



United States Department of Agriculture

FY2024 California NRCS Program Summary

April 2024

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Acting Assistant State Conservationist for Programs



Programs Discussion Topics

- CA NRCS Strategic Plan Overview
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Farm Bill Allocations
- EQIP Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Allocations & Strategies
- FY23/FY24 EQIP Conservation Activity and Resource Assessment Summary
- Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) Updates
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) Updates
- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) Updates – Robert Boettcher

CALIFORNIA NRCS Strategic Plan 2020-2025

Mission – Helping People Help the Land

Vision – Personalizing proven and cutting edge conservation solutions to improve California’s natural resources

Goal 1: Support our valued external and internal stakeholders in service to California’s natural resources

Objective 1 – Focus on our customers to identify and address their conservation needs

Objective 2 – Foster an environment where our employees can succeed

Objective 3 – Collaborate with our partners to meet common conservation goals

Goal 2: Support resilience of agriculture in California through addressing priority resource concerns

Objective 1 – Improve plant and forest health/ productivity

Objective 2 – Improve air quality associated with agriculture operations

Objective 3 – Work with agricultural operations to protect surface and groundwater quality

Objective 4 – Work with agricultural operations to enhance surface and groundwater quantity

Objective 5 – Improve soil health

Objective 6 – Enhance habitat for terrestrial and aquatic species

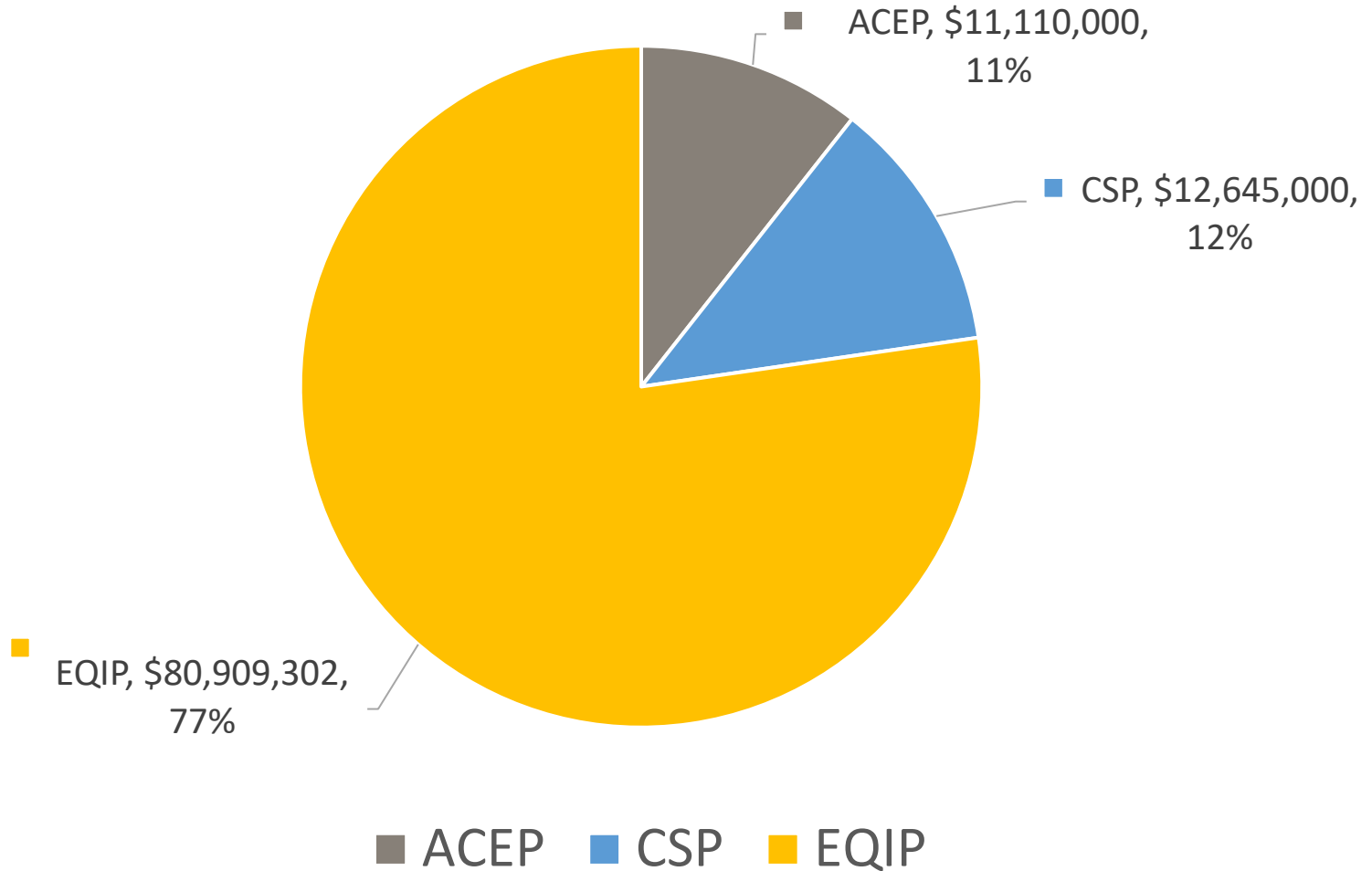




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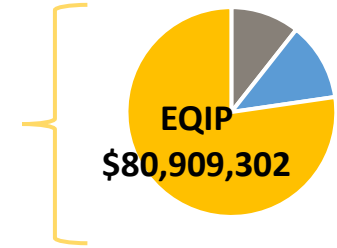
FY24 EQIP Farm Bill Allocations

FY2024 Farm Bill Allocations



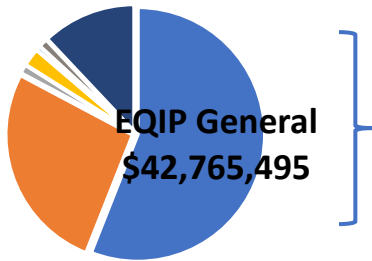
FY2024 EQIP National Initiatives

- National Air Quality Initiative (NAQI)
- WaterSMART (WSI)
- National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI)
- Joint Chiefs' Landscape Initiative (JCLI)
- Sage Grouse Initiative (SGI)
- Southwest Willow Flycatcher
- Migratory Bird Resurgence Initiative (MBRI)
- Organic Transition Initiative (OTI)



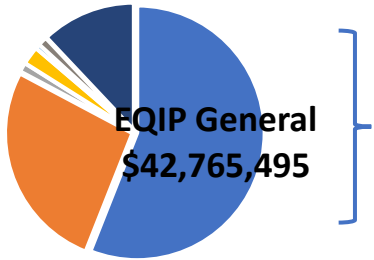
 **Remaining FY24 EQIP Allocation: \$42,765,495**

