NRCS Programs at a Glance

Resources for Private Landowners & Tribes

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

EQIP is our most widely-used program in Alaska and is ideal for new farmers and for clients who are new to working with NRCS. Seasonal high tunnels are a common practice under this program, as well as other popular conservation activities such as forest stand improvement, nutrient management, trails, fish passage and riparian habitat improvement, and more. EQIP provides technical and financial assistance to help producers address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits such as improved forest health, improved fish and wildlife habitat, improved soil health, and more. For producers holding an EQIP contract, NRCS makes incentive payments for the installation of planned conservation practices after the work has been completed. Advance payments are also available for historically-underserved applicants. EQIP can be used on specific parts of your operation such as a particular field, forest stand, or stream.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

CSP is designed to reward producers already implementing conservation activities who would like to take their environmental stewardship to a higher level. CSP provides benefits such as increased crop productivity, improved wildlife habitat, increased resilience to weather extremes, and more. CSP also encourages the adoption of new technologies and management techniques. CSP participants enroll their entire operation into the program. They can implement conservation practices as well as enhancements, which go above and beyond regular NRCS conservation practice standards. CSP is a 5-year contract with the landowner and provides annual payments both for maintaining current conservation efforts and for installing additional conservation activities.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

RCPP is a partner-driven approach to conservation that funds solutions to natural resource challenges on agricultural land. It can help address natural resource issues on a landscape or watershed scale by enlisting multiple landowners and partner organizations to work together to implement similar practices within a community or region. One example in Alaska is the Hoonah Native Forest Partnership, in which the lead partner Sealaska used RCPP in collaboration with multiple partners to support healthy salmon habitat.

NRCS Alaska

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is a federal agency under the United States Department of Agriculture.

We offer technical and financial assistance to private agricultural producers, including Tribes, Tribal entities, local governments and non-governmental organizations, to address natural resource concerns on private land.

Our programs are entirely voluntary. Programs are designed to offer incentives to encourage land managers to adopt proactive conservation approaches that improve the sustainability and resiliency of natural resources for future generations.

Find your local USDA Service Center:

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

ACEP helps landowners, land trusts and other entities protect working farms and ranches, and restore and protect wetlands, through conservation easements. There are two components of the program: Agricultural Land Easements (ALE) and Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE). Through ALE, NRCS helps Alaska Native tribes, state and local governments and non-governmental organizations protect working agricultural lands and limit non-agricultural uses of the land. Easements can protect farmland from non-ag development and ensure the land remains in agriculture for future generations. Through WRE, NRCS helps landowners take wetlands out of agricultural use and restore and/or enhance them, and protect them from future development.

Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP)

EWP is a recovery program that relieves imminent hazards to life and property caused by floods, fires, windstorms and other natural disasters. All projects must have a project sponsor which may be a city, borough, conservation district, or any Federally-recognized Tribe. NRCS may cover up to 75 percent of the cost of the project. In Alaska, EWP is commonly used to relocate homes and buildings away from severe streambank erosion. Other examples of EWP work can include removing debris clogging stream channels and stabilizing eroding streambanks. It does not require a federal or state disaster declaration to qualify; the State Conservationist makes the determination after receiving a request for assistance from a qualifying sponsor.

Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations Program (WFPO)

WFPO provides technical and financial assistance to local governments and Tribes to plan and implement watershed-scale projects. These are long term, multi-year projects that address proactive solutions to issues that cannot be addressed with any other NRCS program. Projects can address flood prevention, watershed protection, public recreation, public fish and wildlife, agricultural water management, municipal and industrial water supply, and water quality management. NRCS provides engineering and technical assistance as well as planning and installation/construction assistance. This program can be used to assist rural villages with managed retreat and/or village relocation efforts which are some of the most pressing needs in many threatened communities across Alaska.

Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)

CIG is a grant program that provides matching funds to an individual or partner organization to stimulate the development and adoption of new and innovative approaches or technologies that apply to conservation on agricultural lands. CIG can include pilot projects and field demonstrations. Many CIG projects lead to the development of new NRCS conservation practices or enhancements that can be widely adopted across the nation; for example, for example, utilizing satellite-based virtual fencing to rotate livestock through remote rangelands and improve range condition. There are two national-level CIG competitions: Classic and On-Farm Trials; and one state-level competition.