	-32,158,801:	--:	--

Program Implementation Activities:

Goals and Coordination Efforts:

The authority for rehabilitation of aging watershed dams is included in section 14 of the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act of 1954 (PL 83-566). Any of the over 11,000 dams in 47 States that were constructed under the four watershed programs (PL-534, PL-566, Pilot, or RC&D) are eligible for assistance under this authority. Many of these dams are nearing the end of their 50-year design life and are in need of rehabilitation to address critical public health and safety issues. The goals of the Watershed Rehabilitation Program are to assist the sponsors (dam owners and operators) to ensure the safety of dams constructed under the authority of the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566), or any of the other three watershed programs (PL-534, Pilot, or RC&D). All projects are carried out with the assistance of the sponsors, which may be any State agency, county or groups of counties, municipality, town or township, soil and water conservation district, flood prevention or flood control district, Indian Tribe or Tribal organization, or any other nonprofit agency with authority under State law to carry out, maintain, and operate watershed works of improvement. NRCS may provide technical assistance and up to 65 percent of the total rehabilitation project cost.

Objectives:

The objective for use of the American Recovery Reinvestment Act Watershed Rehabilitation funds is to address hazardous conditions that the State agency with dam safety responsibility has identified as a priority

and that are owned or operated by sponsors that are ready and able to begin rehabilitation. Consideration is also given to projects that will protect the greatest number of people.

Delivery Schedule:

Funding was allocated in March 2009, to selected projects. Milestones for implementation include the date 1) the rehabilitation plan will be authorized for each project; 2) the design will be completed; 3) the financial assistance will be obligated; and 4) the rehabilitation is completed.

Performance Measures:

	Performance Data		
	2009 Actual	2010 Target	2011 Target
Watershed Rehabilitation			
Number of jobs created or saved	532	957	--
Unsafe dams rehabilitated or removed, number	--	7	19

Note: Jobs created or saved were developed by using IMPLAN, designed by the USDA Forest Service, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and USDI Bureau of Land Management.

Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and Staff Years
2009 Actual and Estimated 2010 and 2011

	2009		2010		2011	
	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years
Arkansas…….	28,122	--	1,466,878	2	--	--
Connecticut..……	90	--	--	--	--	--
Georgia..……	550,000	--	5,615,000	6	--	--
Kansas..…….	110,007	--	1,024,993	1	--	--
Massachusetts.……	280,127	--	4,084,273	4	--	--
Missouri...…….	43,861	--	356,139	1	--	--
Nebraska.…….	912,789	--	273,211	1	--	--
New York……..	2,053	--	2,742,147	3	--	--
Oklahoma……..	14,178,506	2	1,160,494	2	--	--
Texas……..….	327,630	1	4,497,370	5	--	--
Virginia……..	37,685	--	4,317,315	4	--	--
West Virginia……	1,049,553	2	3,070,447	3	--	--
National Hdqtr……..	72,025	1	171,175	1	--	--
National Centers……	248,751	2	1,352,248	3	--	--
Undistributed…….	--	--	2,027,111	--	--	--
Total Obligations/Est……	17,841,199	8	32,158,801	36	--	--

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
WATERSHED REHABILITATION PROGRAM

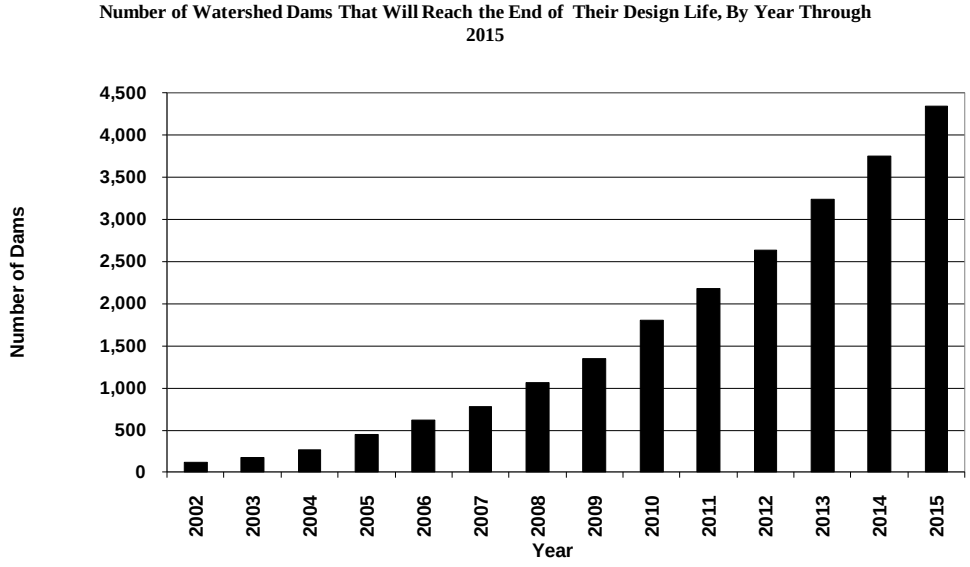
STATUS OF PROGRAM

Current Activities

Background. Local communities have constructed more than 11,000 watershed dams with assistance from NRCS since 1948. These dams protect America's communities and natural resources with flood control but many also provide the primary source of drinking water for some areas, as well as recreation and wildlife areas for others. These projects have become an integral part of the communities they were designed to protect. But like highways, utilities, and other public infrastructure, these dams need to be rehabilitated to protect public health and safety and to meet changing resource needs.

Some communities that have been protected by these watershed dams are now more vulnerable to the devastation caused by flooding because many of the dams have reached or will soon reach the end of their 50-year design life. In 2009, 1,344 watershed dams reached the end of their designed life-span. By 2015, this number will exceed 4,300. Time has taken its toll on many of the dams: spillway pipes have deteriorated and reservoirs have filled with sediment. More significantly, subdivisions and businesses have been built in areas that were once agricultural land the dams protected from flooding. As a consequence, if a dam should fail, a serious threat would be posed to the health and safety of those living downstream and to the communities that depend on the reservoir for drinking water. A dam failure would create serious adverse environmental impacts to the ecosystem.

Additional program information and the Watershed Rehabilitation Progress Report can be found on the NRCS webpage at http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/WSRehab.



Authorizing Legislation and Pilot Projects. In November 2000, P.L. 83-566 was amended by P.L. 106-472 "The Watershed Rehabilitation Amendments of 2000," which authorized NRCS to assist communities to address public health and safety concerns and environmental impacts of aging dams. NRCS may provide technical and financial assistance for the planning, design, and implementation of rehabilitation projects that may include upgrading or removing the dams. NRCS may provide 65 percent of the total cost of the rehabilitation projects; however, Federal funds cannot be used for operation and maintenance

activities. Rehabilitation also provides opportunities for communities to gain new benefits, such as adding municipal and irrigation water supplies, recreation, and wetland and wildlife enhancement.

The FY 2000 and FY 2001 Agricultural Appropriations Acts included authorization for a total of $16 million of EWP funds for pilot rehabilitation projects. The maximum amount of Federal funds eligible for these pilot projects was 65 percent of the total rehabilitation project costs. NRCS worked with local project sponsors, State dam safety agencies, and community leaders on these high priority pilot projects that address public safety concerns and environmental issues. The pilot projects in New Mexico, Mississippi, Ohio, and Wisconsin include rehabilitation of 32 dams in 20 watershed projects.

Community Interest. Project sponsors submitted requests for Federal assistance totaling $19.4 million for the rehabilitation of 82 high priority dams in 21 States in FY 2009. Over $14 million in requests were received from public sponsors of 716 dams to have the condition of their dams assessed in order to consider rehabilitation alternatives to maintain safe dams.

Appropriations. FY 2009 was the eighth year of funding for watershed rehabilitation with $40 million appropriated. A total of 82 rehabilitation projects in 21 states were funded in FY 2009, and 650 dam assessments were funded in 27 states. In FY 2002, $10 million was appropriated; $29.8 million in FY 2003; $29.6 million in FY 2004; $27.5 million in FY 2005; $31.5 million in FY 2006, $31.3 million in FY 2007, and $19.8 million in FY 2008. Dams that pose the highest risk to life and property have been the highest priority for funds.

Summary of Watershed Rehabilitation Projects and Allocations as of September 30, 2009

State	**Total Number Of Funded Dam Rehabilitations Projects 2000 – 2009**	**Number of Dams Rehabilitated**	**FY 2009 Federal Allocations[1]**
Alabama	1	1	$250,000
Arizona	6	0	7,252,176
Arkansas	6	0	10,000
California	1	0	0
Colorado	0	0	150,000
Connecticut	0	0	29,424
Georgia	12	3	432,194
Iowa	4	4	0
Kansas	3	0	1,235,000
Kentucky	4	1	366,000
Louisiana	0	0	29,937
Massachusetts	6	0	821,530
Mississippi	20	15	1,449,000
Missouri	5	1	610,000
Montana	2	0	0
Nebraska	11	5	954,000
Nevada	0	0	80,000
New Hampshire	0	0	20,000
New Jersey	1	0	50,000
New Mexico	8	3	1,028,240
North Carolina	0	0	320,000
North Dakota	3	0	933,900
New York	6	0	198,918
Ohio	9	8	271,671
Oregon	0	0	20,000
Oklahoma	44	18	7,781,319

State	Total Number Of Funded Dam Rehabilitations Projects 2000 – 2009	Number of Dams Rehabilitated	FY 2009 Federal Allocations1
Pennsylvania	3	0	1,182,354
South Carolina	0	0	180,000
Tennessee	2	2	145,292
Texas	17	9	4,897,942
Utah	1	0	700,000
Virginia	9	5	2,144,537
West Virginia	2	0	2,260,000
Wisconsin	13	11	370,000
Wyoming	1	0	142,000
NHQ	0	0	4,376,635
Total	200	86	$40,692,069

[1] Allowances include project planning and implementation. Carryover funds and prior year recoveries are included in the allocation.

Meeting Challenges through Partnerships. Partnerships between local communities, State governments, and NRCS leverage funds and services and allow many projects to move quickly through the planning and implementation stages.

- Technical capacity. NRCS does not have technical staff capacity to respond to all requests for watershed rehabilitation assistance from project sponsors. Private consultants were hired to provide additional technical capacity to conduct assessments of the existing conditions of dams, provide topographic surveys and mapping, geologic investigations, as well as detailed planning and design services. Some sponsors have used either their own professional staff or acquired technical services as part of their "in-kind" contribution to meet their 35 percent cost-share requirement.
- Financial assistance. The watershed rehabilitation authorization requires local sponsors to provide 35 percent of the total project cost. Sponsors used many innovative means to obtain the funds necessary to address the rehabilitation of the aging dams that were threatening their local communities. Some sponsors used the sale of bonds dedicated to dam safety and rehabilitation, levied taxes on beneficiaries, obtained grants, used State appropriations, sought voluntary land rights from private landowners, and provided in-kind services using existing staff.

Selected Example of Recent Progress

Project Status and Benefits. By September 30, 2009, the rehabilitation of 139 dams was authorized in 22 States. The rehabilitation of 86 dams has been completed. The remaining 53 authorized rehabilitation projects are being implemented subject to funding priorities. The following table summarizes the benefits provided by the 86 completed projects:

Average annual floodwater damage reduction benefits ($):	$5,259,614
Average annual non-floodwater damage reduction benefits ($):	$2,904,087
People with reduced risk downstream from the dams (No.):	4,312
People who benefit from project action (No.):	201,185
Homes and businesses benefiting from project action (No.):	6,021
Farms and ranches benefiting from project action (No.):	547
Bridges benefiting from project action (No.):	195

Alabama Choccolocco Creek Watershed Project: Dam #11 was constructed in 1971 for flood control and municipal water supply. The dam is in a \different setting than when it was originally constructed. Over the years, population growth and urban sprawl have occurred both upstream and downstream from the dam, and land use changes have taken place. Rehabilitation of the dam will insure a safe water supply and provide increased safety to occupants of 23 homes and the multi-million dollar water treatment plant.

The sponsors, the Water Works and Sewer Board of Anniston, Alabama, requested assistance under the Watershed Rehabilitation Program to upgrade the dam to meet current Federal standards for a high hazard dam. Rehabilitation consisted of installing a concrete parapet wall to raise the top of the dam 5.3 feet and other treatments to the dam, principle spillway, and auxiliary spillway.

The sponsors performed all of the work on the parapet wall and auxiliary spillway. The City work crew was experienced in concrete construction and did an excellent job building the parapet. Installation of the riprap toe protection, and metal work replacement was performed under contract administered by the Water Works and Sewer Board.

Virginia Pohick Creek Watershed Dam #4, Fairfax, Virginia: Pohick Creek Dam #4 is a $1.5 million rehabilitation project completed in the fall of 2008. The rehabilitation minimizes the threat to loss of life for approximately 700 residents who live and work downstream in 168 homes, 35 businesses, transportation routes for medical and emergency services, two railroads, and a number of water, gas, and communication lines.

The Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District and Fairfax County sponsored the project, with funding from the county and NRCS. The county administered the construction contract, facilitated public meetings, and set up a task force of constituents to participate in the rehabilitation process. The County collected data and secured the engineering design.

Rehabilitation consisted of realigning the auxiliary spillway to direct overflows away from homes built after the original construction to a channel downstream from the dam. The spillway was widened and 9,000 cubic yards of material were imported to construct dikes and a stilling basin. Articulated concrete blocks were used to armor the auxiliary spillway and stilling basin to prevent erosion during major flood events. The blocks were then covered with topsoil and vegetated to maintain recreational aspects of the area.

Ohio Caldwell Lake Dam, Noble County: Caldwell Lake Dam was constructed in 1969, and provides water supply for 1,200 residents, 160 businesses, and six industries in and around Caldwell, Ohio. This aging dam required rehabilitation to meet dam safety standards in consideration of 75 homes at risk should the dam breach. The rehabilitation project was sponsored by the Village of Caldwell, Ohio.

The dam was raised 6.5 feet in height, and the auxiliary spillway was raised 2.3 feet and widened from 40 feet to 150 feet.

Construction to rehabilitate the dam began in August 2008, and was completed in July 2009. Rock had to be drilled and blasted to enlarge the auxiliary spillway. To raise the dam, this rock was placed and compacted to create a rock fill bench on the downstream face of the dam. Earth fill was then compacted over the rock fill bench. Earth fill was used to increase the elevation of the auxiliary spillway. The principal spillway riser and the water supply risers were repaired and refurbished. A township road was shifted to allow room for the rehabilitation. The rehabilitated dam will provide downstream safety and water supply for the Village of Caldwell for 100 years.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Resource Conservation and Development

The estimates include appropriation language for this item as follows (new language underscored; deleted matter enclosed in brackets):

[Resource Conservation and Development]

> [For necessary expenses in planning and carrying out projects for resource conservation and development and for sound land use pursuant to the provisions of sections 31 and 32 of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act (7 U.S.C. 1010-1011; 76 Stat. 607); the Act of April 27, 1935 (16 U.S.C. 590a-f); and subtitle H of title XV of the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 (16 U.S.C. 3451-3461), $50,730,000: Provided, That not to exceed $3,073,000 shall be available for national headquarters activities.]

The change in language reflects the budget proposal to eliminate the program.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Resource Conservation and Development

Appropriations Act, 2010……	$50,730,000
Budget Estimate, 2011……..	--
Decrease in Appropriations……..	-50,730,000

Summary of Increases and Decreases
(On basis of appropriation)

Item of Change	2010 Estimated	Pay Costs	Other Changes	2011 Estimated
Resource Conservation and Development:				
1. Technical Assistance	$50,730,000	--	$50,730,000	--
Total Available	50,730,000	--	50,730,000	--

Project Statement
(On basis of appropriation)

Program	2009 Actual Amount	2009 Actual Staff Years	2010 Estimated Amount	2010 Estimated Staff Years	Increase or Decrease	2011 Estimated Amount	2011 Estimated Staff Years
Resource Conservation and Development:							
1. Technical Assistance….	$50,730,000	412	$50,730,000	412	-$50,730,000(a)	--	--
Total Appropriation	$50,730,000	412	$50,730,000	412	$50,730,000	--	--

Project Statement
(On basis of available funds)

Program	2009 Actual Amount	2009 Actual Staff Years	2010 Estimated Amount	2010 Estimated Staff Years	Increase or Decrease	2011 Estimated Amount	2011 Estimated Staff Years
Resource Conservation and Development:							
1 Technical Assistance …..	$50,620,483	412	$53,504,795	412	-$53,504,795	--	--
2 Financial Assistance……	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total, Direct Obligations……	50,620,483	412	53,504,795	412		-53,504,795	--
Unobligated balance brought forward ……..	(-2,345,834)	--	(-3,028,713)	--	(+2,774,795)	(-253,918)	--
Prior Year Recoveries ……..	(-1,008,124)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Unobligated Expiring Bal.	(+437,595)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Offsetting Collections.....	(-5,423)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Reimbursements……..	(-160)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Chg in Customer Payments	(+2,750)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Not Available Carried Fwd.		--	(+253,918)	--	--	(+253,918)	--
Unobligated balance carried forward …….	(+3,028,713)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Adjusted Appropriation …..	-50730000	--	-50,730,000	--	--	(-50,730,000)	--
Reimbursable Obligations:							--
(a) Technical Assist…….	-160	--	--	--	--	--	--
(b) Financial Assist……..	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Reimbursable Oblig……..	-160	--	--	--	--	--	--
Obligational Authority…….	50,620,323	412	53,504,795	412	-53,504,795	--	--

Justification of Increases and Decreases

(1) A decrease of $50,730,000 for Resource Conservation and Development ($50,730,000 available in 2010):

(a) A decrease of $50,730,000 and 412 staff years for the Resource Conservation and Development program activities.

The fiscal year 2011 budget proposes to terminate funding for the Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) program, first begun in 1962. RC&D areas have received Federal financial support for at least 20 years. At this point, most of these communities should have the capacity to identify, plan, and address their identified priorities. In addition, a 2006 USDA Report to Congress found that the RC&D program provides Administrative and Operational support to the councils, which equals 16 percent of their total funding.

Main Workload Factors

		2009 Actual	2010 Estimate	2011 Estimate
Status of Designated RC&D Areas:				
Areas funded at start of year		375	375	375
New areas funded in year		--	--	--
Total Areas funded end of year		375	375	375
Applications on hand		(39)	(39)	(39)
		2009 Actual	2010 Estimate	2011 Estimate
RC&D Project Activity:				
Project Plans:				
Approved	During year	3,848	4,000	4,000
	Cumulative	95,531	99,531	103,531
Ongoing	During year	7,039	6,800	7000
Completed	During year	4,178	4,200	4,200
	Cumulative	83,343	87,543	91,743

Input of Resources to Projects ($ in 1,000's):

(Resources provided for accomplishing projects. Includes direct technical and financial assistance and value of donated materials attributable to a project.)

-- RC&D resources	During year	--	--	--
-- Other Federal	During year	$79,086	$50,000	$50,000
-- State government	During year	89,519	60,000	60,000
-- Local government	During year	19,996	20,000	20,000
-- Non-government	During year	137,290	75,000	75,000

Rural Development Loans:

	2009 Actual		2010 Estimated		2011 Estimated	
Item	No.	Amount	No.	Amount	No.	Amount
1. Loans obligated during year	--	--	--	--	--	--
2. Borrowers outstanding	1	$41,186	1	$9,819	--	--
3. Loans cumulative	292	29,484,709	292	29,484,709	292	29,484,709

Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and Staff Years
2009 Actual and Estimated 2010 and 2011

	2009		2010		2011	
	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years
Alabama	$1,118,400	9	$1,116,397	9	--	--
Alaska	1,013,146	8	1,189,481	8	--	--
Arizona	823,009	6	767,108	6	--	--
Arkansas	974,066	8	888,582	8	--	--
California	1,350,657	11	1,623,862	11	--	--
Colorado	1,025,030	7	959,723	7	--	--
Connecticut	287,669	2	289,936	2	--	--

	2009		2010		2011	
	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years
Delaware	143,198	1	145,354	1	--	--
Florida	1,026,489	8	909,245	8	--	--
Georgia	1,310,033	9	1,385,639	9	--	--
Hawaii	909,607	7	929,425	7	--	--
Idaho	1,021,066	9	994,272	9	--	--
Illinois	1,254,683	10	1,262,607	10	--	--
Indiana	995,488	12	1,139,116	12	--	--
Iowa	1,805,492	16	1,929,658	16	--	--
Kansas	1,017,598	9	1,133,595	9	--	--
Kentucky	1,576,701	16	1,793,650	16	--	--
Louisiana	925,260	7	919,647	7	--	--
Maine	682,869	6	652,239	6	--	--
Maryland	448,412	4	387,646	4	--	--
Massachusetts	447,415	3	449,079	3	--	--
Michigan	970,304	8	895,699	8	--	--
Minnesota	1,090,908	10	998,742	10	--	--
Mississippi	933,043	11	871,356	11	--	--
Missouri	998,671	7	999,839	7	--	--
Montana	1,074,384	8	950,531	8	--	--
Nebraska	1,349,513	12	1,440,285	12	--	--
Nevada	452,544	4	406,655	4	--	--
New Hampshire	300,424	3	296,307	3	--	--
New Jersey	302,822	3	291,237	3	--	--
New Mexico	956,519	8	985,816	8	--	--
New York	1,055,715	9	1,104,518	9	--	--
North Carolina	1,120,604	10	1,236,188	10	--	--
North Dakota	952,293	9	956,622	9	--	--
Ohio	907,279	9	1,179,300	9	--	--
Oklahoma	1,128,279	9	1,120,470	9	--	--
Oregon	752,903	6	646,380	6	--	--
Pennsylvania	1,002,799	9	1,108,672	9	--	--
Puerto Rico	415,432	4	437,133	4	--	--
Rhode Island	152,979	1	132,563	1	--	--
South Carolina	972,213	8	857,236	8	--	--
South Dakota	957,742	8	791,939	8	--	--
Tennessee	1,119,630	11	1,287,366	11	--	--
Texas	2,476,627	19	2,776,597	19	--	--
Utah	955,759	7	845,546	7	--	--
Vermont	301,008	3	279,985	3	--	--
Virginia	953,308	9	880,431	9	--	--
Washington	889,945	7	807,112	7	--	--
West Virginia	754,010	7	718,732	7	--	--
Wisconsin	959,042	7	885,469	7	--	--
Wyoming	729,368	6	606,050	6	--	--
National Hdqtr	2,867,982	8	2,994,710	8	--	--
National Centers	552,779	4	490,234	4	--	--
Nat. Tech. Sup. Cents	57,367	--	60,079	--	--	--
Undistributed	--	--	2,298,735	--	--	--
Total, Available/Est	50,620,483	412	53,504,795	412	--	--

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Resource Conservation and Development

Classification by Objects
2009 Actual and Estimated 2010 and 2011

Personnel Compensation:		2009	2010	2011
Washington, D.C. …….		$685,373	$687,477	--
Field …….		30,435,086	30,528,523	--
11	Total personnel compensation……..	31,120,459	31,216,000	--
12	Personnel benefits ..……	8,362,955	8,388,000	--
13	Benefits for former personnel ..…….	14,876	15,000	--
	Total pers. comp. & benefits ...……..	39,498,290	39,619,000	--
Other Objects:				
21	Travel ……..….	1,177,557	1,171,000	--
22	Transportation of things ……	121,128	120,000	--
23.2	Rental payments to others …….	1,535,210	1,527,000	--
23.3	Communications, utilities, and …….. miscellaneous charges …….	1,182,938	1,177,000	--
24	Printing and reproduction…….....	25,027	25,000	--
25.2	Other services ……..	5,476,572	8,270,795	--
26	Supplies and materials ……	787,835	784,000	--
31	Equipment ……	689,426	685,000	--
42	Insurance and loans ……..……..	122,676	122,000	--
43	Interest and dividends ……	3,824	4,000	--
	Total other objects ……..	11,122,193	13,885,795	--
Total, direct obligations ……		50,620,483	53,504,795	--

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

STATUS OF PROGRAM

Current Activities

Background. The Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Program was initiated under the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act, (16 U.S.C. 590a-590f), the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act, (16 U.S.C. 1010 and 1011), and the Food and Agriculture Act of 1962, and is authorized under subtitle H, title XV of the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981, (16 U.S.C. 3451-3461), as amended. The Food Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (2002 Act) permanently authorized the program. The NRCS administers the program. In 1981, sections 1528-1538 of the Agriculture and Food Act authorized a program to encourage and improve the capability of State and local units of government and nonprofit organizations in rural areas to plan, develop, and implement programs for resource conservation and development. Through the program, the RC&D areas establish or improve coordination systems in rural communities, and build rural community leadership skills to more effectively use Federal, State, and local programs for the communities' benefit. The 2008 Act further strengthened the relationship between the USDA and the RC&D areas.