EQIP Farm Bill Allocation Requirements



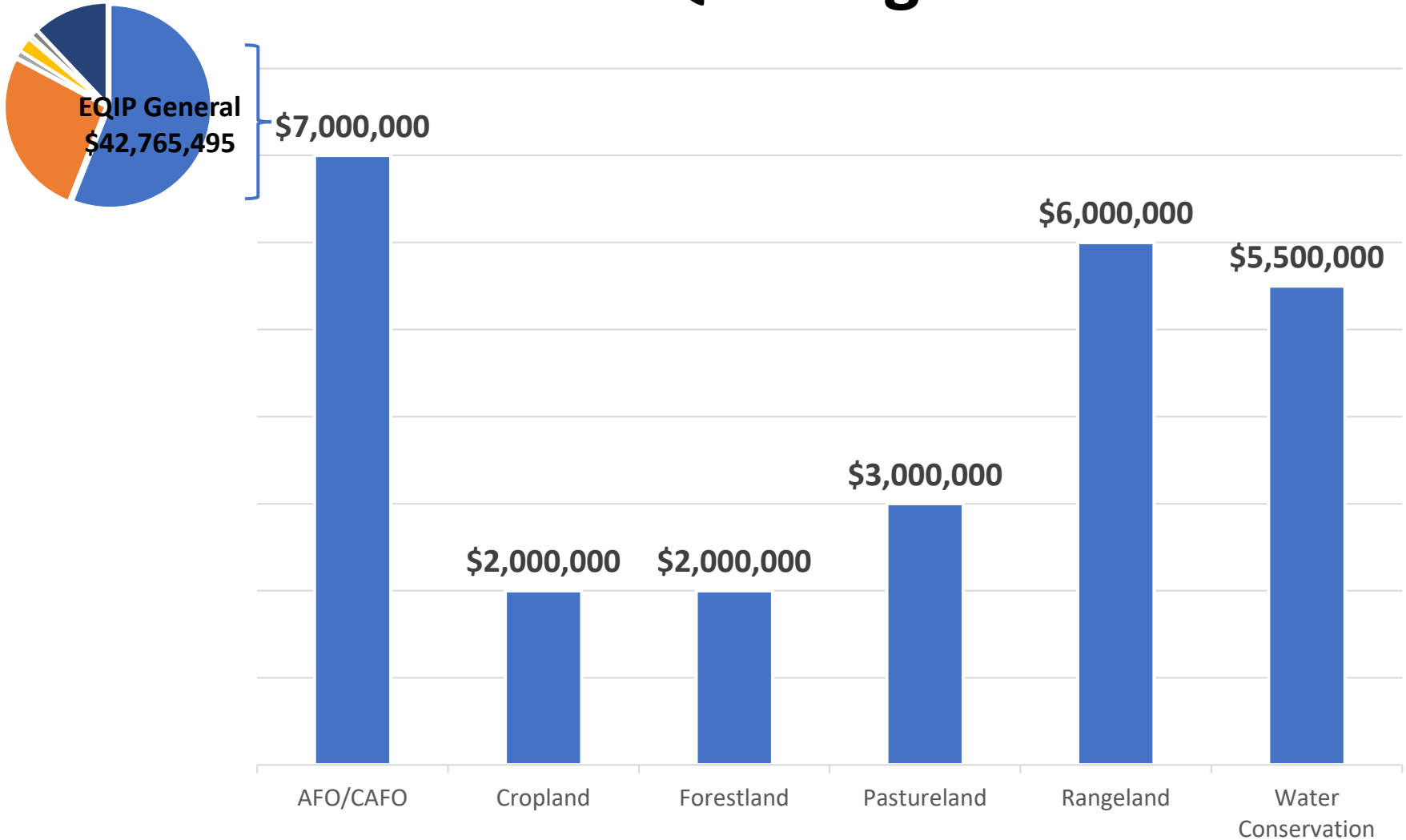
Metric	Required
Livestock	50%
Wildlife	10%
Beginning Farmer/Rancher	5%
Socially Disadvantaged Farmer/Rancher	5%
EQIP-Conservation Incentive Contracts	5%

