



Conservation Programs

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Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

- Natural resource priorities are based upon Local Work Group (LWG) and State Technical Committee input.
- The Conservation Districts (CD) serve as the lead for the LWG annual meetings.
- The LWGs are made up of CD Board members, farmers, ranchers, forest owners, and local agency/non-government organization representatives.
- Starting in 2025, the NRCS in CO has encourage the LWGs to develop EQIP Targeted Conservation Projects (TCP) based upon the local working group priorities.

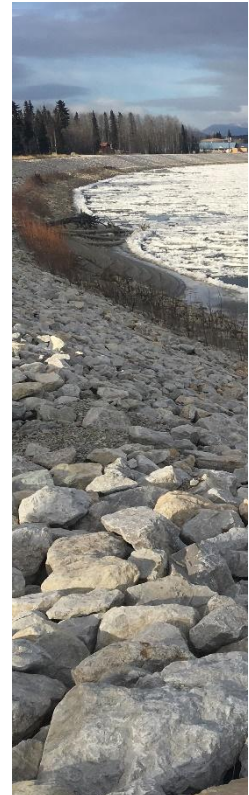


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Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

- The EQIP Targeted Conservation Projects offer an opportunity for the LWGs to request an EQIP funding pool to address a priority resource need.
- The EQIP TCP proposal process is streamlined to identify:
 - Project area and priority natural resource issue
 - Priority conservation practices
 - Estimated number of ag producers within the project area
 - Estimated percentage of the ag producers that are interested in participating
 - Estimated funding request

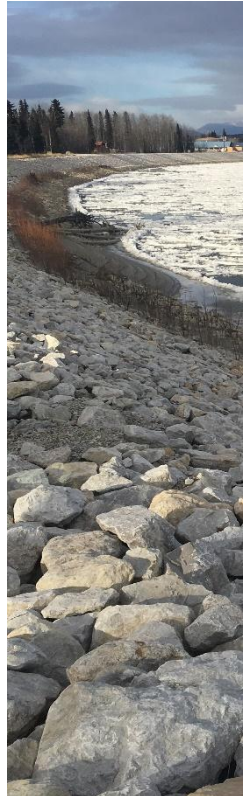


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Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

- If the EQIP TCP is selected for funding, we have allocated up to \$500K per project for the first year.
- If needed the EQIP TCP can be implemented for 3 consecutive years.
- If funds are available, we can increase the annual allocation to address the TCP funding needs.



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Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Water Management Entities (WMEs)



A state, irrigation district, ground water management district, acequia, or similar entity that has jurisdiction or responsibilities related to irrigation water delivery or management on eligible lands. These may be public or semi-public agencies or organizations with the purpose of assisting individual agricultural producers.

WMEs may be considered eligible for an EQIP contract if all the following criteria can be met:

- WME is a public or semi-public agency or organization
- WME's purpose is to assist private agricultural producers with managing water distribution or conservation systems
- Water conservation or irrigation practices support a water conservation project that will effectively conserve water, provide fish and wildlife habitat, or provide for drought-related environmental mitigation

WME Land Eligibility

Water conservation or irrigation practices that are the subject of a water conservation project must be implemented—

- (i) On the eligible land of a producer;
- (ii) On land that is under the effective control of the water management entity; or
- (iii) Adjacent to the eligible land of a producer, provided the state conservationist determines the adjacent land is necessary to support the installation of a conservation practice or system on eligible land.

Note: Land that is under the effective control of a WME may be eligible even if it is not agricultural land or nonindustrial private forest land.

WME – Eligible FSA Business Types

Business Type Code	Business Type Name	Business Type Description
03	Joint Venture	<p>A business enterprise in which two or more individuals and/or businesses pool their resources, such as land, labor, capital, equipment, and management. Members participate fully in running the business and share in profits and losses.</p> <p>Unlike a general partnership, a joint venture may or may not be formed under state law and may be an informal agreement between 2 or more individuals and/or businesses.</p>

WME – Eligible FSA Business Types

Business Type Code	Business Type Name	Business Type Description
04	Corporation	<p>A legal entity created and governed under the laws of the state in which it was formed whose existence is independent of its shareholders with the intent to provide goods and services for a profit.</p> <p>Includes but is not limited to publicly- or privately-held C or S Corporation, such as a domestic C corporation, a private cooperative corporation, or a wholly-owned foreign corporation.</p> <p>This business type does not include corporations that can be classified as nonprofit or tax-exempt organizations.</p>

WME – Eligible FSA Business Types

Business Type Code	Business Type Name	Business Type Description
09	State/Local Government	<p>The government at a state-level or lower, such as the government of a state of the United States, a state agency, county government, or city government. Includes territories of the United States and other public body organizations authorized to act in association with state and local governments as provided under state law.</p> <p>Does not include tribal governments. See Indian Tribal Ventures.</p>

WME – Eligible FSA Business Types

Business Type Code	Business Type Name	Business Type Description
10	Non-profit or Tax-Exempt Organizations	<p>A legal entity created and governed under the laws of the state in which it was formed that is a tax-exempt or non-profit organization, generally a corporation, that does not distribute earnings to its members.</p> <p>Includes but is not limited to churches, charities, private schools, and clubs.</p>

WME – Eligible FSA Business Types

Business Type Code	Business Type Name	Business Type Description
22	Limited Liability Company	A legal entity created and governed under the laws of the state in which it was formed by filing articles of organization as an LLC. Members may be individuals, corporations, partnerships, joint ventures, other LLC's, etc. and are not personally liable for the Limited Liability Company's debts.

Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Waivers

NRCS may waive the applicability of the AGI provisions if NRCS determines that the waiver is necessary to fulfill the objectives of a water conservation project implemented through an EQIP contract with a water management entity.

Under this specific authority, NRCS **will not** require a water management entity to file Form CCC-941 or have AGI determinations made by FSA.

Funding Limitations for WMEs

- **Payment limitations** are not applicable to EQIP contracts obligated during FY 2026.
- **Contract limitations:** Contracts obligated in FY 2026 for WMEs have a contract limit of up to \$900,000. A request to waive this limit up to \$1,800,000 may be considered if the following conditions are met:
 - The project **complies with environmental evaluation** requirements and does not require a site-specific environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS).
 - The **NRCS can support one or more large water management entity projects** and meet EQIP funding targets.
 - The **NRCS can support the project's engineering workload.**

Irrigation Ditch and Pipeline - Access

- A large percentage of irrigation ditches and pipelines in CO do not have recorded access easements or a recorded right of way for access.
- When the irrigation ditches and pipelines do not have a recorded right of way or easement, they have a historic access known as a “prescriptive easement”.
- The courts in CO have upheld use of the prescriptive easements for the irrigation ditch companies, irrigation districts and water right holders to perform maintenance and improvements on existing ditches, pipelines and the associated water control structures.



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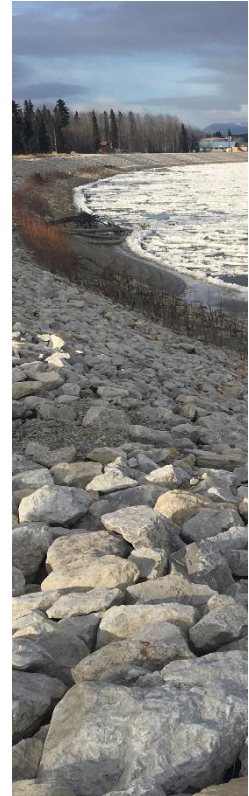
Irrigation Ditch and Pipeline - Access

- NRCS CO-ENG-13 form, Notification of Participant Responsibilities:
- Section 4. Property Rights. The participant is responsible, financially and otherwise, for obtaining adequate and necessary real property rights and interests, easements, subordination agreements, permits, and/or licenses required for the installation of this project. This includes providing a right of ingress and egress as may be necessary and reasonable for NRCS personnel to inspect the work during installation and throughout its design life. Informal property rights agreements should be documented in writing, and formal agreements should be recorded for your future protection.



Irrigation Ditch and Pipeline - Access

- The request to obtain written permission for landowner concurrence is required by NRCS program policy.
- NRCS will follow up to review the policy requirements to ensure we are not adding unnecessary requirements to the program participants.
- NRCS will consult with the USDA Office of General Council (OGC) as project issues arise.



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Regenerative Ag Pilot Program (RPP)

- The RPP is being implemented under the program authorities for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).
- Regenerative Agriculture is a conservation management approach through improved soil health, and water management.
- Whole-farm conservation planning is the centerpiece of the program, ensuring that all resource concerns are addressed.
- Bundled practices will be integrated into a single application, making programs easier to access and more impactful to the natural resources.



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Regenerative Ag Pilot Program (RPP)

As part of participating in RPP, producers must:

- Work with NRCS staff, partners, or technical service providers to complete a whole-farm assessment.
- Use at least one primary regenerative management practice.
- Agree to perform soil health testing in the first and last year of the contract (at a minimum) to establish a starting baseline and to record the resulting changes.
- The whole-farm assessment includes all resource concerns and must meet NRCS planning criteria in the soil and water resource categories.