The NRCS provides program administration and assistance to RC&D areas through volunteer non-profit RC&D Councils. Other USDA agencies with conservation or development responsibilities are involved in the development of program policy and guidance and are members of the USDA RC&D Policy Advisory Board and Working Group. These Agencies provide technical and limited financial assistance to RC&D Councils. RC&D Councils also obtain the assistance from other local, State, and Federal agencies, private organizations, and foundations to carry out their specific projects.

The RC&D program blends natural resource use and conservation with local economic development. RC&D Councils and their sponsors initiate and lead the planning and implementation of their locally developed RC&D area plans, in association with State, local, and Federal governments, and non-profit organizations. Program objectives address improving the quality of life, including social, economic and environmental concerns; continuing wise use of natural resources; and strengthening the local citizens' ability to use the assistance available through USDA and other Federal agency partnerships.

Geographic Scope. The Secretary has designated 375 RC&D areas that serve 2,696 counties in every State, the Caribbean, and the Pacific Basin. Designated areas continue to serve over 85 percent of U.S. counties and more than 77 percent of the U.S. population. Another 38 applicant areas covering 231 additional counties have applied for the USDA Secretary's designation. The 1990 Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act limited assistance to not more than 450 active designated areas. Since FY 2003, USDA designated RC&D areas have remained at 375.

RC&D Area and Council Operations. A RC&D area is a locally defined multi-county area, sponsored and directed by a RC&D Council that carries out the program encouraging natural resource conservation and utilization, accelerated economic development, and/or improvement of social conditions where needed to foster a sound local economy. The Council consists of sponsors from the public and private sector that represent a diverse cross-section of community interests. Sponsors include county and city governments, soil and water conservation districts, sub-state districts, Tribal governments, and other interested private organizations in the area. The RC&D Program epitomizes grassroots involvement and decision-making. From public meetings to identify community concerns, needs, and problems, the RC&D Council develops an area plan that details the goals, objectives, and action items needed to address the local communities' priorities and concerns. The Council then collects data about identified problems, develops alternatives, and recommends solutions. Implementation of an action item may include one step or a full range of steps, such as problem identification, development of alternatives, plan development, and funding.

RC&D projects focus on eight broad areas:

- Resource base protection projects for soil erosion control, noxious plant and pest control, streambank improvement, preservation of prime land, mined land reclamation, natural resource studies, energy conservation, and alternative sources of energy such as biomass.
- Fish and wildlife projects for the protection, improvement, or development of fish and wildlife habitat.
- Waste management and utilization projects for the efficient and environmentally sound disposal of animal waste; development or improvement of a landfill; waste collection; solid waste disposal; composting and recycling of glass, metals, paper, wood, and furniture.
- Community improvement projects that develop community infrastructure including studies on zoning, facilities or services needed, and project implementation. Projects include constructing and improving public trails; community centers and other old community buildings; constructing, improving or repairing subsidized housing; improving roads and parks; and, installing dry fire hydrants.
- Forestry projects improve forested areas through education on safety or harvesting techniques; developing or expanding forest related industries; developing wood waste energy sources; developing or improving value added forestry related products; studies such as forest inventories, species, or forest products; and improving rural road infrastructure with timber bridges.
- Economic development projects include marketing and producer surveys or feasibility studies; assisting with grants, loans, or other financing; assisting in the formation or expansion of agriculture or natural resource related businesses, or other businesses involved with value-added products. Projects can include improvement of agricultural production. Marketing and merchandising projects result in cooperatives or associations; business or marketing plans; and advertising and promotional materials.
- Water projects improve surface and groundwater quality and quantity. Many projects deal with pollution control and dispersing water. Projects include watershed management; construction or rehabilitation of irrigation, flood control systems; wastewater treatment; and, efficient use of aquifers.
- Recreation and tourism projects include feasibility studies and the creation or improvement of water-based recreational areas for swimming, boating, and canoeing, and boat launch sites; establishment or improvement of non water-based recreational areas such golf courses, rodeo arenas, trails, or ball parks; historic site preservation; and, establishment or upgrade of a tourist attraction.

NRCS Program Support. NRCS assists the RC&D Council through an RC&D Coordinator. The RC&D Coordinator facilitates the development and implementation of an individualized and locally determined program (i.e., area plan) with the RC&D Council and the local people. NRCS and other USDA agencies provide planning and technical assistance for implementing the area plan. RC&D activities are broader than those created from USDA assistance alone. The Coordinator is the link between the RC&D Council, its other partners, and the USDA. The goal is a RC&D Council that has the capacity to build effective public/private partnerships that result in strong rural community leadership and accomplishments. Other Federal agencies provide assistance to RC&D councils within their existing authorities and programs as needed. State and local units of government also participate, as well as non-profits and private businesses.

Overview of FY 2009 Progress. RC&D Program management and information system indicators provide several measures of success. Reporting areas indicated that RC&D Councils and their partners helped to create 676 new businesses, expand 1,452 businesses, retain 4,469 businesses, and assist 401 businesses financially with funds totaling $25.9 million. In addition, Councils assisted in the formation of 129 cooperatives. An estimated 7,060 jobs have been created and 4,778 jobs retained through area projects, nationally. Councils obtained over $283.9 million in external grant funds in FY 2009.

Funding provided by non-RC&D appropriations sources indicates an RC&D program leverage of $5.60 for every RC&D appropriation dollar invested.

RC&D Councils assisted 927 farm or ranch operations with agri-tourism activities and 704 farms or ranches with direct marketing from the field to the consumer via Community Supported Agriculture groups (CSAs), restaurants, commercial stores, or public access farmers markets.

Efforts to improve natural resources have resulted in the improvement of an estimated 2.42 million acres of wildlife habitat, 400,000 acres of lakes and other water bodies, and 7,731 miles of streams. RC&D Councils assisted over 1,871 animal agricultural operations with water quality projects; assisted with the construction or rehabilitation of 17 flood control structures; and preserved or protected over 601,701 acres of agricultural land. RC&D Councils in eight States implemented renewable energy projects.

In FY 2009, RC&D Councils held over 6,100 workshops, tours and seminars nationwide on agriculture, aquaculture, forestry and wildlife; and over 2,900 training sessions on leadership development, grant writing, business development, non-profit management and environmental education. These educational projects have helped nearly 1.04 million people develop new skills. More than 500 natural resource related school curricula and programs were created. RC&D projects have helped over 3.2 million economically or socially disadvantaged people. There were 631 instances of assistance provided to Tribal Nations through implementation of projects. RC&D Councils served over 14.5 million citizens nationwide.

More than 4,000 projects that focus on the goals in RC&D area plans were completed in FY 2009. More than 6,800 projects will continue in FY 2010. As a non-profit entity, RC&D Councils are capable of applying for, receiving, delivering, administering, and reporting on all types of Federal funding including loans and grants. RC&D Councils have existing project applications in the area of economic development, infrastructure improvements, renewable energy development, energy conservation, carbon sequestration and climate changes. Since 1964, RC&Ds have completed over 95,600 projects. More information on the RC&D program can be found on the NRCS RC&D homepage at http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/rcd/.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress

Texas: The "Bio-Hybrid-Energy-Cycle" uses commercially grown plant cellulous and animal waste digested to biogas. The produced biogas combines with other forms of renewable energy to produce clean heat and electrical energy for decentralized, utility scale distribution. The by-products of the process include organic fertilizers, soil conditioners, bedding material and phosphate remediation for animal waste. Acreage required to support the production of clean biogas does not compete with food or fiber production. The Post Oak RC&D Council has implemented this six million dollars project, which has created a business and 28 jobs.

Wyoming: Harnessing Wind-Energy, as an alternative energy source, has sparked a new industry. The Southeastern Wyoming RC&D Council is dedicated to promoting and implementing wind energy development by forming landowner associations. Thus far, the Council has formed 11 wind energy associations to identify landowners' leasing options and wind development rights. The goal of the associations is to enhance the marketability of the wind energy resources on members' lands by combining those resources into a single marketing package. The associations use collective bargaining strategies to successfully negotiate wind energy contracts with wind developers in ways that are environmentally sound and economically feasible.

Alabama: Establishment of a marketing cooperative to improve social and economic conditions. The Tombigbee RC&D Council has assisted 155 participants with the establishment of this cooperative to market rabbit, goat, sheep and other agricultural products. The investment in this project of $135,000 contributions has resulted in the creation of 60 jobs and the development of alternative agricultural enterprises in west Alabama.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Healthy Forests Reserve Program

Project Statement
(On basis of available funds)

Program	2009 Actual Amount	2009 Actual Staff Years	2010 Estimated Amount	2010 Estimated Staff Years	Increase or Decrease	2011 Estimated Amount	2011 Estimated Staff Years
Healthy Forests Reserve Program:							
Technical Assistance….	$29,209		$110,944	--	--	--	--
Financial Assistance…..	65,641		1,084,246	--		--	--
Total Direct Obligations…	94,850		1,195,190	--	--	--	
Unobligated Bal.		--			--	--	--
Brought Fwd……..	(-1,274,274)	--	(-1,195,190)	--	---	--	--
Prior Year Recoveries…	(-15,766)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Unobligated Bal. Carried Fwd…….....	(+1,195,190)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Adjusted Appropriation….	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Obligational Authority….	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Note: The 2008 Farm Bill provides $9,750,000 in FY 2010 and $9,750,000 in FY 2011 in mandatory funds. For this program see page 25-53 for further information.

Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and Staff Years
2009Actual and Estimated 2010 and 2011

	2009 Amount	2009 Staff Years	2010 Amount	2010 Staff Years	2011 Amount	2011 Staff Years
Arkansas……	$9,269	--	--	--	--	--
Maine…….……..	2,952	--	--	--	--	--
Minnesota…….	22,699	--	--	--	--	--
Mississippi…….……	59,930	--	$7,826	--	--	--
Undistributed……....…	--	--	1,187,364	--	--	--
Total Obligations/Est …….	94,850	--	1,195,190	--	--	--

Classification by Objects
2009 Actual and Estimated 2010 and 2011

Personnel Compensation:		2009	2010	2011
Washington, D.C.		--	--	--
Field		$24,674	--	--
11	Total personnel compensation	24,674	--	--
12	Personnel benefits	-9,126	--	--
	Total pers. comp. & benefits	15,548	--	--
Other Objects:				
21	Travel	1,152	$7,925	--
22	Transportation of things	2	--	--
23.2	Rental payments to others	1,600	15,849	--
23.3	Communications, utilities, and miscellaneous charges	-4	--	--
24	Printing and reproduction	-46	--	--
25.2	Other services	10,681	87,170	--
26	Supplies and materials	716	--	--
31	Equipment	-439	--	--
32	Land and structures	--	--	--
32.1	Easements	70,655	1,084,246	--
41	Grants	-5,015	--	--
43	Interest and dividends	--	--	--
	Total other objects	79,302	1,195,190	--
Total, direct obligations		94,850	1,195,190	--

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Farm Security and Rural Investment Programs

Food, Conservation and Energy Act for 2010	$3,057,305,209
Budget Estimate, 2011	3,146,707,000
Change in Estimate	+89,401,791

Conservation programs included in this account are listed in the project statement below. The Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008, (P.L. 110-246) program funding authorization will continue from the Commodity Credit Corporation.

Project Statement
(On basis of authorized level)

	2009 Actual		2010 Estimated		Increase	2011 Estimated	
Project	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years	or Decrease	Amount	Staff Years
Wetlands Reserve Program...	$435,711,313	191	$613,115,000	256	-$110,889,000	$502,226,000	281
Environmental Quality Incentives Program	1,054,581,563	2,395	1,180,000,000	3,290	+28,000,000	1,208,000,000	2,510
Agricultural Water Enhancement Program	71,803,404	66	73,000,000	151	+1,000,000	74,000,000	152
Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program	72,742,931	128	85,000,000	152	-12,000,000	73,000,000	143
Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program	118,766,171	34	150,000,000	59	+10,000,000	160,000,000	51
Conservation Security Program	276,004,481	220	233,963,000	152	-21,521,000	212,442,000	138
Conservation Stewardship Program	9,378,239	75	469,442,000	691	+160,055,000	629,497,000	483
Grasslands Reserve Program	47,658,102	30	100,714,000	42	-21,638,000	79,076,000	42
Agricultural Management Assistance a/	7,378,139	9	7,500,000	27	-5,000,000	2,500,000	18
Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program	21,841,618	25	43,000,000	83	+29,000,000	72,000,000	171
Carryover	--	--	1,158,381	9	-1,158,381	--	--
Healthy Forests Reserve Program	2,526,172	5	9,750,000	19	--	9,750,000	14
Carryover	--	--	7,223,828	1	-7,223,828	--	--
Conservation Reserve Program	55,913,833	538	83,439,000	759	+40,777,000	124,216,000	1,123
Subtotal, Food, Conservation And Energy Program	2,174,305,966	3,716	3,057,305,209	5,691	+89,401,791	3,146,707,000	5,126
EPA Great Lakes Restoration Initiative	--	--	21,449,000	14	-21,499,000	--	--
Total, Food, Conservation And Energy Program	2,174,305,966	3,716	3,078,754,209	5,705	+67,902,791	3,146,707,000	5,126

a/ The Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 authorizes $15 million in Agricultural Management Assistance for FY 2010 and FY 2011. The Act authorizes half of that funding for NRCS, or $7.5 million each year. A proposed savings of $5 million in FY 2011 reduces the total authorized level to $10 million and NRCS' portion to $2.5 million, as the entire savings is applied to NRCS.

Statement of Program

Performance Indicators	Performance Targets FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
Wetlands Reserve Program			
Farmland, forest land and wetlands protected by conservation easements, acres	35,338	100,000	110,000
Environmental Quality Incentives Program			
Land with conservation applied to improve irrigation efficiency, acres	1,131,159	1,100,000	1,000,000
Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program			
Non-Federal land with conservation applied to improve fish and wildlife habitat quality, acres	335,402	350,000	400,000
Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program			
Prime, unique and important farmland protected from conversion to non-agricultural uses by conservation easements, acres	38,260	40,000	45,000

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Farm Security and Rural Investment Programs

Geographic Breakdown of Obligations

2009 Actual

	WRP	CRP	EQIP	CStP	WHIP	FRPP	CSecP	AWEP	GRP	CBWP	HFRP	AMA a/
ALABAMA	$20,546,081	$443,900	$16,311,381	$203,145	$1,452,284	$570,377	$2,225,245	$1,804,001	$38,487	--	--	--
ALASKA	45,682	145,573	6,152,895	--	3,027,373	717,026	25,811	--	9,704	--	--	--
ARIZONA	116,711	--	22,516,248	66,823	1,500,608	131,118	328,747	--	54,030	--	--	--
ARKANSAS	10,431,401	639,414	19,002,199	251,284	1,072,180	17,472	11,431,543	444,638	8,119	--	$113,782	--
CALIFORNIA	16,867,424	74,284	69,871,185	244,757	2,455,238	3,755,396	6,628,659	20,766,032	136,566	--	--	--
COLORADO	905,440	551,462	33,800,294	157,047	1,120,828	5,700,954	4,932,799	370,008	109,649	--	--	--
CONNECTICUT	686,463	--	6,816,196	--	2,145,272	5,919,713	65,035	--	21,679	--	--	$344,343
DELAWARE	727,050	59,088	7,077,784	38,225	467,054	5,728,353	1,159,766	--	4,163	$1,255,220	--	153,568
FLORIDA	77,500,994	101,710	22,601,981	157,728	1,862,624	1,504,201	173,255	1,340,853	144,555	--	--	--
GEORGIA	3,611,578	502,983	19,488,912	190,134	1,344,794	17,572	4,507,867	2,158,908	23,151	--	244,214	--
HAWAII	545,937	2,180	9,570,632	28,017	1,043,223	335,900	426,890	--	6,849	--	--	153,259
IDAHO	362,018	381,803	14,832,652	111,571	924,716	1,094,337	13,498,622	7,940,738	41,147	--	--	--
ILLINOIS	4,166,649	4,108,804	15,709,481	316,111	307,609	1,633,313	8,877,502	59,630	1,650	--	--	--
INDIANA	7,268,440	3,475,003	15,188,522	273,188	1,310,763	--	8,429,225	675,266	51,048	--	137,185	--
IOWA	17,640,505	4,368,124	27,210,886	392,342	957,650	246	22,553,084	182,622	81,609	--	--	--
KANSAS	4,456,657	2,080,295	25,937,264	331,442	1,283,349	1,036,736	10,240,248	--	118,634	--	--	--
KENTUCKY	5,220,035	2,094,920	13,535,128	--	1,059,472	3,188,404	883,957	--	56,833	--	--	--
LOUISIANA	6,027,942	634,541	19,695,687	130,900	1,055,725	--	319,408	--	25,020	--	--	--
MAINE	55,288	83,625	11,333,733	40,943	890,111	354,726	730,775	--	13,931	--	23,979	315,651
MARYLAND	5,530,298	623,863	9,256,586	--	387,608	4,319,983	5,590,559	--	7,033	4,960,927	--	372,341
MASSACHUSETTS	5,005,342	9,255	6,983,159	--	1,976,531	6,120,441	38,061	--	13,523	--	--	164,356
MICHIGAN	6,258,333	828,073	20,013,700	156,223	1,047,665	3,039,211	8,103,871	1,686,181	77,736	--	--	--
MINNESOTA	31,476,845	4,441,351	34,845,586	346,129	1,581,607	3,061,206	8,186,591	368,428	46,996	--	96,192	--
MISSISSIPPI	5,037,831	1,057,284	15,723,298	179,194	1,425,322	--	660,222	2,655,097	97,243	--	974,245	--
MISSOURI	8,274,593	2,512,035	24,163,300	482,455	1,450,390	21,171	29,533,414	--	141,482	--	--	--
MONTANA	654,211	1,150,855	28,471,044	141,906	770,621	2,799,705	11,645,434	--	149,751	--	--	--
NEBRASKA	23,515,569	1,945,765	28,217,397	231,512	1,482,888	1,481,454	14,414,903	3,229,731	79,572	--	--	--
NEVADA	14,151	--	8,065,889	41,000	669,526	3,625,056	402,193	---	2,020	--	--	429,743
NEW HAMPSHIRE	20,942,604	4,976	6,545,719	--	2,531,421	3,972,906	15,372	--	21,884	--	--	150,151
NEW JERSEY	2,526,333	118,556	6,481,452	--	1,097,181	6,879,460	176,129	101,445	11,146	--	--	370,749
NEW MEXICO	147,290	198,205	24,321,149	140,754	1,128,037	624,042	1,333,133	4,155,071	232,312	--	--	--
NEW YORK	5,888,398	392,227	17,748,998	--	1,107,816	2,541,501	1,599,549	555,416	33,498	1,251,752	--	1,113,768
N CAROLINA	8,099,698	696,726	17,974,403	232,964	1,168,607	3,020,891	1,396,469	60,085	26,896	--	--	--
N DAKOTA	23,902,063	3,790,827	25,728,653	147,542	1,181,372	5,567	9,640,013	3,095,688	78,675	--	--	--
OHIO	3,980,791	2,722,503	19,452,401	--	923,833	3,363,706	16,774,266	--	69,873	--	--	--
OKLAHOMA	4,819,145	542,581	27,753,262	355,888	1,700,506	308,772	6,082,618	854,145	152,475	--	425,860	--
OREGON	14,078,200	539,713	15,280,022	151,647	1,890,081	8,060	23,950,400	4,154,925	46,748	--	448,333	--
PENNSYLVANIA	2,181,302	2,051,778	16,532,408	--	793,534	5,821,688	2,004,132	--	56,886	6,740,130	--	1,291,839

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Farm Security and Rural Investment Programs

Geographic Breakdown of Obligations

2009 Actual

	WRP	CRP	EQIP	CStP	WHIP	FRPP	CSecP	AWEP	GRP	CBWP	HFRP	AMA a/
PUERTO RICO....	--	--	6,263,258	52,459	--	--	222,883	--	11,422	--	--	--
RHODE ISLAND.	102,460	194	4,765,658	--	1,577,700	5,398,292	32,206	--	4,698	--	--	81,546
S CAROLINA.....	7,373,900	820,504	10,054,440	--	1,836,463	2,814,144	2,726,870	--	25,513	--	--	--
S DAKOTA.....	11,799,862	2,930,106	19,059,155	183,999	1,100,044	5,354	3,996,125	--	137,213	--	--	--
TENNESSEE.....	22,228,791	878,336	14,911,743	--	989,322	1,035,497	1,707,254	--	83,830	--	--	--
TEXAS.....	3,465,426	1,037,362	83,072,573	766,575	4,645,178	2,228,311	2,122,759	12,700,554	333,475	--	--	--
UTAH.....	115,637	28,676	22,033,577	46,354	813,507	920,238	3,552,303	--	35,281	--	--	789,886
VERMONT….....	1,522,200	98,142	9,382,773	--	1,377,054	3,393,634	69,574	--	16,429	--	--	273,955
VIRGINIA……..	464,346	946,884	13,494,147	--	865,616	1,789,543	1,433,097	--	53,924	6,214,545	--	--
WASHINGTON.....	1,615,653	289,526	17,957,576	97,558	1,589,445	5,942,888	6,357,479	1,113	69,835	--	--	--
WEST VIRGINIA..	296,400	240,029	8,117,883	--	1,569,262	5,622,097	337,574	--	32,868	1,419,044	--	474,978
WISCONSIN….....	25,533,535	1,909,715	21,549,863	272,652	1,274,223	1,519,574	5,431,376	--	67,222	--	--	--
WYOMING……..	2,136,911	177,459	15,321,538	101,868	874,069	3,866,047	2,388,953	--	67,210	--	--	898,006
NATIONAL HDQTR	6,988,618	2,420,404	67,432,632	131,527	3,717,917	1,262,973	5,245,199	2,067,295	44,330,416	--	62,381	--
CENTERS.....	2,230,476	482,103	8,124,166	--	--	--	873,310	338,745	--	--	--	--
NTSC....	--	--	2,829,092	--	--	--	521,749	36,793	--	--	--	--
FY 2009 Total Obligations....	$435,711,313	$55,913,833	$1,054,581,563	$9,378,239	$72,742,931	$118,766,171	$276,004,481	$71,803,404	$47,658,102	$21,841,618	$2,526,172	$7,378,139

a/ AMA actuals include only those AMA obligations made by NRCS.

COMMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION
FOOD, CONSERVATION, AND ENERGY ACT OF 2008

WETLANDS RESERVE PROGRAM
STATUS OF PROGRAM

Current Activities

Background. The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) was authorized by Section 1237 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (P.L. 99-198), as amended by the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-624), the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (P.L. 104-127), the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (P.L. 107-171), and the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-246), to assist owners in restoring and protecting wetlands. WRP is a program funded by the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) and administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

WRP is a voluntary program that provides technical and financial assistance to enable eligible landowners to address wetland, wildlife habitat, soil, water and related natural resource concerns on private lands in an environmentally beneficial and cost effective manner. WRP supports three Mission Goals in the NRCS Strategic Plan: Clean and Abundant water, Healthy Plant and Animal Communities, and Clean Air. The program achieves solutions to local community issues related to farms, ranches, rural lands and other areas by establishing easements and long-term agreements on eligible farmlands and establishing 30 year contracts on Tribal lands. This unique program offers landowners an opportunity to establish, at minimal cost, long-term conservation and wildlife habitat enhancement practices and protection.

Program Goal. The goal of WRP is to achieve the greatest wetlands functions and values, along with optimum wildlife habitat on every acre enrolled in the program. In WRP, at least 70 percent of the wetland and upland areas will be restored to the original natural condition to the extent practicable; the remaining 30 percent of the project area may be restored to other than natural conditions. For example, instead of restoring a bottomland hardwood site to all trees, a portion of the site could be restored to an emergent marsh condition if the landowner or NRCS wanted to create habitat for certain wildlife species. This flexibility allows NRCS to implement projects that meet landowner objectives and maximize wildlife benefits. WRP focuses on:

- Enrolling marginal lands that have a history of crop failures or low production yields;
- Restoring and protecting wetland values on degraded wetlands;
- Maximizing wildlife benefits;
- Achieving cost-effective restoration with a priority on benefits to migratory birds;
- Protecting and improving water quality; and
- Reducing the impact of flood events.

Program Scope and Eligibility Criteria. The program is available in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands of the United States, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Island, and the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands on all lands meeting any of the following eligibility criteria:

- Altered, cropped and grazed wetlands along with upland buffer areas;
- Rangeland and wooded areas where hydrology is degraded but restorable;
- Eligible acres already enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program;
- Riparian areas linking protected wetlands;
- Natural wetlands that contribute to the value of the easement restoration area; and
- Wetlands restored under a Federal or State cost-share program with an easement or deed restriction with duration of less than 30 years.

Program Enrollment Options. WRP provides landowners four methods to enroll acreage:

- Permanent easements: Easement duration is in perpetuity. Landowners receive an easement payment after the easement is filed. The compensation is to be the lowest of the:
  - Fair market value of the land as determined by a Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practices (USPAP) appraisal or an area-wide market analysis or survey;
  - Amount corresponding to the geographic rate cap, as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture in regulations;
  - Offer made by the landowner.