FY2024 EQIP Statewide Initiatives

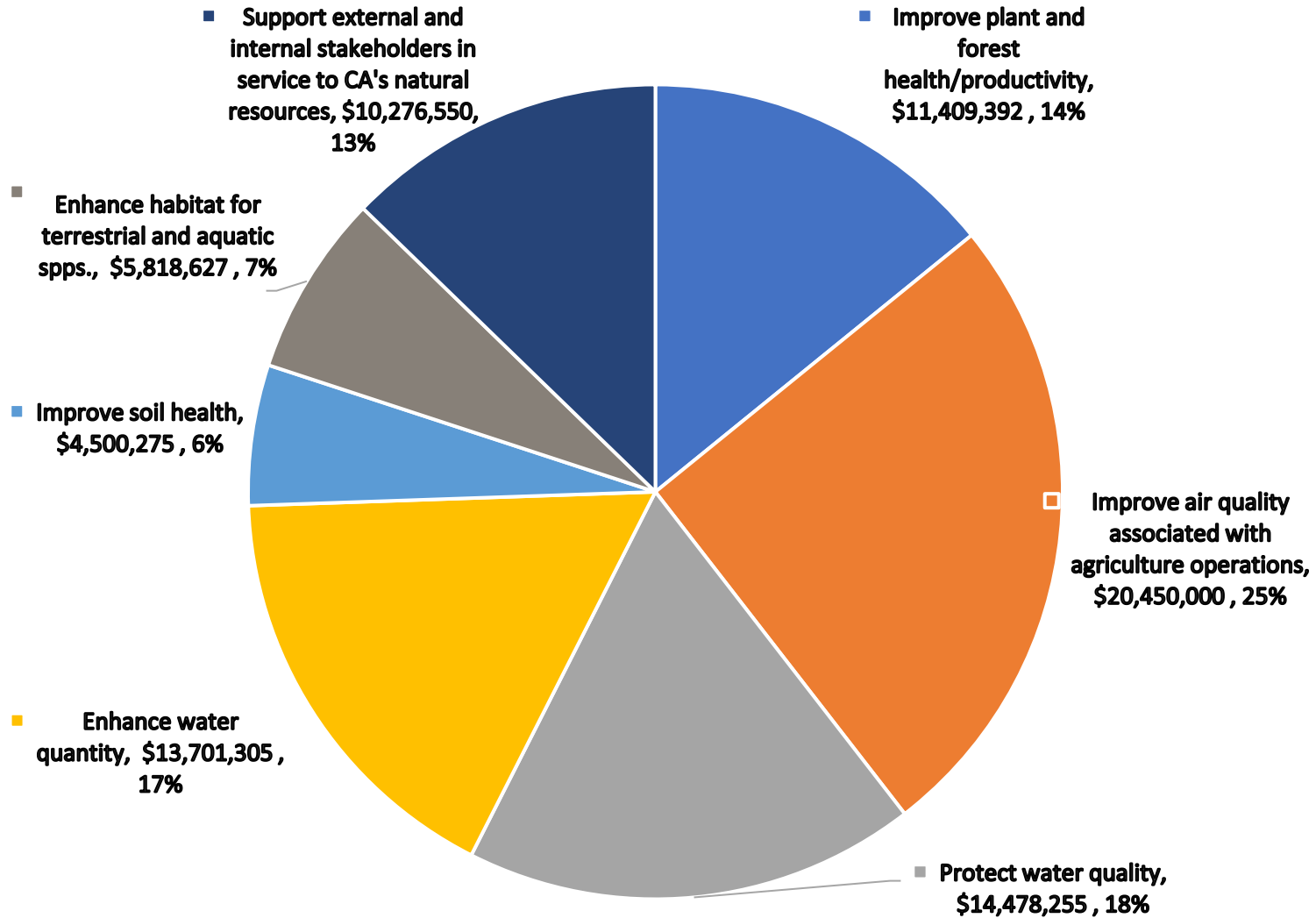


- EQIP-Conservation Incentive Contracts
- Historically Underserved
- On-Farm Energy
- Tribal
- CA Air Quality
- Disaster
- Conservation Planning, Design Implementation and Conservation Evaluation and Monitoring
- Activities
- Groundwater Recharge
- Water Management Entities
- Migratory Bird Resurgence Initiative (match)
- Urban Agriculture
- National Organic Initiative (NOI)
- Tri-Colored Blackbird
- Monarch Butterfly
- CA Wildlife Habitat
- Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)

FY2024 EQIP: Regional



EQIP Allocation by CA NRCS Strategic Plan





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FY24 EQIP Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Allocations

Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)

- Signed into law August 2022
- Contracts must include core conservation activities that
 - directly improve soil carbon;
 - reduce nitrogen losses; or
 - reduce, capture, avoid, or sequester carbon dioxide, methane, or nitrous oxide emissions associated with agricultural production.

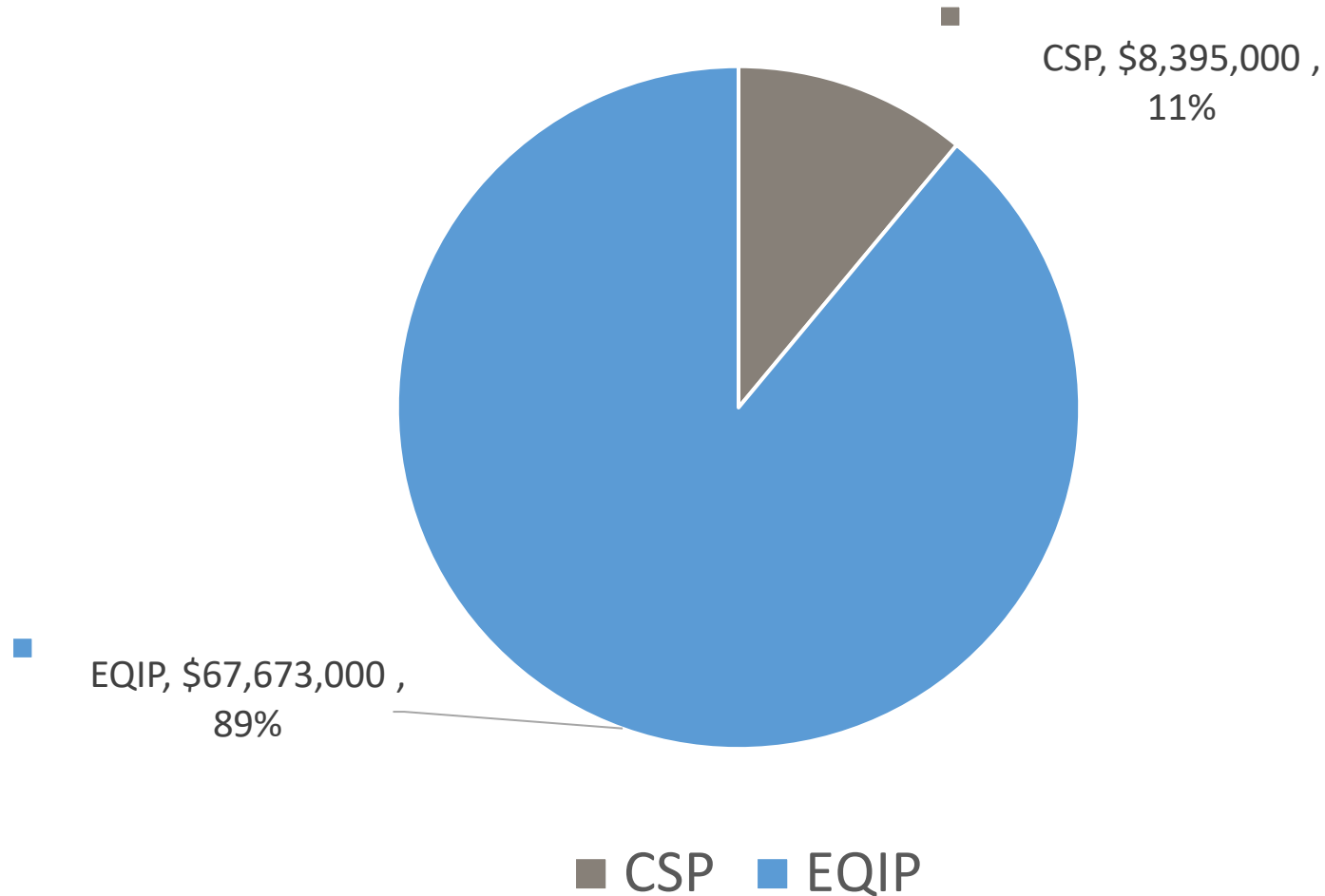


Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Example Mitigation Activities

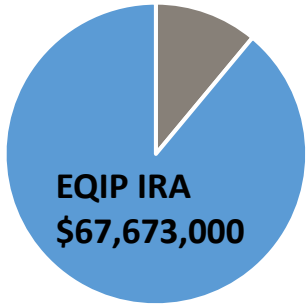
- Soil Health
 - Cover Crop
 - Conservation Cover
 - Tillage management
 - Mulching
- Nitrogen Management
 - Nutrient Management
- Livestock Partnership
 - Anaerobic Digester
- Grazing and Pasture
 - Brush Management
 - Herbaceous Weed Treatment
 - Pasture and Range Plantings
 - Grazing Management
- Agroforestry, Forestry and Wildlife Habitat
 - Fuelbreak
 - Woody Residue Treatment
 - Tree planting
- Energy Efficiency
 - Irrigation Pipeline
 - Microirrigation



