Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

Fact Sheet

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service offers voluntary Farm Bill programs that benefit both agricultural producers and the environment.

What Is RCPP?

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is a partner-driven approach to conservation that funds solutions to natural resource challenges on agricultural land. By leveraging collective resources and collaborating on common goals, RCPP demonstrates the power of public-private partnerships in delivering results for agriculture and conservation.

NRCS is working to improve RCPP by streamlining and simplifying the program to ease the burden on employees and partners and help maximize flexibility for partners leveraging their investments with NRCS resources and capabilities.

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) delivers the largest long-term investment in NRCS conservation programs in decades, delivering over $34 billion through fiscal year 2031, including more than $2.6 billion for RCPP. This increase in funding ensures conservation remains rooted in agriculture, with benefits to producers, communities and natural resources.

RCPP projects fall under two categories:

RCPP Classic and RCPP Alternative Funding Arrangements (AFA).

RCPP CLASSIC	RCPP Classic projects are implemented through NRCS using NRCS contracts and easements with producers, landowners and communities, in collaboration with project partners.
RCPP ALTERNATIVE FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS (AFA)	Through RCPP AFA, NRCS provides funding directly to partners to support conservation activities with producers. RCPP AFA funding also reimburses partners for conservation activities done on behalf of producers, landowners, or other entities.

What Kinds of Activities Does RCPP Support?

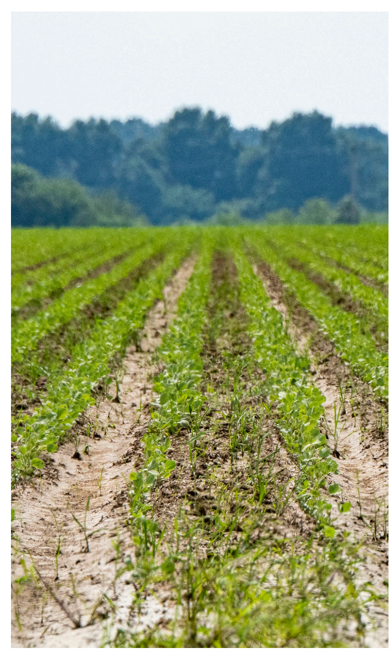
RCPP projects include a range of on-the-ground conservation tools and activities implemented by farmers, ranchers and forest landowners. These include:

- Land management, improvement and restoration practices.
- Land rentals, or payments to producers for actual net loss from land use changes or conservation practices when NRCS payment rates do not cover foregone income.
- Entity-held easements.
- United States-held easements.
- Public works and watershed improvements, specifically supporting the implementation of structural works to address watershed-scale issues through an NRCS-approved watershed plan.

More Information

Visit nrcs.usda.gov/RCPP for more information, resources, and to find contact information for your state or area RCPP Coordinator.

To find your local USDA Service Center, visit nrcs.usda.gov or scan the QR code.



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A single RCPP project can harness any combination of these eligible activity types as part of an RCPP project.

Proposed projects must generate conservation benefits by addressing specific natural resource objectives in a state or multi-state area or address one or more primary resource concerns within an NRCS-designated critical conservation area (CCA).

Visit nrcs.usda.gov/RCPP for examples of successful RCPP projects.

Who Is Eligible?

There are many organizational types eligible to apply for RCPP. Some of these include:

- Nonprofits, for-profit organizations, and businesses, including agricultural organizations and those with a history of working with producers.
- Native American tribal organizations and governments.
- Institutions of higher education.
- Soil and water conservation districts.

View the full list of eligible entities here or visit nrcs.usda.gov/RCPP.

The lead partner for an RCPP project applies for an award and is ultimately responsible for collaborating with NRCS to successfully complete the RCPP project.

Can Producers Submit a Proposal for RCPP?

Individual producers can't submit proposals for project areas but can participate in active RCPP projects. Once NRCS selects a project and executes an RCPP agreement with a lead partner, agricultural producers may participate in an RCPP project in one of three ways:

- In an RCPP Classic project area, producers seeking to implement conservation activities can apply through NRCS.
- Individual producers in an RCPP AFA project area seeking to implement conservation activities can apply through the lead partner.
- Producers may engage with a third party to act as their representative in working with NRCS.

What Makes a Competitive RCPP Proposal?

Successful RCPP applicants will:

- Bring an array of financial and technical capabilities to projects.
- Demonstrate experience working effectively and collaboratively with agricultural producers and landowners.
- Propose sustainable and measurable approaches to achieving compelling conservation outcomes.
- Prioritize producers and producer benefits in their project development and execution.
- Propose effective and compelling solutions to help solve natural resource challenges. Partners are responsible for evaluating a project's impact and results.

How Do I Apply?

Applications are accepted through set funding opportunities announced approximately once per year. When a funding opportunity is announced, NRCS will post that opportunity on the RCPP website, on Grants.gov, and publicize through its available communications channels. For the latest updates, please subscribe to receive conservation news and information on our website.

Applications are accepted from all 50 States, the Caribbean Area (Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands), and U.S. territories in the Pacific Island Areas (Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands).