

United States Department of Agriculture



New Mexico State Technical Committee Meeting 4/30/2024 FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION

FSA | NRCS | RMA | Business Center



Welcome/Introductions- Kenneth State Conservationist- Xavier Montoya Programs- NRCS Programs Staff

- 1. Intro to State Tech Committee/IRA- Kenneth
- 2. Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)- Maggie Gnann
- 3. Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)- Martin Meairs
- 4. Payment Schedule- Athena Cholas
- 5. Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)- Athena Cholas
- 6. Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)- Athena Cholas
- 7. Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP)- Aaron Reynolds/Grace Woodard

Resource Technology Updates- Art Ariaz

 Conservation Assessment Ranking Tool/Conservation Desktop- Ana Gomes Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)- Kris Graham Chavez Engineering Updates- Elias Gnann Partner Updates

- Farm Service Agency
- Other Partners

Questions

Responsibilities of the STC

- Provide information, analysis, recommendations to USDA on conservation priorities and criteria for natural resources conservation activities and programs, including application and funding
- Identify emerging natural resource concerns and program needs
- Recommend conservation practice standards and specifications
- Recommend State and national program policy based on resource data

Responsibilities (Cont)

- Review activities of the local working groups to ensure State priorities are being addressed locally
- Make recommendations to the State Conservationist on requests and recommendations from local working groups
- Assist NRCS with public outreach and information efforts and identify educational and producers' training needs

Recommendations Due Date will be set at next STC <u>Meeting</u>



Updated Program Deadlines

Program/Initiative	Application Deadline	Ranking	80% Obligation	
EQIP Classic	November 3, 2023	March 1, 2024	May 31, 2024	
EQIP CIC	November 3, 2023	March 1, 2024	May 31, 2024	
EQIP IRA	April 26, 2024	TBA***	May 31, 2024	
CSP IRA	Jan 5,2024	March 1, 2024	May 31, 2024	
CSP Classic****	November 3, 2023	March 1, 2024	May 31, 2024	
2024 CSP Renewals (Includes IRA)	TBA**	November 17, 2023	December 22,2023	
2025 CSP Renewals	May 3, 2024**	ТВА	ТВА	
CSP- GCI-1	TBA**	TBA**	TBA**	
ACEP	November 3, 2023*	ТВА	Sept 30,2024	
ACEP IRA	November 13, 2023	December 8,2023	TBA**	
CIG	ТВА	ТВА	Sept 30,2024	-
*High Priority Applications. Second Sig	gn up may be announce if ne	eeded		
** NHQ Established Deadline				Natural
*** IRA Fund Pools will use ACTnow a	and Ranking Deadlines are d	ifferent for each fund co	ode	Resources
**** CSP Classic BFR and NIPF and CSP IRA BFR and NIPF Fund Pools will use ACTnow and ranking will ASAP				Conservation Service
after app is accepted				pres usda qu



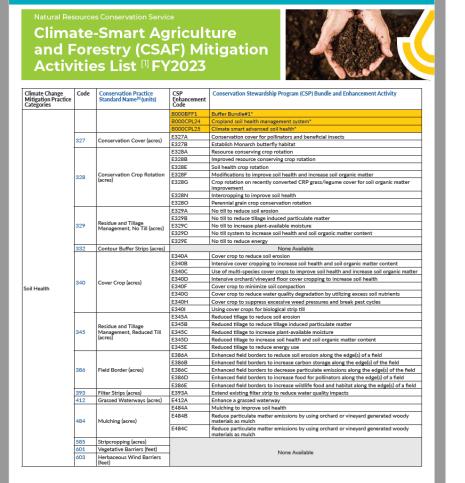
Inflation Reduction Act IRA

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Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)

- Signed into law in August 2022
- Investment in climate and clean energy
- Promote climate-smart agriculture and forestry greenhouse gas mitigation activities



IRA Requirements

CSP & EQIP Use of Funds:

The funds shall **only** be available for 1 or more agricultural conservation practices, enhancements, or bundles that the Secretary determines directly improve soil carbon, reduce nitrogen losses, or reduce, capture, avoid, or sequester carbon dioxide, methane, or nitrous oxide emissions, associated with agricultural production;

IRA Requirements

CONDITIONS.--The funds made available under subsection (a) are subject to the conditions that the Secretary shall not--

(1) Enter into any agreement--

(A) that is for a term extending beyond September 30, 2031; or

(B) under which any payment could be outlaid or funds disbursed after September 30, 2031; or

(2) Use any other funds available to the Secretary to satisfy obligations initially made under this section.



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FY 2023 IRA Contract Types

Eligible IRA contract types:

- ➤CSP Classic
- ➤CSP Renewals
- ► EQIP Classic

Available Funding: \$39,143,000

➤CSP - \$8,524,000
 ➤EQIP - \$30,619,000

IRA Funding Period

- Participants will not/did not need to submit a separate application.
- Application Deadlines for IRA
 - CSP Jan 5th
 - EQIP was April 26th

<u>Utilized ACTNow to process IRA applications</u>

IRA Requirements

"IMPORTANT"

IRA funds:

- Cannot be combined with any other USDA program funding within a contract.
- Payments will count toward program-specific payment limitations

Application Processing

Cannot not use application types:

- Organic
 Plan-Organic
 OTI
- These application types have specific funding requirements that conflict with IRA funding requirements.



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IRA Core Practices

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Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry (CSAF) Mitigation Activity List

• FY24 list of NRCS climate-smart mitigation activities: nrcs.usda.gov/mitigation-activities.pdf

Authorized IRA Conservation Practices

• EQIP and CSP

- One or more core Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry (CSAF) conservation practice or activity identify by NHQ.
- Facilitating practices and activities may be included if needed to implement the core practice.
 - Must provide IRA benefits
 - Meet NPPH definition
 - Document the need
 - Directly tie to the core practice



Facilitating Practices Enable Mitigation

EXAMPLES Tree/Shrub Establishment (612) Tree Shrub Site Preparation (490) Access Control (472)

Conservation Crop Rotation (328) Cover Crops (340) Irrigation Water Management (449) Pest Management Conservation System (595)

> Brush Management (314) Fence (382)

Prescribed Grazing (528) Watering Facility (614) Stream Crossing (578) Fence (382) Livestock Shelter Structure (576)

Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645) Brush Management (314) Herbaceous Weed Treatment (315) Prescribed Grazing (528)

- IRA funding can also be used for practices needed to *facilitate a mitigation practice*.
- Here are some examples of conservation systems that include mitigation practices and the practices that may be needed to facilitate them.



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Key Points

One or more core practices or activities must be planned in a contract.

- Facilitating practices and activities can receive payment but must directly support a core practice addressing climate change in the contract.
- IRA and non-IRA funds cannot be combined in a contract.
- ➢ Practices and activities must be implemented, and payments completed prior to September 30, 2031.



Projected IRA Allocations???

EQIP

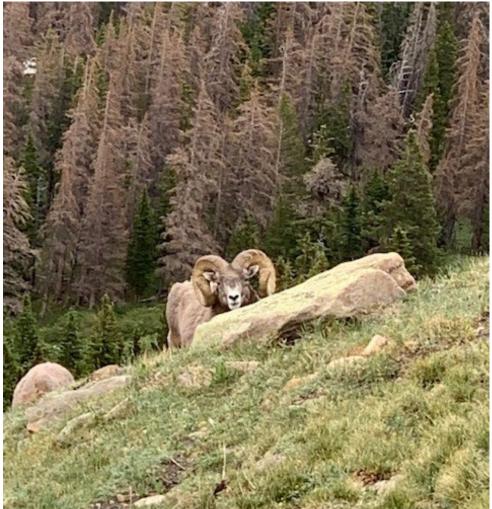
FY 24: **\$19,742,359** FY 25: **\$34,199,102** FY 26: **\$39,403,529**

CSP

FY 24: **\$7,560,705** FY 25: **\$15,221,485** FY 26: **\$22,882,265**

ACEP

FY 24: **\$7,616,055** FY 25: **\$9,139,266**



Resources Conservation Service **nrcs.usda.gov**



Questions?

Email recommendations to Kenneth.branch@usda.gov aaron.Reynolds@usda.gov athena.cholas@usda.gov martin.meairs@usda.gov maggie.gnann@usda.gov

Due date will be provided at next STC Meeting (August)







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Incentives Program (EQIP)

Environmental Quality

STC Meeting April 30, 2024

Maggie Gnann maggie.gnann@usda.gov





Environmental Quality Incentives () () () Program (EQIP) Overview

- EQIP provides technical and financial assistance to agricultural producers and forest landowners to address natural resource concerns, such as:
 - Improved water and air quality
 - Conserved ground and surface water
 - Increased soil health
 - Reduced soil erosion and sedimentation
 - Improved or created wildlife habitat
 - Mitigation against drought and increasing weather volatility.
- NRCS works one-on-one with producers to develop a conservation plan that outlines conservation practices and activities to help solve on-farm resource issues.
- EQIP is a voluntary program, and the intention of the program is to help producers make conservation work for them.
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EQIP FY24 General Funding Pools

National Pools:

- Lesser Prairie Chicken (Working Land for Wildlife)
- National Water Quality (NWQI)
 - Animas River- Three 12 Digit HUC codes
- WaterSMART: (Funding length varies between 4 to 5 years depending on approved proposal)
 - Bloomfield Irrigation District
 - Fort Sumner Irrigation District
 - Animas Watershed
 - Arch Hurley Conservancy District
 - Carlsbad Irrigation District
 - Elephant Butte Irrigation District
 - Guadalupe Soil and Water Conservation District
 - Middle Rio Grande Conservation District.

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EQIP FY24 National Funding Pools & & & (Continued

- High Tunnels
- Organic including National Organic Initiative (NOI) and Organic Transition Initiative (OTI)
- Urban
- Western Drought
- Energy
- Source Water Priority areas in Team 3, 6, 9, 11
- Conservation Incentive Contracts (CIC)
- Strike Force

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- The 2018 Farm Bill requires specific targets for financial assistance (FA):
 - 50% to livestock- related conservation practices;
 - 10% to wildlife-related conservation practices,
 - 5% to beginning farmers and ranchers,
 - 5% to socially disadvantage farmers and ranchers.

To reach these goals, New Mexico created specific state pools:

- Wildlife
- BFR High Tunnel
- BFR Forested
- SD Forested
- State AFO (Animal Feeding Operation)

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- Water Management Entity Pools (Irrigation Districts, Aquifer Recovery, and Acequia Pools)
- Water Management Entities (WMEs) are defined as a state irrigation district, ground water management district, acequia, land grant-merced, or similar entity that has jurisdiction or responsibilities related to water delivery or management on eligible lands.
- WMEs can enter into a EQIP contract if all the following criteria is met:
 - WME is a public or semi-public agency or organization
 - The purpose of the WME is to assist private agricultural producers with managing water distribution or conservation systems
 - The water conservation or irrigation practices support a water conservation project that will effectively conserve water, provide fish and wildlife habitat, or provide drought-related environmental mitigation.

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- CPAs, DIAs, CEMAs Pool
- CPA = Conservation Planning Activates
- DIA = Design and Implementation Activities
- **CEMA= Conservation Evaluation and Monitoring Activities**
- CPAs, DIAs and CEMAs are a financial assistance opportunity for participants to hire Technical Service Producers (TPS) or Qualified Individuals to work through the planning, design, and monitoring stages of NRCS's 9 steps of planning.
- New Mexico needs more Technical Service Providers!

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- CPA 102- Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP)
- CPA 106- Forest Management Plan
- CPA 110- Grazing Management Plan
- CPA 116- Soil Health Management Plan
- CPA 138- Conservation Plan Supporting Organic Transition
- DIA 101- CNMP Design and Implementation
- DIA 120- Agricultural Energy Design
- DIA 157- Nutrient Management Design
- DIA 159- Grazing Management Design
- CEMA 216- Soil Health Testing
- CEMA 217- Soil and Source Testing for Nutrient Management
- This is not the entire list. There are many more.

