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United States Department of Agriculture

USDA's  
93rd  
Annual

# Agricultural Outlook Forum

## A New Horizon: The Future of Agriculture

February 23-24, 2017 • Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel, Arlington, Virginia

Presentation from the USDA Agricultural Outlook Forum 2017

United States Department of Agriculture  
93<sup>rd</sup> Annual Agricultural Outlook Forum  
“A New Horizon: The Future of Agriculture”

February 23-24, 2017  
Arlington, Virginia





United States Department of Agriculture



# Regional Conservation Partnership Program



*February 23, 2017*  
*AG Outlook Forum*



Natural  
Resources  
Conservation  
Service

[nrcs.usda.gov/](http://nrcs.usda.gov/)

# Today's Topics



- About NRCS
  - Organizational Structure
  - Approach
  
- RCPP 101
  - Overview
  - RCPP Process
  - Best Practices
  - To date project numbers
  
- RCPP Q&A



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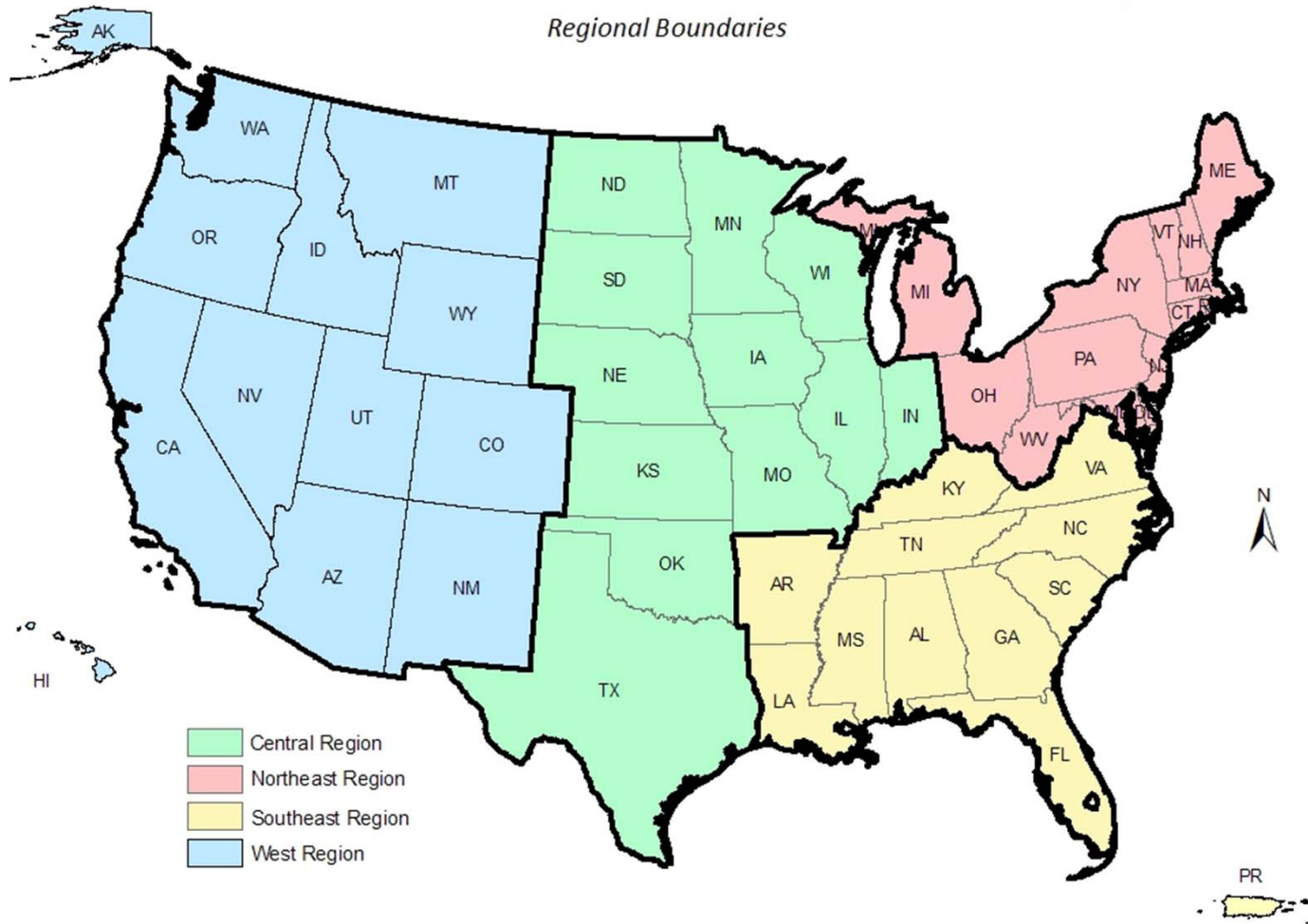