FY2024 Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Allocations

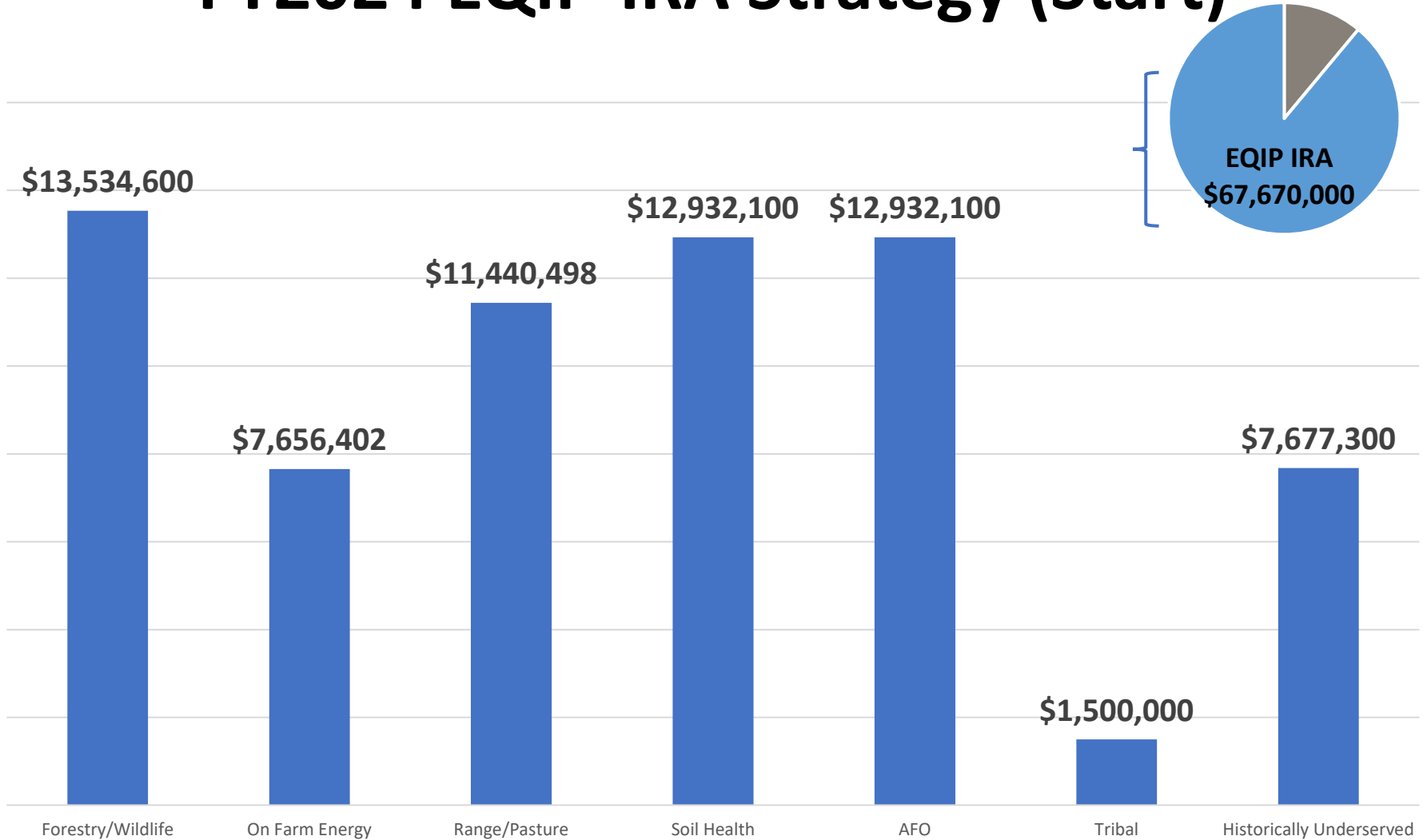


EQIP-IRA Allocation Requirements

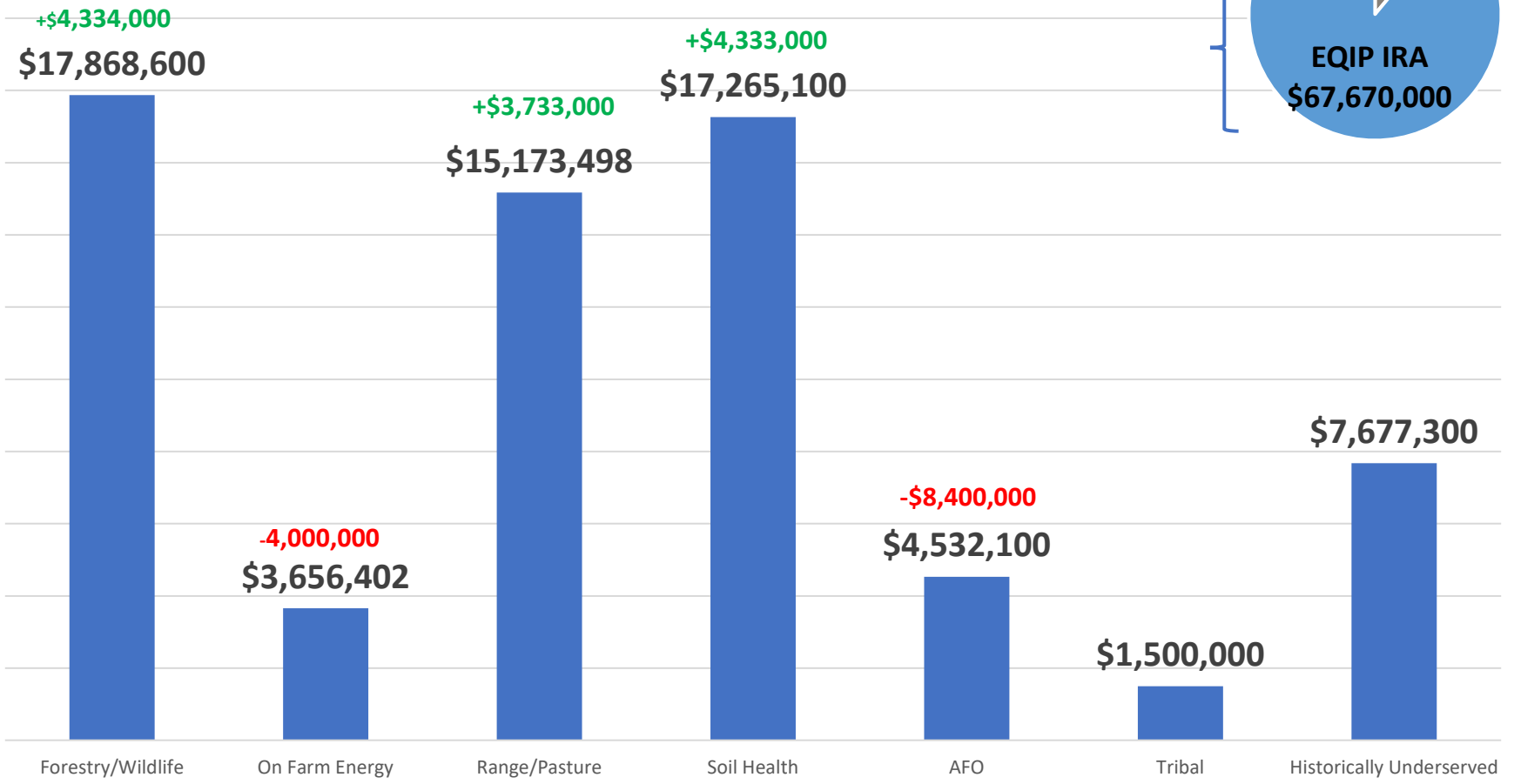


Metric	Required
Wildlife	10%
Beginning Farmer/Rancher	5%
Socially Disadvantaged Farmer/Rancher	5%

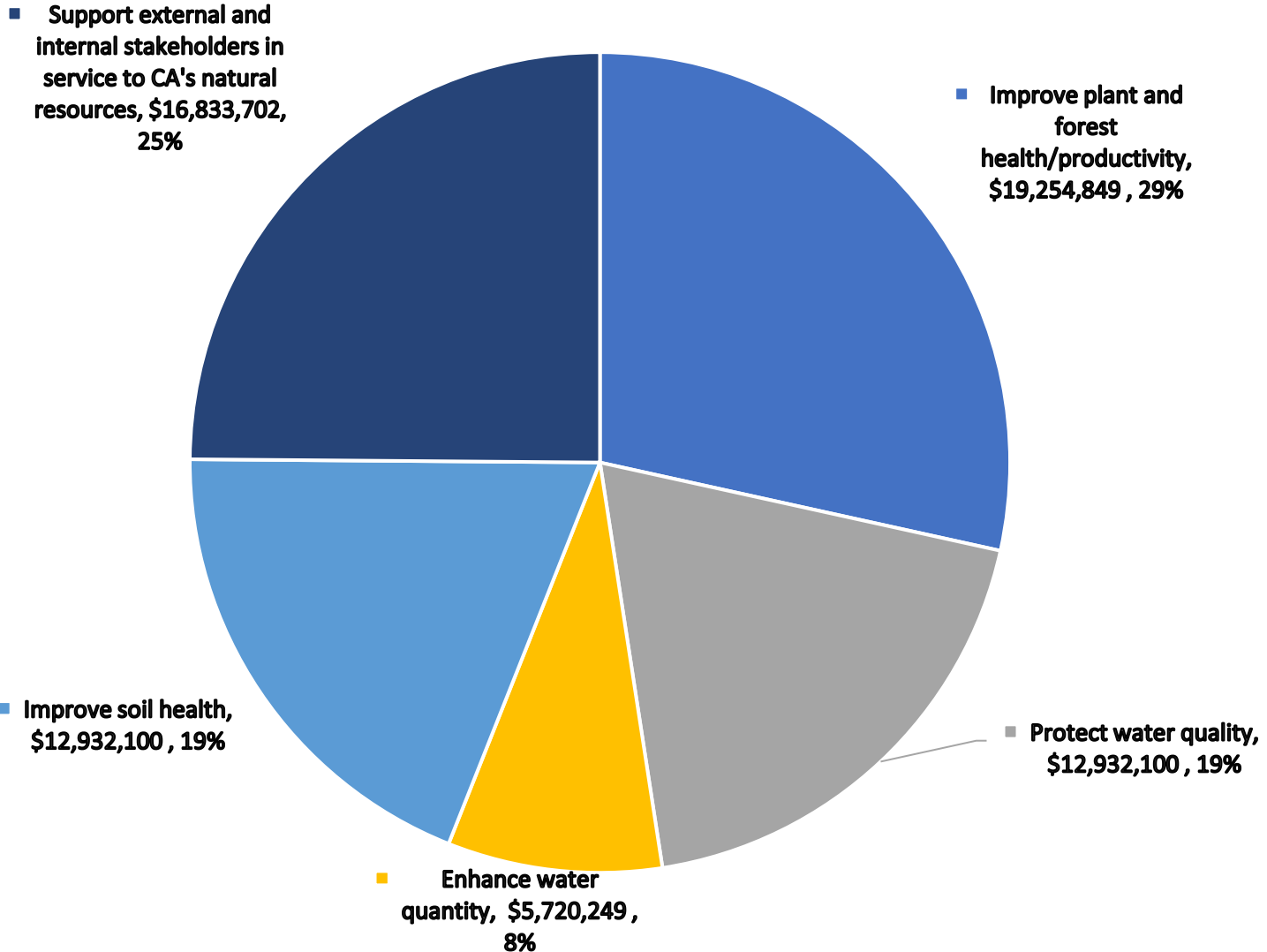
FY2024 EQIP-IRA Strategy (Start)



FY2024 EQIP-IRA Strategy (Final)



EQIP IRA Allocation by CA NRCS Strategic Plan





FY2024 EQIP-IRA Strategy ACT NOW

Ranking Pool	ACT NOW Threshold
IRA Statewide AFO	115
IRA Range/Pasture	50
IRA Forestland/Wildlife	95
IRA On-Farm Energy	50
IRA Soil Health	80
IRA Tribal	see mitigation category
IRA Beginning Farmer	see mitigation category
IRA Socially Disadvantaged Farmer	see mitigation category

- Allows NRCS to begin obligation workflow when application meets a minimum ranking score.
- Application to ranking within 20 business days.



