

United States Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service



# Natural Resources Conservation Service

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State Forester

*The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and  
employer*

# Who We Are...

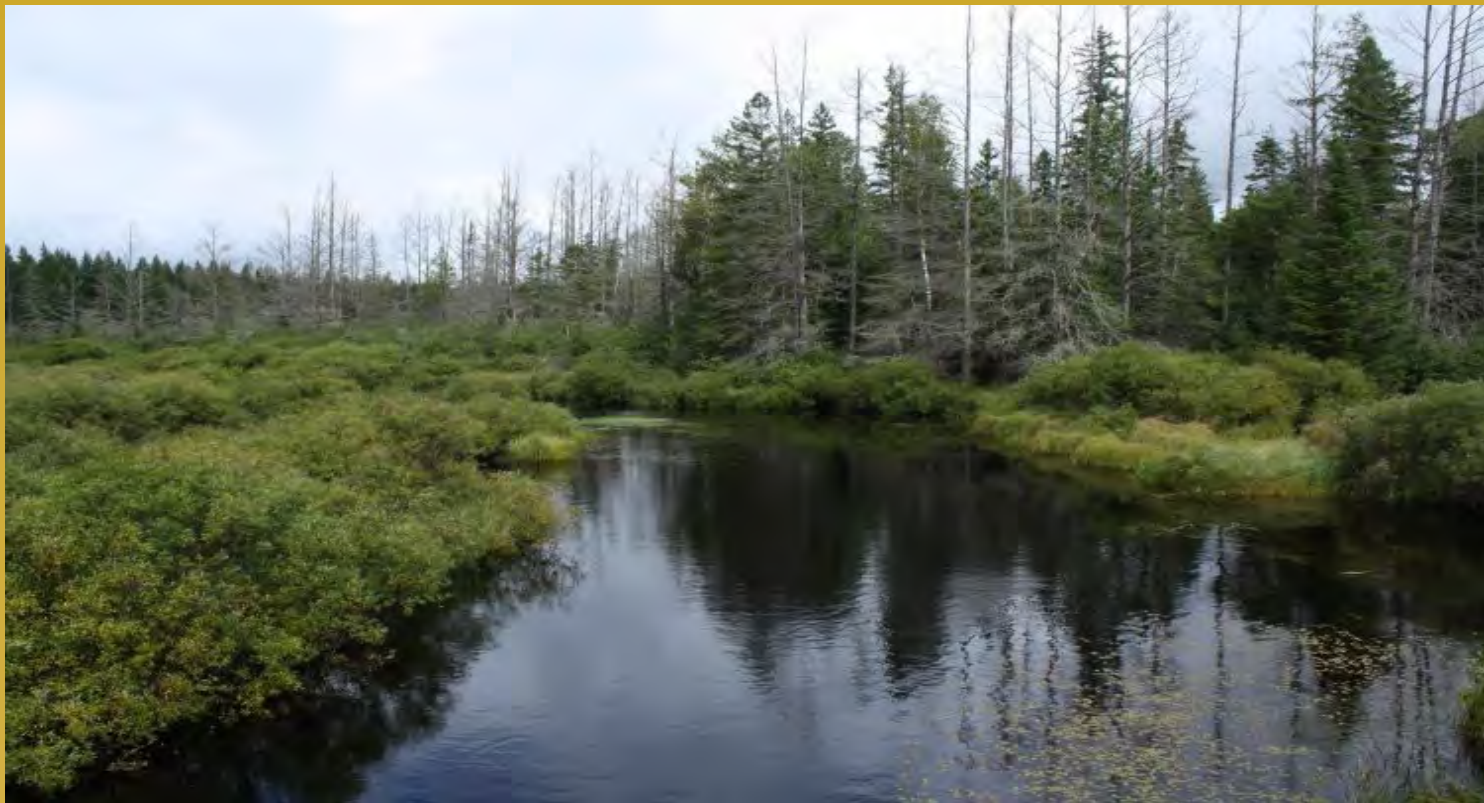
*The Natural Resources Conservation Service is the federal agency that works with landowners on private lands to conserve natural resources. NRCS was formerly called the Soil Conservation Service or "SCS" and was created during the Dust Bowl days of the 1930s.*



*Dust storms and gullies ravaged the Nation's farmland, stripping away millions of tons of topsoil.*