  In addition, NRCS shall share the cost of carrying out the establishment of conservation measures and practices, and the protection of wetland functions and values including necessary maintenance activities as set forth in the plan to the extent that the Secretary determines that cost-sharing is appropriate and in the public interest.
- 30-year easements: Easement duration is 30 years. Landowners receive an easement payment after the easement is filed and is the equivalent of 75 percent of the value for a permanent easement and up to 75 percent of the eligible restoration costs.
- Restoration cost-share agreements: Restoration cost-share agreements are made available to participating landowners as an alternative mechanism to restore wetlands, without requiring the landowner to enroll the land as an easement. Agreements are generally for a 10-year period, although longer agreement periods may be required for unique projects that are funded at a higher level. There is no easement payment; however, NRCS pays up to 75 percent of the eligible restoration costs.
- 30-year contracts: Acreage owned by Indian Tribes can be enrolled through the use of a 30-year contract which shall be equivalent in value to a 30-year easement.

For both permanent and 30-year easements, WRP pays for all the costs associated with recording the easement in the local land records office including recording fees, charges for title abstracts, surveys, appraisal fees, "All Appropriate Inquiry" records searches, and title insurance associated with acquiring an easement. These costs are authorized for payment under Section 303 of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Land Acquisition Policies Act of 1970.

Technical Assistance. With input from State wildlife agencies and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), NRCS develops a preliminary site plan for the offered acres that are initially determined to be eligible. The plan outlines the wetlands and any adjacent lands that would benefit from restoration in this program. Once the participant accepts an offer, NRCS assists in establishing the required practices for the easement area.

NRCS continues to provide assistance to the landowner after the initial completion of the restoration activities. The assistance may be in the form of review of restoration measures, clarification of the technical and administrative aspects of easement and agreement management needs, and basic biological and engineering advice on how to achieve optimum results for wetland dependant wildlife.

FY 2009 Contracts and Acres Enrolled

Type of Project	Contracts Enrolled	Acres Enrolled
30-Year Agreements (With Tribes)	12	2,156
Restoration Cost Share Agreements	14	644
30-Year Easements	399	51,690
Permanent Easements	684	124,642
Total	1,109	179,132

WRP Acreage. NRCS created, restored, or enhanced 106,379 acres of wetlands in FY 2009. The average project size for FY 2009 was 162 acres compared to 163 acres in FY 2008. Acreage offered for participation in the WRP varies in size across the country. Acres are the specific controlling factor for

WRP. Funding needs are determined by projecting the number of acres by program option (i.e. permanent easements, 30-year easements, cost share agreements) and the geographic rate cap for the location of the acres to be enrolled.

Cumulative Enrollment Data (including FY 2009 and prior years)

Acres enrolled	2,177,362
Acres of easements perfected	1,700,076
Acres with restoration cost-share agreements	188,509
Total number of projects	11,758
Number of easement projects	10,498
Number of restoration cost-share agreements	1,248
Number of 30 Year contracts with Indian Tribes enrolled	12
Acres of 30 Year contracts with Indian Tribes enrolled	2,156

The cumulative "Acres Enrolled" in the chart above represents the total initial enrollment for the life of the program less those projects that have been cancelled or terminated after the year of initial enrollment.

The type of wetlands restored varies from floodplain forest, to prairie potholes, to coastal marshes. Floodplain forests and associated sloughs and small emergent marsh wetlands account for the majority of the program's restoration activity. Most of the enrolled floodplain acres offered into the program occur in areas subject to frequent flooding that were originally drained or cleared for agricultural production.

NRCS continues to improve restoration techniques and knowledge. For example, over 65 percent of all restoration involved hydrology restoration, with or without a vegetative component. Of the acres involving a vegetative component, improved techniques such as natural regeneration were used over 45 percent of the time. This allows for the most natural wetland community possible, providing the greatest benefit to associated wetland dependant species, and resulted in NRCS utilizing the most cost effective techniques for complete restoration.

WRP Partnership Activities. In FY 2009, NRCS continued to expand partnership efforts with conservation entities. Ducks Unlimited, numerous State Wildlife Agencies, the Fish and Wildlife Service, California Waterfowl Association, The Nature Conservancy, Wisconsin Waterfowl Association, and the Mississippi Fish and Wildlife Foundation supplemented NRCS capacity with additional restoration expertise and implementation capability. Other groups contributing technical expertise to the delivery of WRP include the National Association of Conservation Districts, State associations of conservation districts, U.S. Forest Service, local conservation districts and technical service providers.

Monitoring Initiative. NRCS is responsible for monitoring over 10,498 easements covering over 1.7 million acres, annually for potential violations.

NRCS implemented a Remote Sensing Project through an agreement with the Farm Service Agency Aerial Photography Field Office to purchase high resolution aerial photography for WRP, Emergency Wetlands Reserve Program, and Emergency Watershed Program-Floodplain easements. The project uses digitized easement boundaries supplied by States to fly over WRP easements on an annual basis. Remote sensing will supplement easement monitoring, enabling States to assess risk of violations and determine if additional site visits are needed. Aerial photography was used to evaluate 3,207 WRP easements in 2007, 7,720 easements in 2008, and 7,245 easements in 2009.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress

Indiana. A representative of the Pokagon Band of the Potowatomi Indians in Indiana recently stated that the WRP is more than restoring wetlands – it is restoring the culture and the sacredness of the land back to the tribe. The Tribe has worked with NRCS to return the hydrology of 1,147 acres of their native land base back to historic marsh conditions. Even more exciting to the Tribal members is the natural regeneration of native plants such as Umbrella Sedge and the success they are having in re-establishing Wild Rice (a

significant, traditional plant for the Tribe). As a result of the restoration work, Green Heron, the Great Blue Heron, egrets, osprey, wild turkeys, Indigo Buntings and butterflies have returned as well. Other partners on the project have included Pheasants Forever and the St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Since 1997, NRCS and The Nature Conservancy have entered into a series of WRP agreements that have resulted in 5,100 acres of wetlands and prairie established in Newton County in northwest Indiana the Kankakee Sands. The conservation plans were designed to deliver high diversity re-creations of rare and declining habitats, such as sedge meadow, wet prairie, emergent wetland, and mesic prairie; habitats that are extremely rare not only in Indiana, but across the eastern Midwest and Great Plains. The results have been outstanding. The interplay of native wet and upland habitats has created a place for huge populations of amphibians, reptiles, mammals and birds. The site has been named a national Important Bird Area by Audubon, with large flocks of waterfowl, marsh birds, and grassland birds using the newly established habitat each year.

Missouri. Southeast Missouri was home to thousands of acres of sand prairie, a unique habitat and plant community. Developing agriculture nearly destroyed the sand prairie habitat in this part of the State. The Splitbeard Bluestem Andropogon ternarius, used to flourish over sandy riverine areas in southern and southeast Missouri. Where applicable, this special community is being restored on WRP sites in southeast Missouri.

Splitbeard Bluestem was a major component of the sand prairie and had all but disappeared from the southeast Missouri landscape. Illinois Chorus Frogs, a State species of conservation concern in Missouri is at home in sand prairies. The Eastern Spadefoot Toad is another amphibian that inhabits sand prairies in southeastern Missouri. They often burrow into the ground and prefer open fields with loose sandy soil. The spadefoot toad is also a State species of concern in Missouri.

One WRP site in New Madrid County was planted to 65 acres of Splitbeard Bluestem in the spring of 2009. Thirty acres was planted on another WRP site in close proximity in 2008 and is responding well to the recent wet weather and has become quite robust. These plantings are part of a WRP complex totaling 1210 acres, a good place for the Splitbeard Bluestem, Illinois Chorus Frog, the Eastern Spadefoot Toad and many other riverine wetland wildlife species to take up residence.

Rhode Island. After decades of degradation, construction is now completed to restore Gooseneck Cove in Newport, Rhode Island. Nearly 14 acres of salt marsh within the cove have been lost since 1939, and water quality and fish habitat have been severely degraded due to restricted tidal flow in this 64 acre coastal wetland. The project marks Rhode Island's first intentional dam removal. While much work remains to be completed in restoring our State's coastal habitats, this project will result in immediate positive ecologic, economic, and recreational effects.

The restoration activities are directed at replacing culverts and the removal of the defunct dam in the center of the wetland system. These barriers altered the natural flow of tides into and out of the marsh, causing marsh plants to die-off, and the surface of the marsh to erode and subside. This has led to decreased water quality, increased flooding, and the introduction of invasive vegetation. The restoration will improve water quality and growing conditions for native marsh plants and improve habitat of the marsh and tidal creeks for commercial and recreational species of fish, such as striped bass, bluefish, and winter flounder; shellfish, waterfowl and shorebirds. It will also reduce flooding and make the marsh more resilient to storm damage and projected sea level rise impacts.

Iowa. For the first time in more than a century trumpeter swans nested in Appanoose County, Iowa thanks in part to restored and enhanced wetlands and other habitat implemented under the Wetlands Reserve Program. The swans were released three years ago by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Trumpeter swans are the world's largest waterfowl, weighing from 25-35 pounds when fully grown. They nested throughout Iowa prior to settlement, but wetland draining and unregulated hunting brought their

demise in the early 1880s. In 1993 the DNR developed a plan to restore trumpeter swans in Iowa. In 1998 three cygnets hatched from a wild nesting trumpeter pair in Dubuque County.

Trumpeter swans form strong pair bonds that can last for years. They build their nests five feet across, which are usually among aquatic plants. They will often use the tops of muskrat houses for a nest base. Nearly 1,000 trumpeter swans have been released in Iowa since 1993. From 1998 to 2008, about 500 cygnets were reported hatched in Iowa.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM

Current Activities

Background. Section 2301 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (the 2002 Act) (P.L. 107-171, May 13, 2002) 16 U.S.C. 3839aa and Section 2503 of the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-246) re-authorized and amended the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), created by the Food Security Act of 1985 (the 1985 Act) as amended by the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (the 1996 Act) (P. L. 104-127, April 4, 1996) (16 U.S.C. 3839aa).

The 1996 Act combined into a single program the functions of the Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP), the Great Plains Conservation Program (GPCP), the Water Quality Incentives Program (WQIP), and the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program (CRBSCP). NRCS implements EQIP and the associated financial and performance reporting. The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) funds EQIP.

Program Operation. EQIP provides technical and financial assistance to eligible farmers, ranchers and nonindustrial private forest owners to address soil, water, air, and related natural resource concerns on their lands in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner. Overall, the program addresses and solves local conservation issues related to farms, ranches, nonindustrial private forest lands and rural lands. This is done through landowners and land users who implement conservation practices on eligible lands:

- Conservation practice means one or more conservation improvements and activities, including structural practices, land management practices, vegetative practices, forest management practices, and other improvements that achieve the program purposes, including such items as CNMPs, agricultural energy management plans, dryland transition plans, forest management plans, integrated pest management, and other similar plans.
- Structural practice means a conservation practice, including a vegetative practice, that involves establishing, constructing, or installing a site-specific measure to conserve and protect natural resources from degradation, or improves soil, water, air, or related natural resources in the most cost-effective manner. Examples include, but are not limited to, animal waste management facilities, terraces, grassed waterways, tailwater pits, livestock water developments, contour grass strips, filter strips, critical area plantings, tree plantings, establishment or improvement of wildlife habitat, and capping of abandoned wells.
- Land management practices are primarily site-specific management techniques and methods to conserve, protect from degradation, or improve soil, water, or related natural resources in the most cost-effective manner. Land management practices include nutrient management, manure management, integrated pest or crop management, irrigation water management, residue management, stripcropping, contour farming, grazing management, and wildlife habitat management.

Program Objectives. NRCS is charged with carrying out EQIP in a manner that optimizes environmental benefits and provides:

- Flexible technical and financial assistance to farmers and ranchers that face the most serious threats to soil, water, air, and related natural resources;
- Assistance to farmers and ranchers in complying with Federal, State, and local environmental regulatory requirements;

- Assistance to farmers and ranchers in making beneficial, cost-effective changes to cropping systems, grazing management, manure, nutrient, pest, or irrigation management, land uses, or other measures needed to conserve and improve soil, water, air, and related natural resources, and
- For the consolidation and simplification of conservation planning and implementation to reduce the administration burden on producers.

Land and Participant Eligibility Requirements. Lands enrolled in EQIP must be privately owned. Eligible lands may include agricultural land (i.e., cropland, rangeland, pasture, private non-industrial forest land and other land on which crops or livestock are produced), including agricultural land that poses a serious threat to soil, water, air, or related resources by reason of soil type, terrain, climatic conditions, topography, flooding, saline characteristics, or other natural resource factors or natural hazards. Publicly owned land is eligible when the land is under private control for the contract period, is included in the participant's operating unit, and when the participant has written authorization from the government landowner to apply conservation practices. Installation of conservation practices and systems must contribute to an improvement in the identified natural resource concern.

Participation is voluntary. In order to participate, both the land and the person(s) must be eligible. Eligibility requires that applicants must:

- Comply with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985;
- Have control of the land for the life of the proposed contract period; and
- Have an interest in the farming operation.

National Priorities. The 2002 and 2008 Farm Bills require that at least 60 percent of the funds for EQIP be targeted to livestock production conservation practices or systems. Livestock production includes both confined and grazed livestock. Energy conservation is considered to be a part of all national priorities. After an extensive public-input effort, NRCS established the following national priorities:

- Reduction of nonpoint source pollution (nutrients, sediment, pesticides, or excess salinity) in impaired watersheds consistent with Total Maximum Daily Loads as well as the reduction of groundwater contamination and reduction of point sources such as contamination from confined animal feeding operations;
- Conservation of (the quantity of) ground and surface water resources;
- Reduction of emissions particulate matter, nitrogen oxides (NO_x), volatile organic compounds, and ozone precursors and depleters that contribute to air quality impairment violations of National Ambient Air Quality Standards;
- Reduction in soil erosion and sedimentation from unacceptable levels on agricultural land; and
- Promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation.

Financial Assistance.

- Conservation Payments: Under EQIP, the Secretary pays eligible program participants an amount not to exceed 75 percent of the incurred costs to implement one or more structural, vegetative, or land management practices and up to 100 percent of estimated foregone income. Estimated income foregone means an estimate of the net income loss associated with the adoption of a conservation practice, including from a change in land use or land taken out of production or the opportunity cost associated with the adoption of a conservation practice. This shall not include losses of income due to disaster or other events unrelated to the conservation practice. Limited resource farmers, beginning farmers, and land owners or operators that are socially disadvantaged are eligible to receive up to 90 percent payment rate.
- Limitations on Payments: Total conservation payments are limited to $300,000 per individual or entity during any six-year period, regardless of the number of farms or contracts. Beginning in FY 2009, no individual/entity may receive EQIP payments in any crop year in which the individual/entity's average

adjusted gross income for the preceding three years exceeds $1 million; unless 67 percent of that income is from farming, ranching, or forestry interests.

Conservation Plan. With NRCS or certified technical service providers' (TSPs) assistance, a participant develops a conservation plan for the offered acres initially determined eligible. The plan specifies the method in which the planned conservation practices and systems on the enrolled acres will be implemented, operated, and maintained. This plan is the basis for the EQIP contract.

EQIP Contract and Contract Modifications. The CCC provides funding for practice payments to apply needed and approved conservation practices and systems and land use adjustments within a time schedule specified by the conservation plan. EQIP contracts may be modified to increase funds provided the increased cost is the result of a valid contract modification within the original contract scope and intent.

One example of an appropriate modification would be the adoption of a State law requiring a liner in a waste storage facility after the EQIP contract and cost estimate was prepared. The original intent was to install a waste storage facility and the facility must meet all Federal, State, and local regulations in order for NRCS to approve its construction. The contract would need to be modified to meet the new State regulation in order to install the originally contracted waste storage facility. All modifications are reviewed and approved according to authorities designated to the State Conservationist.

Technical Assistance and Partnerships. Producers receive technical assistance from NRCS or approved TSPs to develop the conservation plan and establish required practices for lands accepted into EQIP. EQIP complements many State and local programs in addressing specific local conservation and natural resource issues.

Partnership efforts have been forged with Federal, State, and local entities, including the National Association of Conservation Districts, State Associations of Conservation Districts, and local conservation districts in efforts to deliver a program beneficial to program participants and the environment. NRCS cooperates with Federal, State, and local partners to address local and national conservation issues. Through interactive communication between the local community, local interest groups, and State and Federal agencies, the partnership provides the entities with information and resources needed to address local priorities and implement State and national programs, such as EQIP.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress. FY 2009 EQIP funding to States was $1.067 billion. An estimated 12 million acres will be treated through EQIP contracts funded in FY 2010.

Fiscal Year 2009 EQIP Program Demands[1]

State	Total Applications	Number of Contracts	Unfunded Valid Applications	Valid Applications Funded Percent	Average Contract $	Estimated Unfunded Applications
ALABAMA	3,673	1,199	1,678	41.68	$10,320	$17,317,725
ALASKA	68	48	17	73.85	89,274	1,517,662
ARIZONA	606	174	326	34.8	97,219	31,693,417
ARKANSAS	2,120	881	779	53.07	15,721	12,246,628
CALIFORNIA	6,832	1,743	3,853	31.15	32,750	126,184,541
COLORADO	2,013	766	806	48.73	30,876	24,885,704
CONNECTICUT	150	77	44	63.64	61,334	2,698,692
DELAWARE	706	138	270	33.82	40,309	10,883,347
FLORIDA	1,901	364	980	27.08	45,198	44,294,339

State	Total Applications	Number of Contracts	Unfunded Valid Applications	Valid Applications Funded Percent	Average Contract $	Estimated Unfunded Applications
GEORGIA	4,306	1,129	2,516	30.97	13,058	32,853,691
HAWAII	342	176	80	68.75	38,158	3,052,637
IDAHO	1,383	261	763	25.49	41,449	31,625,551
ILLINOIS	1,767	1,028	564	64.57	11,013	6,211,243
INDIANA	1,405	686	482	58.73	16,385	7,897,565
IOWA	4,163	1,227	2,101	36.87	16,416	34,490,478
KANSAS	3,002	874	1,408	38.3	21,679	30,523,662
KENTUCKY	3,403	556	1,554	26.35	18,716	29,085,396
LOUISIANA	2,667	826	1,406	37.01	18,642	26,211,226
MAINE	813	289	465	38.33	30,305	14,092,023
MARYLAND	663	268	157	63.06	25,448	3,995,410
MASSACHUSETTS	540	136	307	30.7	37,658	11,560,866
MICHIGAN	938	306	567	35.05	49,009	27,788,265
MINNESOTA	1,873	1,142	479	70.45	23,166	11,096,310
MISSISSIPPI	4,670	1,684	1,317	56.11	7,071	9,312,299
MISSOURI	4,519	1,006	2,435	29.24	17,679	43,047,610
MONTANA	2,645	637	1,215	34.4	33,232	40,376,782
NEBRASKA	5,107	957	2,814	25.38	22,391	63,009,430
NEVADA	292	79	108	42.25	75,824	8,189,015
NEW HAMPSHIRE	430	276	136	66.99	16,228	2,207,065
NEW JERSEY	433	108	229	32.05	42,911	9,826,560
NEW MEXICO	1,760	423	903	31.9	41,302	37,295,705
NEW YORK	1,653	364	1,068	25.42	36,665	39,158,038
NORTH CAROLINA	1,863	442	1,034	29.95	31,044	32,099,187
NORTH DAKOTA	2,706	751	1,453	34.07	26,456	38,441,004
OHIO	2,764	929	1,448	39.08	15,805	22,885,744
OKLAHOMA	6,359	1,094	4,063	21.21	19,002	77,205,284
OREGON	1,302	396	698	36.2	28,497	19,890,647
PENNSYLVANIA	3,059	342	2,001	14.6	37,314	74,665,929
RHODE ISLAND	198	75	114	39.68	45,352	5,170,097
SOUTH CAROLINA	1,488	264	817	24.42	28,181	23,024,194
SOUTH DAKOTA	1,584	626	713	46.75	22,562	16,086,402
TENNESSEE	2,721	984	945	51.01	11,555	10,919,423
TEXAS	8,695	3,063	3,944	43.71	20,889	82,384,306
UTAH	1,724	327	1,035	24.01	44,838	46,407,472
VERMONT	594	198	260	43.23	34,595	8,994,671
VIRGINIA	1,048	322	473	40.5	32,355	15,303,824
WASHINGTON	1,682	367	1,026	26.35	36,707	37,661,017

State	Total Applications	Number of Contracts	Unfunded Valid Applications	Valid Applications Funded Percent	Average Contract $	Estimated Unfunded Applications
WEST VIRGINIA	1,405	209	972	17.7	27,134	26,374,691
WISCONSIN	2,372	1,052	868	54.79	15,546	13,494,215
WYOMING	1,094	411	484	45.92	26,540	12,845,294
PUERTO RICO	576	280	154	64.52	15,535	2,392,325
Total[2]	**110,077**	**31,960**	**54,329**	**37.04%**	**$22,875**	**$1,360,874,608**

[1] Source: Protracts as of September 30, 2009. Unfunded applications include pre-approved, deferred, eligible, pending, and disapproved.

[2] Total contract average is based on national totals listed.

Significant EQIP Accomplishments

- Conservation Innovation Grants. Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) is a voluntary program intended to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies while leveraging Federal investment in environmental enhancement and protection, in conjunction with agricultural production. CIG was authorized under EQIP in the 2002 Farm Bill. Under CIG, competitive grants are awarded to eligible entities, including State and local agencies, non-governmental organizations, Tribes, or individuals.

  CIG enables NRCS to work with other public and private entities to accelerate technology transfer and adoption of promising technologies and approaches to address some of the Nation's most pressing natural resource concerns. CIG will benefit agricultural producers by providing more options for environmental enhancement and compliance with Federal, State, and local regulations.

  In FY 2009, CIG was implemented with three components: National, Chesapeake Bay Watershed, and State. The grants will stimulate the development and adoption of innovative technologies and approaches through pilot projects and conservation field trials. CIG awarded projects address a broad range of natural resource concerns, including nutrient management, water conservation, air quality, grazing land and forest health, and on-farm energy efficiency.

  The components were awarded as follows:
  - National: Over $14.1 million awarded to recipients in 39 States.
  - Chesapeake Bay Watershed: Over $2.1 million awarded to three recipients in three States.
  - Grant Leveraging: Over $2.2 million awarded to two recipients in one State, and the Caribbean.

Other Significant Accomplishments

- Beginning, Limited Resource, and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers.
  NRCS approved 4,049 beginning farmers and ranchers for EQIP contracts totaling over $112 million. NRCS also approved 1,034 limited resource farmers and ranchers for EQIP contracts totaling $23.8 million. NRCS approved 35 percent of the applications received from potential limited resource producers for three percent of the EQIP funding,36 percent of the applications for beginning farmers and ranchers for a total of 15 percent of the total EQIP funds and 29 percent of the applications for the socially disadvantaged for a total of six percent of the total EQIP funds. Total funding for all three groups accounted for 24 percent of the total EQIP funding.

- EQIP on American Indian and Alaska Native Lands. NRCS approved 503 American Indian and Alaska Native EQIP contracts that are valued at over $22.6 million and, when completed, will assist American Indians and Alaska Natives treat over 1.7 million acres. NRCS approved Conservation Innovation Grants with the College of Menominee Nation Wisconsin for $122,973. The purpose is to

demonstrate the viability of carbon sequestration as a market mechanism tool for promoting environmental preservation, biodiversity, conservation, and sustainable development among Tribes and their lands.

- Market-based Approaches through the Conservation Innovation Grants. NRCS awarded more than $972,973 to 3 projects in 3 states to implement an array of market based approaches that promote conservation. The results of these projects will be incorporated into NRCS' technology transfer tools (practice standards, field handbooks, guidance documents, etc.). An example is: Food Alliance will partner with the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA) to introduce a highly successful sustainable agriculture certification program in Pennsylvania, and improve water quality NRCS awarded one Conservation Innovation Grants to Tribal entities in FY 2009: quality in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The purpose of the project is to replicate a successful market incentive for conservation to promote improvements in management of agricultural lands in Pennsylvania to benefit water quality in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

- Technical Service Providers (TSP). NRCS obligated $16.8 million in EQIP for TSPs in FY 2009. Each State was allocated funding for TSPs from their technical assistance funds to implement this effort. Many States exceeded the allocated amount to involve more TSP assistance.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress

Nebraska – Transition to Organic Agriculture. NRCS in Nebraska has worked with the Nebraska Environmental Trust and Resource Conservation and Development areas to establish a Statewide organic agricultural project. NRCS has assisted producers interested in transitioning to organic agriculture with financial assistance through EQIP for installing approved conservation practices.

Georgia – Organic Initiative. Georgia currently ranks 42nd in the Nation in total acres of land under Certified Organic Operation with approximately 62 producers. When over $1 million was allocated to Georgia for the EQIP Organic Initiative there was concern that these funds could not be utilized. After an aggressive outreach effort by the local field staff, all the allocated funds were utilized with the approval of 53 contracts. The Organic Initiative not only resulted in financial assistance to the producers, it also gave the Georgia NRCS personnel an opportunity to reach out to agricultural producers that traditionally have not utilized the services provided by the Agency.

