Natural Resources Conservation Service Programs authorized by the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008

2008 Farm Bill Reauthorized Until 2012
USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
2012 Focus Areas

NRCS Rivers Initiative
- Connecticut
- Merrimack
- Great Bay/Salmon Falls
- Saco
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

EQIP offers financial and technical assistance to agriculture and forestry producers to promote agricultural production, forest management, and environmental quality as compatible goals.
EQIP Organic:
- Assistance with conservation practices used for organic production and transition to organics
- Payments for practices with organic production benefits
For limited resource, socially disadvantaged, and beginning farmers:

- Up to 90 percent financial assistance on practices
EQIP Payment Limitations

- $300,000 per person over a six-year period
- Up to $450,000 per person over a six-year period may be authorized for projects of environmental significance
- EQIP organic - $20,000 per year or $80,000 for any six-year period
EQIP Practice Examples

**Forestry:** Forest management plan, Forest stand improvement, Road closure, Stream crossing, Control of invasive species, Erosion control on trails and landings

- **Wildlife:** Riparian forest buffers, Tree and shrub establishment, Clearing openings and Planting grass/legume, Fish passage, Fish & wildlife plan

- **Livestock:** Nutrient management plan, Grazing plan, Animal trails, Waste storage facility, Wastewater treatment, Heavy use area, Pasture and hay planting, Prescribed grazing, Watering facility, Roof runoff structure, Ag energy plan

- **Crop:** High tunnels, Pollinator plantings, Cover crops, Crop rotation, Mulching, Nutrient management, Pest management, Residue and tillage management, IPM Plan, Micro-irrigation, Organic transition plan
EQIP: Eroded Cornfield Before
EQIP: Eroded Cornfield Restored to Hayland After
EQIP: Farm Barnyard Improvement Before – Mud and manure
EQIP: Farm Barnyard Improvement After – Gravel High Use Area
EQIP: Heavy Use Area During
EQIP: Heavy Use Area After
EQIP High Tunnels Before
EQIP: High Tunnels After
EQIP High Tunnels Before
EQIP: High Tunnels After
EQIP: Heavy Use Area Before
EQIP: Heavy Use Area After
EQIP: Heavy Use Area Before
EQIP: Heavy Use Area Before
EQIP: Manure Storage Before
EQIP: Manure Storage After
EQIP: Manure Storage Before
EQIP: Manure Storage After
EQIP: Access Road Before
EQIP: Access Road After
EQIP: Forest Road Before
EQIP: Forest Road After
EQIP: Animal Trail Before
EQIP: Animal Trail After
Conservation Innovation Grants

- Competitive grants program using EQIP funds, primarily managed at the state level.
- Stimulate development and adoption of innovative conservation practices and technologies.
Conservation Innovation Grants – Examples

- Carbon Credit Project to identify information needed to establish a soils carbon baseline and ways to expand it.

- Equipment and technical support to farmers for improving pastures and hayfields with no-till drilling techniques and improved nutrient management.

- Wood fired evaporator for maple syrup production
CIG: Sunflower oil generator
CIG: Wood fired evaporator for Maple Sugaring Process
Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) – Assists landowners to develop and improve wildlife habitat

Contracts limited to private agricultural land and non-industrial private forestland.

Annual payment limits of not more than $50,000.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>WHIP Practice Examples</th>
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<tr>
<td>Clearing openings</td>
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<td>Riparian forest buffer</td>
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<td>Mast tree release</td>
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<td>Fish passage</td>
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New England Cottontail:
A Species in Decline

CIRCA 1960

CURRENT
WHIP: Homestead Woolen Mill Dam Removal Before
WHIP: Homestead Woolen Mill Dam Removal After
Weir Construction

Coffer Dam

Dwarf Mussels

Fish Resting
Riparian Buffer

Dwarf Mussels

WHIP: Homestead Woolen Mill Dam Removal
WHIP: Brook Trout Enhancement Before
WHIP: Brook Trout Enhancement After
WHIP: Slide Brook Stream Crossing Before
WHIP: Slide Brook Stream Crossing After
WHIP: Culvert After
WHIP: Culvert After
WHIP: Early Successional Habitat Restoration - During
WHIP: Early Successional Habitat Restoration - After
Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)

- Provides payments to agricultural producers to voluntarily address risk associated with water management, water quality, and erosion control by incorporating conservation practices into their farming operations.
Easement Programs - Private Land Protection

- Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)
- Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)
- Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)
Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

A voluntary, non-regulatory, incentive-based program that helps private landowners protect and restore wetlands on their private property.
WRP: Salt Marsh Restoration Before
WRP: Salt Marsh Restoration After
WRP: Gravel Pit Restoration Before
WRP: Gravel Pit Restoration After
WRP Easements
Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)

- Provides matching funds for easements to purchase development rights
- Protects farmland from development
- Maintains wildlife habitat
- Reduces impervious area in watershed
FRPP Easement
Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)

Assists landowners to restore and protect grassland, pastureland, shrub land and provides assistance for restoration.
Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP)

CStP provides financial assistance to farmers and forest land owners who are improving conservation, via treatment on their working lands to encourage the continuation of farming practices that benefit soil, water, and air resources.
EWP: Conservation Easement and Restoration

Before
EWP: Conservation Easement and Restoration

After
Thank You
Rick Ellsmore,
NRCS State Conservationist
Deborah Weymouth
Asst. State Con. for Programs
603-868-9931
Rick.ellsmore@nh.usda.gov
deborah.weymouth@nh.usda.gov