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- <u>https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/eqip-</u> environmental-quality-incentives/eqip-cpas-dias-and-cemas
- <u>https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/getting-assistance/technical-assistance/technical-service-providers</u>
- New Mexico and AZ NRCS TSP Coordinator:
 - Dan Bloedel
 - Daniel.bloedel@usda.gov
 - Office Phone Number: 505-761-4448

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EQIP FY24 Area Pools

- To further our reach to Historically Underserved Participants North and South Area Pools were created to focus on:
- BFR Crop/Pasture
- BFR Grazed Range
- SD Crop/Pasture
- SD Grazed Range
- Tribal Forest
- Tribal Grazed Range
- Tribal Irrigated Crop

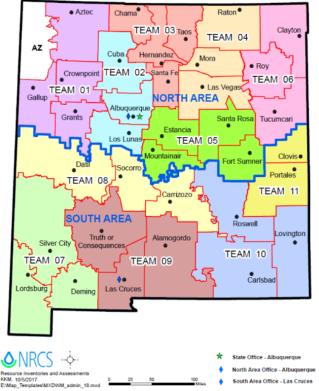
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EQIP FY24 Local Pools

- There are 35 NRCS Service Centers located across the state that are broken up in 11 teams and 2 areas.
 - To ensure funds are spent the best way possible, the district conservationist of each team will hold a local working group meeting to hear the public's recommendations.
 - Allocations per team are determined based on land uses within their teams from the US Ag Census.





EQIP FY24 Local Pools Continued

Each of the 11 Teams have between 3-5 ranking pools that are focused on specific land uses:

- Irrigated Crop
- Dry Crop
- Range
- Forest
- Animal Feeding Operations (AFO)s
- Irrigated Pasture or Pasture
- 97 Fund Pools in EQIP General alone.

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Inflation Reduction Act

- The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) was enacted under Subtitle B "Conservation" of Title II of Public Law No. 117-169 on August 16, 2022.
- NRCS may use IRA funds for contracts that include one or more core conservation practices or activities identified by national NRCS and any associated facilitating practices or activities that:
 - Directly improve soil carbon
 - Reduce nitrogen losses
 - Reduce capture, avoid, or sequester carbon dioxide, methane, or nitrous oxide emissions associated with agricultural production.

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EQIP FY24 IRA (Inflation Reduction Act)

- This is our second year administering EQIP IRA funds. EQIP IRA funds cannot be combined with EQIP General funds.
- We used "Act Now" for EQIP IRA funds. "Act Now" allows NRCS to approve and obligate a ranked application in designated pools when an application meets or exceeds a state determined minimum ranking score without waiting until the NRCS field office ranks all applications in the ranking pool.
- State Pools (ranking threshold of 35):
 - Act Now IRA Crop/Pasture
 - Act Now Forestry
 - Act Now Range
- Local Pools (ranking threshold varied per team):
 - Each Team was required to pick at least one watershed from their team to focus funds with input from the local working group.

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Allocations

FY2024:

- EQIP General: \$24,226,924; EQIP IRA: \$30,619,000.00
- Total: \$54,845,924

FY2023:

- EQIP General: \$23,742,000; EQIP IRA: \$4,851,452.97
- Total: \$28,593,452.97

FY2022:

• EQIP General: \$26,320,085.08

FY2021

• EQIP General: \$27,644,095.64

FY2020

• EQIP General: \$20,880,044.69

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Application Statistics

- FY24: 1,220 applications (IRA & General)
 - More than twice the number of applications form FY23.
- FY23: 608 applications (IRA & General)
- FY22: 662 applications (only General)
- FY21: 533 applications (only General)
- FY20: 537 applications (only General)

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Contract Obligation Statistics:

FY2024: 83 contract obligated

- We are currently still in FY2024. 80% obligation deadline is May 31, 2024.
- We are on track to obligate around 484 applications. Obligation will be dependent on application deferrals and cancellations, or if cost estimates need to be adjusted
- FY2023: 353 contracts obligated
- FY2022: 333 contracts obligated
- FY2021: 307 contracts obligated
- FY2020: 289 contracts obligated

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Historically Underserved (HU) Contract (Obligation Statistics:

FY2024: Out of the current obligated contracts, \$7.6 million has been obligated to HU participants.

- 27.8% BF Obligation
- 49.1% SD Obligation
- 0.6% LRP Obligation

FY2023: \$37.8 million was obligated to HU Participants.

- 16.7% BF Obligation
- 51.7% SD Obligation
- 1.6% VT Obligation
- 1.6% LRP Obligation

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Top 5 EQIP Practices for Farm Bill 2018

Based on obligated amounts:

- Sprinkler System: \$22,167,668
- Brush Management: \$18,261,756
- Forest Stand Improvement: \$10,931,555
- Fence: \$10,115,108
- Irrigation Pipeline: \$9,474,155

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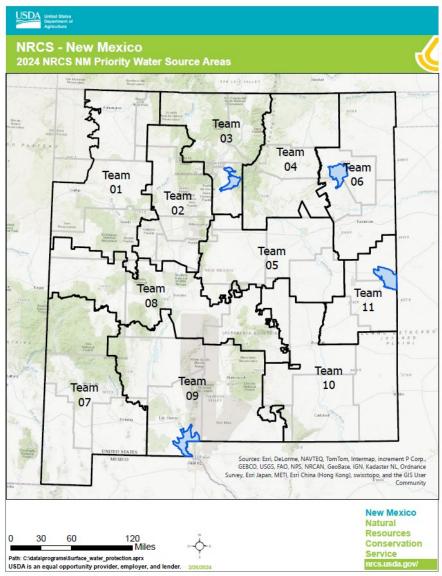


- Source Water Protection is focused on protecting sources of drinking water by identifying practices that have a significant water quality or water quantity benefit and implementing those practices in high priority areas.
 - FY24, Four different areas, located in Team 3, 6, 9 and 11.
 - 27 Identified practices:

313 Waste Storage Facility	410 Grade Stabilization Structure	
316 Animal Mortality	422 Hedgerow Planting	
317 Compositing Facility	449 Irrigation Water Management	
329 Residue and Tillage Management, No Till	511 Forage Harvest Management	
340 Cover Crop	528 Prescribed Grazing	
359 Waste Treatment Lagoon	590 Nutrient Management	
	Pest Management Conservation	
360 Water Facility Closure	595 System	
362 Diversion	620 Underground Outlet	
366 Anaerobic Digester	629 Waste Treatment	
367 Roofs and Covers	632 Waste Separation Facility	Natural
386 Field Border	633 Waste Recycling	Resources
391 Riparian Forest Buffer	634 Waste Transfer	Conservation
393 Filter Strip	635 Vegetated Treatment Area	Service
Stream Habitat Improvement and 395 Management		nrcs.usda.go

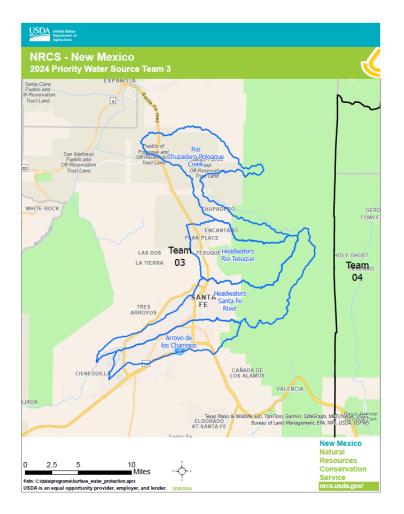


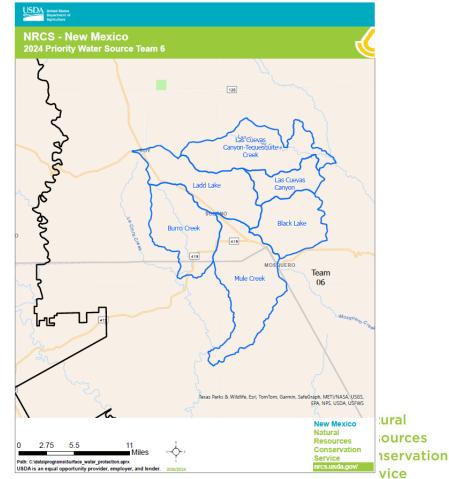




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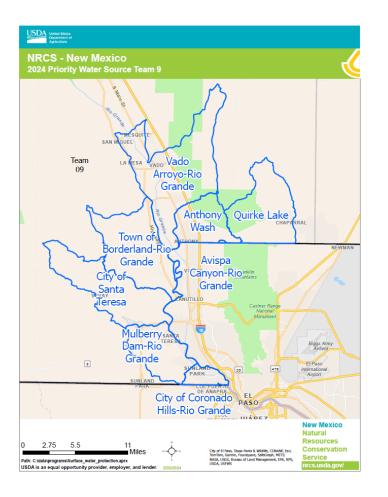


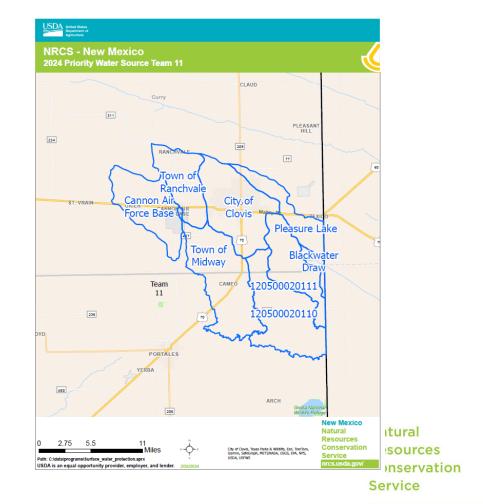




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Request #1:



• This was the first year of Source Water for Team 3.

• Do the Source Water Practices need to change?

- Are these practices under utilized?
- Are there other practices we should be focusing on?

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High Priority Practices

- "High Priority Practices" are eligible for increased payments for conservation practices that:
 - Are underutilized
 - Address specific cause of ground or surface water impairment related to excessive nutrients
 - Address the conservation of water and declining aquifers and mitigate drought
 - Meet other environmental priorities and priority resource concerns identified in habitat or other area restoration plans
 - Are geographically targets to address a resource concern in a specific watershed.
- "High Priority Practices" can overlap with the Source Water practices, but for High Priority Practices we are limited to 20 area

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High Priority Practices

FY2024: We had 8 High Priority Practices

329 Residue and Tillage Management, no till
340 Cover Crop
345 Residue and Tillage Management, reduced till
362 Diversion
410 Grade Stabilization Structure
420 Wildlife Habitat Planting
645 Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
649 Structures for Wildlife

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nrcs.usda.gov/

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- Things to consider:
 - Are there practices that have high potential for conservation benefit but are underutilized?
 - Practices with an underutilized practice purpose?
 - Example: Cover Crop purpose is to improve water quality by planting crops that take up excess soil nutrients.







National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI)

- NWQI was established in FY2012 as an initiative delivered jointly with state quality agencies and the Environmental Protection Agency to address agricultural sources of water pollution (nutrients, sediment, and pathogens) in priority watersheds.
- All states must participate.
- FY2024: Three 12-digit HUCs
 - Animas River
 - Flora Vista 140801041005
 - Estes Arroyo- 140801041004
 - Tucker Canyon- 140801041003









- The three HUCs with the Animas River have been part of NWQI for many years.
- Obligation has declined through the years since work has been completed (Only so much work to do in a HUC)
- We need three new HUCs to work on. We need your suggestions.





