



# PIA Strategic Plan FY 2023-2026

The Strategic Plan outlines NRCS PIA's long-term goals, its challenges and how NRCS PIA plans to address them.



One Mission. One Team.  
We are stronger together

This plan is guided by the USDA's FY 2023 - 2026 Strategic Plan goals, which are:

- Combat climate change to support America's working lands, natural resources and communities.
- Ensure America's agricultural system is equitable, resilient and prosperous.
- Foster an equitable and competitive marketplace for all agricultural producers.
- Provide all Americans safe and nutritious food.
- Expand opportunities for economic development and improve quality of life in rural and urban communities.
- Attract, inspire and retain an engaged and motivated workforce that's proud to represent USDA.





**Strategic Goal 1:**  
Combat climate change to support America's working lands, natural resources and communities

USDA is implementing a comprehensive strategy to incentivize climate-smart decisions for agricultural and forest producers, landowners and communities.

NRCS PIA supports climate smart agriculture conservation practices by:

- Promoting high priority practices that align with climate-smart agriculture and forestry.
- Providing support for farmers and ranchers to make their operations adaptable and resilient to climate change.
- Developing conservation practices that are scalable at the practice, field and farm level.
- Identifying economic constraints to climate-smart conservation measures that affect all communities with emphasis on historically underserved communities.
- Maximizing local flexibilities to address natural resource issues that will have most impact helping producers adapt to climate change.
- Engaging with partners in the implementation of climate-smart agriculture and forestry.
- Training the staff on climate-smart agriculture and forestry best management practices including developing a communication strategy and SharePoint site for staff to develop skills to aid clients.
- Continually providing training and education of the latest climate science so that every planner is knowledgeable about climate change impacts and can provide technical assistance and conservation planning for a spectrum of future conditions.
- Quantifying and accounting for greenhouse gas reductions and carbon sequestrations through the implementation of climate-smart agriculture and forestry practices.





## Strategic Goal 1: (continued)

- Collaborating with private and public sector businesses to identify natural resource concerns and developing unique solutions for protecting these resources.
- Leveraging local work group meetings and partnerships with Native Hawaiians and other underserved communities.
- Exploring use of satellite remote sensing to monitor changes across the landscape. Remote sensing can quantify changes over time more accurately and efficiently than onsite visual inspections.
- Leveraging WaterSmart Initiatives to help farmers and ranchers conserve water and build drought resiliency in communities.
- Working with local communities to invest in new dam and flood prevention projects and repairs on existing watershed infrastructure through WFPO, REHAB or EWP with priority on communities heavily impacted by drought and other natural disasters as well as underserved and limited resource communities.
- Implementing the living shoreline plan along coastlines.





USDA will safeguard animal and plant health, support farmers and ranchers' ability to start and maintain profitable cooperatives and businesses and offer financial support to those affected by natural disasters.

NRCS PIA examines farm bill programs for increased opportunity for enrollment and embraces new technologies to implement NRCS assistance by:

- Identifying underutilized programs and develop methods to educate and promote for future increased use.
- Engaging with partners to expand opportunities for perpetual conservation through the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program with a focus on protection of urban agricultural farms.
- Implementing easement training in Agricultural Land Trust.
- Promoting new RCPP projects to address regional resource concerns through partnerships.
- Utilizing EQIP state initiatives to address urban and small farm conservation.
- Utilizing EQIP conservation incentive contracts (CIC).
- Developing training for Field staff.
- Designing promotional items with Public Affairs Team.



**Strategic Goal 2:**  
Ensure America's  
agricultural  
system is  
equitable, resilient  
and prosperous





## Strategic Goal 2: (continued)



- Promoting Conservation Stewardship Program in PIA.
- Accelerating urban conservation and opportunities for small farms.
- Working with Federal, State and local agencies to increase outreach efforts targeting urban and small acreage farmers.
- Researching and find local nonprofit organizations to target urban and small acreage farmers (food pantries, faith-based organizations, and churches, etc.).



- Participating in conferences targeting urban and small acreage farmers by having a booth, speaking on the agenda and networking with participants.
  - PIA Agri-Forestry Small Farmers and Ranchers Conference
  - Urban Forum
  - Hawai'i Farmers Union United
  - Hawai'i's Cattlemen's Council Inc. Convention
- Identifying conservation methods and techniques to strengthen, promote and implement a technically sound urban and small farm agriculture program.
- Developing native landscaping projects for cities that provide tax breaks to residents and involve Plant Materials Center.
- Designing a Fact sheet with advice and assistance
- Developing conservation practice scenarios for urban and small farms
- Identifying financial assistance programs that can be utilized to promote and implement urban and small farm agriculture.
- Incorporating the approved national small acreage scenarios in PIA.
- Developing payment schedules to support small-acreage scenarios.
- Increasing the USDA infrastructure investments that benefit underserved communities.
- Expanding partnerships to ensure unserved producers have the support needed to access USDA programs.





### Strategic Goal 3: Foster an equitable and competitive marketplace for all agricultural producers

USDA will design, implement and administer programs in a way that is environmentally sound and increases access, program participation and investments to underserved communities.