New Jersey - Farmers and New Jersey Audubon Partner for Birds. Thanks to an historic partnership, a direct farm-to-market link has been established that offers locally grown birdseed through New Jersey Audubon Society nature centers. With support from a Conservation Innovation Grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, New Jersey farmers are working with New Jersey Audubon Society to grow a "greener", more environmentally friendly black-oil sunflower seed. This "bird-friendly" seed is the first birdseed certified as "Jersey Grown" by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture. The supply of "Jersey Grown" birdseed quickly ran out in the first year of the project; the farmers involved expanded their acreage in 2009 to meet the demand while devoting additional land to warm season grass habitat for ground nesting birds. The project demonstrates that locally grown agricultural products can complement habitat and soil conservation practices while achieving economic viability.

California – Pollinator Habitat Development. California apiaries are once again faced with a shortage of bees this year. As such it is increasingly important to California's economy and ecology to explore supplemental means of pollination. The Natural Resources Conservation Service has partnered with the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, the Audubon California and the University of California, Berkeley to use funding from the Environmental Quality Incentives Program to assist landowners with establishing habitats to attract and maintain populations of wild pollinators such as bees, butterflies and moths. Not only could these pollinators potentially reduce the need for managed colonies and alleviate the stress on the producers who depend upon them, but in creating areas that attract wild pollinators, landowners also diversify and enhance their land's ecosystem.

Iowa - Solar Power Helps Dairy Grazing Management. A southeast Iowa dairy farmer installed a solar-powered pump system to water 140 head of cattle on his 236-acre rotational grazing system with assistance through EQIP. Solar panels convert sunshine to electricity and power a submersible pump which sends pond water up a hill to a 4,000-gallon tank. The tank uses gravity throughout the underground piping system to water the cattle in each paddock. "The solar powered pump system works very well," said the producer. "NRCS provided financial assistance through EQIP, the tax code gave us a tax credit, and we are saving $150 a month on our rural water bill."

New Mexico – Indian Reservation. An unnaturally large amount of prickly cholla cactus on one of New Mexico's Indian reservations has been cleared with the assistance of the EQIP, allowing the land to begin restoring a natural plant community rich in native grasses. With continued efforts to keep the cactus under control, the land can once again be utilized by cattle and wildlife for grazing. Because of the abundance of archeological sites, the clearing was carefully planned and tracked. A dozer with a rake attachment covered the land, and clipped the collar at the base, similar to how a tree would be cut. The Bureau of Indian Affairs restricted the dozer from many small areas to protect the archeological sites from disturbances.

AGRICULTURAL WATER ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

Current Activities

Background. Section 2510 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (the 2008 Act) (P.L. 110-246) established the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP) by amending section 1240I of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended by the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (P. L. 104-127, April 4, 1996) (the 1996 Act) (16 U.S.C. 3839aa) as amended by Section 2301 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (the 2002 Act) (P. L. 107-171, May 13, 2002) (16 U.S.C. 3839aa). The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) implements AWEP and the associated financial and performance reporting. The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) funds AWEP.

Program Operation. AWEP is a voluntary conservation program that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to implement agricultural water enhancement activities on agricultural land for the purposes of conserving surface and ground water and improving water quality. As part of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), AWEP operates through contracts with producers to plan and implement conservation practices to conserve ground and surface water and improve water quality in project areas established through partnership agreements.

As authorized by Congress, this is not a grant program to eligible partners. This is a program whereby eligible partners will enter into multi-year agreements with NRCS to promote ground and surface water conservation, or improve water quality on eligible agricultural lands. The intent of AWEP is for the Federal government to leverage investment in natural resources conservation along with services and resources of other eligible partners. Individual producers are not eligible to submit a partnership proposal.

Potential partners submit proposals that contain the information set forth in ''Proposal Requirements'' to receive consideration for entering into partnership agreements as outlined in a Notice of Request for Proposals which is published annually in the Federal Register. Entities that are eligible to enter into AWEP partnership agreements include: Federally recognized Indian Tribes, States, units of local government, agricultural or silvicultural associations, or other groups of such producers, such as an irrigation association, agricultural land trust, or other non-governmental organization that has experience working with agricultural producers.

After an AWEP project proposal has been approved by the NRCS Chief, the program provides technical and financial assistance to eligible farmers, ranchers and non-industrial private forest owners to address water conservation and water quality related natural resource concerns on their lands in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner. Overall, the program addresses and solves water conservation and

quality issues related to farms, ranches, nonindustrial private forest lands and rural lands. This is done through landowners and land users who implement conservation practices on eligible lands:

- Conservation practice means one or more conservation improvements and activities, including structural practices, land management practices, vegetative practices, forest management practices, and other improvements that are planned and applied according to NRCS standards and specifications.

Program Objectives. NRCS is charged with carrying out AWEP in a manner that optimizes environmental benefits and provides for carrying out the following activities with respect to agricultural land:

- Water quality or water conservation plan development, including resource condition assessment and modeling.
- Water conservation restoration or enhancement projects, including conversion to the production of less water-intensive agricultural commodities or dryland farming.
- Water quality or quantity restoration or enhancement projects.
- Irrigation system improvement and irrigation efficiency enhancement.
- Activities designed to mitigate the effects of drought.
- Related activities that the Secretary of Agriculture determines will help achieve water quality or water conservation benefits on agricultural land.

Land and Participant Eligibility Requirements. The following land is eligible for enrollment in the AWEP through program contracts with producers:

- Private agricultural land:
- For agricultural lands not irrigated for two of the previous five years, the construction, improvement, or maintenance of irrigation ponds, small on-farm reservoirs, or other agricultural water impoundment structures, which are designed to capture surface water runoff, are eligible only in an area that is experiencing or has experienced exceptional drought conditions between June 18, 2006 and June 18, 2008.
- Indian land; and
- Publicly owned land where:
    - The conservation practices to be implemented on the public land are necessary and will contribute to an improvement in the identified resource concern;
    - The land is a working component of the participant's agricultural and forestry operation; and
    - The participant has control of the land for the term of the contract.

National Priorities. NRCS will evaluate and give priority to proposals that:

- Include high percentages of agricultural land and producers in a region or other appropriate area;
- Result in high levels of applied agricultural water quality and water conservation activities;
- Significantly enhance agricultural activity;
- Allow for monitoring and evaluation;
- Assist agricultural producers in meeting a regulatory requirement that reduces the economic scope of the producer's operation;
- Achieve the project's land and water treatment objectives within five years or less;
- For proposals from States with water quantity concerns, the Chief will give higher priority to projects from States where the proposal will:
    - Include conservation practices which support the conversion of agricultural land from irrigated farming to dryland farming;
    - Leverage Federal funds provided under the program with funds provided by partners;

- Assist producers in States with high priority water quantity concerns, as determined by the Chief. The high priority areas are located in the following regions: Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer, Puget Sound, Ogallala Aquifer, Sacramento River Watershed, Upper Mississippi River Basin, Red River of the North Basin, or Everglades.

Financial Assistance.

- Conservation Payments: Eligible program participants can receive a payment amount not to exceed 75 percent of the incurred costs to implement one or more structural, vegetative, or land management practices and up to 100 percent of estimated foregone income. Estimated income foregone means an estimate of the net income loss associated with the adoption of a conservation practice, including from a change in land use or land taken out of production or the opportunity cost associated with the adoption of a conservation practice. This shall not include losses of income due to disaster or other events unrelated to the conservation practice. Limited resource farmers, beginning farmers, and land owners or operators that are socially disadvantaged are eligible to receive up to 90 percent of the payment rate.
- Limitations on Payments: Total conservation payments are limited to $300,000 per individual or entity during any six-year period, regardless of the number of farms or contracts. Beginning in FY 2009, no individual/entity may receive AWEP payments in any crop year in which the individual/entity's average adjusted gross income for the preceding three years exceeds $1 million unless two-thirds of that income is from farming, ranching, or forestry interests.

Conservation Plan. With NRCS or approved technical service providers' (TSPs) assistance, a participant develops an AWEP plan for the offered acres initially determined eligible. The plan specifies the method in which the planned conservation practices and systems on the enrolled acres will be implemented, operated, and maintained. This plan is the basis for the AWEP contract.

AWEP Contract and Contract Modifications. The CCC provides funding for payments to apply needed and approved conservation practices and systems and land use adjustments within a time schedule specified by the conservation plan. AWEP contracts may be modified to increase funds provided the increased cost is the result of a valid contract modification within the original contract scope and intent.

One example of an appropriate modification would be the adoption of a State law requiring a liner in a waste storage facility after the AWEP contract and cost estimate was prepared. The original intent was to install a waste storage facility and the facility must meet all Federal, State, and local regulations in order for NRCS to approve its construction. The contract would need to be modified to meet the new State regulation in order to install the originally contracted waste storage facility. All modifications are reviewed and approved according to authorities designated to the State Conservationist.

Technical Assistance and Partnerships. Producers receive technical assistance from NRCS or certified TSPs to develop the conservation plan and establish required practices for lands accepted into AWEP. AWEP complements many State and local programs in addressing water conservation and water quality issues.

Partnership efforts have been forged with Federal, State, and local entities, including the National Association of Conservation Districts, State Associations of Conservation Districts, and local conservation districts in efforts to deliver a program beneficial to program participants and the environment. NRCS cooperates with Federal, State, and local partners to address local and national conservation issues. Through interactive communication between the local community, local interest groups, and State and Federal agencies, the partnership provides the entities with information and resources needed to address local priorities and implement State and national programs, such as AWEP.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress. FY 2009 AWEP funding to States was $58 million. An estimated 488,380 million acres will be treated through AWEP contracts funded in FY 2009.

Fiscal Year 2009 AWEP Program Demands[1]

State	Total Applications	Number of Contracts	Unfunded Valid Applications	Valid Applications Funded Percent	Average Contract $	Estimated Unfunded Applications
ALABAMA	201	23	115	17	$68,589	$7,887,735
ARKANSAS	26	17	0	100	19,753	0
CALIFORNIA	890	555	86	87	32,480	2,793,267
COLORADO	7	6	0	100	53,354	0
FLORIDA	139	31	38	45	37,586	1,428,285
GEORGIA	576	263	284	48	7,157	2,032,544
IDAHO	88	61	0	100	113,185	0
ILLINOIS	8	8	0	100	6,882	0
INDIANA	43	25	13	66	20,255	263,314
IOWA	12	10	1	91	15,883	15,883
MAINE	2	0	0	0	N/A	0
MICHIGAN	78	30	2	94	49,474	98,949
MINNESOTA	12	9	25	26	30,809	770,228
MISSISSIPPI	298	123	0	100	18,663	0
MONTANA	11	0	0	0	N/A	0
NEBRASKA	703	82	412	17	34,288	14,126,827
NEVADA	1	0	0	0	N/A	0
NEW JERSEY	7	6	0	100	15,044	0
NEW MEXICO	115	35	41	46	104,601	4,288,652
NEW YORK	6	3	3	50	180,851	542,553
NORTH CAROLINA	43	13	2	87	4,010	8,020
NORTH DAKOTA	110	90	6	94	29,504	177,021
OKLAHOMA	30	13	16	45	56,915	910,636
OREGON	94	59	5	92	62,378	311,888
PENNSYLVANIA	1	0	0	0	N/A	0
TEXAS	383	225	106	68	46,624	4,942,107
VIRGINIA	1	0	0	0	N/A	0
WASHINGTON	1	0	0	0	N/A	0
Total[2]	3,886	1,687	1,155	59	$45,831	$40,597,909

[1] Source: Protracts as of October 2, 2009. Unfunded applications include pre-approved, deferred, eligible, pending, and disapproved.

[2] Total contract average is based on national totals listed.

Significant AWEP Accomplishments.

- This is the first year AWEP has been implemented. Out of 193 proposals submitted for national competition, 63 were approved. Nearly $58 million in 1,687 contracts were approved for producers who agreed to implement practices which address surface and ground water conservation and to address water quality projects.
- Six project areas involved Tribes and two projects were multi-State in scope. Twenty-four projects were approved in the special priority areas.

WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Current Activities

Background. Section 1240N of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended by 2502 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (P.L. 107-171) (16 U.S.C. 3839bb-1), as amended by section 2602 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110 – 246) reauthorized the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) to improve wildlife habitat in our Nation. NRCS administers WHIP.

The purpose of the program is to help participants develop fish and wildlife habitat on private agricultural land, nonindustrial private forest land, and Indian land. Although the primary purpose is wildlife habitat development and enhancement, the benefits are not limited to wildlife. The practices are often compatible with and beneficial to farming and ranching enterprises. Some practices enhance farm profitability by improving grazing conditions, reducing management expenses, and by producing non-crop income from the lease of rights to harvest and observe wild game and fish. WHIP has been used to control invasive species, re-establish native vegetation, manage non-industrial forestland, stabilize streambanks, protect, restore, develop or enhance unique habitats, and remove barriers that impede migration of certain wildlife species.

WHIP is a voluntary program that provides technical and financial assistance to enable eligible participants to develop upland wildlife, wetland wildlife, threatened and endangered species, fish and other types of wildlife habitat in an environmentally beneficial and cost effective manner. WHIP supports NRCS' Mission Goal of Healthy Plants and Animals.

National Priorities. For FY 2009 national priorities were to:

- Promote the restoration of declining or important native fish and wildlife habitats.
- Protect, restore, develop or enhance fish and wildlife habitat of at-risk species.
- Reduce the impacts of invasive species on fish and wildlife habitats.
- Protect, restore, develop, or enhance declining or important aquatic wildlife species' habitats.

Eligibility Criteria. To be eligible for WHIP, the land must be private agricultural land, nonindustrial private forest land, or Indian land.

WHIP State Wildlife Plans Updated. NRCS updated WHIP plans in each State to reflect FY 2009 WHIP national priorities, the recent NRCS Strategic Plan, and to ensure wildlife needs are comprehensively addressed. A key reference in the NRCS WHIP plan update was State government wildlife action plans that State wildlife agencies updated in FY 2009. Together, these Federal and State plans help identify high value and important habitats and focus funding on projects to conserve and restore them.

Program Operation.

- States Set Wildlife Priorities. NRCS works at the local level and with the State Technical Committee to establish wildlife priorities. This process allows for local input as well as the coordination of wildlife priorities with other wildlife interests in the State and encourages the leveraging of other State, Federal, and private dollars to address State and local wildlife priorities. States generally select two to six priority habitat types; States have consistently included one or more upland and riparian habitats. A number of States identified wetlands, aquatic in-stream habitat, and other unique wildlife habitat such as caves and salt marshes as priorities.

- Wildlife Habitat Plan. NRCS and its partners provide program participants with an assessment of wildlife habitat conditions, recommendations for practices to improve these habitat conditions, and a plan that incorporates practices and strategies for maximizing habitat for target species. This WHIP Plan of Operations (WPO), is the basis of the agreement between NRCS and the participant.

- Cost-Share Agreements. The WPO identifies the cost-share practices that will be installed and the operation and maintenance requirements for the life of the agreement. Agreements usually last from

one to ten years. WHIP provides additional cost-share to landowners who enter into 15-year or longer agreements to protect and restore high value and essential plant and animal habitat.

- Implementation Assistance. NRCS helps program participants with technical and financial assistance to install any eligible practice NRCS determines is primarily for the development of prioritized wildlife habitat. NRCS provides up to 75 percent of the cost of installing these WPO practices (native grassland seeding, prescribed burns, hardwood planting, fish passage structure installation, etc).

- Partners Play Significant Role. In addition to providing technical assistance, partners provide financial assistance through additional cost-share dollars, supplying equipment, or installing practices for the participant. This emphasis placed on partners in WHIP has improved communication and coordination among various interests addressing wildlife concerns. The partners who play an essential part of the success of the program include public agencies, non-profit organization partners, and Technical Service Providers.

Accomplishments. In FY 2009, NRCS enrolled over 3,700 agreements on over 800,000 acres. The value of the contracts was almost $52 million. The average agreement size is 219 acres. There were 54 contracts valued at over $3 million with American Indian and Alaska Native Lands. On average, NRCS agreed to reimburse participants approximately $14,000 for each long-term agreement. Since the program began in 1998, national enrollment includes a total of almost 33,000 agreements on over 5.5 million acres. NRCS provided over $58 million in financial assistance from the Commodity Credit Corporation for FY 2009.

Benefits. Of the total acreage enrolled in FY 2009, one percent will benefit threatened and endangered species. Threatened and endangered species targeted through WHIP include, but are not limited to, the following: American-burying beetle, Neosho madtom, Topeka shiner, gray bat, kit fox, black-tailed prairie dog, bog turtle, gopher tortoise, dusky-gopher frog, eastern-indigo snake, southern-hognose snake, black-pine snake, Louisiana-black bear, red-cockaded woodpeckers, Mississippi-sandhill crane, Florida panther, wood storks, snail kites, Florida sandhill crane, caracara, grasshopper sparrow, Snake River-Chinook salmon, Umpqua River-cutthroat trout, coho salmon, steelhead, bulltrout, Lahontan-cutthroat trout, Yuma-clapper rails, Sonoran pronghorn, Mexican voles, lesser long-nosed bats, and Atlantic Salmon.

Nationally, WHIP acres were distributed among the following three major habitat types and declining species:

- **Upland Wildlife Habitat**. Of the total FY 2009 acres enrolled, over 98 percent encompassed upland wildlife habitat including grasslands, shrub/scrub, and forests. Several types of early succession grasslands, such as tall grass prairies, have declined more than 98 percent according to a 1995 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Report. One primary focus of WHIP nationally is the restoration of these scarce areas. Wildlife dependent on native grasslands includes neo-tropical migratory birds, waterfowl, amphibians, reptiles and many mammals. Specific species that will benefit from re-establishment of grasslands in one or more States include grasshopper sparrow, bobwhite quail, swift fox, short-eared owl, Karner-blue butterfly, gopher tortoise, western-harvest mouse, Gunnison-sage grouse, and Greater sage grouse.

  Other upland priorities include the establishment of windbreaks, and the improvement of the edge around cropland, wildlife corridors, shrub-scrub and steppe habitats, and forests including pine barrens and long leaf pine. Wildlife species that will benefit from development of these habitats include Louisiana black bear, eastern collared lizard, Bachman's sparrow, ovenbird, acorn woodpecker, western grey-squirrel and greater sage grouse.

  Practices installed on upland habitat include seedings and plantings, fencing, livestock management, prescribed burning, and shrub thickets with shelterbelts. Additional practices were installed for the benefit of forest land management including creation of forest openings, disking or mowing including meander disking through woodlands, woody cover control, brush management, upland wildlife management, aspen stand regeneration, and exclusion of feral animals.

  - **Wetland Wildlife Habitat**. More than 1.8 percent of WHIP lands benefit wetland habitat. WHIP wetland acres are not eligible for the Wetlands Reserve Program. WHIP wetland habitat includes crop

fields that are flooded in the winter for waterfowl, tidal flushing areas, salt marshes, wetland hardwood hammocks, mangrove forests, and wild-rice beds. WHIP wetland habitat also includes created wetlands, freshwater marshes, and vernal pools in abandoned gravel mines. Among the wildlife species that will benefit from development or enhancement of wetland habitat are black crowned night heron, snowy egret, canvasback duck, ibis, piping plover, short-nosed sturgeon, osprey, California-clapper rail, fairy shrimp, Santa Cruz long-toed salamander, and endangered waterbirds.

- **Riparian and In-stream Aquatic Wildlife Habitat**. Riparian habitat makes up almost one-half of one percent of the acres enrolled in FY 2009. This category includes riparian areas along streams, rivers, lakes, sloughs and coastal areas. Over 3,000 acres of riparian herbaceous cover, shallow water management for wildlife, and over stream habitat improvement and management were installed.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress

Wisconsin - Wildlife habitat restoration of a stream. This project included many habitat structures installed to benefit reptiles, amphibians, and non-game fish, which also included a shallow wetland scrape restoration and a prairie planting. Partners for this effort included Federal and State agencies, nonprofits, and private organizations. Prior to the project, flooding had significantly altered the stream by moving thousands of yards of rock bed load, road base, and hillside materials. Integrated bank stabilization and thousands of feet of bank shaping were installed to rehabilitate eroding stream corners. Various practices were installed in the creek such as cross-channel logs, vortex weirs and sets of boulder retards for the benefit of all fish species and turtles such as the Wood and Blandings which are both threatened turtle species. Many small backwater pockets were created and serve as tremendous recruitment areas for reptiles and amphibians and act as a refuge for the young of these species and several types of minnows from the predatory waters of the main stream. A snake hibernaculum was created as an over-wintering den for snake species such as garter, common water, western fox and milk. This stream is now one of the coldest, cleanest flowing streams in southwestern Wisconsin.

Alabama - Turning a creek clear while increasing the agricultural productivity and wildlife habitat of a farm. A tributary to the Tennessee River was designated as unsuitable for fish and wildlife as a result of tons of manure caused by years of a congregation of cattle. The Tennessee River is a source of drinking water for millions. With the goal of achieving clean water, a number of agencies and non-government organizations utilized a number of programs to filter sediment and nutrients by seeding with pasture mixes, fencing out the stream and creating buffers, planting trees, and implementing intensive rotational grazing with the creation of paddocks. Conservation practices were also installed where cattle congregate, such as water troughs and feedlot areas. Distance to water troughs was calculated to control cattle walking distances. A shallow water habitat was developed for wintering waterfowl such as ducks and geese, big blue heron, great egret, and the tricolored heron. Every drop of rain that falls on the farm goes through some type of treatment before it gets into the stream that ultimately runs into the Tennessee River. All work completed on this farm was voluntary. Not only did this work conserve the soil and water, but it will also increase the livestock production. With the improvement of water quality there is the possibility that three endangered mussels may return to this tributary because they are known to occur in this area. They are the pink mucket pearly mussel (Lampsillis abrupta), ring pink mussel (Obovaria refusa), and the rough pigtoe mussel (Pleurobema plenum). This would be a wonderful award for this farm in Alabama.

New Hampshire - Removal of a dam. A dam built in 1957 and owned by a State agency was removed in 2009. This project, funded in 2007 under the 2002 Farm Bill, included the involvement of a number of government agencies and non-government organizations. Removal of the dam reconnected 39 miles of riverine corridor providing many practical benefits for wildlife and the surrounding estuaries. The dam's removal allows diadromous fish, fish that survive in both fresh and salt water such as American eel, rainbow smelt and river herring, to travel up the river to reproduce in spawning and nursery grounds. The dam's removal is also anticipated to improve the water quality by restoring it to a tidal river system.

FARM AND RANCH LANDS PROTECTION PROGRAM

Current Activities

Background. The Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) amended the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (2002 Farm Bill) which had reauthorized the Farmland Protection Program (FPP). The Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 established FPP as a new farmland protection program. Under the FPP, the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the NRCS, was authorized, on behalf of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), to purchase conservation easements for the purpose of protecting topsoil by limiting nonagricultural uses of the land. The 2008 Farm Bill changed the purpose of the program to providing funding for the purchase of conservation easements to protect agricultural productivity and related conservation values of land. The FPP enabled the Federal government to establish partnerships with State or local governments to share in the costs of acquiring conservation easements. The program name Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) was established in the 2003 Final Rule and more accurately reflects the types of land the program protects. The 2002 Farm Bill added Tribal governments and non-government organizations as eligible cooperating entities with which NRCS could share the costs of acquiring easements.

FRPP supports the NRCS Strategic Plan Mission Goal of Working Farms and Ranch Lands. Through FRPP NRCS:

- Establishes partnerships with State, Tribal, or local governments or non-governmental organizations to leverage their purchase of development rights by providing matching funds not to exceed 50 percent of the appraised fair market value;
- Acquires perpetual conservation easements on a voluntary basis on farm and ranch lands that contain prime, unique, or other productive soil or historical and archaeological resources; and
- Protects agricultural use and related conservation values by limiting conversion to nonagricultural uses of the land.

Program Operation

Cooperating Entity Eligibility. FRPP is carried out through existing farmland protection programs of State, Tribal, local governments or non-governmental organizations. These cooperating entities include local or State agencies, counties, municipalities, towns or townships, soil and water conservation districts, American Indian Tribes or Tribal organizations, and eligible non-governmental organizations. They may apply for FRPP funds if they have a farmland protection program that purchases conservation easements for the purpose of protecting agricultural productivity and related conservation uses of land by limiting conversion to nonagricultural uses, and if they have pending offers with willing landowners. Potential participating cooperating entities must provide written evidence of:

- Cooperating entities' commitment to long-term conservation of agricultural lands through the use of legal instruments (i.e., right-to-farm laws, agricultural districts, zoning, or land use plans);
- The use of voluntary approaches to protect farmland from conversion to nonagricultural uses;
- The capability to acquire, manage, and enforce easement rights or other interests in land; and,
- The availability of cash funds to provide a minimum 25 percent, in cash, of the purchase price (appraised fair market value minus the landowner donation) of the conservation easement.