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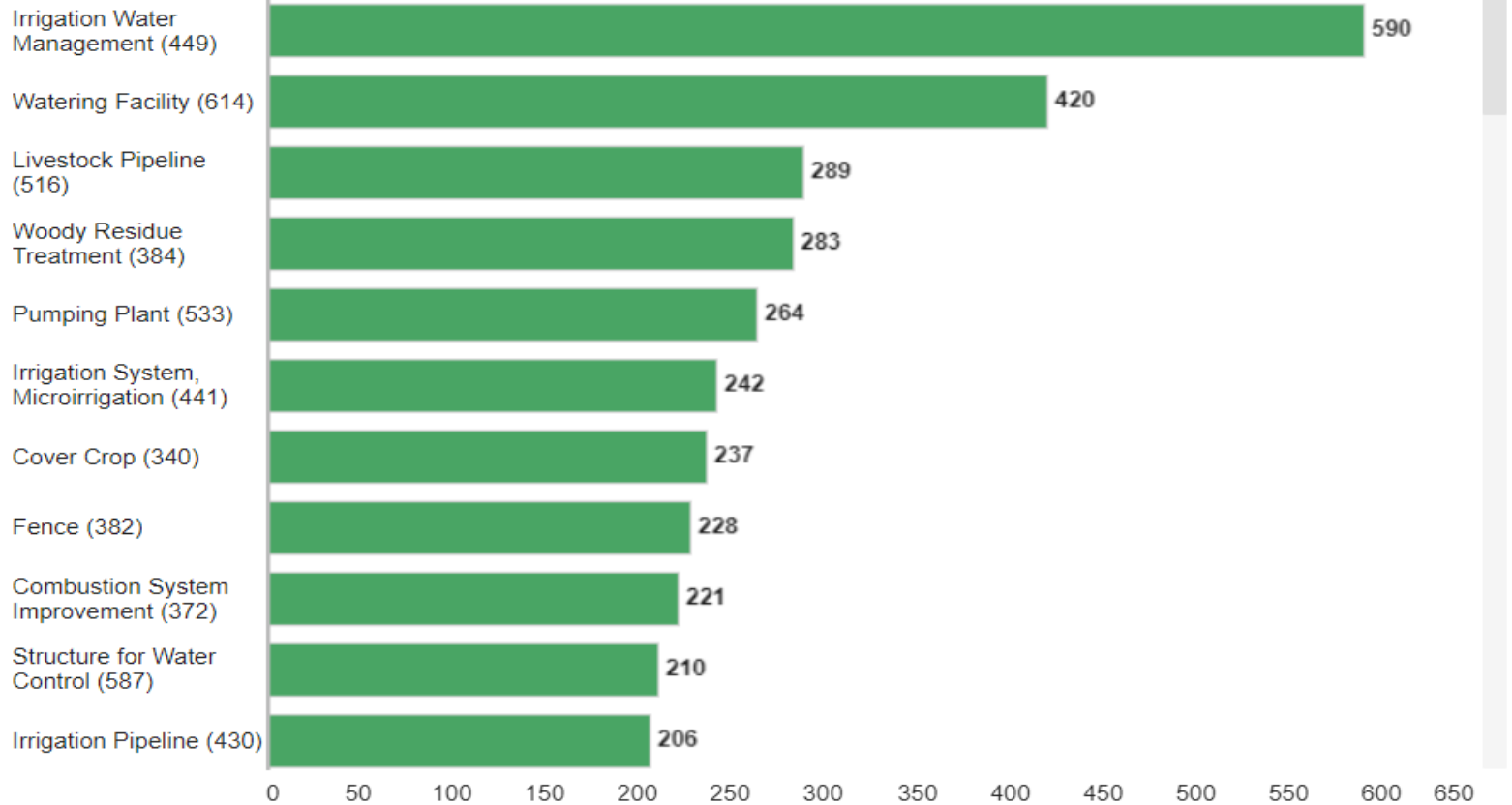
FY23/24 Conservation Activities & Resource Assessment Summary



FY2023 EQIP Top Practices by Instance

Top Practices

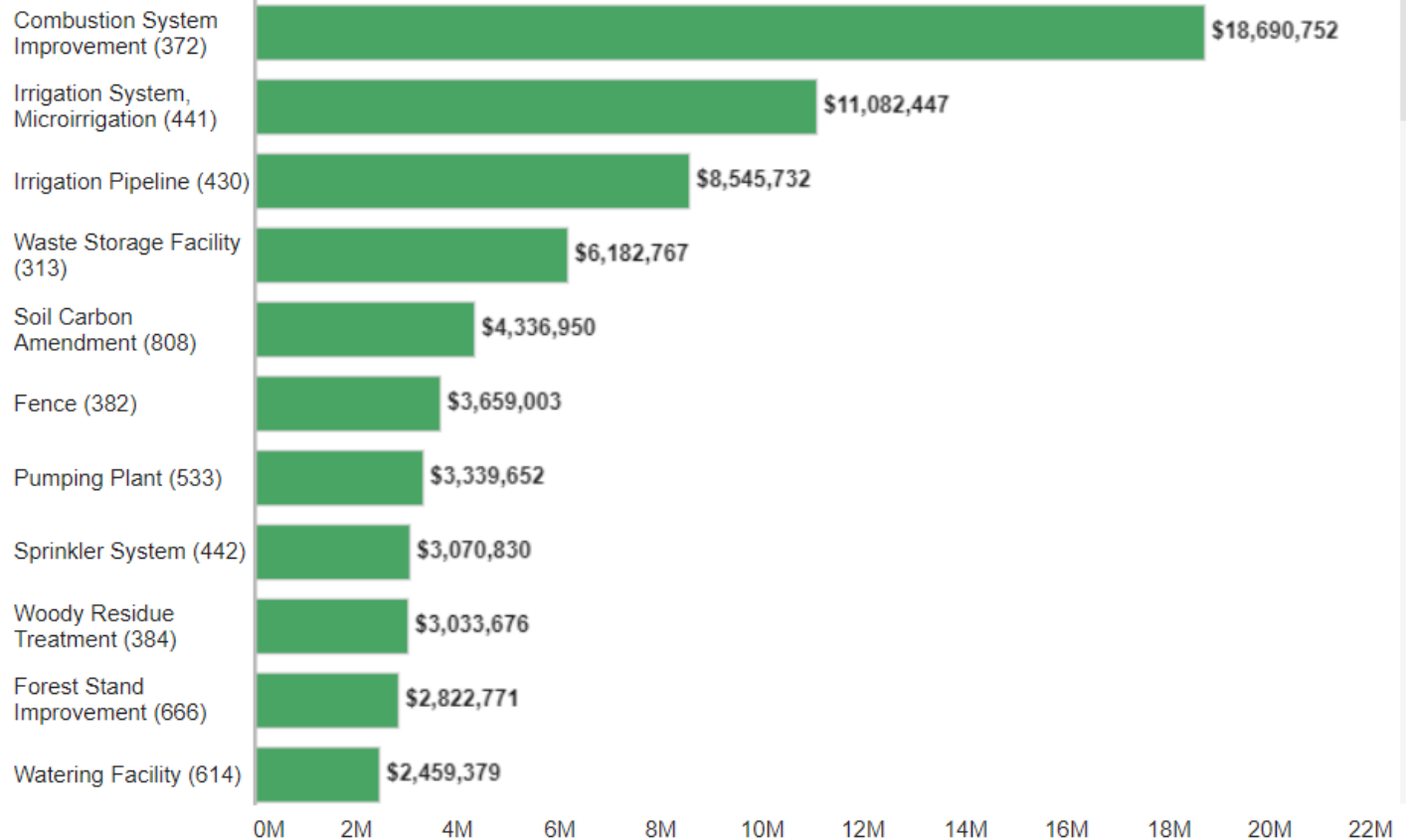
Top Practices by Practice Instances Obligated