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Onservation Stewardship Program

STC Meeting 4/30/2024

Martin Meairs <u>Martin.Meairs@usda.gov</u>







Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

- The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) offers technical and financial assistance to help agricultural and forest producers take their conservation efforts to the next level.
- Provides funding for maintaining and improving existing conservation systems and practices and adopting additional conservation activities.
- 5 year contracts with yearly payments
- Minimum Payments for FY24 CSP Classic increased from \$1,500 to \$4,000 per year





CSP Ranking Pools

- Agland (range, crop and pasture)
- Agland Beginning Farmer/Rancher
- Agland Socially Disadvantaged Farmer/Rancher
- Agland-Organic
- Non-Industrial Private Forestland (NIPF)
- NIPF Beginning Farmer/Rancher
- NIPF Socially Disadvantaged Farmer/Rancher
- Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) CSP
 - Agland
 - NIPF

At Minimum 5% of funds required to be allotted to SD and BFR Applicants



What is CSP-IRA

Focus is Climate Change Mitigation

Conservation activities can support climate change mitigation by reducing greenhouse gas emissions or increasing carbon sequestration while also addressing other natural resources such as:

- Restoring Disturbed Lands
- Enhanced Grazing Land Management
- Soil Health
- Energy Efficiency
- Improved Nitrogen Management

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Updates for CSP-IRA FY24

- Expanding the Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry Mitigation Activities (CSAF) list for FY 2024
 - USDA Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry Mitigation Activities List
 - USDA Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry
 - Biden-Harris Administration Makes Available Historic \$3 Billion for Climate-Smart Practices on Agricultural Lands Through Investing in America Agenda | Natural Resources Conservation Service (usda.gov)

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Requirements for CSP-IRA

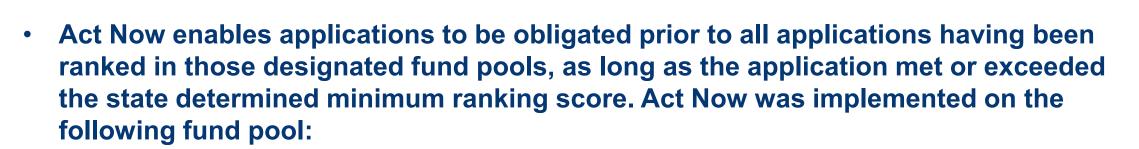
• For CSP, NRCS may only use IRA funds for contracts that include one or more core conservation practices, enhancements or bundles from the CSAF List

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Act Now



- 1. AgLand BFR
- 2. IRA AgLand BFR
- 3. NIPF
- 4. NIPF SD
- 5. NIPF BFR
- 6. IRA NIPF
- 7. IRA NIPF BFR
- 8. IRA NIPF SD





FY 2024 Application Status

FY 24 Classic CSP

- Total Applications Received 146
- Selected for funding 63
- Beginning Farmer Rancher (BFR) 14
- Socially Disadvantaged (SD) 14

FY24 Classic CSP IRA

- Total Applications Received 67
- Selected for funding -34
- SD 15
- BFR 5

FY24 CSP Renewals

- Total Applications Received 3
- Funded -3
- SD-2

FY24 IRA - CSP Renewals

- Total Applications Received 1
- Funded -1
- SD 1

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FY 23 Classic CSP

- Total Applications Received 149
- Selected for funding 54
- Beginning Farmer Rancher (BFR) 7
- Socially Disadvantaged (SD) 13

FY23 Classic CSP IRA

- Total Applications Received 25
- Selected for funding 6
- SD 3

FY 24 Classic CSP

- Total Applications Received 146
- Selected for funding 63
- Beginning Farmer Rancher (BFR) 14
- Socially Disadvantaged (SD) 14

FY24 Classic CSP IRA

- Total Applications Received 67
- Selected for funding -34
- SD 15
- BFR 5



FY 2024 Funding Status

FY24 Classic CSP Allocation - \$12,364,635

- Agland General \$9,030,057 42 Contracts Selected
- Agland BFR \$1,220,613 9 Contracts Selected
 - Additional BFR Funded in Agland General- \$820,000 5 Contracts
- Agland SD \$1,893,965 10 Contracts Selected
 - Additional SD Funded in Agland General- \$240,000 3 Contracts
- NIPF General \$200,000 1 Contract Selected
- NIPF SD \$20,000 1 Contract Selected

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FY 2024 Funding Status

FY24 Classic CSP-IRA Allocation \$6,784,695

- Agland General- 2,848,278 13 Contracts Selected
- Agland BFR \$514,588 4 Contracts Selected
 - Additional BFR Funded in Agland General- \$20,000 1 Contracts
- Agland SD \$2,491,819 14 Contracts Selected
 - Additional SD Funded in Agland General- \$200,000 1 Contract
- NIPF SD \$950,010 1 Contract Selected

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FY 2024 Funds Obligated

FY24 CSP Renewal Obligations

- Total Funds Spent \$380,365 3 Contracts
- Agland General \$176,298 1 Contracts
- Agland SD \$204,067 2 Contracts

FY24 IRA-CSP Renewal Obligation

- Total Funds Spent - \$1,739,305 - 1 Agland SD Contract

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Funding Update – General CSP \$12,364,635

- 63 Applications Selected for Funding
- 18 Applications Selected in the North
 - Team 1 4
 - Team 2 2
 - Team 3 4
 - Team 4 2
 - Team 5 6
- 45 Applications Selected in the South
 - Team 7 2
 - Team 8 15
 - Team 9 5
 - Team 10 22
 - Team 11 1

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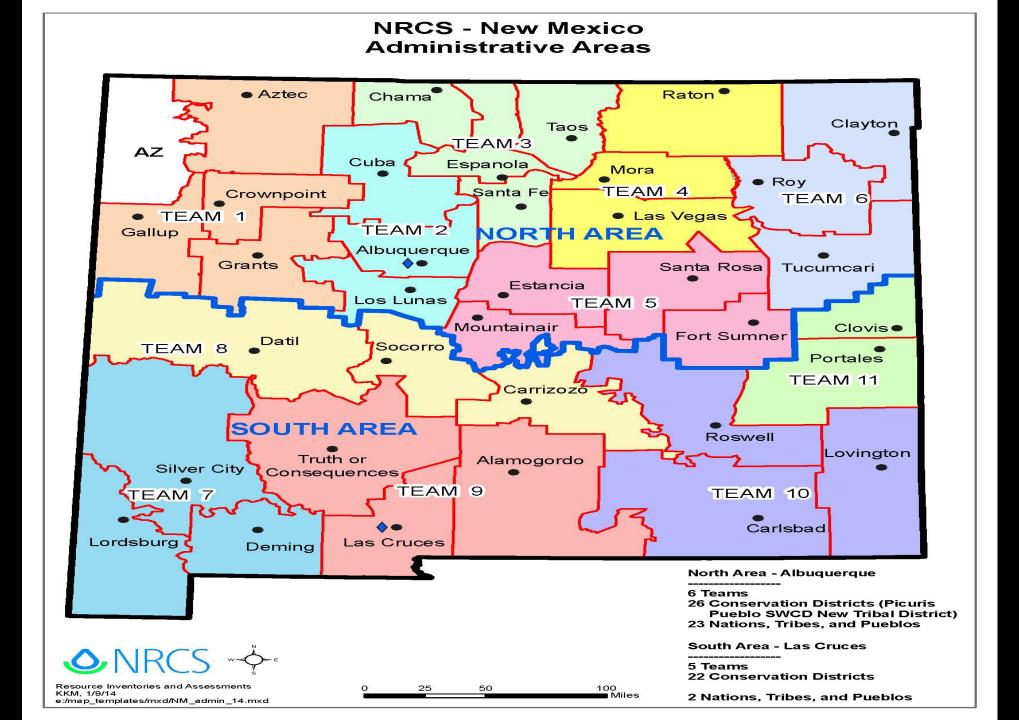




Funding Update – IRA CSP \$6,784,695

- 34 Applications Selected for Funding
- 21 Applications Selected in the North
 - Team 1 3
 - Team 2 2
 - Team 3 2
 - Team 4 3
 - Team 5 11
- 13 Applications Selected in the South
 - Team 8 5
 - Team 9 7
 - Team 10 1





USDA United States Department of Agriculture

Input



• Would it be beneficial to allocate Funds by Team vs statewide pools

• This would allow District Conservationist more flexibility and Local Workgroups an opportunity to provide input more specific to their area

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Resource Priorities

New Mexico Priority Resource Concern Categories					
Agland	Non-Industrial Private Forestland				
Wind and Water Erosion	Wind and Water Erosion				
Concentrated Erosion	Concentrated Erosion				
Degraded Plant Condition	Degraded Plant Condition				
Pest Pressure	Pest Pressure				
Livestock Production Limitation	Livestock Production Limitation				
Terrestrial Habitat	Terrestrial Habitat				
Source Water Depletion	Inefficient Energy Use				
Soil Quality Limitations	Fire Management				

- Other Resource Concern Categories that are not listed as State Priority Resource Concern
 - Air quality emissions, Aquatic habitat, Field pesticide loss, Salt losses to water, Storage and handling of pollutants, Weather resilience

Conservation Ranking considers the number of priority resource concern categories met and addressed. Service



Ranking Weights

Category	Algorithm	Allowable Min	NM%	Allowable Max
Vulnerabilities	Adjustment (A)		5 5	10
Planned Practice Effects	Adjustment (C)	35	5 35	50
Resource Priorities	Default	15	5 35	35
Program Priorities	Default	15	5 15	35
Efficiencies	Default	10	10	10

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Input

- Is there a need to change priority resource concern categories for either Agland or NIPF operations
- Ranking Question Focus:
 - Forest
 - Reduce threat of wildfire
 - Reduce pest damage
 - Agland
 - Will activities be implemented to increase or benefit soil health
 - Will activities be implemented to address water quality degradation

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State Technical Committee Meeting April 30, 2024



Q Search



Natural Resources Conservation Service U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

CONSERVATION BASICS	GETTING ASSISTANCE	PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES	RESOURCES	NEWS & EVENTS	CONTACT
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<u>Technical Service Providers | Natural Resources Conservation</u> <u>Service (usda.gov)</u> Natural Resources Conservation Service

>



Technical Service Provider Rates (TSPR) for implementation

When funds are available, agricultural producers participating in certain activities in the EQIP program can hire a TSP to design, prepare the installation and certify completion of practices that are in an obligated EQIP contract. The EQIP contract will be modified by NRCS to add the Technical Service Provider rates.

NOTE: Producers may also choose to pay for services from qualified individuals at their own expense. Services that are provided prior to the TSPR being added to an EQIP contract will not be reimbursed by NRCS.

The maximum rates for technical services are available in the most recent **State Payment Schedule.**

https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/getting-assistance/technicalassistance/technical-service-providers





New TSPR scenarios are due June 10; existing ones can also be revised

Code	Practice	Component	Units	Unit Cost
913	TA Check-Out	TSPR-Forest Stand Improvement <=15 ac: 666-Forest Stand Improvement	Ac	\$28.04
913	TA Check-Out	TSPR-Forest Stand Improvement >50 ac: 666-Forest Stand Improvement	Ac	\$10.37
913	TA Check-Out	TSPR-Forest Stand Improvement 16-50 ac: 666-Forest Stand Improvement	Ac	\$17.25
913	TA Check-Out	TSPR-Irrigation Pipeline: 430-Irrigation Pipeline	Ft	\$0.47
913	TA Check-Out	TSPR-Irrigation Reservoir: 436-Irrigation Reservoir	Ac-Ft	\$142.79
913	TA Check-Out	TSPR-Pond <= 2000 CuYd: 378-Pond	No	\$405.99
913	TA Check-Out	TSPR-Pond > 6000 CuYd: 378-Pond	No	\$704.24
913	TA Check-Out	TSPR-Pond 2001 - 6000 CuYd: 378-Pond	No	\$576.42
913	TA Check-Out	TSPR-Pond Lining, Flexible Membrane: 521-Pond Sealing or Lining, Geomembrane or Geosynthetic Clay Liner	SqYd	\$0.32
913	TA Check-Out	TSPR-Pumping Plant, <=5 hp: 533-Pumping Plant	No	\$283.43
913	TA Check-Out	TSPR-Pumping Plant, >50 hp: 533-Pumping Plant	No	\$283.43
913	TA Check-Out	TSPR-Pumping Plant, 6 to 50 hp: 533-Pumping Plant	No	\$283.43
913	TA Check-Out	TSPR-Sprinkler System, Center Pivot: 442-Sprinkler System	Ft	\$0.93
913	TA Check-Out	TSPR-Sprinkler System, Periodic Move: 442-Sprinkler System	Ac	\$26.01
913	TA Check-Out	TSPR-Stream Habitat < 2 ac: 395-Stream Habitat Improvement and Management	Ac	\$520.40
913	TA Check-Out	TSPR-Stream Habitat > 4 ac: 395-Stream Habitat Improvement and Management	Ac	\$230.71

0

Codes 911, 912 and 913 are on pages 94-97 of the New Mexico payment schedule. These are for engineering and vegetative practices.