# Who We Are...

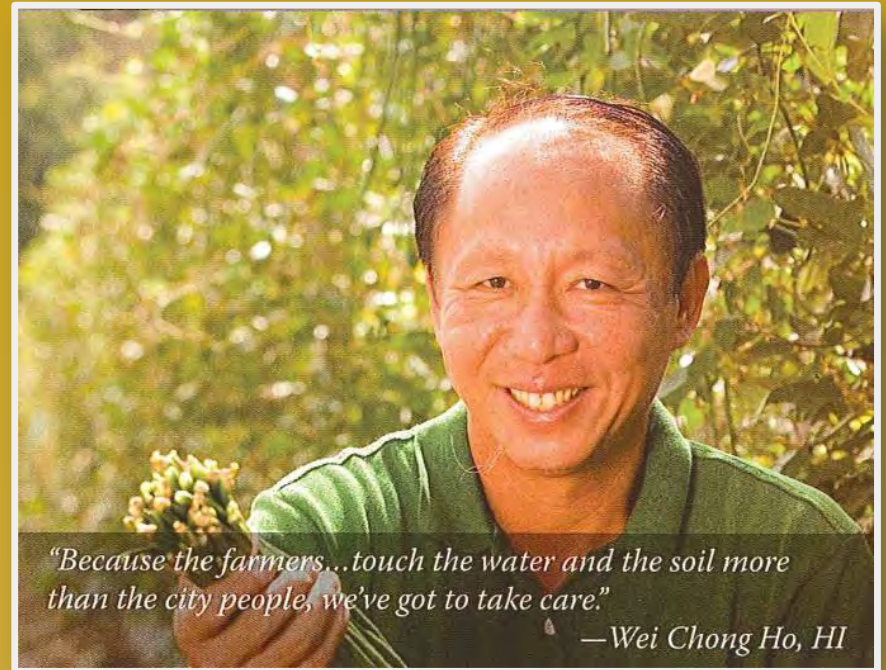
*Since that time, NRCS has kept its commitment to protecting and conserving soil and other natural resources on America's private lands.*





# Who We Are...

*We work with customers to help them reduce erosion, protect wildlife, promote good land and water use, and preserve the Nation's natural resources.*



# How Can NRCS offer assistance?

- ▶ Conservation Technical Assistance
- ▶ Farm Bill Programs
  - ▶ Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
  - ▶ Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP)
  - ▶ Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

*In order to participate in USDA farm programs, Federal law requires that all persons that produce agriculture commodities must protect their highly erodible cropland from excessive erosion. In addition, anyone participating in USDA farm programs must certify that they have not produced crops on converted wetlands and did not convert a wetland.*

# Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)



- ▶ EQIP is a voluntary conservation program that supports production agriculture and environmental quality as compatible goals.
- ▶ Offers financial and technical assistance with structural and management conservation practices on agricultural and non-industrial private forestry land
- ▶ Sign-up rankings are usually in the fall, but eligible participant can sign up at anytime during the year.
- ▶ Contracts for practice implementation from 1-10 years.



## Basic EQIP Eligibility

- ▶ Be an agricultural producer who is engaged in livestock or agricultural production, including non-industrial private forestland.
- ▶ Have control of the land for the term of the proposed contract period. (*Deed, Rental Agreement, or other...*)
- ▶ Be in compliance with farm bill provisions.
  - ▶ Wetland and Highly Erodible Land (HEL) certifications.
- ▶ Be within appropriate payment limitation and adjusted gross income.



- ▶ **Must Have A Forest Management Plan**

# How EQIP Works

- *Producers can apply in person at their local service center or complete an application online and mail to their local service center.*
- *NRCS staff will assist in completing the application.*
- *NRCS staff will make a site visit to determine the appropriate practices needed to address the resource concern.*
- *Applications are ranked at specific times of the year to determine funded applications.*



# How EQIP Works

- *Applicants are notified of pre-approval via certified letter.*
- *NRCS develops a conservation plan outlining the practices under contract.*
- *Contract is developed and signed by both parties.*
- *All NRCS programs are voluntary!*

- ▶ Common EQIP Practices
  - ▶ Forest Management Plan CAP-106
  - ▶ Riparian Forest Buffer
  - ▶ Forest Stand Improvement
  - ▶ Brush Management
  - ▶ Woody Residue Treatment
  - ▶ Tree/Shrub Establishment
  - ▶ Herbaceous Weed Control
  - ▶ Road Trail and Landing Closure and Treatment
  - ▶ Windbreak/Shelterbelt
  - ▶ Tree and Shrub Site Preparation