# About NRCS



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Conservation  
Service

[nrcs.usda.gov/](https://nrcs.usda.gov/)



Map Date - June 2012  
 Map Source - Regional Conservationists Office

- Approx. 11,000 employees, only 600 in Washington, DC area
- Network of nearly 3,000 field offices
- Conservation professionals working with farmers, ranchers, landowners, and partners





## NRCS Approach

70% of land in the lower 48 states is privately owned.

NRCS combines locally-led solutions with science and research; landowner stewardships; partnerships; and proven conservation practices to produce results for agriculture and the environment.







# RCPP 101



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**RCPP empowers local organizations and communities to demonstrate the importance of strong public-private partnerships in delivering solutions to natural resource challenges.**



# Regional Conservation Partnership Program

- Provides partners the opportunity to direct NRCS Programs through a unique partnership
- Encourages innovative, locally driven conservation
- Increases investment through partner contributions to the shared conservation mission
- Reaches out to new participants for NRCS Programs



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# Regional Conservation Partnership Program



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# RCPP Funding Process

## Annual Announcement for Program Funding (APF)

### Two-phase application process

- 1. Pre-proposal application**
  - Partners submit projects with pre-proposal application
  - NRCS reviews and selects pre-proposals
- 2. Full proposal application**
  - NRCS invites partners to submit a full proposal for selected pre-proposals
  - NRCS reviews and selects full proposals for development of an agreement and award

**Agreement (or MOU) negotiated and signed between Partner and NRCS**



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# Identify Programs Used in Project



**Environmental Quality Incentives Program**



**Conservation Stewardship Program**



**Agricultural Conservation Easement Program**



**Healthy Forests Reserve Program**

**WATERSHED PROTECTION AND FLOOD PREVENTION ACT**

*Public Law 83-566*

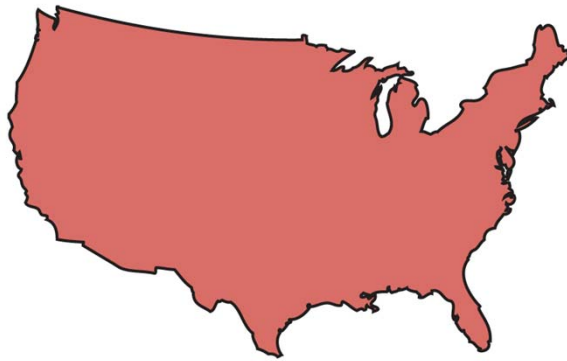
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# Select One of Three RCPP Funding Pools



National – 40%



State – 25%



Critical Conservation Area (CCA) - 35%



# Identify Natural Resource Concerns



***The project should “...achieve specific, measurable natural resource results.”***

- Excess/Insufficient Water/Drought
- Water quality degradation
- Soil quality degradation
- Inadequate habitat for fish and wildlife (and invertebrates)
- Air quality impacts
- Degraded Plant Condition (specific to certain CCA only)
- Energy
- Climate Change



# RCPP Best Practices



*Successful RCPP projects demonstrate four characteristics.*

- Participation
- Innovation
- Contribution
- Solutions



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# RCPP by the Numbers



*RCPP with a quick breakdown:*

- RCPP has awarded 287 agreements from FY 2014-2017
- Resource Concern most often addressed:
  - Water Quality
- Projects in all 50 States and 1 US Territory
- Most impactful projects are well defined in geographic scope, monetary ask and contributions, and have measurable, achievable outcomes.





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**The heart of RCPP is about empowering local project sponsors to design and deliver solutions that benefit natural resources where they live and work.**



USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

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