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Process to determine compensation

Component Unit

Acres

Typical

Size

60

TSPR Scenario List

1

Adopted

YES

Active 🔿 Inactive 🔿 Both 🖲

ID TSPR Scenario Name

TSPR-Subsurface Drip Irrigation

Who wants to help? What skills are needed? How many hours to complete the task?

	911 TA Design		912 TA Application		913 TA Checkout	
Component ID	Hours	Total Costs	Hours	Total Costs	Hours	Total Costs
2837 Administrative Assistant-NRCS	1	\$42.06	1	\$42.06	1	\$42.06
2825 Engineer-NRCS	44	\$2,885.08	8	\$524.56	6	\$393.42
2831 Soil Conservation Technician-NRCS	60	\$2,515.20	22	\$922.24	20	\$838.40
Sub-Total		\$5,442.34		\$1,488.86		\$1,273.88
Cost Per Unit		\$90.71		\$24.81		\$21.23

https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/getting-assistance/payment-schedules



TSP for Planning

- Many different plans can be developed by a consultant under EQIP.
- One kind of plan is available for CSP.

159	Grazing Management Design	Design and Implementation Activities for Grazed Lands <100 acres	No	\$1,254.51
159	Grazing Management Design	HU-Design and Implementation Activities for Grazed Lands <100 acres	No	\$1,505.41
159	Grazing Management Design	Design and Implementation Activities for Grazed Lands >10,000 acres	No	\$2,822.65
159	Grazing Management Design	HU-Design and Implementation Activities for Grazed Lands >10,000 acres	No	\$3,387.18
159	Grazing Management Design	Design and Implementation Activities for Grazed Lands 1,501 to 5,000 acres	No	\$2,195.39
159	Grazing Management Design	HU-Design and Implementation Activities for Grazed Lands 1,501 to 5,000 acres	No	\$2,634.47
159	Grazing Management Design	Design and Implementation Activities for Grazed Lands 101 to 500 acres	No	\$1,568.14
159	Grazing Management Design	HU-Design and Implementation Activities for Grazed Lands 101 to 500 acres	No	\$1,881.77
159	Grazing Management Design	Design and Implementation Activities for Grazed Lands 5,001 to 10,000 acres	No	\$2,509.02
159	Grazing Management Design	HU-Design and Implementation Activities for Grazed Lands 5,001 to 10,000 acres	No	\$3,010.83
159	Grazing Management Design	Design and Implementation Activities for Grazed Lands 501 to 1,500 acres	No	\$1,881.77
159	Grazing Management Design	HU-Design and Implementation Activities for Grazed Lands 501 to 1,500 acres	No	\$2,258.12

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Requirements for certification as O (TSP for Grazing Management (528)

- Bachelor's or higher degree in Range Science or Management, Agronomy, Soil Science, or Plant Science.
- Certification in at least one of the following: 1) Society for Range Management (SRM): Certified Rangeland Management Consultant (CRMC) or Certified Professional in Range Management (CPRM);

2) American Forage and Grassland Council (AFGC): Certified Grassland Professional;

3) American Society of Agronomy (ASA): Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) or Certified Professional Agronomist (CPAg);

4) National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants (NAICC): Certified Professional Crop Consultant (CPCC).

- Demonstrate at least 4 years experience in planning of associated conservation practices for this conservation activity.
- Certify completion of the following NRCS Courses: 1) TSP Orientation and Conservation Planning (AgLearn Course NRCS-NEDC-000191); and 2) Introduction to the Field Office Technical Guide (AgLearn Course NRCS-NEDC-000149).
- Submit 1 sample of work including implementation requirements and supporting documents for review and approval. Documentation must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the appropriate Conservation Practice Standard and Statement(s) of Work.



Changes to practice standards

- Announced in the Federal Register, comments were due March 4, 2024, docket 2023-0022, <u>Conservation Practice Standards Information | Natural Resources</u> <u>Conservation Service (usda.gov)</u>
- Grazing Management (528)- changed the name from Prescribed Grazing. Added the purpose to reduce plant pest pressure. Requires contingency plans to factor for events that may be intensified with climate change.
- Filter Strip (393): Added text that requires the location to be downslope from a source area of contaminants and added a vegetation section. Added both criteria for flow lengths based on Agronomy Technical Note No. 2, and new content to specify burning frequency. Revised the "Irrigation Tailwater and Excessive Sediment in Surface Waters" section to clarify the plant stem spacing.
- Seasonal Water Management for Wildlife (Code 646): Title changed from "Seasonal Water Development and Management" to articulate the intent to provide temporary habitat needs through the management of water. Changed lifespan from 5 years to 1 year to align with other management practices.



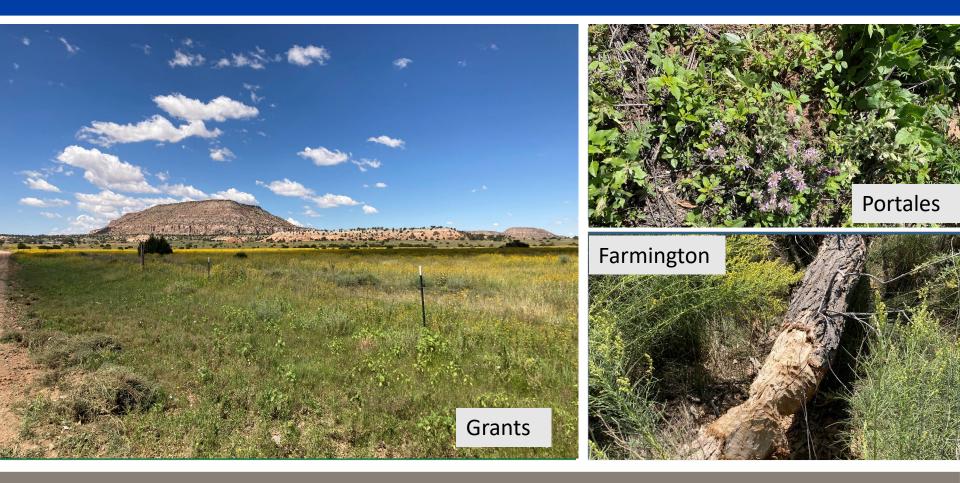
New activities for FY2025

- Proposing a new CSP enhancement to add telemetry to existing watering facilities to save energy and protect animal health. This will require adding energy as a consideration to the Watering Facility (614) practice standard.
- A new scenario under Energy Efficient Operation (374) may allow payment under EQIP to add telemetry to an existing watering facility to save energy.
- Virtual fences, "geofences," may have a separate payment scenario in FY2025. Virtual fencing assist with implementation of Grazing Management (528).





United States Department of Agriculture



Conservation Easements

FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION FSA | NRCS | RMA | Business Center



2024 ACEP Summary



- 7 RCPP entity-held applications received.
- 1 IRA application submitted but not selected.
- 1 wetland reserve (WRE) application cancelled/postponed.
- 2 agricultural land easements (ALE) closed in middle Rio Grande and 2 more about to close. 1 more in progress in southern NM.
- 2 ALE-grassland of special significance in progress.



Agricultural Land Easements (ALE)- Regular

Priorities

- Valencia County.
- Middle Rio Grande.
- Proximity to riparian areas.
- Metropolitan areas: Albuquerque, Las Cruces, Santa Fe, Farmington.
- Protect surface water rights.
- Avoid loss of agricultural land.
- Protect prime soils.

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Agricultural Land Easements (ALE) - GSS

Priorities

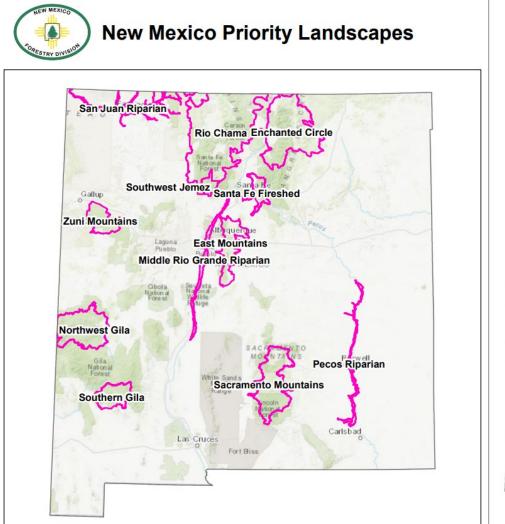
- Proximity to Rio Grande, Pecos, Gila or San Juan river.
- Contains riparian or perennial water.
- Avoids subdivision of large ranches.
- Provide wildlife habitat compatible with grazed land.

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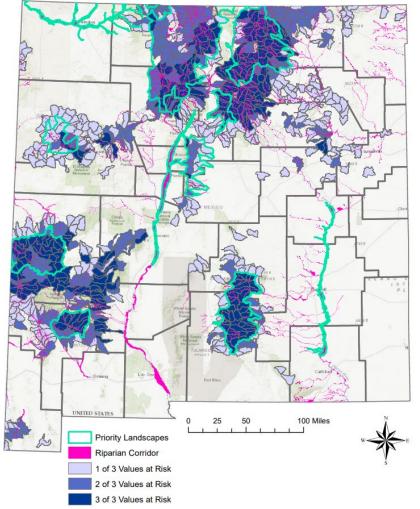
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Shared StewardshipTop 500 Watersheds



) 14



May is

American Wetlands Month



Healthy riverscapes, with connected floodplains and rich riparian wetlands, are critical pieces of natural infrastructure.

NRCS Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE) can be 30-year and perpetual. Protecting riparian wetlands is a priority for WRE.

Wetland Reserve Easement (WRE) Geographic area rate cap (GARC)

New Mexico will compensate landowners up to 90% of the appraised fair market value with the following not-to-exceed rates:

No water rightsNot to exceed \$5,000Land with water rightsNot to exceed \$13,000 per acre.



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Wetland Restoration Criteria Guidelines

Restoration Requirements

- Playas- NM Surface Water Quality Bureau, NMED, released an erosion guide for playas.
- Milkweeds: should milkweeds be planted on wetland easements?
- what species, densities, wetland types?
- Showy, horsetail, butterfly, whorled, broadleaf and swamp milkweeds are the most common ones used in NM by monarchs (there are @30 different kinds of milkweeds in the state).
- For CSP, the requirement for a stand of milkweeds is 500 stems per acre (1 stem per 100 square feet).
- Wetland easements cannot be hayed or used as confined pasture. Can be grazed.

NATURAL CHANNEL DESIGN ENGINEERING I

Playa Erosion Control Field Guide









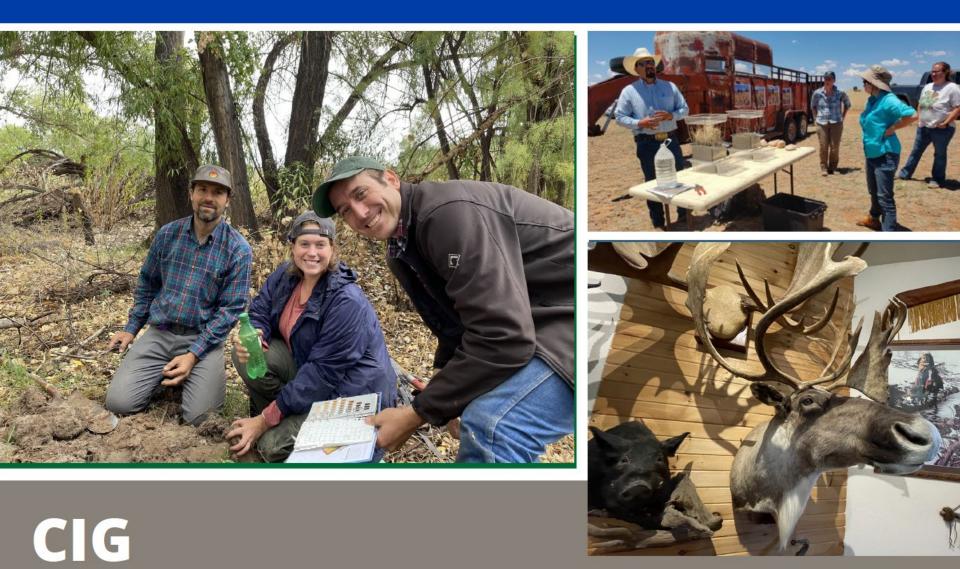
WRE Partnerships (WREP) 🕗 🕹 🍐 🎸

- WREP provides funding to partners to increase WRE outreach and restoration.
- Partners must provide a 10-percent cash and/or in-kind match towards easement acquisition due diligence costs or actual easement restoration costs.
- Call for proposals should be coming out soon.