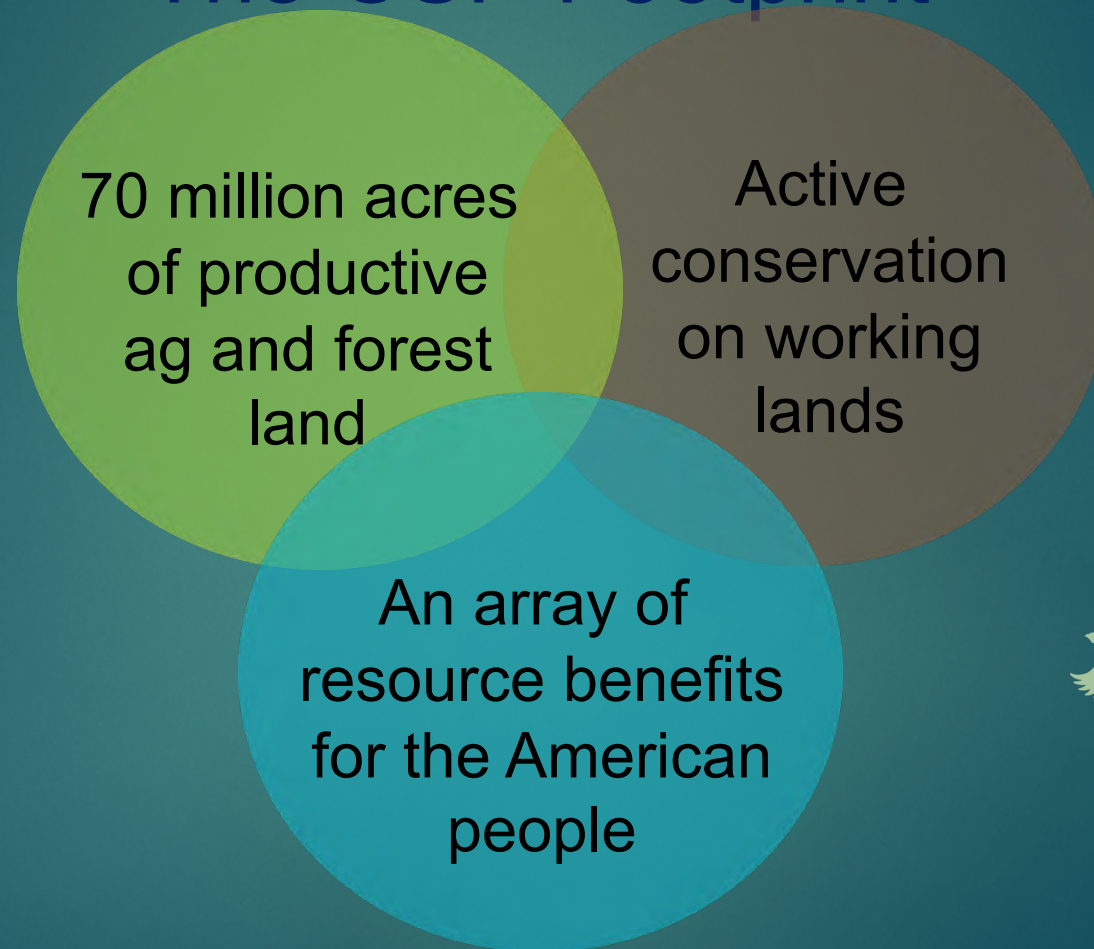


# CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

*Building Better Outcomes*



# The CSP Footprint



- Land Eligibility
  - Private agricultural land
  - Agricultural Indian lands
  - Nonindustrial private forest land



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# Application Type

- Agricultural land applications will compete separately from NIPF applications.
- Applicants with both Ag land and NIPF may elect to apply for:
  1. One application for NIPF
  2. One application for agricultural land
  3. Two applications, one for each land type

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## **Planning Steps**

Evaluation to determine  
if stewardship  
threshold requirement  
is met (CAET)

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# Stewardship Threshold Eligibility

- An application must meet TWO resource concerns for each land use and land management system at the time of application
- At a minimum, an applicant must meet or exceed ONE ADDITIONAL resource concern for each land use by the end of the stewardship contract

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# CAET – Planning

- The tool also:  **NEW**
  - integrates and supports the processes of inventorying resources, determining existing land stewardship and identifying new conservation activities

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## **Planning: Field Verification**

- NRCS will examine the field conditions and written records to determine if planning criteria or evaluation criteria is met during the CAET process.



# Planning- Resource Concerns Met

## Resource Concerns

❌ Soil Erosion

❌ Soil Quality Degradation

✅ Excess Water

✅ Insufficient Water

❌ Water Quality Degradation

✅ Air Quality Impacts

✅ Degraded Plant Condition

❌ Fish and Wildlife - Inadequate Habitat

⚠️ Livestock Production Limitation

❌ Inefficient Energy Use





# Planning - Additional Activities

## ✓ Compaction

Status at Time of Application: Cause Not Met

324 - Deep Tillage

328 - Conservation Crop Rotation

334 - Controlled Traffic Farming

340 - Cover Crop

E328107I - Improved resource conserving crop rotation to improve soil compaction

✓ E328107R - Resource conserving crop rotation to improve soil compaction

E334107Z - Controlled traffic farming to reduce compaction

E340107Z - Cover crop to minimize soil compaction

Will the Resource Concern Cause be met or exceeded with selected Conservation Activities?

Yes ▼



# Payments

- ▶ Annual Payments may vary from year to year depending on the management system agreed to at the time of enrollment and the extent of additional activities completed each year.
- ▶ Minimum \$1500/yr for applicants without existing contract





# Forestry Enhancements

## Something for Everyone

- ▶ **E612101Z** - Cropland conversion to trees for long term water erosion control
- ▶ **E612130Z** - Planting for high carbon sequestration rate
- ▶ **E666132Z2** - Reduce forest stand density to improve a degraded plant community.
- ▶ **E666133Z1** - Creating structural diversity with patch openings
- ▶ **E391136Z** - Increase riparian forest buffer width to enhance wildlife habitat
- ▶ 40 forestry enhancements possible and 15 for wildlife

# Questions