Landowner Eligibility. Individual landowners must apply to and be accepted by the eligible State, Tribe, or local governments or non-governmental programs to participate in FRPP. They must meet Farm Bill requirements for adjusted gross income, wetland conservation and highly erodible land conservation.

Land Eligibility. Land must meet one of three criteria to qualify for consideration in FRPP:

- Land that has 50 percent prime, unique, and important farmland soil;
- Land that has historic or archeological resources; or
- Land that supports the policies of a State or local farm and ranch protection program.

Application and Selection Process. NRCS uses a continuous signup for cooperating entities to submit parcels proposed for funding. Upon receipt of the applications for parcels from an eligible cooperating entity, each NRCS State office evaluates the entities, land, and landowners for eligibility, and gives each parcel a score based on established ranking criteria. On an announced date, the parcels are ranked and prioritized. NRCS awards funds to the eligible cooperating entities that submitted the highest ranked

parcels for which the State NRCS office has FRPP funding. Cooperative agreements are signed between the cooperating entities and NRCS to obligate FRPP funds.

Cooperating entities process the easement acquisition, and also hold, manage, and enforce the acquired easements. The Federal share for any easement acquisition cannot exceed 50 percent of the appraised fair market value of the conservation easement. Each conservation easement deed must include a Right of Enforcement to protect the Federal investment. To ensure responsible land stewardship, the landowner must implement a conservation plan protecting highly erodible land on each parcel acquired in part with Federal funds. After the cooperating entities complete the easement acquisition, they submit the appropriate documentation to the NRCS State office and request reimbursement equal to the Federal share of the easement purchase price. NRCS may issue payment at closing or on a reimbursable basis. FRPP funds are made available from the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC). A failure by the cooperating entity to abide by the terms of the cooperative agreement or the recorded easement deed may result in the easement rights being vested solely in the United States, the United States receiving reimbursement in full for the Federal share of the easement purchase price, or the United States pursuing action in Federal court to have the terms of the deed enforced.

NRCS Technical Assistance. NRCS provides technical assistance to landowners who develop conservation plans for those acres that have been accepted in FRPP. These activities include conservation planning, verification of the eligibility of the entity, landowner, and land; assessment of the risk of hazardous materials; evaluating and ranking applications; developing cooperative agreements; reviewing deeds, title, and appraisals; and processing payments. NRCS monitors the easements and enforces violations of the conservation easement deeds.

Cumulative Summary 1996-2009. From 1996-2009, a total of $741.8 million was appropriated to FRPP. During that time, 49 States have received over $715.5 million in financial assistance from FRPP funds. Easements on 2,380 farms and ranches have been purchased using FRPP funds. It is estimated that 456,624 acres of prime, unique, and important farmland have been or will be permanently protected from conversion to nonagricultural uses with these easements. Approximately 655,270 acres on 3,142 farms, with an estimated cumulative easement value of nearly $1.9 billion, have or will have easement contracts in the near future. Acquisition of 434 parcels covering 67,634 acres has been cancelled because the cooperating entity had not demonstrated progress on the acquisition when the cooperative agreement expired or the landowner decided not to sell an easement. NRCS and the cooperating entities acquire all easements for perpetuity.

The demand for the program has exceeded available funds by approximately 200 percent. For every Federal dollar invested through FRPP, an additional two dollars has been contributed by the participating State, Tribal and local governmental entities, non-governmental organizations, and landowners. In FY 2009, Congress appropriated $120 million for FRPP.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress
Colorado - Quarter Circle U Ranch. The Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust (CCALT), NRCS FRPP, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the San Luis Valley Habitat Partnership Program all contributed to the protection of the 1,575-acre Quarter Circle U Ranch in the Saguache Creek Corridor. Over the past decade, these partnerships have resulted in 15 ranchland conservation easements that have protected more than 11,000 acres along Saguache Creek and its tributaries. Great Outdoors Colorado's six million dollars lottery-funded Legacy Grant helped protect 6,446 of the 11,000 acres.

The Quarter Circle U Ranch, named for the landowners' cattle brand, contains over 4 ½ miles of Saguache Creek and nearly 1,000 acres of irrigated hay meadows. In addition, the ranch has extensive native grass and shrubland pastures and is adjacent to tens of thousands of acres of Bureau of Land Management land to the east and west. The cottonwood-lined creek and lush meadows are visible to travelers along scenic Highway 114 between Saguache and Gunnison, which is the longest undeveloped pass in Colorado. The ranch supports a wide array of wildlife including wintering bald eagles, and provides critical winter range for the area's elk herds and deer.

Georgia – Wiley Farm. The Georgia Land Conservation Program and the FRPP contributed to the protection of 50 acres of the 175-acre Wiley Farm. The Wiley Farm is located in Covington, Walton County, Georgia; and has been farmed continuously since 1821 when Jesse Gilbert drew it in a lottery. Marvin Lester Wiley and Margret Wiley, the grandparents of the current owner, purchased this farm in 1919. They farmed cotton on this farm and put it in the "soil-bank" in 1948. The current owner, Herman Dale Wiley, has been farming this land since about 1968 when he was 13 years old. The property is primarily a cattle and hay production farm.

The farmhouse was built in 1910 and the farm has a small cemetery with 23-30 plots of dating from the Revolutionary War. The farm provides watershed protection for the Cornish Creek Watershed. The small pond on the property flows into the adjacent Varner Watershed Lake which is the primary drinking water source for Walton and Newton counties. There are 35-foot riparian buffers along the stream channel and a 100-foot buffer around the farm pond. The buffers provide habitat for many birds including migratory songbirds, blue herons, egrets, warblers, pileated woodpecker and wild turkey, hawks, and owls.

The farm offers a considerable scenic benefit as it provides the ridgeline for Lake Varner, a public fishing and recreation lake. The farm is clearly visible from Lake Varner, and provides aesthetic benefit to this resource. The scenic beauty of the lake will be preserved by eliminating the possibility of development, thus enabling generations of fisherman to enjoy the lake as it is today.

Vermont - Blue Spruce Farm. The Audet family, owners of Blue Spruce Farm, has farmed in Bridport since the 1950s. This past December, the Audets conserved 441 acres of land that they purchased from Stephen and Margaret Cooke in 2007. Three Audet brothers Eugene, Earle and Ernie and over 20 family members and employees manage the modern dairy operation that includes a methane digester, which turns manure into electricity. The family milks over 1,000 cows. Selling the easement was a business decision for the family. The easement payment helps their bottom line. They are in the dairy business for the long haul and they need this land for growing hay and corn. In addition to 415 acres of cropland and pasture, the property has 11 acres of rare clayplain forest.http://www.vlt.org/champlainva.html - top

Wisconsin – Strack Farm. A 200 cow dairy farm owned by Ken and Margie Strack from Adell, Wisconsin enrolled in the FRPP. The farm is in the North Branch Milwaukee River Wildlife and Farming Heritage Area, one of the largest blocks of open space remaining in southeastern Wisconsin. The Stracks farm with their sons who live on the 118 acre farm in Sheboygan County, Wisconsin. The easement contains 81 acres of cropland, 9.5 acres of lowland forest, and 13.4 acres of wetland. A portion of the property will be open for public hunting. This farm will be preserved for generations to come.

CONSERVATION SECURITY PROGRAM

Current Activities

Background. The Conservation Security Program (CSP) is authorized by the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002. The CSP is a voluntary program administered by the NRCS. The program provides financial and technical assistance to producers who advance the conservation and improvement of soil, water, air, energy, plant and animal life, and other conservation purposes on Tribal and private working lands. Such lands include cropland, grassland, prairie land, improved pasture, and rangeland, as well as forested land and other non-cropped areas that are an incidental part of an agricultural operation. The CSP regulation implements provisions set out in Title XII, Chapter 2, Subchapter A, of the Food Security Act of 1985, 16 U.S.C. 3801 et seq., The Food Conservation and energy Act of 2008, Public Law 110-246, authorizes NRCS to use such sums as are necessary to administer contracts entered into before September 30, 2008, and is intended to assist agricultural producers in taking actions that will provide long-term beneficial effects.

Agricultural producers are longtime stewards of America's working lands and the CSP supports this ongoing stewardship by providing financial and technical assistance for producers to maintain and enhance resources. The purpose of CSP is to:

- Identify and reward those farmers and ranchers meeting the very highest standards of conservation and environmental management on their operations,
- Create powerful incentives for other producers to meet those same standards of conservation performance on their operations, and
- Provide public benefits for generations to come.

CSP rewards those farmers and ranchers who reach the pinnacle of good land stewardship and encourages others to enhance the ongoing production of clean water and clean air on their farms and ranches. The program is available to all eligible producers on privately owned or Tribal lands in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands of the United States, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianna Islands.

Land and Participant Eligibility Requirements. The following are CSP land and participant eligibility requirements:

- The land must be privately owned or Tribal working land and the majority of the land must be located within one of the selected watersheds (forest land is not eligible).
- The applicant must be in compliance with highly erodible and wetland provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985, have an active interest in the agricultural operation, and have control of the land for the life of the contract.
- The applicant must share in the risk of producing any crop or livestock and be entitled to a share in the crop or livestock marketed from the operation.
- The applicant's average adjusted gross income for the preceding three years must be less than $2.5 million unless 75 percent of that income is from farming, ranching, or forestry interest.

Natural Resource Emphasis and Three Tier Approach. The CSP emphasizes water quality and soil quality as nationally significant resource concerns because of the potential for significant environmental benefits from conservation treatment that improves their condition.

The CSP rewards three levels of conservation treatment. Tier I contract participants must have addressed water quality and soil quality resource concerns to the sustainable level of treatment on part of the participant's agricultural operation prior to application. Tier II contract participants must have addressed water quality and soil quality resource to the sustainable level of treatment on the entire agricultural operation prior to application. Tier II contract participants must also treat an additional significant resource concern by the end of the contract period. For Tier III, the contract participants must have addressed all existing resource concerns to the sustainable level on their entire agricultural operation before application.

Participant's payments are determined by the tier of participation, conservation treatments completed and the acres enrolled:

- For Tier I (part of their agricultural operation), contracts are for five years; maximum payment is $20,000 annually;
- For Tier II (all of their agricultural operation), contracts are for five to ten years; maximum payment is $35,000 annually;
- For Tier III (all of their agricultural operation), contracts are for five to ten years; maximum payment is $45,000 annually.

Priority Watershed Delivery. NRCS uses a watershed approach to deliver CSP to the farmers and ranchers of America's working agricultural lands. NRCS prioritizes watersheds based upon a nationally consistent process that uses existing natural resource, environmental quality, and agricultural activity data along with other information necessary to efficiently operate the program. Sign-ups for CSP participation are rotated between watersheds on an annual basis.

This priority watershed delivery approach reduces the administrative burden on applicants and minimizes the cost of processing a large number of applications that could not be funded. It also allows NRCS the flexibility to expand CSP as more program funds become available.

Technical and Financial Assistance to Participants. Technical assistance is available to CSP participants through the NRCS or an approved TSP. This technical assistance includes help to finalize the CSP application after producers have determined they meet CSP minimum requirements, to document a conservation stewardship plan, and to apply conservation treatment on their land. There are four components to CSP financial assistance payments:

- An annual stewardship component for the base level of conservation treatment,
- An annual existing practice component for the maintenance of existing conservation practices,
- An enhancement component for exceptional conservation effort and additional activities that provide increased resource benefits beyond the prescribed level, and
- A one-time new practice component for additional needed practices.

Since 2003, over $1.4 billion of financial and technical assistance has been invested in 21,359 CSP contracts to enhance environmental benefits on over 17.7 million acres.

With that investment, CSP has continued to pioneer the conservation efforts of producers and NRCS. Since its inception, CSP has been a significant contributor within the emerging areas of carbon and energy management. NRCS is providing payments for enhancement activities under the CSP to promote carbon sequestration, energy conservation, and the production and use of renewable fuels and electricity.

These exceptional conservation efforts include activities such as:

- Sequestration of greenhouse gases as measured by improvements to the soil conditioning index, which reflects soil organic matter levels;
- Generation of renewable energy;
- Use of renewable energy fuels like biodiesel and ethanol,
- Recycling of on-farm lubricants; and
- Reductions in soil tillage intensity ratings.

Since 2004, over 25.4 million collective acres of soil management activities have been applied to improve soil carbon levels, resulting in an increase of nearly 14 million tons of carbon sequestered. CSP activities resulted in significant reductions in on-farm energy use due to the implementation of 19.2 million collective acres of enhanced energy management activities.

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Current Activities

Background. The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) is authorized by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Act) and replaces the Conservation Security Program. The CSP is a voluntary program administered by the NRCS. The purpose of CSP is to encourage producers to address resource concerns in a comprehensive manner by:

- Undertaking additional conservation activities; and
- Improving, maintaining, and managing existing conservation activities.

CSP encourages agricultural and forestry producers to maintain existing conservation activities and to adopt additional ones on their operations. CSP provides opportunities to both recognize excellent stewards and deliver valuable new conservation.

CSP is available on Tribal and private agricultural lands, as well as nonindustrial private forest lands in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands of the United States, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianna Islands. The program provides equitable access to all producers, regardless of operation size, crops produced, or geographic location. The program is available on a continuous sign-up basis.

Eligibility. Producers must meet applicant eligibility requirements that include:
Being the operator of record in the USDA farm records management system for the eligible land being offered for enrollment;
Having documented control of the land for the term of the proposed contract; and
Being in compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions of 7 CFR Part 12, and adjusted gross income provisions.
The following are CSP land eligibility requirements:
The 2008 Act limits eligibility to private agricultural land and agricultural Indian lands. Those lands include cropland, pastureland, and rangeland. Non-industrial private forestland is eligible by special provision, but it can make up no more than 10 percent of the acres enrolled nationally in any fiscal year.
The entire operation must be enrolled and must include all eligible land that will be under the applicant's control for the term of the proposed contract that is operated substantially separate from other operations.
Land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program, Wetlands Reserve Program, Grasslands Reserve Program, and Conservation Security Program are ineligible for CSP. Additionally, a participant may not receive payment for land used for crop production after June 18, 2008, that had not been planted, considered to be planted, or devoted to crop production for at least four of the six years preceding that date, unless the land was:
previously enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program;
maintained using long-term rotations, such as hayland in rotation; or
incidental to the operation but needed for the efficient management of the operation.

How CSP Works. NRCS at the State level, in consultation with the State Technical Committee and local working groups, will focus CSP on natural resources that are of specific concern for a State or the specific geographic areas within a State. Applicants will be ranked relative to other applicants who face similar resource challenges in these ranking pools using conservation performance ranking scores. Agricultural land and nonindustrial private forest land will be ranked separately.

Producers interested in CSP are encouraged to begin the application process by completing a producer self-screening checklist. The self-screening checklist helps potential applicants decide for themselves whether CSP is the right program for them. Once applicant and land eligibility are determined, the NRCS field office will assist the producer with completing the Conservation Measurement Tool (CMT). The CMT will estimate the level of environmental benefit to be achieved by the applicant. The CMT conservation performance scoring will enable NRCS to determine if the stewardship threshold requirement is met, rank applications, and establish payments.

For a pre-approved applicant, NRCS will request the applicant’s conservation activity records and conduct on-site field verification to ensure that information provided by the applicant was accurate prior to contract approval. Once information is verified, NRCS and the applicant proceed to develop the contract. Upon approval, the contract will obligate the participant to achieve a higher level of conservation performance by installing additional activities scheduled in their conservation stewardship plan and to maintain the level of existing conservation performance identified at the time of application.

Benefits to Participants. CSP provides participants with two possible types of payments. An annual payment is available for installing new conservation activities and maintaining existing activities. A supplemental payment may be earned by participants receiving an annual payment who also adopt a resource-conserving crop rotation.

Through five year contracts, payments will be made as soon as practical after October of each year for contract activities installed and maintained in the previous year. For all contracts, CSP payments to a person or legal entity may not exceed $40,000 in any year and $200,000 during any five year period. Each CSP contract will be limited to $200,000 over the term of the initial contract period.

Continuous Sign-Up Begins. Congress authorized the enrollment of 12,769,000 acres for each Fiscal Year (FY) for the period beginning October 1, 2008, and ending on September 30, 2017. Continuous sign-up for

CSP started on August 10, 2009. The ranking period cut-off for FY 2009 acres ended September 30, 2009. During the ranking period, over 21,200 applications were received covering an estimated 33,000,000 acres. NRCS will rank the applications through the CMT and those applications that rank the highest will be approved for contracts. Those applications not selected for funding may be deferred into the next sign up.

GRASSLAND RESERVE PROGRAM

Current Activities

Background. The Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) was authorized by Sections 1238 N through Q of the Food Security Act of 1985 (P.L. 99-198) as amended by The Food Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill). A voluntary program, GRP helps landowners and operators restore and protect rangeland, pastureland, and other grassland while maintaining the land's suitability for grazing.

As required by statute, GRP's emphasis is on supporting grazing operations, plant and animal biodiversity, and grassland and land containing shrubs or forbs under the greatest threat of conversion. Land is eligible if it is privately owned or Tribal land, and it is 1) grassland that contains forbs or shrubs (including rangeland and pastureland) for which grazing is the predominant use or 2) located in an area that has been historically dominated by grassland, forbs, or shrubs. The land must also have potential to provide habitat for animal or plant populations of significant ecological value if the land is retained in the current use or restored to a natural condition. Incidental lands may be included to allow for the efficient administration of an agreement or easement.

GRP contributes to two NRCS strategic Mission Goals: Healthy Plant and Animal Communities, and Working Farm and Ranch Lands. GRP participants are required to follow a grazing management or conservation plan including grazing practices. The program is jointly administered by the NRCS and the Farm Service Agency (FSA). NRCS has lead responsibility on technical issues and easement administration. FSA has lead responsibility for rental contract administration.

Although each agency has a specific focus related to program administration, FSA and NRCS work collaboratively on all program matters. The program operates under a continuous signup process. NRCS and FSA in consultation with the State Technical Committees use State developed ranking criteria to ensure GRP funds are focused on projects that address program priorities and objectives. Applications, ranking criteria and program forms are publicly available through agency websites.

Program Enrollment Options. Participants have the opportunity to enroll acreage in rental contracts, permanent conservation easements. Participating land will be managed to maintain the viability of the plant community as described in a participant's grazing management plan developed with the NRCS. With USDA approval, participants may include a restoration agreement with either enrollment option. A $50,000 payment limitation applies to restoration agreements and rental contracts.

All enrollment options permit grazing on the land in a manner that is consistent with maintaining the viability of the natural grasses, shrubs, and forbs. Haying, mowing, or harvesting seed is permitted except during the nesting seasons for area bird species that are in significant decline. USDA gives a higher priority to applications with high quality grassland needing protection rather than restoring poorer quality grassland.

Features of the various enrollment options are:

- Ten-year, 15-year, or 20-year rental contracts. Rental payment amounts will not exceed 75 percent of the grazing value for the length of the contract and are paid annually after the anniversary date of the contract. County-based grazing values (determined on soil productivity) are posted in USDA field offices. Payment rates are evaluated to assure that the rates reflect local prevailing rental rates.
- Permanent easements. Easement duration is in perpetuity, or the maximum extent allowed by State law. Participants are provided an easement payment after the easement is filed. Easement payment

amounts will not exceed the current market value of the land less the grazing value of the land encumbered by the easement. Easement compensation is determined as the lower of 1) an appraisal or market-wide survey, 2) a geographic cap, or 3) a landowner offer.

For easements held by the United States, the Commodity Credit Corporation pays costs associated with recording the easement in the local land records office (recording fees, charges for abstracts, surveys, appraisal fees, title insurance, etc.). These costs are authorized for payment under Section 303 of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Land Acquisition Policies Act of 1970. If NRCS and the landowner determine that restoration is necessary to return the vegetation to a desired condition, cost-share assistance is available. Participants may receive up to 50 percent of the restoration cost up to $50,000 per year.

Cooperative Agreements. Cooperative agreements were authorized for use in GRP allowing an eligible entity to write, own and enforce GRP easements. An eligible entity is a unit of State or local government, Indian Tribe or land trust that demonstrates it has the relevant experience and resources to administer a GRP easement. Its charter or mission describes its long-term commitment to conserving ranchland, agricultural land, or grassland for grazing and conservation purposes. Before entering into a cooperative agreement, NRCS evaluates an entity's capacity to acquire, manage and enforce easements; its staffing; and the ability of an entity to provide matching funds. The entity assumes all administrative and restoration costs. The United States maintains a contingent right of enforcement.

Technical Assistance. The participant develops a grazing management plan or conservation plan including grazing practices with NRCS for the acres determined eligible for GRP. NRCS provides technical assistance to the participant after the land is enrolled. The plan specifies the manner in which the grasslands should be managed to maintain their viability. Participants have the opportunity to use common management practices to maintain the viability of the grazing uses and related conservation values. NRCS technical assistance includes reviews of restoration measures, guidance on management activities, and basic biological advice to achieve optimum results considering all grassland resources.

New Acreage Cap. The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 authorized the enrollment of 1,220,000 acres of eligible land in the program during the fiscal years 2009 through 2012.

Selected Example of Recent Progress

Washington State protecting historic grazing lands. The Colvin family ranched on their 530 acres family homestead along Scatter Creek in Washington State since Ignatius Colvin arrived over the Oregon Trail in the 1850's. GRP easements allow the current generation of the Colvin family to keep the land as a working ranch in perpetuity. Urban development pressures in western Washington make maintaining large tracts of grazing lands very difficult. By granting GRP easements, the entire 530 acres grazing area soon will be protected. The contiguous easements were funded through fiscal year 2004, 2005 and 2009 allocations. The Colvin family's grazing management plan, developed with NRCS, maintains and enhances native prairie habitat.

FY 2009 Summary. States obligated and committed $40.5 million, with 60 percent of the funds enrolling GRP easements and 40 percent of the funds enrolling rental contracts.

GRP Accomplishments	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009
	Cumulative Totals						
Number of participants enrolled	794	1,055	2,211	2,803	2,805	2,812	3,201
Acres enrolled	240,965	524,303	625,759	719,246	724,772	725,352	871,621
GRP conservation easements	27	27	11,344	45,850	111,615	117,200	117,200
Permanent protection of native grassland, rangeland, and shrubland through GRP conservation easements	60,341	78,218	97,742	105,682	106,660	107,249	163,937

AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Current Activities

Background. Section 524(b), Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA), authorized the Secretary of Agriculture to use $10 million of Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) funds for cost-share assistance in ten to 15 States where participation in the Federal Crop Insurance Program is historically low. Section 524(b) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act, 7 U.S.C. 1524(b), was added by Title I, Section 133, of the Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000 (PL 106-224, June 22, 2000). Section 133 (Public Law 106-224. Section 524(b), was further amended by the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110 – 246).

Section 524(b)(2)(A), (B), and (C) provides for financial assistance to producers to construct or improve water management structures or irrigation structures; plant trees for windbreaks or improve water quality; and mitigate risks through production diversification or resource conservation practices, including soil erosion control, integrated pest management, or transition to organic farming. Section 524(b)(2)(D) and (E) provides for cost-share assistance to producers to enter into futures, hedging, or options contracts in a manner designed to help reduce production, price, or revenue risk.

The Secretary has designated 16 States to participate in AMA: Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming. NRCS, the Risk Management Agency, and the Agricultural Marketing Service administer the AMA funds in amounts determined by the Secretary.

Program Design. NRCS developed the conservation provisions so the implementation would be flexible and allow States the opportunity to use the program to meet their resource needs. States individually determined the resource concerns to be addressed, eligible practices, and applicant ranking criteria, the ranking process, and cutoff dates for ranking applications. States are responsible for fund allocations within the State, payment methods, and public outreach and information activities. The program does not have any buy-down provisions and payments can be made the first year of the contract. Participants may use AMA in conjunction with other USDA conservation programs.

Program Implementation. Participation in AMA is voluntary. Applicants are required to own or control the land, agree to implement specific eligible conservation practices, and to meet the Food Security Act 'person' definition. AMA implementation is based on a conservation plan that is the basis for developing the AMA contract. Participants enter into contracts that may be a minimum length of one year to a maximum of ten years to install the planned and needed conservation practices. Participants must agree to maintain cost-shared practices for the life of the practice. Participants are allowed to contribute to the cost

of a practice through in-kind contributions. Eligible in-kind contributions include personal labor, use of personal equipment, donated labor or materials, and on-hand or approved used materials.

In FY 2009, NRCS allocated $7.5 million of CCC funds to the AMA States for financial and technical assistance for approval of new AMA contracts. In FY 2009, $6.2 million was obligated into 214 contracts covering 13,875 acres. Currently, there are 723 contracts in implementation. The continued backlog of applications indicates support among producers for AMA. The total application backlog is 266 applications covering 23,471 acres for about $10.3 million.