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FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION FSA | NRCS | RMA | Business Center



https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/cig-conservation-innovation-grants/new-mexico/conservation-innovation-grants

📕 An official website of the United States government Here's how you know 💙





Natural Resources Conservation Service U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Q	Search	→
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CONSERVATION BASICS	GETTING ASSISTANCE	PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES	RESOURCES	NEWS & EVENTS	CONTACT
			No contraction of the second s		
The second	tion Innova ogram (CIG				



State priorities



- Increased reliance on biodiversity to control pests.
- Soil health management systems.
- ➤ Water conservation.
- Fish and wildlife habitat.
- Removed: Provide non-lethal alternatives to predator management and/or that decrease mortality of livestock with shelter or management.



UK Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust



State CIG FY2023



Search for "CIG NRCS NM" for Notice of Funding: <u>Conservation Innovation Grants Program (CIG) - New Mexico | Natural Resources</u> <u>Conservation Service (usda.gov)</u>

Deadline expected to be June 15, 2024, and will be announced at Grants.gov.



Release is pending changes to comply with "Build America, Buy America." The Buy America preference set forth in section 70914 of BABA requires all iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials used for infrastructure projects under Federal financial assistance awards be produced in the United States.

- New Mexico is requesting a waiver to exempt tribes from the match requirement and reduce the match from historically underserved applicants.
- ➢ NM will allocate \$50,000 per year.







FY23 National Classic and OFT:

Awards have not yet been announced. The proposal review panels met at the start of the calendar year. Ranked proposals are now being reviewed by the Chief's staff for selection.

FY24 National Classic and OFT:

Notice of Funding are drafted and currently going through the clearance process which includes being reviewed by the Chief's staff, OGC, and OBPA. In addition, the CIG team is working with public affairs to prepare a news release to be published when the NFO is announced.





When CIG does not fit 🛛 🛆 🛆 🖉 🎸

Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) Renewable Energy Systems & Energy Efficiency Improvement Guaranteed Loans & Grants

Application Window:

Program Application Period: Open for Fiscal Year 2024

Application Windows: June 30, 2024 September 30, 2024

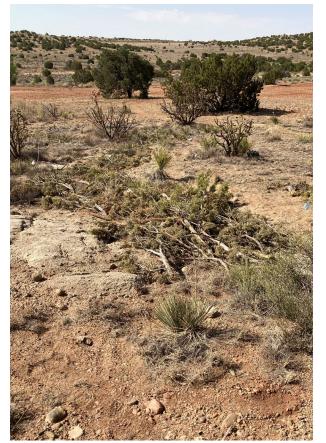
For state specific information:

-- Select State --

\$

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athena.cholas@usda.gov

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Resource Technical Services(RTS)-Updates

Art Ariaz-State Resource Conservationist

State Technical Meeting 4/30/24



FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION FSA | NRCS | RMA | Business Center



Resource Technical Services (RTS) NM

- Cultural Resources, Range, Agronomy, Forestry, Business Tools and Wildlife Biology (NEPA)
- Manage and Maintain Electronic Field Office Technical Guide (EFOTG)
- Manage all Ecological Conservation Standards/Specification and Implementation Requirements IR's/Job Sheets
- Conservation Planning assistance for AO and FO staff
- Provide Training to AO/FO staff, Producers, partners and TSPs
- Outreach



New Hires FY 2024

- State Wildlife Biologist- Pamela Herrera-Olivas, formerly the Wildlife Biologist for BLM Taos
 - \bullet State Forester- Andrew Lee, former Forester for NRCS CA RTS Staff
 - State Resource Specialist Dan Bloedel
 - Business Tool Specialist Ana Gomes
 - State Archaeologist Bill Volf
 - Archaeologist Molly Murphy
 - State Agronomist Phil Herrera
 - State Rangeland Management Specialist- Jim Armendariz
 - Administrative Assistant Amanda Brown

FY 2024 Trainings

Completed

 Conservation Planning Course (Modules 6-8)- Las Cruces, December 2023
 Conservation Desktop (CD) Conservation Assessment Ranking Tool (CART) Training – Las Cruces and Albuquerque, December 23/January 24

Cultural Resources (Module 7)- Gallup, March 2024

• Wind Erosion Prediction System (WEPS) and Windows Pesticide Screen Tool (WinPST) Aztec March 24, Las Vegas

April 24

Forestry Training - Ruidoso, April 24
Soil Health & Sustainability for Field Staff - Hernandez, April 24

Upcoming

Prescribed Fire Training- Encino, June 24
 Rangeland Ecology Training- Santa Fe, May 24
 Cultural Resources Refresher Trainings -Ongoing
 CRP-Grassland/ECP Training TBD
 CPA-52 Training TBD

USDA



Outreach

- Tribal Outreach
 - Intertribal Ag Council Soil Health demo
 - Tribal Healthy Soils Grant assistance
- HPCC post fire outreach
 - Community Meetings
 - LCC Agreement for assistance to students.
 - Interagency and partner events

Soil Health Activities

- NRCS NM will continue providing technical assistance to NMDA regarding their Healthy Soils Program
- RTS State Office Staff will be reviewing and ranking NMDA's FY 2024 Healthy Soils Program applicants.
- Remainder of FY 2024 NRCS will continue to work on outreach regarding soil health to tribes and pueblos

State Led Soil Health Training for Field employees April 2024



HPCC Conservation Restoration Plans

Total Applications Received – 1323

Completed and Delivered Plans – 725

• Acres - 105,811

• Total Dollars Planned - \$544,354,421

Reassessed Applications – 12

Reassessed Planned Amounts - \$2,674,215

• NRCS is completing the plans on a first come first serve basis.

Approximately \$318 Million has been paid out on NRCS plans



United States Department of Agriculture

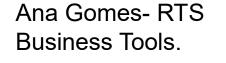
Questions?

What is CART?

<u>0000000</u>

- <u>Conservation</u>
- <u>A</u>ssessment
- <u>Ranking</u>

• <u>T</u>ool



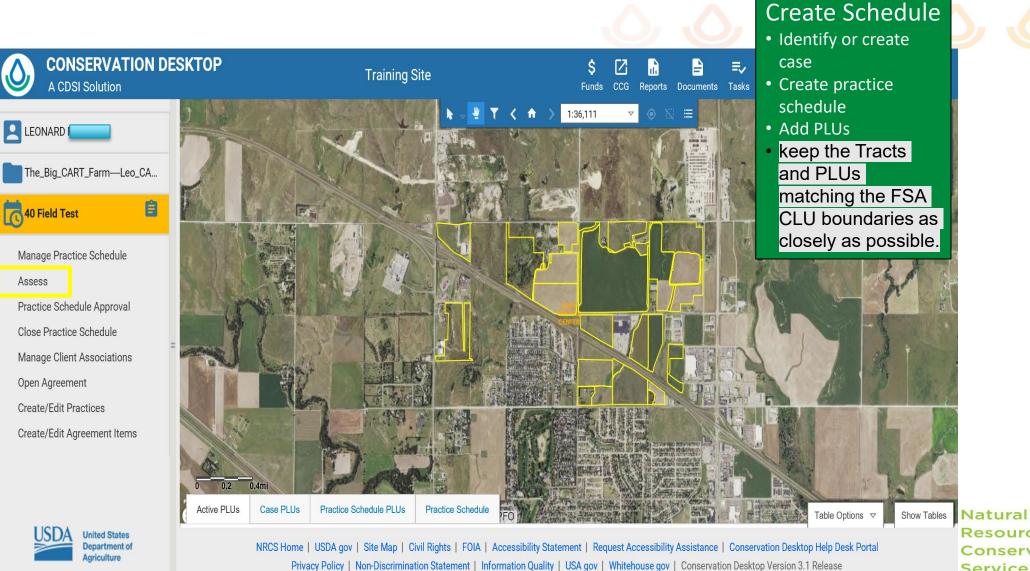
- Set of Business Practices to <u>streamline</u> Conservation Planning and Program Delivery
- Program Neutral integrated Information Technology (IT) Software Application





Any USDA Conservation Program!

Conservation Desktop-CD



USD/

United States Department of Agriculture

Resources Conservation Service

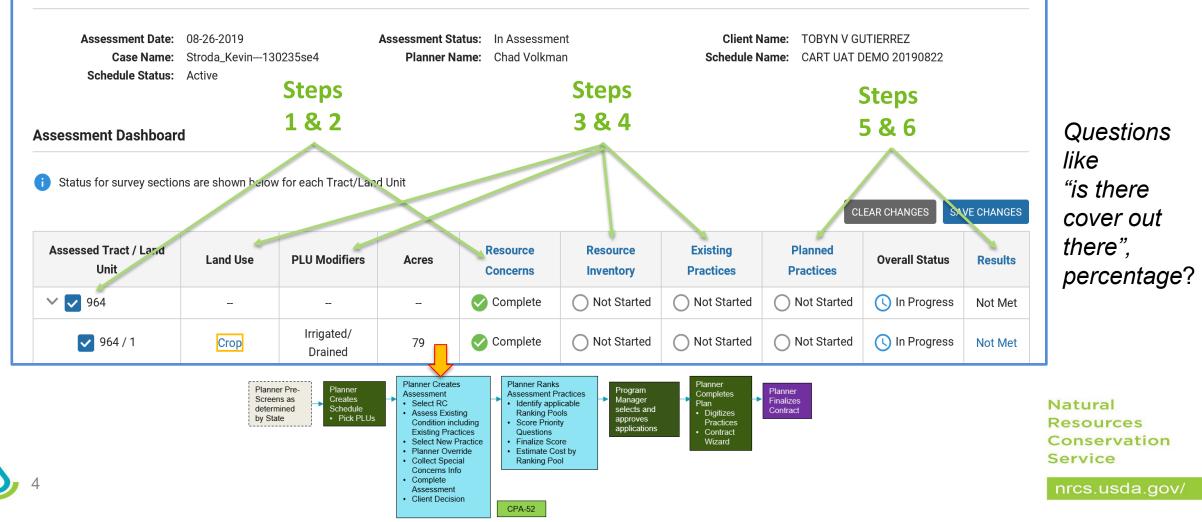
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How does CART work? => Integrating (T) () () ()

	 Phase I Collect & Analyze Identify Problem Determine Objective Inventory Resources Analyze Resource Data 	t & AnalyzeDecision Supportntify Problem• Formulate Alternativescermine Objective• Evaluate Alternativesentory Resources• Make Decision			
	Conserv	ation Desktop	Fut	ture	
		sessment Ranking Tool ntal Assessment Conservation Plan CAPS – Resource Assessment Conservation Practices Economics	Protracts Funds Manager CAPS - Designs Checkout	CAPS - Outcomes	Natural Resources Conservation Service
Slide 3					nrcs.usda.gov

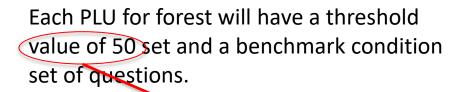
How does CART Work? – Planning Steps 🛆 📣 📣

Assessment results for CART UAT DEMO 20190822



How does CART work? – Steps 1 and 2 📣 📣 📣

Plant Degradation – Plant Structure and Composition - Forestry - Threshold





Results for La	nd Unit							– Natural
Resource Concerns	Components	Existing Conditions	Existing Practices	Existing Total	Planned Practices	Plan Total	Threshold	Resources Conservation
Plant structure and composition	Plant structure and composition	0	0	0	0	0	50	Service nrcs.usda.gov/

How does CART work? – Steps 3 and 4

Plant Degradation – Plant Structure and Composition - Forestry – Existing Conditions

Answer	Existing Condition Points	Reference for assessment condition
None to Slight	60	Is density, composition, and age structure >80% of the expected ecological site or other documentation that demonstrates representative plant community?
Slight to Moderate	51	Is density, composition, and age structure 60-80% of the expected ecological site or other documentation that demonstrates representative plant community?
Moderate	20	Is density, composition, and age structure 40-60% of the expected ecological site or other documentation that demonstrates representative plant community?
Moderate to Extreme	10	Is density, composition, and age structure 20-40% of the expected ecological site or other documentation that demonstrates representative plant community?
Extreme	1	Is density, composition, and age structure <20% of the expected ecological site or other documentation that demonstrates representative plant community?