NRCS PIA plans to strengthen and expand partnerships by:

- Expanding and enhancing partnerships and networks that provide assistance and information to underserved groups and individuals and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.
- Ensuring partners receive updated information regarding outreach through publications, meetings and trainings.
- Prioritizing PIA Partners for Conservation opportunities for projects that address NRCS priorities targeted for underserved groups and individuals and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.
- Developing a business model for salesmanship.
- Researching opportunities for podcasts and blogs to highlight agency opportunities.
- Networking with community leaders.
- Developing a list of nontraditional media sources (TV/ newspapers, community newsletters, church announcements/ newsletters, etc.) and share agency news releases with these resources.





USDA will collaborate with communities to increase opportunities for underserved communities. This includes working with Federal partners and various stakeholder groups to help rural and Native Hawaiian communities thrive.

NRCS PIA will build trust, reduce barriers to access, invest in underserved communities and foster innovation and partnerships by:

- Identifying and reducing barriers to USDA programs support to underserved communities. Establish a point of contact for each island to assist underserved customers through the NRCS conservation planning and program assistance process.
- Ensuring USDA service center provide presence and services to urban and suburban communities and align programs, payment schedules and conservation practice implementation to meet the needs of urban and suburban agricultural producers.
- NRCS PIA will take steps to remove barriers to access USDA programs.
- Hosting Native Hawaiian Organizational round table sessions for increased communication and customer service.
- Building and strengthening partnerships with state and community partners to ensure Native Hawaiian climate change strategies are locally-led.



## Strategic Goal 4: Ensure opportunities for economic development and improve quality of life in rural and native Hawaiian communities







USDA is committed to reaching new heights by recruiting, onboarding, supporting and retaining a diverse and talented workforce and cultivating a workplace environment that is collaborative, service-oriented, mission-centered, healthy, inclusive and welcoming.

NRCS PIA plans to continue to build a high performing organization by:

**Strategic Goal 5:**  
 Attract, inspire and retain an engaged and motivated workforce that's proud to represent USDA

- Providing professional self-improvement opportunities to all staff including leadership development, work/life balance, financial management consultation and retirement investment training.
- Developing team building sessions and activities.
- Utilizing successful businesses to provide specific customer service training to supervisors and managers.
- Expanding recruitment efforts.
- Developing a set of materials for college recruitment events and post to SharePoint for access.
- Developing a set of materials for high school recruitment events and post to SharePoint for access.
- Providing a NRCS booth at 4-H, FFA Annual Convention and other events.
- Developing contacts at local high schools to share NRCS career materials and attend career days.
- Developing relationships for recruitment at the Land Judging Events and other judging events.
- Exploring farm recruitment opportunities.
- Gathering list of career events for colleges and universities with agriculture, engineering and natural resources programs.





## Strategic Goal 5: (continued)



- Evaluating additional staffing needs based on agency priorities.
- Increasing the number of Program Support Specialists to handle large volume of program documentation and payments.
- Developing methods to improve employee morale.
- Increasing opportunities for field staff and local partners to work together.
- Modernizing technology.
- Working to ensure all field employees have access to mobile tools, iPhones/iPads to access online tools while working in the field, improved GPS technology that integrates with iPhones/iPads.
- Exploring the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) to assist staff with inspections, construction monitoring, easement monitoring, watershed structure monitoring, in addition to conservation practices.
- Replacing engineering survey equipment and technology to keep up with current technology.
- Providing staff training, education and resources to effectively meet NRCS priorities including climate related, urban agriculture, drought resiliency, etc.





## Strategic Goal 5: (continued)

- Establish diverse CRC contact list(s) for sharing all PIA job announcements.
  - 1890; AI/AN; employee organizations, national/other state SEPMs for GS-9 & up.
  - Target agricultural departments or natural resource divisions, biology and natural science departments for entry level, Pathways and volunteers.
- Distribute all PIA job announcements to NRCS staff and SWCD partners via email as soon as positions post to USA Jobs.
  - When possible alert employees in advance of posting.
  - Consider local release for jobs in newspaper, free TV release, or post to community bulletin boards.
- Develop presentation or video to be posted on website and used by all staff invited to student events and career days.
  - Highlight PIA's diversity and what it takes to work live and play in PIA.
- Update website links, information, photos to highlight PIA's cultural and ecological diversity.
  - Information on relocation and return rights; what OCONUS means; employee entitlements in PIA for outside recruits vs. local hires.
- Work with HR (FPAC-BC) to better understand hiring process.
  - Evaluate candidate pools at all phases to identify diversity deficiencies and barriers.
  - Ensure timely distribution of job announcements to candidates who reflect the diversity of the nation.
  - Enhance "Work-Live-Play in PIA" to represent a wide range of cultures and perspectives.
- Participate in all aspects of PIA's hiring processes.
- Recruiting and placing new PIA employees to fill critical positions throughout PIA.
  - Advertise State and Area positions as "All PIA Locations" when possible.



- Allow employees on detail and temporary promotions to serve remotely.
- Updating and reconfiguring office spaces to adapt to hybrid work environments and maximize efficiency of our existing spaces.
  - Install touchdown stations in all offices for use by non-supervisors.
  - Establish private offices for all supervisors.
  - Treat partner planners as PIA staff members.
  - Designate space in Service Centers for staff reporting to the Area/State Office.
  - Identify spaces throughout PIA where we can expand our operations without requiring additional leasing.



## Our Commitment to Equity

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information

(e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

■ To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form AD-3027 [online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter to USDA and provide the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).



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