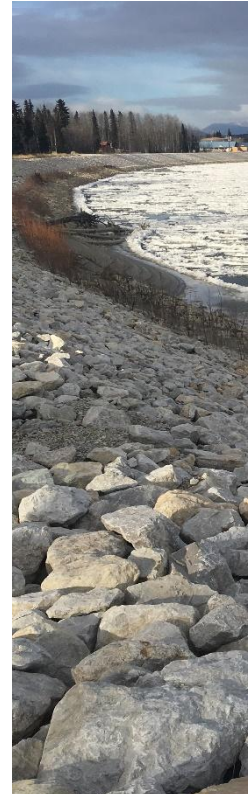
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Regenerative Ag Pilot Program (RPP)

Primary Regenerative Management Practice examples include:

- .Conservation Crop Rotation
- .Contour Farming
- .Cover Crop
- .Forage Harvest Management
- .Forest Stand Improvement
- .Irrigation Water Management
- .Nutrient Management
- .Pest Management
- .Grazing Management
- .Residue and Tillage Management, No Till or Strip Till



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Technical Service Providers (TSP)

- Producers can voluntarily choose to use NRCS certified Technical Service Providers (TSPs) to assist them in developing conservation planning activities and designing conservation practices to address resource concerns on their land.
- NRCS provides financial assistance opportunities for producers/landowners to hire certified Technical Service Providers (TSPs) to complete Conservation Activities associated with conservation planning, developing conservation practice designs, and monitoring and/or evaluating conservation measures applied to the land.
- Certified TSPs add important subject matter expertise to support NRCS Conservation Planning and Conservation Practice Design. The TSP Program benefits NRCS by building the capacity to address the substantial workload associated with implementing Farm Bill programs.



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Technical Service Providers (TSP)

- The NRCS in CO has need for TSP capacity for conservation planning, practice design and implementation in the following areas:
 - Engineering project design and implementation
 - Regenerative Ag Pilot Program (RPP)
 - Agronomic practices such as crop rotation, residue management, nutrient management and pest management
 - Grazing management and supporting practices
 - Forest stewardship planning and implementation



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Farm Service Agency (FSA) Drought Assistance

Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP): Payments to producers suffering grazing losses due to drought or fire.

Emergency Livestock Relief Program (ELRP): Specifically for drought/wildfire losses.

Supplemental Disaster Relief Program (SDRP): Assists producers with indemnified losses.

Emergency Relief Program (ERP): Provides assistance for revenue losses due to disasters.

Emergency Conservation Program (ECP): Funding for rehabilitating farmland damaged by natural disasters.

Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP): Cost-share grants for restoring private forest land.



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Farm Service Agency (FSA) Drought Assistance

Emergency Loan Program: For producers who suffered losses due to qualifying disasters.

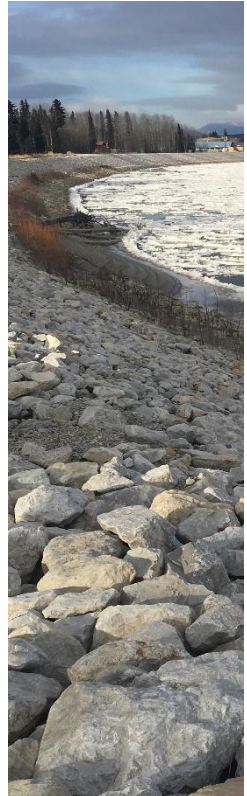
Guaranteed Loans: Loans made by traditional lenders but guaranteed by FSA.

Farm Operating Loans: For purchasing livestock, seed, equipment, and annual operating costs.

Farm Ownership Loans: For purchasing or expanding a farm or ranch, constructing improvements, and soil/water conservation.

Microloans: Simplified loans for small, beginning, or niche farmers.

Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC): Provides income support based on crop revenue.



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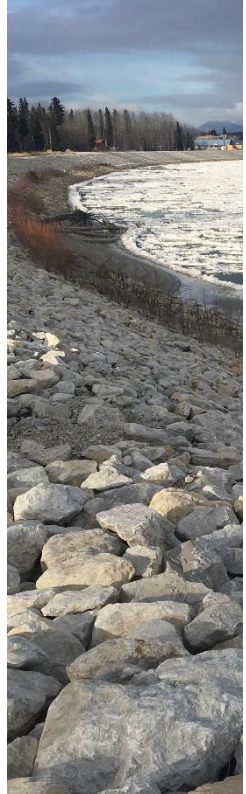
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Farm Service Agency (FSA) Drought Assistance

Price Loss Coverage (PLC): Provides income support based on crop prices.

Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL): Provides temporary financing to allow producers to manage cash flow without selling crops at low prices.

Distressed Borrowers Assistance Network: Helps farmers facing financial hardship.



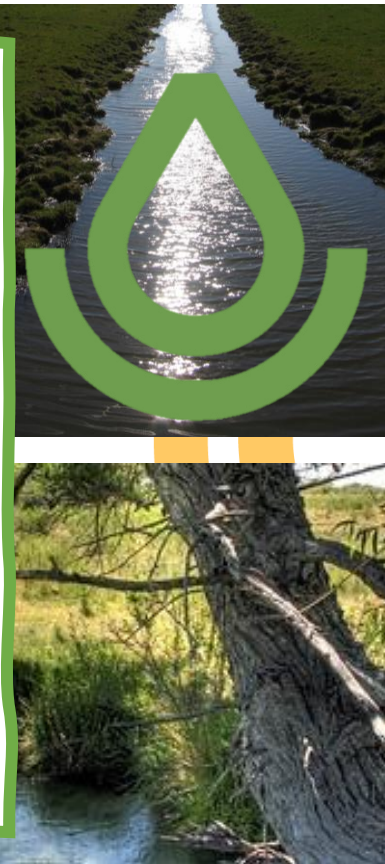
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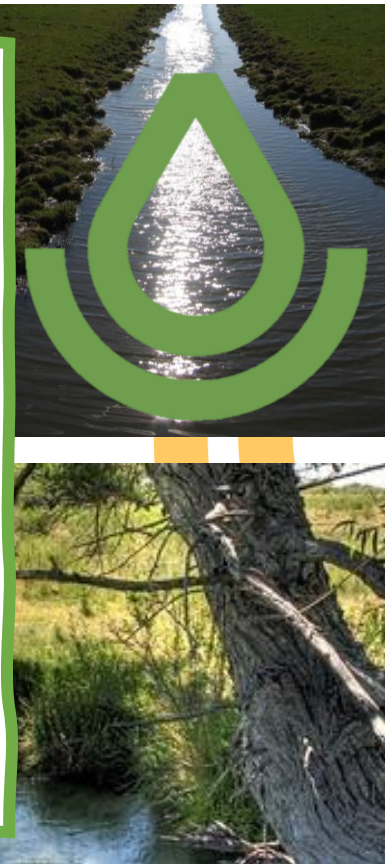
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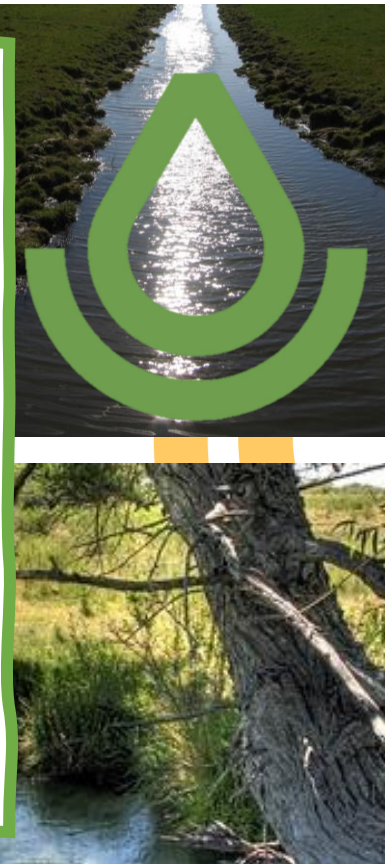
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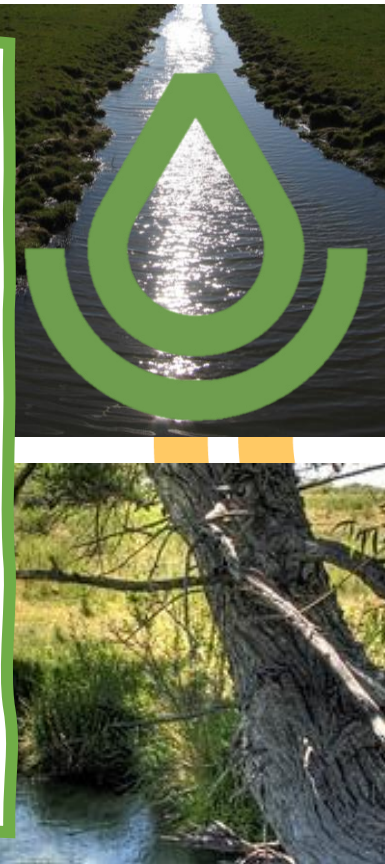
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Thank you!

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