Plan Total

Planned

Results for Land Unit Resource Existing Existing Components **Existing Total** \square •

Concerns	Components	Conditions	Practices	Existing Total	Practices	Plan Total	Inresnoid	Conservation
Plant structure and composition	Plant structure and composition	20	0	20	0	20	50	Service nrcs.usda.gov/

Natural

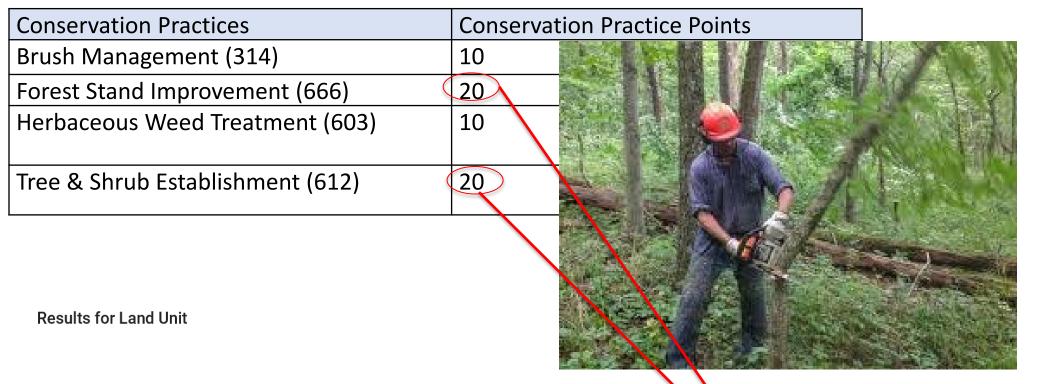
Threshold

Resources



How does CART work? – Steps 5 and 6 🕖 🖉 🖉

Plant Degradation – Plant Structure and Composition - Forestry – Planned Practices

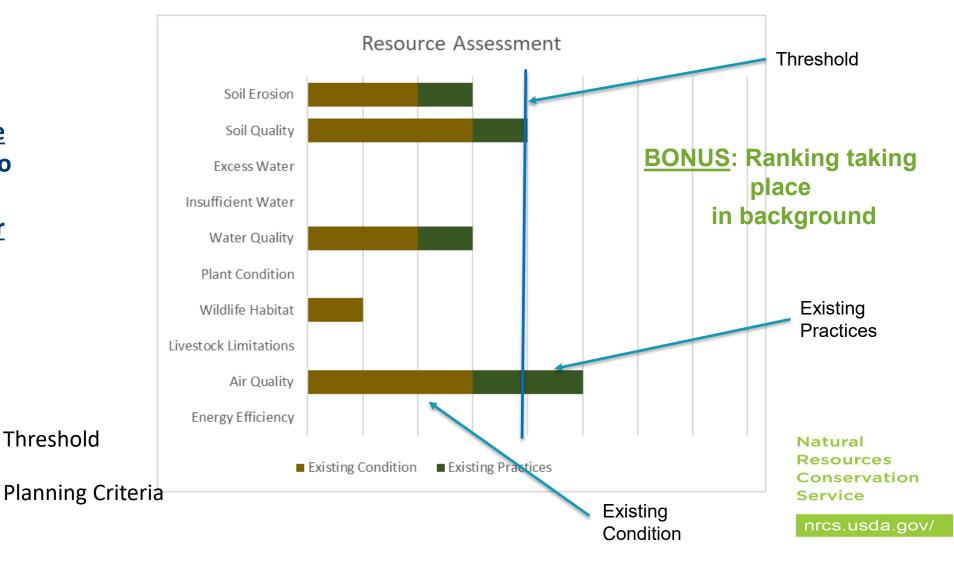


Plant structure Plant structure							ervation
and composition and composition	20	0	20	40	60	50	:e usda.gov/



How does CART work? => Steps 3 and 4

CART <u>assists</u> planners to analyze resource data captured in the inventory and <u>compare</u> against the <u>threshold</u> to determine if planning criteria_is met. <u>Planner</u> <u>override</u> will be allowed.





CART Advantages 🕗 🛆 🕗 🍐 🎸

- Program Neutral Planning
- Streamlined Assessment
- Assessment and Resource Concern information by Land Unit
- Environmental Assessment completed as part of planning
- One Plan Goal
- Program Prioritization based on Planning and outcomes
- Reduced data duplication

Natural Resources Conservation Service



Program Ranking

Local flexibility

Natural Resources Conservation Service

10 Mission Support Services



Plan Assessment Ranking Points

Ranking pools will evaluate client's applications for 5 main areas

- 1. Plan Assessment: Existing Vulnerability*
- 2. Plan Assessment: Planned Practice Effects*
- **3. Pool Priorities: Resource** (ex. *Geospatial Based Priority Watershed*) Question Based (ex. Do the practices in the application affect sage grouse?
- 4. Pool Priorities: Program-Question Based (ex. Veteran Farmer), past contract information
- 5. Efficiency

*Information captured already in the assessment process

The locally led process can have input on each of these

NOTE:



Only resource concerns which are identified by the ranking pool will garner plan assessment points-Only practices on land uses which are identified by the ranking pool will garner plan assessment points Natural Resources Conservation Service



Application Score Weighting

- Set by ranking pool with bounds set by program
- Old National, State, and local questions would be incorporated into Plan Assessment or Pool Priorities

Pool Weighting							
Plan	Vulnerability	20%					
Assessment	Planned Practice Effects	30%					
Pool Priorities	Resource	30%					
	Programmatic	10%					
Efficiency Score							
Application Score		100%					

Natural Resources Conservation Service





UPDATES- IRIS Release

- 1. CRP Grasslands Reserve Program
- 2. Landscape Priority Tracking
- 3. Reports (National, Region, Local)





United States Department of Agriculture

ORP- Conservation Reserve Program







United States Department of Agriculture



1- CRP Grassland plans by the 12/15/23 deadline were approved to now be assessed and monitored in CD.

- 2- Tracing CRP Plan requests through CD
- **3- Integration with FSA DATA**
- 4- Contract Reviews on CRP





CRP Vision in Conservation Desktop/CART

1. Create CRP Practice Schedule with FSA CRP1 and CRP 2 and autogenerate CRP Plan Request

2. Allow multiple contracts in one CRP **Practice Schedule**

> 3. Create Record Of Decision with CRP data

4. Create Plan Map with CRP data

5. CRP Summary Report





1. Create CRP Plan Request, Mods and Status **Reviews without Case** File/Practice Schedule



4. Change Conservation Schedule to CRP Schedule

5. Add Schedule approval validation rules to check for one contract number per tract and S&F in DMS

1. Integration with FSA COLs data and CRP scenario boundaries \mathcal{O} 2. Replace 1155 with Cost Estimate 3. Switch to using

Supplemental Planning Boundaries (no topology rules)

> 4. FSA Access into CD for CRP requests and reports

6. Update S&F Worksheet to use CART Assessment report

7. CRP Templates in CART Assessment

> Conservation Service





REPORTS

- <u>ک</u>
- Resource Concerns Assessed
- Assessments completed nationally
- New Customers to NRCS



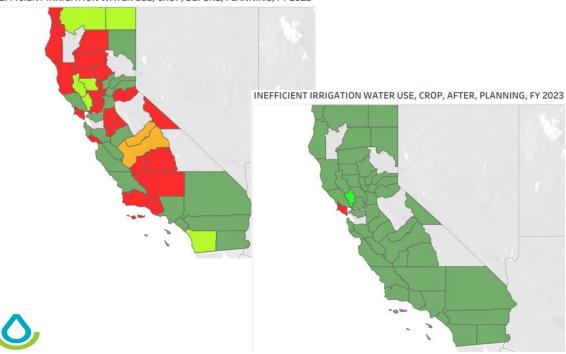


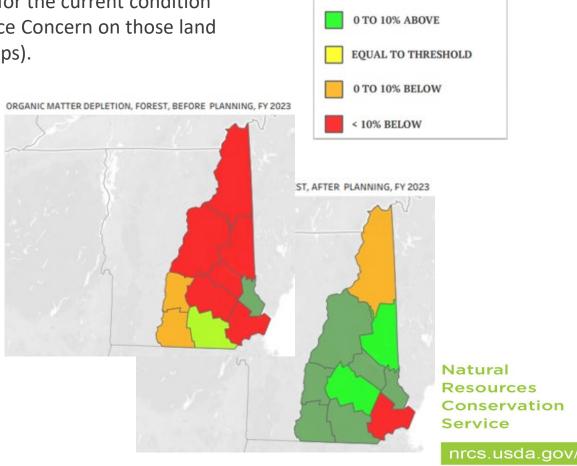
Before and After Planning Maps

These maps analyze each state's most assessed Resource Concern (and corresponding land use) along with map sets for climate smart agriculture RCs.

The maps show how each Resource Concern relates to the threshold for the current condition (the "before planning" maps) and the expected benefit to the Resource Concern on those land uses when the planned practices are applied (the "after planning" maps).

INEFFICIENT IRRIGATION WATER USE, CROP, BEFORE, PLANNING, FY 2023





Legend

% COMPARED TO THRESHOLD > 10% ABOVE

State Report Example

Provides comparison of the past three fiscal years with national average, median, and rank

the State					
Fiscal Year	Total CART Assessments	Change from Previous Fiscal Year	Rank	National Average	National Median
FY23	3,445	-2%	16	2,778	1,885
FY22	3,502	-10%	16	2,773	1,762
FY21	3,871		13	2,483	1,641

This captures all assessments entered in CART, except for those in Discarded status.

Table 3: Number of Unique Ranked Assessments in the State

Fiscal Year	Unique Ranked Assessments	Change from Previous Fiscal Year	Rank	National Average	National Median
FY23	2,968	-4%	8	1,797	1,193
FY22	3,077	-6%	5	1,617	1,206
FY21	3,264		5	1,540	1,228

The term "unique" means that if an assessment is ranked in multiple ranking pools, it is still only counted once here.

The difference between the number of ranked assessments compared to total assessments could be because Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) assessments are not ranked. In states with a lot of <u>CRP</u>, you would expect to see a lower percentage of assessments ranked.