FY2023 EQIP Top Practices by \$\$

Top Practices

Top Practices by Dollars Obligated

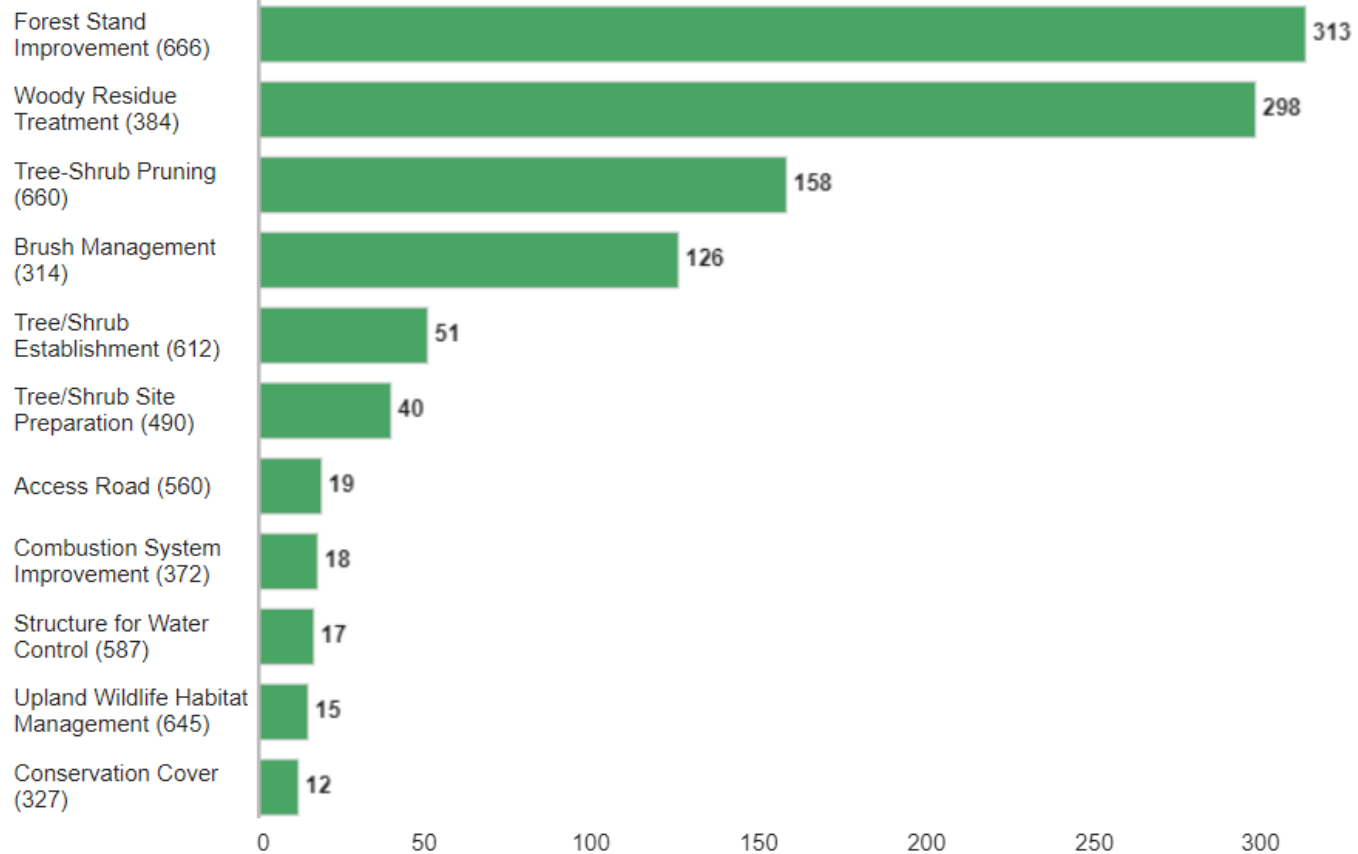




FY2023 EQIP-IRA Top Practices by Instance

Top Practices

Top Practices by Practice Instances Obligated

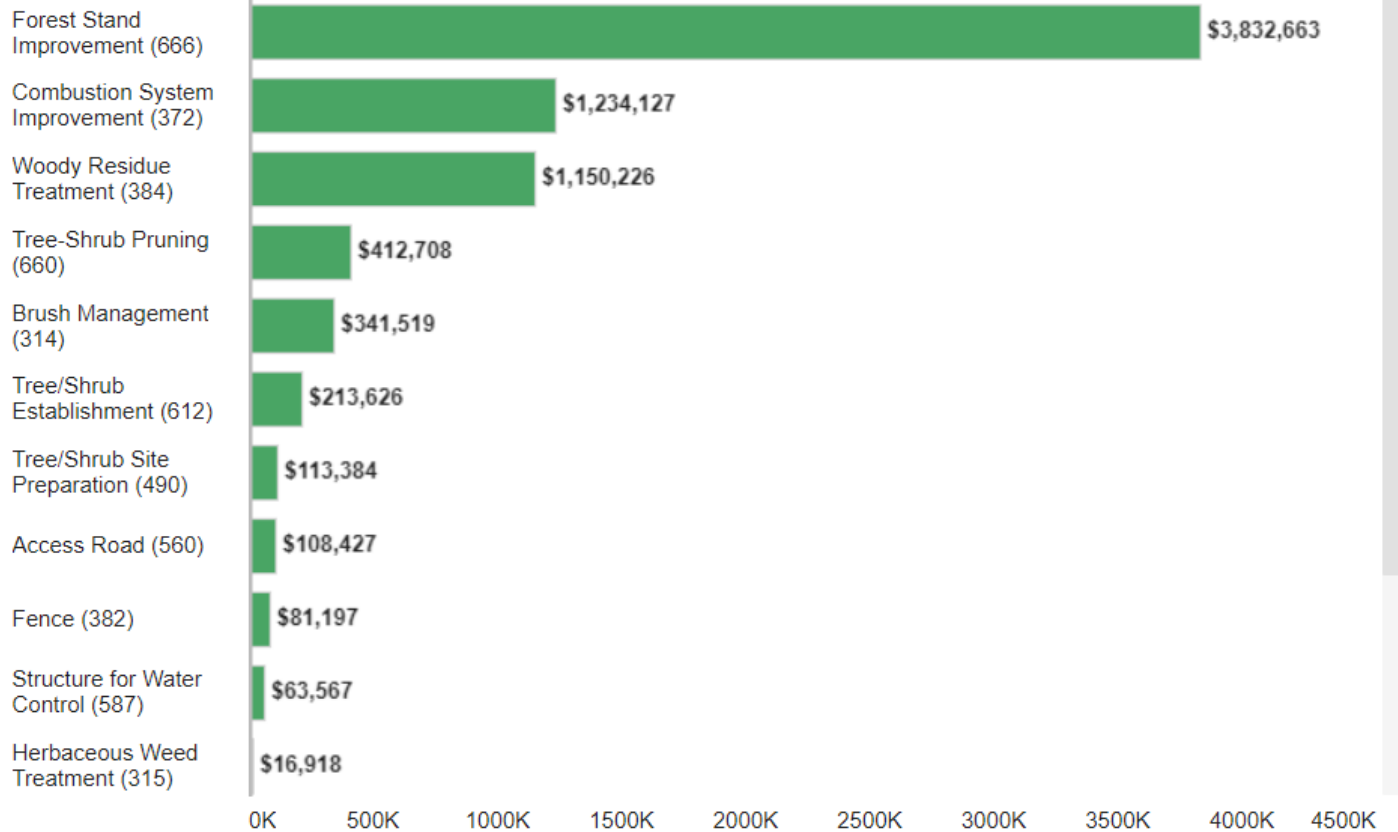




FY2023 EQIP-IRA Top Practices by \$\$

Top Practices

Top Practices by Dollars Obligated





FY2024 Top Assessed Resource Concern Categories & Associated Structural Practices

1. *Air Quality emissions*

- Combustion System Improvement, Forest Stand Improvement, Cover Crop, Irrigation System- Microirrigation, Mulching

2. *Soil quality limitations*

- Cover Crop, Irrigation System- Microirrigation, Structure for Water Control, Mulching

3. *Field sediment, nutrient and pathogen loss*

- Cover Crop, Irrigation Pipeline, Sprinkler System, Irrigation System- Microirrigation, Mulching

4. *Degraded plant condition*

- Fence, Livestock Pipeline, Forest Stand Improvement, Woody Residue Treatment, Brush Management, Mulching

5. *Source water depletion*

- Sprinkler System, Irrigation Pipeline, Cover Crop, Irrigation System- Microirrigation, Mulching



EQIP High Priority & Source Water Protection Practices

Priority Resource Concern Practices

Count (Max 10): 10/10

- 327 - Conservation Cover
- 328 - Conservation Crop Rotation
- 340 - Cover Crop
- 345 - Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced Till
- 484 - Mulching
- 528 - Prescribed Grazing
- 590 - Nutrient Management
- 595 - Pest Management Conservation System
- 645 - Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
- 666 - Forest Stand Improvement

Source Water Protection Practices

- 329 - Residue and Tillage Management, No Till
- 342 - Critical Area Planting
- 350 - Sediment Basin
- 351 - Well Decommissioning
- 384 - Woody Residue Treatment
- 390 - Riparian Herbaceous Cover
- 391 - Riparian Forest Buffer
- 449 - Irrigation Water Management
- 605 - Denitrifying Bioreactor
- 614 - Watering Facility



FY2024 EQIP Deadlines

Program	Application Cutoff	Obligation Deadline
EQIP Classic, CIC	Nov 3, 2023	July 12, 2024
EQIP NWQI, WSI, OTI	Feb 16, 2024	August 30, 2024
EQIP NAQI, CPA's, IRA (ACT NOW)	March 1, 2024 (Extended)	July 12 ,2024
EQIP Tri- colored Blackbird, Disaster, Migratory Bird Resurgence	May 24, 2024	August 30, 2024



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Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)



FY24 Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

Easement Component Program	Allocation	Sign-up Date	Applications
