



PROVIDING SUPPORT BACKED BY SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

We generate, manage and share the data, research and standards that enable partners and policymakers to make decisions informed by objective, reliable science.

The conservation practices we promote are backed by science and research conducted with our land grant universities, and proven to work. We use the latest research and technology to demonstrate the value of conservation and identify places that can most benefit from our programs. We provide the information producers, partners, and policymakers rely on to make informed decisions.

Through our **Ecological Sciences Division** we provide resources, tools and training to examine how voluntary conservation impact working lands. We conduct resource assessments and provide environmental compliance assistance, evaluating over **70** regular EQIP projects, **42** EWP projects, and updating **26** Caribbean Area conservation practice standards and **7** practice specifications in FY 2021. We also provide technical training to staff and partners for conservation planning, high tunnels, RUSLE 2 erosion prediction, threatened & endangered species protection and cultural resources identification and preservation.

Through our **Engineering Division** we support our Field Offices and clients with technical advice, design and certification of NRCS engineering practice standards. About **455** engineering practices were certified in FY 2021. The most certified practices were **Obstruction Removal (30%)**, followed by **Roof Runoff Structures, Pumping Plants, Watering Facilities, and Clearing & Snagging**. In 2021 Engineering staff assisted special projects in Coloso Valley, Santa Isabel, Salinas, and Húcar, providing irrigation system conservation practices for vast land areas serving several farms. The team also led design efforts for the Yabucoa RCPP channel restorations, Lajas RCPP irrigation water availability assessments and Añasco Dam repairs. Engineering successfully completed all Emergency Watershed Protection Program streambank cleanups from Hurricane Maria and Tropical Storm Isaias - over 75 sites across the Islands.

Through the **National Cooperative Soil Survey** NRCS details the make-up of soils across our islands so that farmers, ranchers, and others can make informed land use decisions. We fund cutting-edge projects like Identification and Determination of Spatial Distribution of Coastal Lowlands Acid Sulfate Soils, Coastal Zone Soil Survey, Ecological Site Descriptions, and Wetlands Determinations. During FY 2021, we evaluated **576** acres for Highly Erodible Land and conducted wetland determinations on **208** acres for Food Security Act compliance. Our conservation team identified **5,327** acres to preserve the values, acreage, and functions of PR and USVI wetlands. Technical soil services provided in FY 2021 benefited over **101,896** people and more than **16** different groups and organizations in the Caribbean Area.

In 2021 NRCS invested over **\$1 million** in **8** cooperative and inter-agency agreements to assist our farmers and field offices with watershed assessments, cultural resource assessments, conservation technical assistance, dairy conservation practices and forestry, pollinator and wildlife practice planning and implementation.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is an agency within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). We have 10 offices serving the Caribbean Area — Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. To find out how we can help you or for more information visit www.pr.nrcs.usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

HELPING PEOPLE HELP THE LAND

GIVING ADVICE AND SOLUTIONS

We provide one-on-one, personalized advice on the best solutions to meet the unique conservation and business goals of our Caribbean Area farmers.

NRCS helps Caribbean Area farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners make conservation work for them. The system of practices we promote helps them improve production, reduce input costs, and conserve natural resources for the future. We also provide financial resources to help with the cost of getting conservation on the ground.

Our **Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA)** program is the foundation of our financial and technical assistance delivery system. CTA funds conservation planning and provides producers with the decision support and proven technology needed to achieve the benefits of a healthy and productive landscape.

In 2021, NRCS provided CTA to over **8,500** clients and media outreach to over **1 million** residents through over **2,500** separate activities and contacts. Over **99%** of our financial assistance went to beginning, limited resource or socially disadvantaged farmers, and **19%** of our participants were women, **7%** were black and **89%** were Hispanic.



INVESTING IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

- **17,367 acres of conservation practices applied.**
- **13,599 acres of conservation planning completed.**
- **3,765 acres of cropland conservation applied to improve soil health.**
- **12,008 acres of conservation applied to improve water quality.**
- **1,358 acres of conservation applied to improve irrigation efficiency.**
- **8,364 acres of grazing land conservation applied.**
- **17,953 trees delivered to farmers for shade coffee, habitat enhancement and agroforestry.**
- **301 acres of conservation applied to improve fish and wildlife habitat.**

NRCS provides conservation solutions so farmers can protect natural resources and feed a growing world. We work hand in hand with our communities to protect and improve the health of our soil, water, air, plants, animals and people.

Farmers and ranchers are the backbone of America. By supporting their operations and helping them make improvements on their lands, we help to provide economic stability in local communities. Our work supports rural economies, helps create jobs, keeps farm lands in production, and provides disaster assistance to communities in need.

Our **Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)** offers financial incentives for producers to not only maintain the existing level of conservation on the land, but incorporate new or advanced conservation activities to take their stewardship to the next level.

Our **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** is NRCS' flagship financial assistance program for working lands, helping producers make improvements to benefit agriculture and conservation.

Our **Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWPP)** helps local communities recover after a natural disaster. EWPP offers technical and financial assistance to help communities relieve imminent threats to life and property caused by floods, fires, windstorms and other natural disasters.

Our **Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)** promotes coordination of NRCS conservation activities with partners that offer value-added contributions to expand our collective ability to address on-farm, watershed, and regional natural resource concerns.

These programs are helping producers prepare their operations for the challenges ahead – from an increasing global population to extreme weather events like severe droughts and flooding.

\$206,000
INVESTED IN NEW & EXISTING CONSERVATION PRACTICES &

\$313,500
OBLIGATED IN NEW CONTRACTS WITH

24 FARMERS PROTECTING OVER

1,020 ACRES

CSP

\$4.8 MILLION
INVESTED IN NEW CONSERVATION PRACTICES &

\$7.9 MILLION
OBLIGATED IN NEW CONTRACTS TO HELP

EQIP ON **283 FARMERS**

~13,000 ACRES

EWPP OVER

\$3.9 MILLION
INVESTED TO REPAIR

73 SITES

DAMAGED BY HURRICANE MARÍA & T.S. ISAÍAS