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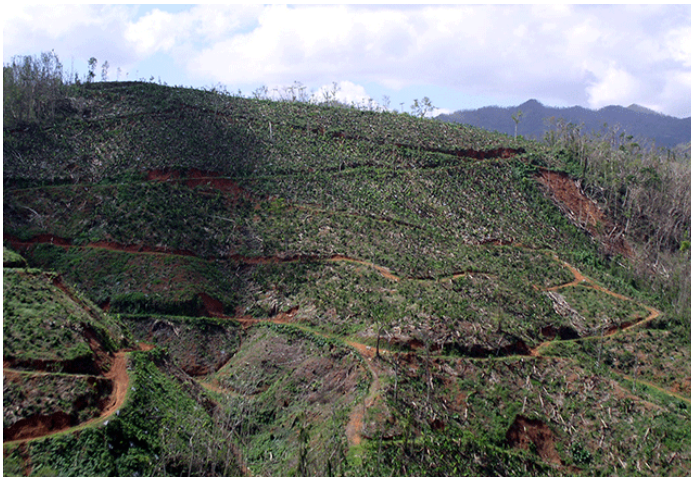
United States Department of Agriculture

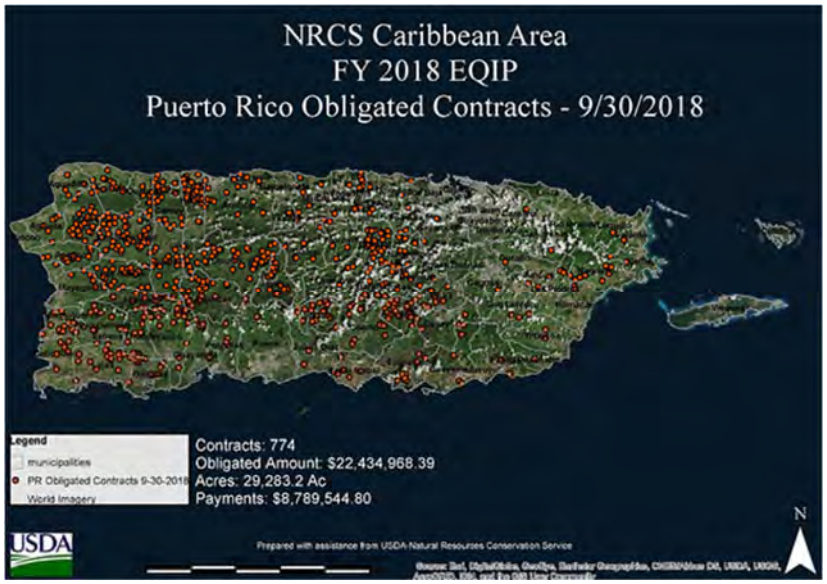
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

NRCS Caribbean Area is committed to providing emergency assistance to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) via the **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)**.

EQIP helps farmers and ranchers improve and protect environmental quality on their land by offering financial and technical assistance to voluntarily implement conservation practices. To help farmers recover from storm damage and rebuild conservation practices damaged by the hurricanes, NRCS initiated **EQIP** equitable relief assistance. Five emergency recovery practices were made available to all farmers: obstruction removal, roofs and covers, clearing and snagging (of debris in waterways) and emergency animal mortality management. NRCS partnered with conservation districts, PR & VI Agriculture Depts., and COOPLE to assess damage and apply conservation practices in priority areas.



Utuado coffee farms denuded by hurricane María, Sept. 27, 2017.



EQIP Status Update:

In the months after hurricanes Irma & María, NRCS processed over **3,000** EQIP applications. Of those, **1,222** were for emergency EQIP assistance.

FY 2018 recorded **828** obligated contracts to provide over **$23.7 million** in financial assistance. At least **364** contracts had payments for completed practices for over **$8.8 million**, with an average payment of **$24,195**. Over **24,380** acres of conservation implementation was completed, including **11,854** acres of conservation applied to improve water quality and **2,466** acres of grazing land conservation applied. Over **99%** of the financial assistance we provided went to beginning, limited-resource or socially-disadvantaged farmers; **12%** of our FY 2018 participants were women, **1%** were veterans, **9%** were black and **90%** were Hispanic.

More Information:

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Natural Resources Conservation Service

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