Wetland Reserve Easements	\$5,503,460	12/15/2023	10 (3,500ac)
Wetland Reserve Easements (IRA)		11/13/2023	4 (2,414ac)
Agricultural Land Easements	\$5,123,150	12/15/2023	11 (10,252ac)
Agricultural Land Easements (IRA)		11/13/2023	3 (7,089ac)



FY23/24 Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

- WRE - Closed 5 permanent easements - protecting 3,868 acres
- Entered into 8 wetland restoration & enhancement agreements – totaling 2,623 acres
- ALE - Closed 11 permanent easements - protecting 15,126 acres



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Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

FY24 Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

- **7 active RCPP Classic agreements that make approximately \$5M available for on-the-ground conservation.**
- 1 RCPP Classic focuses on easements (in acquisition process)
- 2 other Alternative Funding Arrangement agreements starting implementation later this year



FY24 Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

NEW Agreements:

- Elevated Foods - \$12M
 - Will focus on irrigation improvements and complement a Climate Smart Commodity Grant.



FY2024 RCPP Application Deadlines

- Next round of proposals accepted until **July 2, 2024**
- Funding Priorities: climate-smart agriculture, urban agriculture, conservation, and environmental justice.

RCPP 18 Land Management	
1862 - Maximizing Waterbird Habitat on CA Ricelands	January 12, 2024
1862 - Maximizing Waterbird Habitat on CA Ricelands	April 5, 2024
2130 - Protection, Restoration and Enhancement of Tri Colored Blackbird Habitat on Ag Lands	continuous
2130 - Protection, Restoration and Enhancement of Tri Colored Blackbird Habitat on Ag Lands	continuous
1886 - San Joaquin Valley Land & Water Conservation Collaborative	January 12, 2024
1886 - San Joaquin Valley Land & Water Conservation Collaborative	April 5, 2024
2338 - Soil Health Management Systems in Northern California	January 12, 2024
2338 - Soil Health Management Systems in Northern California	April 5, 2024
2516 - Building Fire Resiliency in CA Coast Range	January 12, 2024
2516 - Building Fire Resiliency in CA Coast Range	April 5, 2024
2591 - San Diego County Agricultural Resiliency	January 12, 2024
2591 - San Diego County Agricultural Resiliency	April 5, 2024
2871 - Crisis to Opportunity Sierra Nevada Recovery and Resilience	April 5, 2024
RCPP 18 Rental	
1886 - San Joaquin Valley Land & Water Conservation Collaborative	April 5, 2024



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