CHESAPEAKE BAY WATERSHED PROGRAM

Current Activities

Background. Section 2605 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Act) (P.L. 110-246, June 18, 2008) added the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program to the Food Security Act of 1985 (1985 Act). The 2008 Act amended Chapter 5 of subtitle D of Title XII of the 1985 Act by inserting after section 1240P (16 U.S.C. 3839bb–3) the following new section: SECTION 1240Q – Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Program Operation. The Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program (CBWP) is carried out through the various natural resources conservation programs authorized under subtitle D, Title XII of the 1985 Act (16 U.S.C. 3830–3839bb–5). The CBWP assistance in FY 2009 used the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and followed EQIP requirements and policies. NRCS administers the CBWP and carries out program implementation using funds, facilities, or authorities of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC).

Program Objectives. The CBWP helps agricultural producers improve water quality and quantity, and restore, enhance, and preserve soil, air, and related resources in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed through the implementation of conservation practices. These conservation practices reduce soil erosion and nutrient levels in ground and surface water, improve, restore, and enhance wildlife habitat, and help address air quality and related natural resource concerns.

Land and Participant Eligibility Requirements. Only agricultural producers owning or operating within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed are eligible to participate in the CBWP. The Chesapeake Bay Watershed is defined as all tributaries, backwaters, and side channels, including their watersheds, draining into the Chesapeake Bay. The Chesapeake Bay Watershed area includes portions of the States of Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.

National Priorities. Section 2605 of the 2008 Act gives special, but not exclusive, consideration to producers' applications in the following river basins: Susquehanna River, Shenandoah River, Potomac River (including North and South Potomac), and the Patuxent River.

Financial Assistance. Under CBWP, the Secretary of Agriculture uses the funds to enter into agreements and cover the costs of applicable conservation programs used to apply conservation treatment by eligible producers in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. The CBWP will use the same eligibility requirements established for the various natural resources conservation programs authorized under subtitle D, Title XII of the 1985 Act (16 U.S.C. 3830–3839bb–5).

Conservation Plan. With NRCS or approved Technical Service Providers' (TSPs) assistance, a participant develops a conservation plan for the offered acres initially determined eligible. The plan specifies the method in which the planned conservation treatment practices and systems on the enrolled acres will be implemented, operated, and maintained. The conservation plan is the basis for the applicable conservation program contract.

Contract and Contract Modifications. The CCC provides funding for financial assistance payments to apply needed and approved conservation practices and systems and land use adjustments within a time

schedule specified by the conservation plan. The CBWP contracts may be modified to increase funds provided the increased cost is the result of a valid contract modification within the original contract scope and intent. The modification will follow the rules of the conservation program used to apply the conservation treatment.

An example of an appropriate modification would be the adoption of a local government rule that requires more environmental protection for an agrichemical handling facility. The new rule became effective after the conservation program contract and cost estimate was prepared. The original intent of the conservation treatment was to install an agrichemical handling facility that meets all Federal, State, and local rules in order for NRCS to approve its construction. The contract needs to be modified to meet the new local rule in order to install the originally contracted agrichemical handling facility. All modifications are reviewed and approved according to authorities delegated to the State Conservationist.

Technical Assistance and Partnerships. Under the CBWP, the Secretary of Agriculture will consult with appropriate Federal and State agencies to ensure conservation activities carried out under the CBWP complement Federal and State programs in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress. In FY 2009, more than $18.5 million of financial assistance was used to treat an estimated 110,300 acres. Examples of conservation treatment practices include conservation crop rotation, conservation tillage, cover crop, fence, waste storage facility, riparian buffers, heavy use area protection, nutrient management, and streambank and shoreline Protection.

Significant Accomplishments. By working with State Technical Committees and partners during FY 2009, each Chesapeake Bay Watershed State identified high priority sub-watersheds (12 digit Hydrologic Unit Code level). Priority was based on nitrogen, phosphorous, and sediment loads delivered to the Bay, Stream Impairment status, partner resources, and ability to demonstrate results. Chesapeake Online Assessment Support Tools maps developed by United States Geological Survey and the Chesapeake Bay Program Office were heavily relied upon to identify areas of high nitrogen phosphorous and sediment agriculture contributions.

HEALTHY FORESTS RESERVE PROGRAM

Current Activities

Background. Title V of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-148) authorized the establishment of the Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP), and was amended by the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (the 2008 Act), Public Law. 110-246. The purpose of this program is to assist landowners in restoring, enhancing and protecting forest ecosystems to 1) promote the recovery of threatened and endangered species, 2) improve biodiversity, and 3) enhance carbon sequestration. The HFRP supports the NRCS Mission Goal of Healthy Plant and Animal Communities.

Enrollment Options. There are four HFRP enrollment options:

- 10-year cost share agreement for which the landowner may receive 50 percent of the cost of the approved conservation practices;
- 30-year contract (the value of which shall be equivalent to the value of a 30-year easement) for which the landowner may receive 75 percent of the easement value of the enrolled land plus 75 percent of the cost of the approved conservation restoration practices. This option is available to Indian Tribes only.
- 30-year easement for which the landowner may receive 75 percent of the easement value of the enrolled land plus 75 percent of the cost of the approved conservation practices; or
- Permanent easement for which landowners may receive 100 percent of the easement value of the enrolled land plus 100 percent of the average cost of the approved conservation practices.

Eligibility and Restoration Plans. Only privately held land is eligible for enrollment into the HFRP. Additional eligibility requires the private land to restore, enhance, or measurably increase the likelihood of recovery of a threatened or endangered species or candidates for the Federal or State threatened or

endangered species list. Technical assistance will be provided by NRCS to assist owners in complying with the terms of restoration plans under the HFRP.

Landowner protections similar to "Safe Harbor" will be made available to landowners enrolled in the HFRP who agree, for a specified period, to protect, restore, or enhance their land for threatened or endangered species habitat. In exchange, they avoid future regulatory restrictions on the use of that land protected under the Endangered Species Act.

Technical Assistance. NRCS, in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, develops a Healthy Forests Conservation Plan with the landowner for the acres determined eligible for HFRP. The Healthy Forests Conservation Plan integrates compatible silvicultural practices and habitat considerations to protect, restore and enhance forest ecosystems for the recovery of threatened and endangered species and candidate species. NRCS continues to provide assistance to the participant after the land is enrolled. This assistance may be in the form of guidance on practice implementation, review of restoration measures, guidance on management activities, and basic biological advice to achieve optimum results, considering all forestland resources.

Examples of Recent Progress

In 2009, four states that were approved for funding include Oklahoma, Georgia, Oregon, and Indiana. These were in addition to the pilot states of Arkansas, Minnesota, Mississippi, and Maine.

Applications were prioritized according to ranking criteria that promotes the recovery of habitats for the Red Cockaded Woodpecker, Gopher Tortoise, the Northern Spotted Owl, and the Copperbelly Watersnake. During the 2009 signup, States accepted 122 applications covering 19,426 acres. Nine applications were enrolled into the easement program this year in Mississippi and Arkansas. Eight applications were enrolled into 30 year easements for 527 acres at an approximate value of $449,988. One application was enrolled into a permanent easement for 282 acres at an approximate value of $401,000.

In 2009, NRCS continued the implementation of the HFRP in the pilot States of Arkansas, Maine, Minnesota and Mississippi. In Mississippi, landowners are enrolling in the HFRP to promote the recovery of Federally listed threatened or endangered species targeted for habitat and population recovery activities. Currently Mississippi has 1,622 acres in conservation easements and an additional 1,467 acres under 10-year restoration agreements to protect the gopher tortoise along with the gopher frog and the black pine snake, a candidate for listing.

Summary	**Cumulative**
Total Applications Processed	292
Total Applications Approved	21
Total Acres Enrolled	692,872
Total Obligations	$5,772,048

Restoration Activity	**Cumulative**
Restoration Agreements Approved	6
Restoration Agreement Acres	689,972
Total Funds Obligated for Restoration Agreements	$848,892

Easements Activity	**Cumulative**
Easement Projects Enrolled	15
Easement Acres Enrolled	2,900
Total Funds Obligated for Easement Projects	$4,923,156

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Summary of Budget and Performance
Statement of Department Goals and Objectives

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) was established pursuant to Public Law 103-354, the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994, (7 U.S.C. 6962). The mission of NRCS is "Helping People Help The Land." The Agency accomplishes its mission by providing products and services that enable people to be good stewards of the Nation's soil, water, and related natural resources on non-Federal lands.

NRCS administers the following programs:

- Conservation Operations (CO), which includes Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA), Soil Surveys, Snow Surveys and Water Supply Forecasts, and Plant Material Centers;
- Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (WFPO), which includes Watershed Operations authorized by P.L. 78-534 (PL-534), Small Watersheds authorized by P.L. 83-566 (PL-566), as amended, and Emergency Watershed Operations (EWP);
- Watershed Rehabilitation;
- Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D);
- Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP);
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP);
- Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP);
- Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP);
- Conservation Security Program (CSP);
- Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP);
- Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA);
- Grassland Reserve Program (GRP);
- Healthy Forest Reserve Program (HFRP);
- Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP); and
- Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program (CBWP).

The Agency also provides technical assistance to the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) administered by Farm Services Agency.

NRCS has four strategic goals:
1. High Quality, Productive Soils
2. Clean and Abundant Water
3. Clean Air
4. Healthy Plant and Animal Communities

NRCS strategic goals focus on the natural resources that form the foundation for healthy lands and support USDA's Strategic Goals. The following table displays the links between NRCS' strategic goals and objectives and those of USDA.

The NRCS has four strategic goals and ten strategic objectives. These strategic goals and objectives contribute to the Department's Strategic Goals.

USDA Strategic Goal	Agency Strategic Goal	Agency Objectives	Programs that Contribute	Key Outcome
USDA Strategic Goal: USDA will assist rural communities to create wealth so they are self-sustaining, repopulating and thriving economically.	**Agency Goal 2:** Clean and Abundant Water	Objective 2.1-2.3: By 2015, agricultural producers will reduce potential delivery of sediment and nutrients from their operations.	P.L. 566*, P.L. 534*, EWP*, CStP RC&D*	Key Outcome 2 - Water Quality: The quality of surface water and groundwater is improved and maintained to protect human health, support a healthy environment, and enable productive use of the land.
		Objective 2.4: By 2015, farmers and ranchers will establish conservation measures that conserve an additional 6.25 million acre-feet of water.	CO (Snow Survey), P.L. 566*, P.L. 534*, CStP	Key Outcome 3 - Water Quantity: Water is conserved and protected to ensure an abundant and reliable supply for the Nation.
USDA Strategic Goal: USDA will ensure our national forests and private working lands enhance our water resources and are conserved, restored, and made more resilient to climate change.	**Agency Goal 1:** High-quality, Productive Soils	Objective 1.1: By 2015, farmers will manage 70 percent of cropland under systems that maintain or improve soil condition and increase soil carbon.	CO (CTA, Soil Survey), EQIP, CSP, CStP, FRPP	Key Outcome 1 - High-quality, Productive Soils: The quality of intensively used soils is maintained or enhanced to enable sustained production of a safe, healthy and abundant food and fiber supply.
	Agency Goal 2: Clean and Abundant Water	Objective 2.1-2.3: By 2015, agricultural producers will reduce potential delivery of sediment and nutrients from their operations.	AMA, CO (CTA, Plant Materials), P.L. 534*, P.L. 566*, EWP*, WRP, EQIP, AWEP, CBWP, CSP, CStP, CRP	Key Outcome 2 - Water Quality: The quality of surface water and groundwater is improved and maintained to protect human health, support a healthy environment, and enable productive use of the land.

USDA Strategic Goal: USDA will ensure our national forests and private working lands enhance our water resources and are conserved, restored, and made more resilient to climate change.	**Agency Goal 2:** Clean and Abundant Water	Objective 2.4: By 2015, farmers and ranchers will establish conservation measures that conserve an additional 6.25 million acre-feet of water.	AMA, CO (CTA, Snow Survey), EQIP, AWEP, CSP, CStP, Watershed Rehabilitation	Key Outcome 3 - Water Quantity: Water is conserved and protected to ensure an abundant and reliable supply for the Nation.
	Agency Goal 3: Clean Air	Objective 3.1: By 2015, farmers and ranchers will apply conservation measures to reduce annual soil losses from wind erosion by 7 percent.	CO (CTA), EQIP, CSP, CStP, CIG	Key Outcome 4 - Clean Air: Farmers and ranchers make a positive contribution to local air quality.
	Agency Goal 4: Healthy Plant and Animal Communities	Objective 4.1: By 2015, farmers, ranchers, and other landowners will apply management that will maintain or improve long-term vegetative condition on 150 million acres of grazing land.	CO (CTA), EQIP, CSP, CStP, GRP, FRPP	Key Outcome 5 - Grassland and Rangeland Ecosystems: Grassland and rangeland ecosystems are productive, diverse, and resilient and provide a wide variety of environmental services.
		Objective 4.2: By 2015, non-industrial private forest landowners will apply management that will maintain or improve vegetative condition and protect and enhance ecosystem services on 9 million acres of non-industrial private forest land that are considered to have minimal or degrading vegetative conditions.	CO (CTA), EQIP, HFRP, CStP, FRPP	Key Outcome 6 - Forest Land Ecosystems: Healthy forest lands that are productive, diverse, and resilient, and provide a wide range of ecosystem services.
		Objective 4.3: By 2015, farmers, ranchers, and non-industrial private forest landowners will implement conservation measures to improve an additional 8.5 million acres of essential habitat to benefit at-risk or declining species.	CO (CTA), CSP, CStP, WRP, HFRP, EQIP, WHIP, CRP	Key Outcome 7 - Fish and Wildlife Habitat: Working lands and waters provide habitat for diverse and healthy wildlife, aquatic species, and plant communities.

USDA Strategic Goal: USDA will ensure our national forests and private working lands enhance our water resources and are conserved, restored, and made more resilient to climate change.	**Agency Goal 4:** Healthy Plant and Animal Communities	Objective 4.4: By 2015, farmers and ranchers will create, restore, or enhance an additional 1.25 million acres of wetlands on non-Federal lands.	CO (CTA), WRP, CRP, EQIP	Key Outcome 8 - Wetlands: Wetlands provide high quality habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife, protect water quality, and reduce flood damage.
USDA Strategic Goal: USDA will help America promote agricultural production and biotechnology exports as America works to increase food security.	**Agency Goal 2:** Clean and Abundant Water	Objective 2.1-2.3: By 2015, agricultural producers will reduce potential delivery of sediment and nutrients from their operations.	CO (Plant Materials)	Key Outcome 2 - Water Quality: The quality of surface water and groundwater is improved and maintained to protect human health, support a healthy environment, and enable productive use of the land.

*Not funded in the FY 2011 President's Budget.

Key Outcome 1 — High-quality, Productive Soils: The quality of intensively used soils is maintained or enhanced to enable sustained production of a safe, healthy and abundant food and fiber supply.

Soil quality describes the capacity of a soil to sustain plant and animal productivity, maintain or enhance water and air quality, and support human health and habitation. High-quality soils are the foundation of productive croplands, forest lands, and grasslands and a vibrant and productive agriculture. NRCS provides landowners and land users with assistance in adopting environmentally sound management practices. NRCS provides information on soil quality, plant materials, resource management and provides assistance in using the information to implement sustainable production techniques and new technologies. Land managers who receive NRCS technical assistance are more likely to plan, apply, and maintain conservation systems that support agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible goals.

Long-term Performance Measures:
Target: By 2015, farmers will manage 70 percent of cropland under systems that maintain or improve soil condition and increase soil carbon.
Baseline: In 2003, 60 percent of cropland was farmed under systems that maintained or improved soil condition and increased soil carbon.

Selected Past Accomplishments toward Achievement of the Key Outcome:

Program	Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual
CO-CTA	Cropland with conservation applied to improve soil quality, million acres	6.4	7.3	8.3	7.6
EQIP	Cropland with conservation applied to improve soil quality, million acres	3.4	5.3	5.6	4.8
CStP	Under development	NA	NA	NA	NA

Selected Accomplishments Expected at the FY 2011 Proposed Resource Level:

Program	Performance Measure	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
CO-CTA	Cropland with conservation applied to improve soil quality, million acres	7.5	7.7
EQIP	Cropland with conservation applied to improve soil quality, million acres	5.0	5.0
CStP	Under development	TBD	TBD

Efficiency Measures:

Program	Efficiency Measure
CO-CTA	Acres of conservation applied per technical assistance staff year.
EQIP	Percent of conservation practices applied within the first three years of the contract.
	Number of active contracts approved per FTE.

Key Outcome 2 — Water Quality: The quality of surface water and groundwater is improved and maintained to protect human health, support a healthy environment, and enable productive use of the land.

Water running off or infiltrating the ground from agricultural operations can carry a number of potential pollutants into streams, lakes, groundwater, and estuaries. States and Tribes have identified sediment and nutrients as the greatest agricultural contaminants affecting surface water quality; nutrients and agrichemicals are the major concerns for groundwater. NRCS sets long-term targets for reducing the potential of sediment and nutrients to move from agricultural operations. Long-term measures are supported by annual measures for application of conservation practices that reduce erosion and runoff and movement of nutrients.

Long Term Performance Measures:

- Reduce potential sediment delivery from agricultural operations.
  Target: By 2015, potential sediment delivery from agricultural operations will be reduced by an additional 37.5 million tons (3.8% improvement over 2003 baseline).
  Baseline: In FY 2003, potential sediment delivery from agricultural operations was 970 million tons.
- Reduce potential nitrogen delivery from agricultural operations.
  Target: By 2015, potential delivery of nitrogen from agricultural operations will be reduced by an additional 215,000 tons (3.6% improvement over 2003 baseline).
  Baseline: In FY 2003, potential annual nitrogen delivery from agricultural operations was an estimated 6 million tons.
- Reduce potential phosphorus delivery from agricultural operations.
  Target: By 2015, potential delivery of phosphorus from agricultural operations will be reduced by an additional 37,500 tons (10.4% improvement over 2003 baseline).
  Baseline: In FY 2003, potential annual phosphorus delivery from agricultural operations was an estimated 360,000 tons.

High Performance Priority Goals: Accelerate the protection of clean, abundant water resources by implementing high impact targeted (HIT) [1] practices on 3 million acres of National Forest and private working lands in priority landscapes, which may include the upper Mississippi River basin and the California Bay Delta.

Program	Performance Measure	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
CO-CTA	Priority landscapes with high impact targeted conservation practices applied to improve water quality, acres	TBD[2]	TBD[2]
EQIP	Priority landscapes with high impact targeted conservation practices applied to improve water quality, acres	TBD[2]	TBD[2]
CStP	Under development	TBD[2]	TBD[2]

[1] High Impact Targeted (HIT) Practices are defined as a suite of practices that when combined, offer the greatest opportunity to avoid, control and trap nutrients, sediments or air particulates or compounds from being generated or leaving an area under agricultural production. An example would be cover crops to avoid loss of nutrients to surface and ground water, combined with no-till cropping to control erosion and reduce sediment/nutrient runoff, and using a wetland to trap nutrients and sediment on an cropland operation to reduce the a edge of field /root zone loss of nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment.

[2] Targets for these measures will be established after the priority landscapes and HIT practices have been identified.

Selected Past Accomplishments toward Achievement of the Key Outcome:

Program	Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual
CO-CTA	Comprehensive nutrient management plans applied, number	2,269	1,911	1,745	1,485
EQIP	Comprehensive nutrient management plans applied, number	2,774	2,490	2,520	2,019
CBWP	Land with conservation applied to improve water quality, acres	NA	NA	NA	4,572

Selected Accomplishments Expected at the FY 2011 Proposed Resource Level:

Program	Performance Measure	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
CO-CTA	Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans applied, number	1,300	1,300
EQIP	Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans applied, number	2,000	2,000
CBWP	Land with conservation applied to improve water quality, acres	65,000	150,000

Efficiency Measures:

Program	Efficiency Measure
CO-CTA	Acres of conservation applied per technical assistance staff year.
EQIP	Percent of conservation practices applied within the first three years of the contract.
	Number of active contracts approved per FTE.

Key Outcome 3 — Water Quantity: Water is conserved and protected to ensure an abundant and reliable supply for the Nation.

Agriculture is one of the largest users of the Nation's surface water and groundwater, with irrigation being the greatest use. In arid and semi-arid areas, crop production depends almost entirely on irrigation. Competition for water in these areas is increasing as a result of increased human populations. In recent years, irrigation has been increasing in eastern States, resulting in increased competition among users. NRCS has set a long-term target for the conservation of water. The long-term measure is supported by an annual measure for the application of practices that improve the management of irrigation water.

Long Term Performance Measures:
Target: By 2015, farmers and ranchers will establish conservation measures that conserve an additional 6.25 million acre-feet of water (250% improvement over baseline).
Baseline: In 2005, an estimated 2.5 million acre-feet of water were conserved.

High Performance Priority Goals: Accelerate the protection of clean, abundant water resources by implementing high impact targeted (HIT) practices on 3 million acres of National Forest and private working lands in priority landscapes.

Program	Performance Measure	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
CO-CTA	Priority landscapes with high impact targeted conservation practices applied to improve irrigation efficiency, acres	TBD[1]	TBD[1]
EQIP	Priority landscapes with high impact targeted conservation practices applied to improve irrigation efficiency, acres	TBD[1]	TBD[1]

[1] Targets for these measures will be established after the priority landscapes and HIT practices have been identified.

Selected Past Accomplishments toward Achievement of the Key Outcome:

Program	Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual
CO-CTA	Land with conservation applied to improve irrigation efficiency, acres	678,149	828,246	844,818	753,214
EQIP	Land with conservation applied to improve irrigation efficiency, acres	758,923	883,033	1,048,319	1,131,159

Selected Accomplishments Expected at the FY 2011 Proposed Resource Level:

Program	Performance Measure	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
CO-CTA	Land with conservation applied to improve irrigation efficiency, acres	800,000	825,000
EQIP	Land with conservation applied to improve irrigation efficiency, acres	1,100,000	1,000,000

Efficiency Measures:

Program	Efficiency Measure
CO-CTA	Acres of conservation applied per technical assistance staff year.
EQIP	Percent of conservation practices applied within the first three years of the contract.
	Number of active contracts approved per FTE.

Key Outcome 4 — Clean Air: Farmers and ranchers make a positive contribution to local air quality.

The quality of air affects every component of the natural system: soil, water, plants, animals, and people. As air quality and atmospheric change concerns increase, NRCS anticipates an expanded conservation focus on these issues. Many practices that protect soil and water also protect air quality. NRCS is revising and adapting conservation standards and specifications to better address air issues. NRCS will acquire and develop needed resource data and technology and encourage accelerated adoption of practices to address air quality concerns.

Long-Term Performance Measures:
Target: By 2015, farmers and ranchers will apply conservation measures to reduce annual soil losses from wind erosion by 7 percent.
Baseline: In 2003, wind erosion accounted for more than 776 million tons of soil loss from cropland.

Selected Past Accomplishments toward Achievement of the Key Outcome:
NRCS is developing an annual performance measure to track the acreage on which conservation practices have been applied to reduce wind erosion. The Agency incorporates air quality considerations into conservation planning with producers. NRCS has seven full-time staff members dedicated to air quality issues and development of technological innovations. The NRCS Chief chairs a task force to address air quality issues. This task force includes USDA employees, industry representatives, and other experts in the fields of agriculture and air quality and advises the Secretary in order to ensure that that Federal policy, in regard to air pollution, is based on sound scientific findings that are subject to adequate peer review and take into account economic feasibility.

Selected Accomplishments Expected at the FY 2011 Proposed Resource Level:
Performance targets for FY2011 and future years will be established once the annual performance measure is finalized, estimated to occur in FY 2010. NRCS will continue to provide assistance to producers to address six air quality and atmospheric change concerns: particulate matter (including coarse and fine particles, smoke, dust, and off-site effects from wind erosion), ozone precursors, odor, chemical drift, ammonia, and greenhouse gases and carbon sequestration. Requests for assistance on these issues are expected to increase. Technology development and transfer will continue to provide the field with the information and tools they need to provide high quality service.

Key Outcome 5 — Grassland and Rangeland Ecosystems: Grassland and rangeland ecosystems are productive, diverse, and resilient and provide a wide variety of environmental services.

Healthy, vigorous plant communities on rangeland and native or naturalized pasture lands protect soil quality, prevent soil erosion, provide sustainable forage and cover for livestock and wildlife, provide fiber, improve water quality, provide diverse habitat for wildlife, and sequester carbon. Sustaining healthy grassland and rangeland ecosystems is achieved by focusing on interacting relationships between plant and animal species within a given ecosystem and their relationship to the physical features and processes of their environment. NRCS provides data and technical and financial assistance to people interested in creating, restoring, protecting and enhancing grassland and rangeland.

Long Term Performance Measure:
Target: By 2015, farmers, ranchers, and other landowners will apply management that will maintain or improve long-term vegetative condition on 150 million acres of grazing land (50% improvement over baseline).
Baseline: In 1999, about 300 million acres of non-Federal grazing land were considered to be in minimal or degrading vegetative condition.

Selected Past Accomplishments toward Achievement of the Key Outcome:

Program	Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual
CO-CTA	Grazing and forest land with conservation applied to protect and improve the resource base, million acres	11.8	14.2	16	16
EQIP	Grazing and forest land with conservation applied to protect and improve the resource base, million acres	12.2	16.5	16.9	17.2

Selected Accomplishments Expected at the FY 2011 Proposed Resource Level:

Program	Performance Measure	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
CO-CTA	Grazing land with conservation applied to protect the resource base, million acres	14	14
EQIP	Grazing land with conservation applied to protect and improve the resource base, million acres	14.3	14.3

Note: Starting in FY2010, the former performance measure that covered grazing land and forest land has been split into two distinct measures, one for grazing land and one for forest land.

Key Outcome 6 — Forest Land Ecosystems: Healthy forest lands that are productive, diverse, and resilient and provide a wide range of ecosystem services.

Healthy, vigorous plant communities on forest lands protect soil quality, prevent soil erosion, provide fiber, improve water quality, provide diverse habitat for wildlife, and sequester carbon. Sustaining healthy forest ecosystems is achieved by focusing on interacting relationships between plant and animal species within a given ecosystem and their relationship to the physical features and processes of their environment. NRCS provides data and technical and financial assistance to people interested in creating, restoring, protecting and enhancing forest lands.

Long Term Performance Measure:
Target: By 2015, non-industrial private forest landowners will apply management that will maintain or improve vegetative condition and protect and enhance ecosystem services on 9 million acres of non-industrial private forest land that are considered to have minimal or degrading vegetative conditions (an improvement of 4.5% over 2003 baseline).
Baseline: In 2003, about 200 million acres of non-industrial private forest land were considered to be in minimal or degrading vegetative condition due to overstocking, invasive species, wildfire damage, insects, hurricane damage, or other factors.

Selected Past Accomplishments toward Achievement of the Key Outcome:

Program	Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual
CO-CTA	Grazing and forest land with conservation applied to protect and improve the resource base, million acres	11.8	14.2	16	16
EQIP	Grazing and forest land with conservation applied to protect and improve the resource base, million acres	12.2	16.5	16.9	17.2

Selected Accomplishments Expected at the FY 2011 Proposed Resource Level:

Program	Performance Measure	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
CO-CTA	Forest land with conservation applied to protect and improve vegetative condition, acres	600,000	600,000
EQIP	Forest land with conservation applied to protect and improve vegetative condition, acres	700,000	700,000

Note: Starting in FY2010, the former performance measure that covered grazing land and forest land has been split into two distinct measures, one for grazing land and one for forest land.

Efficiency Measures:

Program	Efficiency Measure
CO-CTA	Acres of conservation applied per technical assistance staff year.
EQIP	Percent of conservation practices applied within the first three years of the contract.
	Number of active contracts approved per FTE.

Key Outcome 7 — Fish and Wildlife Habitat: Working lands and waters provide habitat for diverse and healthy wildlife, aquatic species, and plant communities.

Privately-owned and other non-Federal lands provide habitat for much of the Nation's wildlife. Protecting specific ecosystems and landscapes, including wetlands, grasslands, floodplains, and certain types of forests, can help support wildlife and aquatic species and provide benefits in the form of recreation, hunting, and other forms of agri-tourism. NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to maintain and enhance fish and wildlife habitat on non-Federal lands.

Long-Term Performance Measures:
Target: By 2015, farmers, ranchers, and non-industrial private forest landowners will implement conservation measures to improve an additional 8.5 million acres of essential habitat to benefit at-risk or declining species (a 425% increase over baseline).
Baseline: In 2005, farmers, ranchers, and other landowners and managers improved habitat for declining and at-risk species on 2 million acres.

Selected Past Accomplishments toward Achievement of the Key Outcome:

Program	Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual
WHIP	Non-Federal land with conservation applied to improve fish and wildlife habitat quality, acres	175,543	388,769	316,896	335,402

Selected Accomplishments Expected at the FY 2011 Proposed Resource Level:

Program	Performance Measure	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
WHIP	Non-Federal land with conservation applied to improve fish and wildlife habitat quality, acres	350,000	400,000

Efficiency Measures:

Program	Efficiency Measure
WHIP	Acres of wildlife habitat improved per $1 million of financial assistance

Key Outcome 8 — Wetlands: Wetlands provide high quality habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife, protect water quality, and reduce flood damage.

Wetlands provide wildlife habitat, protect and improve water quality, lessen flooding impacts, and recharge ground water. NRCS uses voluntary incentive-based approaches to restore wetlands, make wetland determinations, and conduct wetland compliance reviews.

Long-Term Performance Measures:
Target: By 2015, farmers and ranchers will create, restore, or enhance an additional 1.25 million acres of wetlands on non-Federal lands (a 1.1% improvement over baseline).
Baseline: In 2003, there were 111 million wetland acres on non-Federal lands in the contiguous United States.

High Performance Priority Goals: Accelerate the protection of clean, abundant water resources by implementing high impact targeted (HIT) practices on 3 million acres of National Forest and private working lands in priority landscapes.

Program	Performance Measure	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
CTA	Wetlands created, restored or enhanced in priority landscapes, acres	TBD[1]	TBD[1]
WRP	Wetlands created, restored or enhanced in priority landscapes, acres	TBD[1]	TBD[1]

[1] Targets for these measures will be established after the priority landscapes and HIT practices have been identified, estimated to occur in FY 2010.

Selected Past Accomplishments toward Achievement of the Key Outcome:

Program	Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual
CTA	Wetlands created, restored or enhanced, acres	65,344	62,093	72,806	67,233
WRP	Wetlands created, restored or enhanced, acres	181,979	149,330	128,860	106,379
WRP	Farmland, forest land, and wetlands protected by conservation easements, acres	114,193	74,509	56,117	35,338

Selected Accomplishments Expected at the FY 2011 Proposed Resource Level:

Program	Performance Measure	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
CTA	Wetlands created, restored or enhanced, acres	51,300	51,300
WRP	Wetlands created, restored or enhanced, acres	125,000	140,000
WRP	Farmland, forest land, and wetlands protected by conservation easements, acres	100,000	110,000

Efficiency Measures:

Program	Efficiency Measure
CO-CTA	Acres of conservation applied per technical assistance staff year (full time equivalent)
WRP	Percent of WRP easements closed within 12 months of initial project application
	Percent of WRP projects fully restored within three years of closing the easement

Goal: Rural Communities create wealth so they are self-sustaining, repopulating and thriving economically.							
	2009 Actual		2010 Estimated		Increase	2011 Estimated	
		Staff		Staff	or		Staff
	Amount	Years	Amount	Years	Decrease	Amount	Years
Discretionary:							
Snow Survey and Water							
Supply Forecasting	5,403,000	38	5,482,000	32	+48,000	5,530,000	31
Flood Prevention Operations							
P.L.-534							
1. Technical Assistance	465,000	6	515,000	6	-515,000	--	--
2. Financial Assistance	3,356,000	--	2,058,000	--	-2,058,000	--	--
Subtotal, P.L.-534	3,821,000	6	2,573,000	6	-2,573,000	--	--
Emergency Watershed							
Protection Program							
1. Technical Assistance	7,250,000	68	--	196	--	--	--
2. Financial Assistance	29,000,000	--	--	--	--	--	--
Subtotal, EWP	36,250,000	68	--	196	--	--	--
Watershed Operations							
P.L.-566							
1. Technical Assistance	17,102,000	41	3,516,000	141	-3,516,000	--	--
2. Financial Assistance	63,722,000	--	8,911,000	--	-8,911,000	--	--
Subtotal, P.L.-566	80,824,000	41	12,427,000	141	-12,427,000	--	--
Resource Conservation &							
Development	50,730,000	412	50,730,000	412	-50,730,000	--	--
Total, Discretionary	177,028,000	565	71,212,000	787	-65,682,000	5,530,000	31
Mandatory:							
Conservation Stewardship							
Program	4,689,119	37	234,721,000	345	+80,027,000	314,748,000	241
Total, Mandatory	4,689,119	37	234,721,000	345	+80,027,000	314,748,000	241
Total, Goal	$181,717,119	602	$305,933,000	1,132	+$14,345,000	$320,278,000	272

Goal: National forest & private working lands are conserved, restored and made more resilient to climate change and managed to enhance water resources.

	2009 Actual		2010 Estimated		Increase	2011 Estimated	
	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years	or Decrease	Amount	Staff Years
Discretionary:							
Conservation Technical Assistance	$739,437,000	5,529	$771,637,000	5,702	+$34,885,000	$806,522,000	5,380
Soil Survey	92,229,000	696	93,939,000	707	+1,011,000	94,950,000	672
Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting	5,403,000	38	5,483,000	31	+47,000	5,530,000	30
Plant Materials Program	5,464,000	50	5,544,000	50	+54,000	5,598,000	47
Flood Prevention Operations P.L.-534							
1. Technical Assistance	464,000	6	515,000	7	-515,000	--	--
2. Financial Assistance	3,356,000	--	2,058,000	--	-2,058,000	--	--
Subtotal, P.L.-534	3,820,000	6	2,573,000	7	-2,573,000	--	--
Emergency Watershed Protection Program							
1. Technical Assistance	21,750,000	206	--	589	--	--	--
2. Financial Assistance	87,000,000	--	--	--	--	--	--
Subtotal, EWP	108,750,000	206	--	589	--	--	--
Watershed Operations P.L.-566							
1. Technical Assistance	17,102,000	41	3,516,000	141	-3,516,000	--	--
2. Financial Assistance	63,722,000	--	8,911,000	--	-8,911,000	--	--
Subtotal, P.L.-566	80,824,000	41	12,427,000	141	-12,427,000	--	--
Watershed Rehabilitation							
1. Technical Assistance	40,905,000	72	17,200,000	99	+336,000	17,536,000	29
2. Financial Assistance	49,095,000	--	22,961,000	--	--	22,961,000	--
Subtotal, Rehabilitation	90,000,000	72	40,161,000	99	+336,000	40,497,000	29
Total, Discretionary	1,125,927,000	6,638	931,764,000	7,326	21,333,000	953,097,000	6,158
Mandatory:							
Wetlands Reserve Program	435,711,313	191	613,115,000	256	-110,889,000	502,226,000	281
Environmental Quality Incentives Program	1,054,581,563	2,395	1,180,000,000	3,290	+28,000,000	1,208,000,000	2,510
Agricultural Water Enhancement Program	71,803,404	66	73,000,000	151	+1,000,000	74,000,000	152
Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program	72,742,931	128	85,000,000	152	-12,000,000	73,000,000	143
Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program	118,766,171	34	150,000,000	59	+10,000,000	160,000,000	51
Conservation Security Program	276,004,481	220	233,963,000	152	-21,521,000	212,442,000	138
Conservation Stewardship Program	4,689,120	38	234,721,000	346	+80,028,000	314,749,000	242
Grasslands Reserve Program	47,658,102	30	100,714,000	42	-21,638,000	79,076,000	42
Agricultural Management Assistance	7,378,139	9	7,500,000	27	-5,000,000	2,500,000	18
Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program	21,841,618	25	43,000,000	83	+29,000,000	72,000,000	171
Healthy Forests Reserve Program	2,526,172	5	9,750,000	19	--	9,750,000	14
Conservation Reserve Program	55,913,833	538	83,439,000	759	+40,777,000	124,216,000	1,123
Total, Mandatory	2,169,616,847	3,679	2,814,202,000	5,336	+17,757,000	2,831,959,000	4,885
Total, Goal	$3,295,543,847	10,317	$3,745,966,000	12,662	$39,090,000	$3,785,056,000	11,043

Goal: America leads the world in crop production and biotech crop exports.								
	2009 Actual		2010 Estimated		Increase		2011 Estimated	
		Saff		Staff	or			Staff
	Amount	Years	Amount	Years	Decrease		Amount	Years
Goal Crop production and biotech crop exports								
Discretionary:								
Plant Materials Program	$5,464,000	51	$5,544,000	51	+$55,000		$5,599,000	48
Total, Discretionary	5,464,000	51	5,544,000	51	+55,000		5,599,000	48
Total, Goal	$5,464,000	51	$5,544,000	51	+$55,000		$5,599,000	48

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Summary of Budget and Performance
Key Performance Outcomes and Measures

Goal: USDA will assist rural communities to create wealth so they are self-sustaining, repopulating and thriving economically.

Key Outcome 2 - Water Quality: The quality of surface water and groundwater is improved and maintained to protect human health, support a healthy environment, and enable productive use of the land.

Water running off or infiltrating the ground from agricultural operations can carry a number of potential pollutants into streams, lakes, groundwater, and estuaries. States and Tribes have identified sediment and nutrients as the most extensive agricultural contaminants affecting surface water quality; nutrients and agrichemicals are the major concerns for groundwater. NRCS sets long-term targets for reducing the potential of sediment and nutrients to move from agricultural operations. Long-term measures are supported by annual measures for application of conservation practices that reduce erosion and runoff and movement of nutrients.

Long-term Performance Measures:

- Reduce potential sediment delivery from agricultural operations.
  Target: By 2015, potential sediment delivery from agricultural operations will be reduced by an additional 37.5 million tons.
  Baseline: In FY 2003, potential sediment delivery from agricultural operations was 970 million tons.

- Reduce potential nitrogen delivery from agricultural operations.
  Target: By 2015, potential delivery of nitrogen from agricultural operations will be reduced by an additional 215,000 tons.
  Baseline: In FY 2003, potential annual nitrogen delivery from agricultural operations was an estimated 6 million tons.

- Reduce potential phosphorus delivery from agricultural operations.
  Target: By 2015, potential delivery of phosphorus from agricultural operations will be reduced by an additional 37,500 tons.
  Baseline: In FY 2003, potential annual phosphorus delivery from agricultural operations was an estimated 360,000 tons.

Key Performance Targets

Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
Jobs created or retained in rural communities through effective natural resource and community planning efforts, number						
RC&D	7,204	8,226	9,094	7,843	7,500	0
Performance measure to be developed						
CStP	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	TBD	TBD

Description of annual performance measures:

- Jobs created or retained in rural communities through effective natural resource and community planning efforts. The number of jobs either created or retained by RC&D projects. This does not include RC&D Coordinator positions, and does not include seasonal jobs.

Key Outcome 3 - Water Quantity: Water is conserved and protected to ensure an abundant and reliable supply for the Nation.

Agriculture is one of the largest users of the Nation's surface water and groundwater, with irrigation being the greatest use. In arid and semi-arid areas, crop production depends almost entirely on irrigation. Competition for water in these areas is increasing as a result of increased human populations. In recent years, irrigation has been increasing in eastern States, resulting in increased competition among users. NRCS has set a long-term target for the conservation of water. The long-term measure is supported by an annual measure for the application of practices that improve the management of irrigation water.

Long Term Performance Measures:

Target: By 2015, farmers and ranchers will establish conservation measures that conserve an additional 6.25 million acre-feet of water.

Baseline: In 2005, an estimated 2.5 million acre-feet of water were conserved.

Key Performance Targets

Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
Flood prevention or mitigation measures installed, number						
PL-566	117	106	74	20	45	135
Water supply forecasts issued, number						
CO-Snow Survey	11,534	12,141	12,505	12,399	11,400	11,400

Description of annual performance measures:

- Flood prevention or mitigation measures installed. The number of flood prevention or mitigation measures installed during the fiscal year for the purpose of flood damage reduction. This measure included both structural and non-structural measures.
- Water supply forecasts issued. The total number of water supply forecasts issued within the fiscal year by the Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting program.

Goal: USDA will ensure our national forests and private working lands enhance our water resources and are conserved, restored, and made more resilient to climate change.

Key Outcome 1 — High-quality, Productive Soils: The quality of intensively used soils is maintained or enhanced to enable sustained production of a safe, healthy and abundant food and fiber supply.

Soil quality describes the capacity of a soil to sustain plant and animal productivity, maintain or enhance water and air quality, and support human health and habitation. High-quality soils are the foundation of productive croplands, forest lands, and grasslands and a vibrant and productive agriculture. NRCS provides landowners and land users with assistance in adopting environmentally sound management practices. NRCS provides information on soil quality, plant materials, resource management and provides assistance in using the information to implement sustainable production techniques and new technologies. Land managers who receive NRCS technical assistance are more likely to plan, apply, and maintain conservation systems that support agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible goals.

Long-term Performance Measures:
Target: By 2015, farmers will manage 70 percent of cropland under systems that maintain or improve soil condition and increase soil carbon.
Baseline: In 2003, 60 percent of cropland was farmed under systems that maintained or improved soil condition and increased soil carbon.

Key Performance Targets:

Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
Cropland with conservation applied to improve soil quality, million acres						
CO-CTA	6.4	7.3	8.3	7.6	7.5	7.7
EQIP	3.4	5.3	5.6	4.8	5.0	5.0
Prime, unique or important farmland protected from conversion to non-agricultural uses by conservation easements, acres						
FRPP	46,909	38,495	27,401	38,260	40,000	45,000

Description of annual performance measures:

- Cropland with conservation applied to improve soil quality, million acres. Controlling erosion, minimizing soil disturbance and compaction, and managing plants and soil organic matter are all essential to maximizing soil quality and function for agricultural and environmental benefits. This measure captures the cropland acres on which conservation practices have been applied to improve soil quality, as measured in millions of acres.
- Prime, unique or important farmland protected from conversion to non-agricultural uses by conservation easements, acres. Prime, unique and important farmlands are those that have the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, fiber, forage, or oil seed crops. This measure documents the cumulative acreage of prime, unique and important farmlands that are permanently protected from conversion to non-agricultural uses. This measure reports on acres of prime, unique and important soils protected by permanent easements annually registered at the courthouse.

Key Outcome 2 - Water Quality: The quality of surface water and groundwater is improved and maintained to protect human health, support a healthy environment, and enable productive use of the land.

Water running off or infiltrating the ground from agricultural operations can carry a number of potential pollutants into streams, lakes, groundwater, and estuaries. States and Tribes have identified sediment and nutrients as the most extensive agricultural contaminants affecting surface water quality; nutrients and agrichemicals are the major concerns for groundwater. NRCS sets long-term targets for reducing the potential of sediment and nutrients to move from agricultural operations. Long-term measures are supported by annual measures for application of conservation practices that reduce erosion and runoff and movement of nutrients.

Long-term Performance Measures:

- Reduce potential sediment delivery from agricultural operations.
  Target: By 2015, potential sediment delivery from agricultural operations will be reduced by an additional 37.5 million tons.
  Baseline: In FY 2003, potential sediment delivery from agricultural operations was 970 million tons.

- Reduce potential nitrogen delivery from agricultural operations.
  Target: By 2015, potential delivery of nitrogen from agricultural operations will be reduced by an additional 215,000 tons.
  Baseline: In FY 2003, potential annual nitrogen delivery from agricultural operations was an estimated 6 million tons.

- Reduce potential phosphorus delivery from agricultural operations.
  Target: By 2015, potential delivery of phosphorus from agricultural operations will be reduced by an additional 37,500 tons.
  Baseline: In FY 2003, potential annual phosphorus delivery from agricultural operations was an estimated 360,000 tons.

Key Performance Targets

Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans applied, number						
CO-CTA	2,269	1,911	1,745	1,485	1,300	1,300
EQIP	2,774	2,490	2,520	2,019	2,000	2,000
Land with conservation applied to improve water quality, acres						
AWEP	N/A	N/A	N/A	6,239	20,000	20,000
CBWP	N/A	N/A	N/A	4,572	65,000	150,000

Description of annual performance measures:

- Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans applied. A CNMP identifies management and conservation actions that will be followed to meet clearly defined soil and water conservation goals, including nutrient management on an animal feeding operation. A CNMP incorporates practices to utilize animal manure and organic by-products as a beneficial resource. CNMPs enable producers to manage collection, storage, and disposal of animal wastes in ways that minimize the potential for damage to the environment.
- Land with conservation applied to improve water quality. Land on which one or more conservation practices have been applied to improve quality during the fiscal year, measures in acres treated.

High Performance Priority Goals: Accelerate the protection of clean, abundant water resources by implementing high impact targeted (HIT) practices on 3 million acres of National Forest and private working lands in priority landscapes.

Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
Priority landscapes with high impact targeted conservation practices applied to improve water quality, acres						
CO-CTA	NA	NA	NA	NA	TBD[1]	TBD[1]
EQIP	NA	NA	NA	NA	TBD[1]	TBD[1]
Performance measure to be developed						
CStP	NA	NA	NA	NA	TBD[1]	TBD[1]

[1] Targets for these measures will be established after the priority landscapes and HIT practices have been identified, estimated to occur by FY 2010.

Key Outcome 3 — Water Quantity: Water is conserved and protected to ensure an abundant and reliable supply for the Nation.

Agriculture is one of the largest users of the Nation's surface water and groundwater, with irrigation being the greatest use. In arid and semi-arid areas, crop production depends almost entirely on irrigation. Competition for water in these areas is increasing as a result of increased human populations. In recent years, irrigation has been increasing in eastern States, resulting in increased competition there also. NRCS has set a long-term target for the conservation of water. The long-term measure is supported by an annual measure for application of practices that improve the management of irrigation water.

Long Term Performance Measures:

Target: By 2015, farmers and ranchers will establish conservation measures that conserve an additional 6.25 million acre-feet of water.

Baseline: In 2005, an estimated 2.5 million acre-feet of water were conserved.

Key Performance Targets:

Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
Land with conservation applied to improve irrigation efficiency, acres						
CO-CTA	678,149	828,246	844,818	753,214	800,000	825,000
EQIP	758,923	883,033	1,048,319	1,131,159	1,100,000	1,000,000
AWEP	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,850	50,000	55,000

Description of annual performance measures:

- Land with conservation applied to improve irrigation efficiency. Irrigation makes a significant contribution to the United States farm economy. Improvements in irrigation water management can help to maintain the viability of the irrigated agricultural sector and help to protect water quality. This indicator reports the adoption of improved technology to replace older methods and other improvements to existing systems.

High Performance Priority Goals: Accelerate the protection of clean, abundant water resources by implementing high impact targeted (HIT) practices on 3 million acres of National Forest and private working lands in priority landscapes.

Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
Priority landscapes with high impact targeted conservation practices applied to improve irrigation efficiency, acres						
CO-CTA	NA	NA	NA	NA	TBD[1]	TBD[1]
EQIP	NA	NA	NA	NA	TBD[1]	TBD[1]

[1] Targets for these measures will be established after the priority landscapes and HIT practices have been identified, estimated to occur by FY 2010.

Key Outcome 4 — Clean Air: Farmers and ranchers make a positive contribution to local air quality.

The quality of air affects every component of the natural system: soil, water, plants, animals, and people. As air quality and atmospheric change concerns increase, NRCS anticipates an expanded conservation focus on these issues. Many practices that protect soil and water also protect air quality. NRCS is revising and adapting conservation standards and specifications to better address air issues. NRCS will acquire and develop needed resource data and technology and encourage accelerated adoption of practices to address air quality concerns.

Long-Term Performance Measures:
Target: By 2015, farmers and ranchers will apply conservation measures to reduce annual soil losses from wind erosion by 7 percent.
Baseline: In 2003, wind erosion accounted for more than 776 million tons of soil loss from cropland.

Key Performance Targets:

Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
Land with conservation applied to reduce wind erosion, acres						
CO-CTA	NA	NA	NA	NA	TBD[1]	TBD[1]
EQIP	NA	NA	NA	NA	TBD[1]	TBD[1]

[1] This measure is under development. Targets for this measure will be established after the applicable conservation practices have been finalized.

Description of annual performance measures:

- Land with conservation applied to reduce wind erosion. Land on which one of more conservation practice has been applied to reduce wind erosion during the fiscal year, measured in acres. This measure is under development. The eligible practices and geographic range for this measure will be finalized in FY2010, and targets will be established starting in FY2011.

Key Outcome 5 — Grassland and Rangeland Ecosystems: Grassland and rangeland ecosystems are productive, diverse, and resilient and provide a wide variety of environmental services.

Healthy, vigorous plant communities on rangeland and native or naturalized pasture lands protect soil quality, prevent soil erosion, provide sustainable forage and cover for livestock and wildlife, provide fiber, improve water quality, provide diverse habitat for wildlife, and sequester carbon. Sustaining healthy

grassland and rangeland ecosystems is achieved by focusing on interacting relationships between plant and animal species within a given ecosystem and their relationship to the physical features and processes of their environment. NRCS provides data and technical and financial assistance to people interested in creating, restoring, protecting and enhancing grassland and rangeland.

Long Term Performance Measure:

Target: By 2015, farmers, ranchers, and other landowners will apply management that will maintain or improve long-term vegetative condition on 150 million acres of grazing land.
Baseline: In 1999, about 300 million acres of non-Federal grazing land were considered to be in minimal or degrading vegetative condition.

