



Customer Focus

NRCS, the Seminole Tribe, and the local working group decided to target cow-calf operations first to help ranchers improve the quality of the water leaving Seminole ranches. Canals that release the water off the reservations are surrounded by cow-calf operations. Water released from Brighton Reservation flows into Lake Okeechobee, and water released from Big Cypress Reservation flows into the Big Cypress preserve and ultimately the Everglades ecosystem.

During the past few years South Florida has suffered severe drought conditions. Ranchers on the Seminole reservation have been desperate to find alternatives (potable water) for their animals. NRCS has assisted ranchers on Big Cypress and Brighton reservations to achieve these goals and provided alternatives. LaBelle Service Center staff have assisted ranchers on both reservations with watering facility designs (wells, pumps, pipeline, and appurtenances) and excavated ponds to alleviate the need. EQIP has provided new stock-water facilities, making it possible to fence off main canals previously used by the cattle. This dramatically reduced direct water contamination to canals and provided potable water for cattle. Other practices such as; interior fencing, filter strips, exotic plants control and pasture improvements combined with nutrient management were implemented under EQIP. These have resulted in improved water quality and quantity.

2001 Environmental Quality Incentives Program



Florida Summary

Overview

In Florida, strong interest and participation in the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) continued through FY 2001. Applications requesting Federal cost-share funds totaling over \$9 million dollars were submitted by 900 landowners. The Florida FY 2001 allocation for financial assistance was \$4,384,000. This is a shortfall of about 4.6 million to meet current client needs. NRCS staff and our conservation partners developed and approved 442 EQIP conservation plans and contracts, which obligated nearly 100 percent of allocated financial assistance funds. NRCS employees in Florida devoted over 44,160 hours to EQIP administration in FY 2001. This is equivalent to \$1,011,160 in wages associated with EQIP.

Accomplishments

EQIP financial assistance has been distributed in Florida through 11 Geographic Priority Areas (GPA) and four statewide Natural Resource Concern (NRC) projects. About \$2,953,000 in EQIP Federal cost-share dollars were obligated in GPAs and \$1,431,000 obligated in NRC projects. FY 2001 EQIP conservation plans and contracts covered nearly 52,000 acres throughout the State. About 2,100 clients were provided assistance associated with EQIP in Florida as reported in PRMS. Since the inception of EQIP in Florida, over 23,000 distinct conservation practices have been planned in EQIP contracts.

Outlook

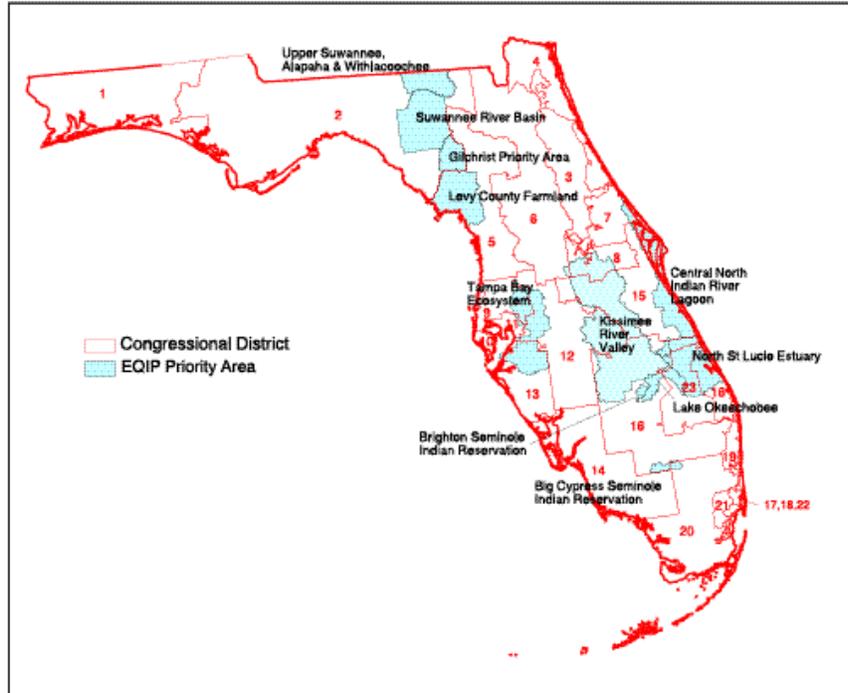
If participation measured the success of this program, Florida would report tremendous success with EQIP. The unmet requests from clients totaled 4,600,000 in FY 2001, and the total of unfunded GPAs (approved GPA applications that have not been funded) was about \$38,680,00. These figures indicate the need for continued program support to address significant resource concerns.

State Contacts

Jerry Joiner Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, USDA NRCS EQIP Program Manager, PO Box 141510, Gainesville, FL, 32605
Tim Hafner, Natural Resource Specialist, EQIP Program Specialist, (352) 338-9510



Florida EQIP Priority Areas Within Congressional Districts



Florida EQIP Dollars and Contracts by Congressional District

Congressional Districts	Fiscal Year 2001		Cumulative Total (97-01)	
	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts
District 0	0	0	\$3,235,385	470
District 1	432,203	198	887,346	298
District 2	1,618,971	113	5,078,625	539
District 3	0	0	880,832	67
District 4	0	0	471,074	20
District 5	307,366	17	379,517	22
District 7	50,000	1	50,000	1
District 8	45,495	1	45,495	1
District 9	30,961	1	497,327	54
District 12	495,973	53	1,021,637	124
District 13	30,648	4	30,648	4
District 14	0	0	682,674	54
District 15	676,517	27	1,700,570	108
District 16	212,246	13	2,640,192	322
District 23	483,799	14	1,055,413	32
State Totals	\$4,384,179	442	\$18,656,762	2116

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.