Table 4: Number of Unique Funded Assessments in the State

Fiscal Year	Unique Funded Assessments	Change from Previous Fiscal Year	Rank	National Average	National Median
FY23	1,439	-4%	11	865	705
FY22	1,505	-18%	7	760	639
FY21	1,844		3	751	605
The term "unique" means	s that if an assessment i	is funded in multiple fundir	ng pools,	it is still only	y counted

Additional State Maps

- % of Ranked Assessments Funded
- Avg # Assessments per user

Number of CART Assessments in Each County



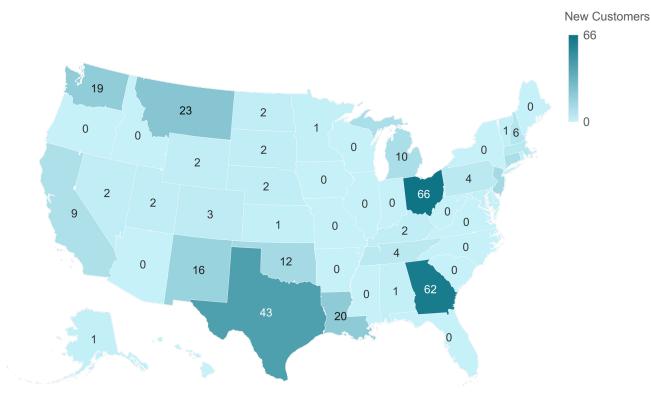
This map shows the number of CART Assessments (excluding any assessments that were discarded) by cot in FY23. Take note of the counties with fewer assessme (the lighter shaded counties) and those higher numbers assessments (the darker shaded counties). Do these ma sense? Is there anything surprising in this data?

> tural sources nservation rvice

344 New Customers

As of January 16th the Client Summary Report displays New Customers with Brief Technical Assistance Requests

This map displays each states counts of new customers. New Customers with Brief Technical Assistance Requests 344 New Customers in FY24



Powered by Bing © GeoNames, Microsoft, TomTom Natural Resources Conservation Service

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United States Department of Agriculture

Landscape Priority Tracking





United States Department of Agriculture



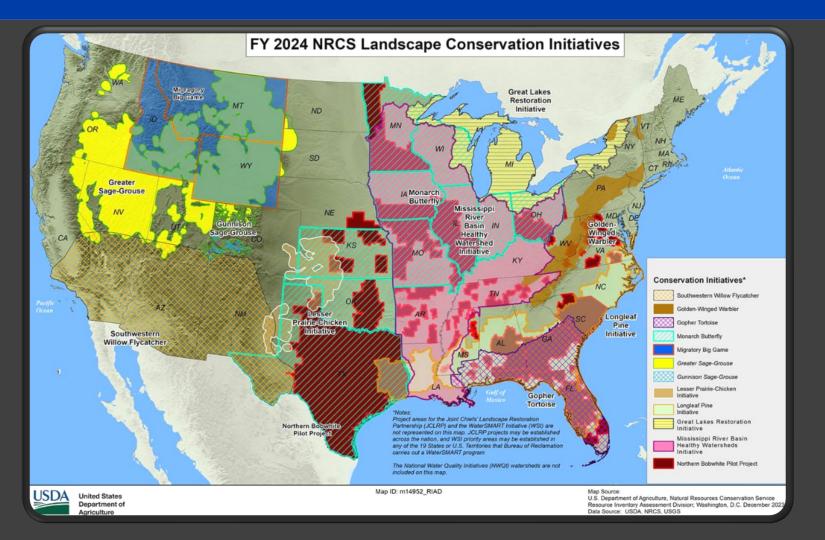
Why is it important:

- Recognizes specific environmental accomplishments conservation planners are achieving through voluntary conservation
- Applicable to all conservation planning and programmatic financial assistance programs
- NRCS uses landscape priority information to report progress towards:
 - Our agency's broad goals and commitments.
 - Landscape Conservation Initiative goals
 - Other priorities established with our conservation partners.

<u>Landscape</u> <u>Conservation</u> <u>Initiatives</u> <u>Website</u>

USDA

WLFW Black-Footed Ferret							
WLFW Bog Turtle							
WLFW Gopher Tortoise							
WLFW Golden-Winged Warbler							
WLFW Lesser Prairie-Chicken Initiative							
New England Cottontail							
WLFW Sage-Grouse Initiative Greater Sage-Grouse							
WLFW Southwestern Willow Flycatcher							
Longleaf Pine							
WLFW Kenai Peninsula Salmon							
WLFW Sandhills							
WLFW Colorado River Aquatic Species							
WLFW Louisiana Wetlands Shorebirds							
WLFW Monarch Butterfly							
Honey Bee Pollinator Initiative							
WLFW Yazoo Darter							
WLFW Conasauga River Aquatic Species							
WLFW American Black Duck							
WLFW Northeast Turtles							
WLFW Blandings Turtle							
WLFW Eastern Hellbender							
WLFW Louisiana Pine Snake							
WLFW Nene							
WLFW Northern Plains Grassland							
WLFW Sage-Grouse Initiative Gunnison Sage-Grouse							
WLFW Great Plains Grasslands Biome Framework							
WLFW Sagebrush Biome Framework							
WLFW Bobwhite Grasslands & Savannas Framework							
New England Pollinator Partnership							
WLFW Migratory Big Game Initiative							
Eastern white oak and upland oaks							



These landscape-level efforts have seen success across the country. From the removal of streams from federal impaired streams list to the determination not to list the greater sage-grouse and New England cottontail.



Planning

Planner meets with Producer to identify Resource Concerns, Client Objectives & Practices.

- Conservation
 Planning happens in
 the field.
- Conservation
 Desktop and CART
 do not eliminate the
 need to go to the field
 and plan with the
 Producer.

Natural Resources Conservation Service **nrcs.usda.gov** United States Department of Agriculture

USDA

THANK YOU!

RTS Ana.Gomes@usda.gov





Regional Conservation **Partnership** Program April 30, 2024 **Kris Graham Chavez**











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.





April 3, 2024 – Release Date July 2, 2024 – Deadline to Submit Application

\$1.5 billion in fiscal year 2024 to invest in partner-driven conservation and climate solutions

Natural Resources Conservation Service

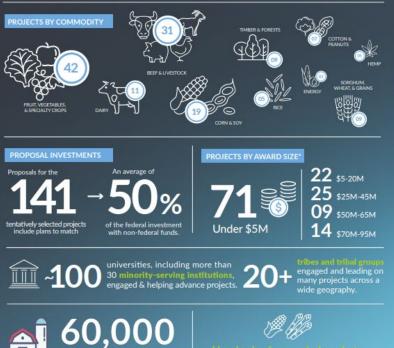


USDA U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

PARTNERSHIPS FOR CLIMATE-SMART COMMODITIES BY THE NUMBERS



The U.S. Department of Agriculture is investing over **\$3.1 billion** in **141** selected projects under the Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities.



Hundreds of expanded markets and revenue streams for producers and commodities across agriculture ranging from traditional agent to specially crops.

More than 60 million metric tools of carbon dioxide equivalent sequestere over the lives of the projects. This is equivalent to removing more than 12 million gasoline gowered passenger vehicles from the road for one year

engaged in climate-smart production practices.

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For RCPP Classic NOFO0001354 <u>https://www.grants.gov/search-results-</u> <u>detail/353379</u>

For RCPP AFA NOFO0001355 <u>https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/353380</u>

Consistent with past precedent, details and additional resources <u>(including future partner meeting dates etc.)</u> are (or in some instances will be) posted to the "How to Apply to RCPP" web page:

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Regional Conservation Partnership Program Classic Notice of Funding Opportunity



Fiscal Year 2024 Natural Resources Conservation Service Notice of Funding Opportunity No. USDA-NRCS-NHQ-RCPP-24-NOFO0001354



Regional Conservation Partnership Program Alternative Funding Arrangements



Fiscal Year 2024 Natural Resources Conservation Service Notice of Funding Opportunity No. USDA-NRCS-NHQ-RCPPAFA-24-NOFO0001355

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RCPP AFAs

Intended to support project structures and approaches that cannot be carried out as effectively through the RCPP Classic NFO.

RCPP AFA applicants must describe the innovative nature of the conservation approach they are proposing to justify potential funding through an RCPP AFA NFO rather than an RCPP Classic NFO.

Moreover, applicants should consider the additional administrative and technical assistance responsibilities that accompany receipt of an RCPP AFA award.





The 2018 Farm Bill

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 projects that use innovative approaches to leverage the Federal investment in conservation;

 projects that deploy a pay-for-performance conservation approach; and

• projects that seek large-scale infrastructure investments that generate conservation benefits for agricultural producers and nonindustrial private forest owners.

Although RCPP AFA provides flexibilities to partners, these projects share the overarching focus of RCPP, which is to engage with producers and landowners to implement conservation practices, systems, and approaches on (or for the benefit of) agricultural and nonindustrial private forest lands





NRCS will offer one-on-one support for Historically Underserved (HU) entities developing RCPP proposals within the Critical Conservation Area funding pool.

The purpose of this effort is to provide support services to the Agencies' Underserved Outreach efforts to improve HU participation within the RCPP program. Underserved Outreach is distinguished as Beginning, Veteran, and the Socially Disadvantaged farmer or rancher (Female, African American/Black, Asian American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian/Native American, Alaskan Native, Hawaiian Native, and Other Pacific Islander farmers and ranchers).

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NRCS will be notifying past RCPP HU applicants as well as provide outreach events to HU communities about this opportunity.

HU entities interested in applying for this proposal development support will complete the RCPP 24 NFO Proposal Support Questionnaire (posted on RCPP website) which will highlight the eligibility requirements for this service.

NRCS will accept the first 20 eligible applications for a period of 45 days from the date of the announcement. Selection is on a first-come, first-served basis. Eligible applications will then be forwarded to Metaphase Consulting LLC, who will offer their assistance for developing and navigating the RCPP proposal process.

P	egional Conservation Partnership Program
<u></u>	FY 24 NFO Proposal Support Questionnaire
1. Le	gal Name:
2 Eli	gible Applicant Type:
Selec	
	es your organization qualify as one of the following entity types aborgular individuals are ineligible from this funding opportunity)
Sele	ction
4. Do	es your proposal target any of the Critical Conservation Areas (CCA)
Sele	ction
5. Do	es your proposal target any of the following Priorities?
	ction
6. Are (UE	e you registered in Sam.Gov and have a Unique Entity Identification I)?
Sele	action
	your Sam.Gov account in good standing or does one of the following cors apply to you or your organization?
Sele	action
8. Ple	ase provide your email address below:

Submit completed questionnaires to the Regional Conservation Partnership Program inbox email RCPP@usda.gov. Eligible applicants will receive follow up instructions, all others will be redirected to applicable resources. Application period is 45 days from NFO announcement, and selection is on a first come first served basis.

Conservation Service



Metaphase Consulting LLC will provide the following:

- Support for proposal development and submission but will not be writing the proposal for the entity,
- May hire a Subject Matter Expert (SME) to coordinate with HU entities,
- Promote and host virtual Townhall Meetings,
- Encourage entities to contact and work with the lead state's RCPP Coordinator,
- Adhere to confidentiality requirements,
- Provide periodic updates to the FAPD Project's Branch Point of Contact,
- Ensure HU entities understand this assistance will not guarantee final selection of the Proposal.

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How to Apply

nrcs.usda.gov/

Upcoming Webinars for Applicants

April 23, 2024

RCPP Applicant Outreach Webinar: 2pm to 4pm EDT

This webinar will provide general information for applicants submitting proposals. The same material will be covered at both webinars followed by a question and answer section. **Registration Link:** <u>https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/e2f45f75-7ea4-410b-b1c9-567537cd2454@ed5b36e7-01ee-4ebc-867e-e03cfa0d4697</u>

May 30, 2024

RCPP Applicant Outreach Webinar: 2pm to 4pm EDT

This webinar will provide general information for applicants submitting proposals. The same material will be covered at both webinars followed by a question and answer section. **Registration Link:** <u>https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/226dcb51-0b57-43b1-b340-95e535238713@ed5b36e7-01ee-4ebc-867e-e03cfa0d4697</u>

May 16, 2024

RCPP Easement Webinar: 2pm to 4pm EDT

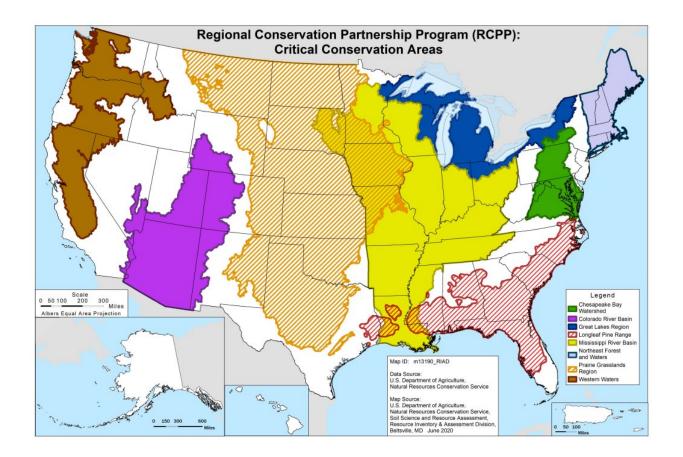
This webinar will provide information on RCPP easements for applicants submitting proposals. Registration Link: <u>https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/0fb9e56b-64dd-49dbea684es</u> 61a546d6ee7e@ed5b36e7-01ee-4ebc-867e-e03cfa0d4697

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Additional Information

Proposed projects must generate conservation benefits by addressing specific natural resource objectives in a State/multistate area or address one or more primary resource concerns within an NRCS-designated <u>critical conservation area</u> (CCA).