Key Performance Targets:

Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
Grazing land with conservation applied to protect the resource base, million acres						
CO-CTA	11.8	14.2	16.0	16.0	14.0	14.0
EQIP	12.2	16.5	16.9	17.2	14.3	14.3

Note: Starting in FY2010, the former performance measure that covered grazing land and forest land has been split into two distinct measures, one for grazing land and one for forest land. The data reported above for FY2006-2009 include forest land; the targets for FY2010-2011 do not.

Description of annual performance measures:

- Grazing land with conservation applied to protect the resource base. This measure includes land on which a conservation system or practice is applied with NRCS technical assistance and/or financial assistance. The conservation applied includes a wide range of practices tailored to the resource conditions and producer's operation and goals on the specific site. This measure is acres (in millions) of grazing land on which conservation practices have been applied to protect the resource base.

Key Outcome 6 — Forest Land Ecosystems: Healthy forest lands that are productive, diverse, and resilient and provide a wide range of ecosystem services.

Healthy, vigorous plant communities on forest lands protect soil quality, prevent soil erosion, provide fiber, improve water quality, provide diverse habitat for wildlife, and sequester carbon. Sustaining healthy forest ecosystems is achieved by focusing on interacting relationships between plant and animal species within a given ecosystem and their relationship to the physical features and processes of their environment. NRCS provides data and technical and financial assistance to people interested in creating, restoring, protecting and enhancing forest lands.

Long Term Performance Measure:

Target: By 2015, non-industrial private forest landowners will apply management that will maintain or improve vegetative condition and protect and enhance ecosystem services on 9 million acres of non-industrial private forest land that are considered to have minimal or degrading vegetative conditions.
Baseline: In 2003, about 200 million acres of non-industrial private forest land were considered to be in minimal or degrading vegetative condition due to overstocking, invasive species, wildfire damage, insects, hurricane damage, or other factors.

Key Performance Targets:

Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
Forest land with conservation applied to protect and improve vegetative condition, acres						
CO-CTA	NA	NA	NA	NA	600,000	600,000
EQIP	NA	NA	NA	NA	700,000	700,000

Note: Starting in FY2010, the former performance measure that covered grazing land and forest land has been split into two distinct measures, one for grazing land and one for forest land.

Description of annual performance measures:

- Forest land with conservation applied to protect and improve vegetative condition. This measure includes non-industrial private forest land on which a conservation system or practice is applied with NRCS technical assistance and/or financial assistance. The conservation applied includes a wide range of practices tailored to the resource conditions and producer's operation and goals on the specific site. The measure is acres of non-industrial private forest actively managed with conservation practices that protect and improve vegetative condition.

Key Outcome 7 — Fish and Wildlife Habitat: Working lands and waters provide habitat for diverse and healthy wildlife, aquatic species, and plant communities.

Privately-owned and other non-Federal lands provide habitat for much of the Nation's wildlife. Protecting specific ecosystems and landscapes — including wetlands, grasslands, floodplains, and certain types of forests — can help support wildlife and aquatic species and provide benefits in the form of recreation, hunting, and other forms of agri-tourism. NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to maintain and enhance fish and wildlife habitat on non-Federal lands.

Long-Term Performance Measures:
Target: By 2015, farmers, ranchers, and non-industrial private forest landowners will implement conservation measures to improve an additional 8.5 million acres of essential habitat to benefit at-risk or declining species.
Baseline: In 2005, farmers, ranchers, and other landowners and managers improved habitat for declining and at-risk species on 2 million acres.

Key Performance Targets

Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
Non-Federal land with conservation applied to improve fish and wildlife habitat quality, acres						
WHIP	175,543	388,769	316,896	335,402	350,000	400,000

Description of annual performance measures:

- Non-Federal land with conservation applied to improve fish and wildlife habitat quality. The rural landscape provides critical habitat, food and safety for much of the Nation's wildlife. Many of the conservation practices that farmers and ranchers apply to cropland and grazing land improves the habitat those lands provide for wildlife. The measure is acres of non-Federal land actively managed with conservation practices that protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat.

Key Outcome 8 — Wetlands: Wetlands provide high quality habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife, protect water quality, and reduce flood damage.

Wetlands provide wildlife habitat, protect and improve water quality, attenuate water flows due to flooding, and recharge ground water. NRCS will help protect and improve wetland resources by supporting voluntary incentive-based approaches to wetland restoration, making wetland determinations, and conducting wetland compliance reviews.

Long-Term Performance Measures:
Target: By 2015, farmers and ranchers will create, restore, or enhance an additional 1.25 million acres of wetlands on non-Federal lands.
Baseline: In 2003, there were 111 million wetland acres on non-Federal lands in the contiguous United States.

Key Performance Targets

Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
Wetlands created, restored or enhanced, acres						
CO-CTA	65,344	62,093	72,806	67,233	51,300	51,300
WRP	181,979	149,330	128,860	106,379	125,000	140,000
Farmland, forest land, and wetlands protected by conservation easements, acres						
WRP	114,193	74,509	56,117	35,338	100,000	110,000

Description of annual performance measures:
- Wetlands created, restored or enhanced. Wetlands provide fish and wildlife habitat, reduce flooding, recharge groundwater, protect biological diversity, and improve water quality by filtering sediments and chemicals. This measure reports acres on which conservation practices have been applied to meet criteria in local field office technical guides. It includes only acres on which conservation was completed in a given fiscal year. It includes the wetland acres treated but not any associated upland acres treated or placed under easement to protect the wetland itself. It is, therefore, a more precise measure of changes in wetlands acreage than measures that include wetlands and associated uplands.
- Farmland, forest land, and wetlands protected by conservation easements. This measure reports on acres enrolled under permanent and 30-year easements registered at the courthouse during the specified fiscal year. This measure reflects wetland acreage only; however WRP protects these wetlands by also placing associated upland acreage under easement.

High Performance Priority Goals: Accelerate the protection of clean, abundant water resources by implementing high impact targeted (HIT) practices on 3 million acres of National Forest and private working lands in priority landscapes.

Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
Wetlands created, restored or enhanced in priority landscapes, acres						
CO-CTA	NA	NA	NA	NA	TBD[1]	TBD[1]
WRP	NA	NA	NA	NA	TBD[1]	TBD[1]

[1] Targets for these measures will be established after the priority landscapes and HIT practices have been identified, estimated to occur by FY 2010.

Goal: USDA will help America promote agricultural production and biotechnology exports as America works to increase food security.

Key Outcome 2 - Water Quality: The quality of surface water and groundwater is improved and maintained to protect human health, support a healthy environment, and enable productive use of the land.

Water running off or infiltrating the ground from agricultural operations can carry a number of potential pollutants into streams, lakes, groundwater, and estuaries. States and Tribes have identified sediment and nutrients as the most extensive agricultural contaminants affecting surface water quality; nutrients and agrichemicals are the major concerns for groundwater. NRCS sets long-term targets for reducing the potential of sediment and nutrients to move from agricultural operations. Long-term measures are supported by annual measures for application of conservation practices that reduce erosion and runoff and movement of nutrients.

Long-term Performance Measures:

- Reduce potential sediment delivery from agricultural operations.
  Target: By 2015, potential sediment delivery from agricultural operations will be reduced by an additional 37.5 million tons.
  Baseline: In FY 2003, potential sediment delivery from agricultural operations was 970 million tons.

- Reduce potential nitrogen delivery from agricultural operations.
  Target: By 2015, potential delivery of nitrogen from agricultural operations will be reduced by an additional 215,000 tons.
  Baseline: In FY 2003, potential annual nitrogen delivery from agricultural operations was an estimated 6 million tons.

- Reduce potential phosphorus delivery from agricultural operations.
  Target: By 2015, potential delivery of phosphorus from agricultural operations will be reduced by an additional 37,500 tons.
  Baseline: In FY 2003, potential annual phosphorus delivery from agricultural operations was an estimated 360,000 tons.

Key Performance Targets

Performance Measure	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Target
Plant materials technical documents written and released to the public, number						
CO-Plant Materials	427	459	435	436	340	340

Description of annual performance measures:

- Plant materials technical documents written and released to the public. Plants and plant technologies are important tools to meet evolving natural resource conservation needs. This measure tracks the number of technical documents that are developed and made available to internal and external customers to enable effective use of plants developed by NRCS.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Full Cost by Secretary's Strategic Priorities

PROGRAM	PROGRAM ITEMS	AMOUNT ($000) FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
Snow Survey & Water Supply Forecasting				
	Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment	3,691	3,746	3,778
	Indirect Costs	1,712	1,736	1,752
	Total Costs	5,403	5,482	5,530
	FTEs	38	32	31
	Performance measure: Water supply forecasts issued			
	Performance, number	12,399	11,400	11,400
Flood Prevention Operations P.L. 534				
	Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation	22	25	0
	Conservation Implementation	56	62	0
	Financial Assistance-Program Administration	3	4	0
	Financial Assistance - Cost Share & Monetary Incentives	3,357	2,057	0
	Indirect Costs	383	425	0
	Total Costs	3,821	2,573	0
	FTEs	6	6	0
	Performance measure: Flood prevention or mitigation measures installed			
	Performance, number	1	5	14
Watershed Operations P.L. 566				
	Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation	1,879	387	0
	Conservation Implementation	9,009	1,852	0
	Financial Assistance-Program Administration	660	136	0
	Financial Assistance - Cost Share & Monetary Incentives	63,721	8,910	0
	Indirect Costs	5,555	1,142	0
	Total Costs	80,824	12,427	0
	FTEs	41	141	0
	Performance measure: Flood prevention or mitigation measures installed			
	Performance, number	20	45	135
Emergency Watershed Protection Program				
	Conservation Implementation	5,293	0	-
	Financial Assistance-Program Administration	1,015	0	-
	Financial Assistance - Cost Share & Monetary Incentives	28,999	0	-
	Indirect Costs	943	0	-
	Total Costs	36,250	0	-
	FTEs	68	196	-

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Full Cost by Secretary's Strategic Priorities

Rural communities create wealth so they are self-sustaining, repopulating and thriving economically.

PROGRAM	PROGRAM ITEMS		AMOUNT ($000) FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
Resource Conservation & Development					
	Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation		21,364	21,364	0
	Conservation Implementation		19,355	19,355	0
	Indirect Costs		10,011	10,011	0
		Total Costs	50,730	50,730	0
		FTEs	412	412	0
	Performance measure: Jobs created or retained in rural communities through effective natural resource and community planning efforts				
	Performance, number		7,843	7,500	-
Discretionary Total					
		Total Costs	177,029	71,212	5,530
		FTEs	565	787	31
Conservation Stewardship Program					
	Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation		199	1,814	1,389
	Conservation Implementation		260	2,379	1,821
	Financial Assistance - Program Administration		1,043	9,538	7,300
	Financial Assistance - Cost Share & Monetary Incentives		0	191,765	281,873
	Indirect Costs		3,188	29,226	22,367
		Total Costs	4,689	234,721	314,749
		FTEs	37	345	241
	Performance measure: Under development				
	Performance,		NA	TBD	TBD
Mandatory Total					
		Total Costs	4,689	234,721	314,749
		FTEs	37	345	241
Agency Total					
		Total Costs	181,718	305,933	320,279
		FTEs	602	1,132	272

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Full Cost by Secretary's Strategic Priorities

National forest & private working lands are conserved, restored and made more resilient to climate change and are managed to enhance water resources.

PROGRAM	PROGRAM ITEMS		AMOUNT ($000) FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
Conservation Technical Assistance					
	Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation		177,182	184,898	193,257
	Conservation Implementation		97,105	101,334	105,915
	Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment		12,260	12,794	13,372
	Natural Resource Technology Transfer		77,811	81,199	84,870
	Indirect Costs		375,079	391,412	409,108
		Total Costs	739,437	771,637	806,522
		FTEs	5,529	5,702	5,380
	Performance measure: Priority landscapes with high impact targeted conservation practices applied to improve water quality				
	Performance, acres		NA	TBD	TBD
	Performance measure: Comprehensive nutrient management plans applied				
	Performance, number of plans		1,485	1,300	1,300
	Performance measure: Land with conservation applied to improve irrigation efficiency				
	Performance, acres		753,214	800,000	825,000
	Performance measure: Priority landscapes with high impact targeted conservation practices applied to improve irrigation efficiency				
	Performance, acres		NA	TBD	TBD
	Performance measure: Cropland with conservation applied to improve soil quality				
	Performance, million acres		7.6	7.5	7.7
	Performance measure: Grazing and forest land with conservation applied to protect and improve the resource base				
	Performance, million acres		16.0	NA	NA
	Performance measure: Grazing land with conservation applied to protect the resource base				
	Performance, million acres		NA	14.0	14.0
	Performance measure: Forest land with conservation applied to protect and improve vegetative condition				
	Performance, acres		NA	600,000	600,000
	Performance measure: Wetlands created, restored or enhanced				
	Performance, acres		67,233	51,300	51,300
	Performance measure: Wetlands created, restored or enhanced in priority landscapes				
	Performance, acres		NA	TBD	TBD
Soil Survey					
	Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment		46,726	47,592	48,104
	Natural Resource Technology Transfer		12,086	12,310	12,442
	Indirect Costs		33,417	34,037	34,404
		Total Costs	92,229	93,939	94,950
		FTEs	696	707	672
	Performance measure: Soil surveys mapped or updated				
	Performance: million acres		37.5	38.0	40.0

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Full Cost by Secretary's Strategic Priorities

PROGRAM	PROGRAM ITEMS	AMOUNT ($000) FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
Snow Survey & Water Supply Forecasting				
	Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment	3,691	3,746	3,778
	Indirect Costs	1,712	1,737	1,752
	Total Costs	5,403	5,483	5,530
	FTEs	38	31	30
	Performance measure: Water supply forecasts accuracy			
	Performance, index	0.58	0.58	0.58
Plant Materials Centers				
	Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment	663	673	679
	Natural Resource Technology Transfer	2,294	2,328	2,351
	Indirect Costs	2,507	2,543	2,568
	Total Costs	5,464	5,544	5,598
	FTEs	50	50	47
	Performance measure: New plant materials released to commercial growers			
	Performance, number	16	15	13
Flood Prevention Operations P.L. 534				
	Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation	22	25	0
	Conservation Implementation	56	62	0
	Financial Assistance-Program Administration	3	4	0
	Financial Assistance - Cost Share & Monetary Incentives	3,356	2,057	0
	Indirect Costs	383	425	0
	Total Costs	3,820	2,573	0
	FTEs	6	7	0
	Performance measure: Long-term contracts completed during the fiscal year (all measures installed) for the purpose of water quality improvement			
	Performance, number	34	5	5
Watershed Operations P.L. 566				
	Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation	1,879	387	0
	Conservation Implementation	9,009	1,852	0
	Financial Assistance-Program Administration	660	136	0
	Financial Assistance - Cost Share & Monetary Incentives	63,721	8,910	0
	Indirect Costs	5,555	1,142	0
	Total Costs	80,824	12,427	0
	FTEs	41	141	0
	Performance measure: Long-term contracts completed during the fiscal year (all measures installed) for the purpose of water quality improvement			
	Performance, number	65	20	15

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Full Cost by Secretary's Strategic Priorities

National forest & private working lands are conserved, restored and made more resilient to climate change and are managed to enhance water resources.

PROGRAM / PROGRAM ITEMS		AMOUNT ($000) FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
Emergency Watershed Protection Program				
Conservation Implementation		15,878	0	0
Financial Assistance-Program Administration		3,045	0	0
Financial Assistance - Cost Share & Monetary Incentives		86,999	0	0
Indirect Costs		2,828	0	0
	Total Costs	108,750	0	0
	FTEs	206	589	0
Watershed Rehabilitation Program				
Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation		4,739	1,994	2,033
Conservation Implementation		16,667	7,008	7,144
Financial Assistance-Program Administration		1,918	806	822
Financial Assistance - Cost Share & Monetary Incentives		49,095	22,960	22,961
Indirect Costs		17,581	7,393	7,537
	Total Costs	90,000	40,161	40,497
	FTEs	72	99	29
Performance measure: Unsafe dams rehabilitated or removed				
Performance, number		7	25	30
Performance measure: Dams with watershed rehabilitation plans authorized				
Performance, number				
Discretionary Total				
	Total Costs	1,125,927	931,764	953,097
	FTEs	6,638	7,326	6,158
Wetlands Reserve Program				
Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation		2,191	2,886	3,227
Conservation Implementation		11,791	15,534	17,367
Financial Assistance - Program Administration		10,370	13,662	15,274
Financial Assistance - Cost Share & Monetary Incentives		404,941	572,578	456,905
Indirect Costs		6,418	8,455	9,453
	Total Costs	435,711	613,115	502,226
	FTEs	191	256	281
Performance measure: Wetlands created, restored or enhanced				
Performance, acres		106,379	125,000	140,000
Performance measure: Wetlands created, restored or enhanced in priority landscapes				
Performance, acres		NA	TBD	TBD
Performance measure: Farmland, forest land, and wetlands protected by conservation easements				
Performance, acres		35,338	100,000	110,000

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Full Cost by Secretary's Strategic Priorities

National forest & private working lands are conserved, restored and made more resilient to climate change and are managed to enhance water resources.

PROGRAM / PROGRAM ITEMS	AMOUNT ($000) FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
Environmental Quality Incentives Program			
Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation	19,132	25,190	20,023
Conservation Implementation	99,117	130,503	103,732
Financial Assistance - Program Administration	66,540	87,611	69,639
Financial Assistance - Cost Share & Monetary Incentives	757,389	788,698	896,969
Indirect Costs	112,404	147,998	117,637
Total Costs	1,054,582	1,180,000	1,208,000
FTEs	2,395	3,290	2,510
Performance measure: Priority landscapes with high impact targeted conservation practices applied to improve water quality			
Performance, acres	NA	TBD	TBD
Performance measure: Comprehensive nutrient management plans applied			
Performance, number	2,019	2,000	2,000
Performance measure: Land with conservation applied to improve irrigation efficiency			
Performance, acres	1,131,159	1,100,000	1,000,000
Performance measure: Priority landscapes with high impact targeted conservation practices applied to improve irrigation efficiency			
Performance, acres	NA	TBD	TBD
Performance measure: Cropland with conservation applied to improve soil quality			
Performance, million acres	4.8	5.0	5.0
Performance measure: Grazing and forest land with conservation applied to protect and improve the resource base			
Performance, million acres	17.2	NA	NA
Performance measure: Grazing land with conservation applied to protect the resource base			
Performance, million acres	NA	14.3	14.3
Performance measure: Forest land with conservation applied to protect and improve vegetative condition			
Performance, acres	NA	700,000	700,000
Grasslands Reserve Program			
Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation	2,021	3,647	3,460
Conservation Implementation	835	1,507	1,430
Financial Assistance - Program Administration	3,240	5,847	5,547
Financial Assistance - Cost Share & Monetary Incentives	41,042	88,774	67,749
Indirect Costs	520	939	890
Total Costs	47,658	100,714	79,076
FTEs	30	42	42
Performance measure: Farmland and grazing lands protected by conservation easements			
Performance, acres	1,094	50,000	40,000

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Full Cost by Secretary's Strategic Priorities

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PROGRAM	PROGRAM ITEMS	AMOUNT ($000) FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
Agricultural Water Enhancement Program				
	Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation	1,264	2,396	2,471
	Conservation Implementation	4,390	8,323	8,582
	Financial Assistance - Program Administration	3,091	5,860	6,042
	Financial Assistance - Cost Share & Monetary Incentives	60,397	51,376	51,703
	Indirect Costs	2,661	5,045	5,202
	Total Costs	71,803	73,000	74,000
	FTEs	66	151	152
	Performance measure: Land with conservation applied to improve irrigation efficiency			
	Performance, acres	2,850	50,000	55,000
	Performance measure: Land with conservation applied to improve water quality			
	Performance, acres	6,239	20,000	20,000
Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program				
	Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation	2,770	2,763	2,672
	Conservation Implementation	5,895	5,880	5,687
	Financial Assistance - Program Administration	7,083	7,064	6,832
	Financial Assistance - Cost Share & Monetary Incentives	52,146	64,457	53,131
	Indirect Costs	4,849	4,836	4,678
	Total Costs	72,743	85,000	73,000
	FTEs	128	152	143
	Performance measure: Non-Federal land with conservation applied to improve fish and wildlife habitat quality			
	Performance, acres	335,402	350,000	400,000
Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program				
	Financial Assistance - Program Administration	336	567	509
	Conservation Implementation	18	30	27
	Financial Assistance - Program Administration	3,828	6,456	5,793
	Financial Assistance-Cost Share & Monetary Incentives	112,915	140,132	151,146
	Indirect Costs	1,669	2,815	2,525
	Total Costs	118,766	150,000	160,000
	FTEs	34	59	51
	Performance measure: Prime, unique, or important farmland protected by conservation easements from conversion to non-agricultural uses			
	Performance, acres	38,260	40,000	45,000

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Full Cost by Secretary's Strategic Priorities

National forest & private working lands are conserved, restored and made more resilient to climate change and are managed to enhance water resources.

PROGRAM	PROGRAM ITEMS	AMOUNT ($000) FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
Conservation Security Program				
	Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation	1,264	990	933
	Conservation Implementation	1,657	1,298	1,223
	Financial Assistance - Program Administration	6,647	5,205	4,903
	Financial Assistance - Cost Share & Monetary Incentives	246,121	210,520	190,357
	Indirect Costs	20,315	15,950	15,026
	Total Costs	276,004	233,963	212,442
	FTEs	220	152	138
	Performance measure: Cropland that uses management practices to reduce nitrogen loading to surface and groundwater			
	Performance, million acres	1.0	0.8	0.6
Conservation Stewardship Program				
	Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation	199	1,814	1,389
	Conservation Implementation	260	2,379	1,821
	Financial Assistance - Program Administration	1,043	9,538	7,300
	Financial Assistance - Cost Share & Monetary Incentives	-	191,764	281,872
	Indirect Costs	3,188	29,226	22,367
	Total Costs	4,689	234,721	314,749
	FTEs	38	346	242
	Performance measure: Under development			
	Performance,	TBD	TBD	TBD
Agricultural Management Assistance				
	Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation	150	172	125
	Conservation Implementation	465	534	387
	Financial Assistance - Program Administration	441	506	367
	Financial Assistance - Cost Share & Monetary Incentives	6,181	6,126	1,504
	Indirect Costs	141	162	117
	Total Costs	7,378	7,500	2,500
	FTEs	9	27	18
	Performance measure: Land with conservation applied to improve irrigation efficiency			
	Performance, acres	8,068	8,150	8,150
Healthy Forests Reserve Program				
	Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation	180	399	331
	Conservation Implementation	382	846	702
	Financial Assistance - Program Administration	459	1,016	843
	Financial Assistance - Cost Share & Monetary Incentives	1,191	6,794	7,296
	Indirect Costs	314	695	578
	Total Costs	2,526	9,750	9,750
	FTEs	5	19	14
	Performance measure: Non-Federal land with conservation applied to improve fish and wildlife habitat quality			
	Performance, acres	-	3,750	3,000

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Full Cost by Secretary's Strategic Priorities

National forest & private working lands are conserved, restored and made more resilient to climate change and are managed to enhance water resources.

PROGRAM	PROGRAM ITEMS	AMOUNT ($000) FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program				
	Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation	209	601	1,263
	Conservation Implementation	1,083	3,115	6,544
	Financial Assistance - Program Administration	727	2,091	4,393
	Financial Assistance - Cost Share & Monetary Incentives	18,595	33,659	52,379
	Indirect Costs	1,228	3,534	7,421
	Total Costs	21,842	43,000	72,000
	FTEs	25	83	171
	Performance measure: Land with conservation applied to improve water quality Performance,acres	4,572	65,000	150,000
Conservation Reserve Program				
	Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation	11,579	17,279	25,723
	Conservation Implementation	17,242	25,730	38,304
	Financial Assistance - Program Administration	17,497	26,110	38,870
	Financial Assistance - Cost Share & Monetary Incentives	-	-	-
	Indirect Costs	9,596	14,320	21,319
	Total Costs	55,914	83,439	124,216
	FTEs	538	759	1,123
Mandatory Total				
	Total Costs	2,169,616	2,814,202	2,831,959
	FTEs	3,679	5,336	4,885
Agency Total				
	Total Costs	3,295,544	3,745,966	3,785,056
	FTEs	10,317	12,662	11,043

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Full Cost by Secretary's Strategic Priorities

America leads the world in crop production and biotech crop exports.

PROGRAM	PROGRAM ITEMS		AMOUNT ($000) FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
Plant Materials Centers					
	Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment		663	673	679
	Natural Resource Technology Transfer		2,294	2,328	2,351
	Indirect Costs		2,507	2,543	2,569
		Total Costs	5,464	5,544	5,599
		FTEs	51	51	48
	Performance measure: Technical documents written and transferred				
	Performance, number		436	340	340
Discretionary Total					
		Total Costs	5,464	5,544	5,599
		FTEs	51	51	48
Mandatory Total					
		Total Costs	-	-	-
		FTEs	-	-	-
Agency Total					
		Total Costs	5,464	5,544	5,599
		FTEs	51	51	48