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Critical Conservation Area 00000

ССА	Priority Resource Concerns
Colorado River Basin	Excess or Insufficient Water (Flood or Drought)
	Inadequate Habitat for Fish, Wildlife, and Invertebrates
	Soil Quality Degradation
	Water Quality Degradation
Prairie Grasslands Region	Degraded Plant Condition
	Excess or Insufficient Water (Flood or Drought)

Natural Resources Conservation Service



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Current Deadlines

Program/Initiative	Туре	RCPP #	Application Deadline	Ranking	100% Obligation	FA Balance Type
2018 RCPP- San Juan Phreatophyte Removal	State	1893	January 19, 2024	May 3, 2024	August 2, 2024	\$435,328.00 LM
2018 RCPP- Eastern NM Grasslands	CCA	1905	January 19, 2024	May 3, 2024	August 2, 2024	\$1,356,173.00 LM
2018 Restoration - Renewal	State	2127	January 19, 2024	May 3, 2024	August 2, 2024	\$95,106.00 LM
2018 RCPP-North Central - Renewal	State	2137	January 19, 2024	May 3, 2024	August 2, 2024	\$208,143.43 LM
2018 New Mexico Ogallala Preservation & Conservation	CCA	2553	January 19, 2024	May 3, 2024	August 2, 2024	\$3,411,418.00 EHE
						\$1,768,609.52 _{LM}
2018 RCPP-North Central - Renewal	State	2679	January 19, 2024	May 3, 2024	August 2, 2024	\$717,413.74 LM
2018 Establishment of Grassland Strongholds across the Southern High Plains - (CO lead state)	CCA	2764	ТВА			\$7,158,500.00 EHE
						Conservat



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United States Department of Agriculture

Project #	Project Title	Lead Partner	Funding Amount	Funding Pool	CCA	Summary
1893 A- 0040	San Juan Non- Native Phreatophyte Removal Program	San Juan SWCD	\$1,042,208.00	State	N/A	The San Juan Soil and Water Conservation District aims to protect reduce wildfire risk by removing non-native Russian olive and Salt Cedar infestations in identified high priority areas. The project will also undertake native plant and tree restoration activities to help restore riparian habitat and improve hydrology, involve the community in restoration and monitoring activities, and to encourage a renewed connection with the river.
1905 A- 0056	Eastern New Mexico Prairie Grassland Initiative	NMACD	\$2,025,974.00	CCA	Prairie Grassland	To increase suitable and occupied habitat to meet critical habitat needs of Lesser Prairie-chicken. Habitat improvements will occur through chemical and physical destruction of Mesquite patches across five priority areas identified using a mesquite density model and a study by scientists at New Mexico State University.
514 –2127 A-0057	2015 NM Restoration Initiative for Rangeland, Forestland, and Wildlife on Ranches w Fed Lands	NMACD	\$4,000,000.00	State		The New Mexico Restoration Initiative will utilize EQIP contracts with ranchers whose operations include federal lands.
287 - 2137 A-0046	2015 North Central NM Watershed Restoration Project	Pinto	\$2,313,359.00	State		Claunch-Pinto SWCD and its partners have identified over 35,000 acres for forest restoration treatments on private, public, state and tribal lands that are located within both the upland ponderosa pine, pinon, and juniper watersheds, and in the lower elevation riparian ones. Claunch-Pinto SWCD and their partners are committed to successful restoration treatments aimed at improving watershed health and mitigating the extreme risk of wildfire.



2553	New Mexico Ogallala Preservation & Conservation	NMACD	NM	\$2,184,900	\$15,109,920.00	CCA		John Tunberg
2679	North Central NM Watershed Restoration Project	Claunch- Pinto SWCD		NM	\$717,413.74		Claunch-Pinto SWCD and its partners have identified over 35,000 acres for forest restoration treatments on private, public, state and tribal lands that are located within both the upland ponderosa pine, pinon, and juniper watersheds, and in the lower elevation riparian ones. Claunch-Pinto SWCD and their partners are committed to successful restoration treatments aimed at improving watershed health and mitigating the extreme risk of wildfire.	



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Programmatic Partnership Agreement 🖉 🄇

3093	Grazing Management and Non-Lethal Predator Risk Mitigation in NM and AZ	Western Landow ners Alliance	NM, AZ	:\$6,665,854.00				The goal of the project is to reduce the financial and social burden of recovering predator populations on livestock operations by increasing access to conservation activities relevant to rangeland livestock production. Locally-delivered outreach and TA in partnership with NRCS will advance adoption of climate-smart grazing management systems that incorporate non-lethal risk management strategies, addressing multiple threats to sustained livestock production.
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ان QUESTIONS?







Joilynn R. Gray April 30, 2024



New Mexico State Technical Committee Meeting



Topics

- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
- Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)





CRP Program Objective

- Assist owners and operators in conserving and improving the nation's natural resource base.
- Cost share is offered for eligible practices
- Cost share rates include the cost of any factors necessary to perform the practice





General CRP

Continuous CRP

- Regular CRP
- Grasslands CRP
- Highly Erodible Land Initiative (HELI) CRP
- State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) CRP





- General
 - Signup 62 Period was from March 4 March 29
 - 62 offers were submitted

County	Number of Offers
Curry	17
Lea	2
Quay	14
Roosevelt	29





- Continuous
 - Regular CRP is for environmentally sensitive land devoted to certain conservation practices can be enrolled in CRP at any time.





- Continuous
 - Highly Erodible Land Initiative





Continuous

- SAFE
 - Lea (2007)
 - Lea & Roosevelt (2021)

No offers were submitted during this year's signup period

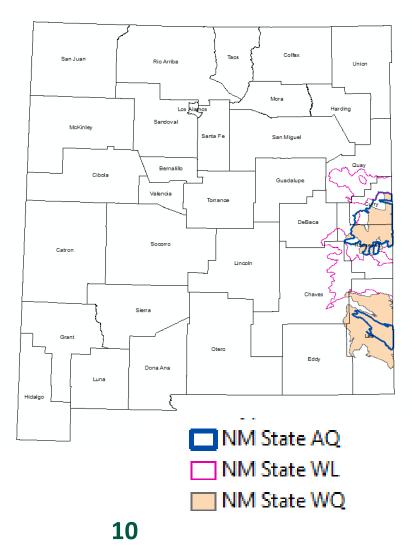


- Continuous
 - Grasslands
 - Signup Period is forthcoming.





- National CPA
- State CPA (Zone)

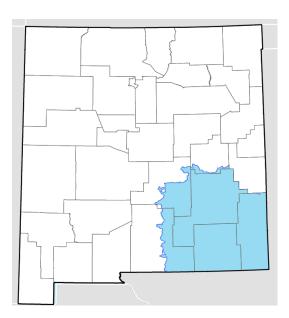


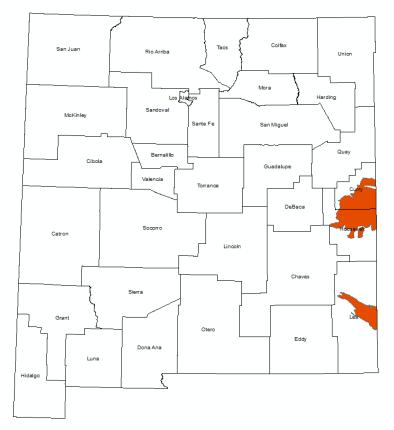




State CPAs

Air Quality (AQ) CPA







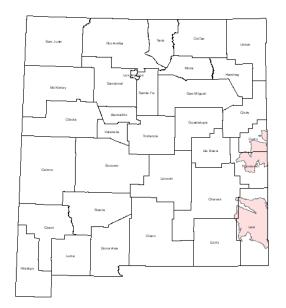


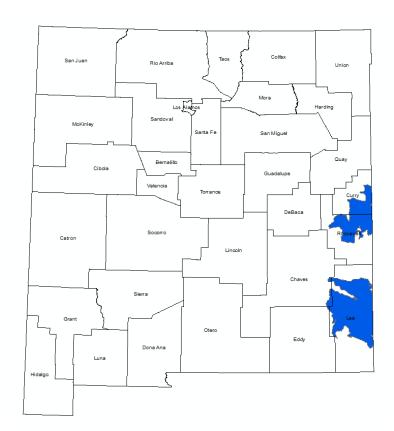




State CPAs

Water Quality (WQ) CPA









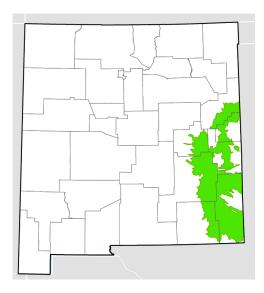
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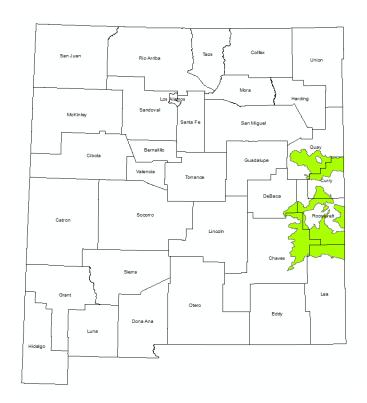


State CPAs

Wildlife (WL) CPA







2024



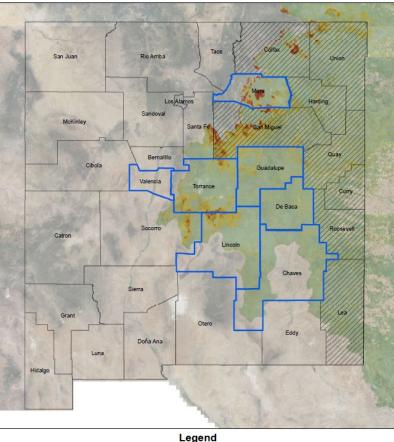
Agency

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 State CPA Grassland Zone



2024 State Grasslands CRP CPA

County Boundary

14

CRP Grassland Nat. Priority Zone, Dust Bowl





Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)

ECP is a C/S program. Subject to the availability of funds, the objective of ECP is to make C/S assistance available to eligible agricultural producers and ranchers for performing approved emergency conservation practices to

- rehabilitate farmlands and conservation structures damaged by certain natural disasters.
- install water conservation measures during periods of severe drought to supply emergency water for certain livestock





Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)

- Cost share level approvals or payments **must not** exceed:
 - 75 percent of the producer's total allowable cost to perform the practice

• or

 90 percent of the producer's total allowable cost to perform the practice, if a producer certifies as a limited resource, socially disadvantaged, or beginning farmer or rancher.





Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)

• Active programs in New Mexico

Disaster	County
2021 Flooding	Dona Ana, Chaves
2022 Flooding	Chaves, Grant, Hidalgo, Luna
2022 Wildfire	Harding, Lea, Rio Arriba
2023 Flooding	Quay





Thank you! Joilynn R. Gray, Farm Program Chief joilynn.gray@usda.gov

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Lisa Garay, Program Specialist lisa.garay@usda.gov

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