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State Technical Committee

Will be starting around 9:05am

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Conservation Grants

- **Conservation Innovation Grants** Caribbean Area- NOFO0001205 – ***deadline May 31***

- **National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI)** Opportunity Number – USDA-NRCS-PR-EQIP-22- NOFO0001206 – ***deadline May 25***

- **Caribbean Partners in Conservation (CPC)** - USDA-NRCS-PR-CPC-22-NOFO0001207 – ***deadline May 31***

- The 2022 Caribbean Area Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and Application Package can be found at www.grants.gov

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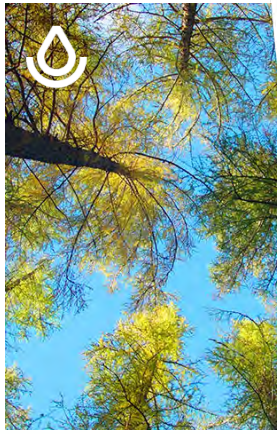

State Technical Committee; Conservation Engineering Update

Wednesday; May 18, 2022

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Infrastructure

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Infrastructure Funding 2022

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)

- **Watershed Programs that address new, ongoing, emergent, and relief to all communities to address watershed resource concerns.**

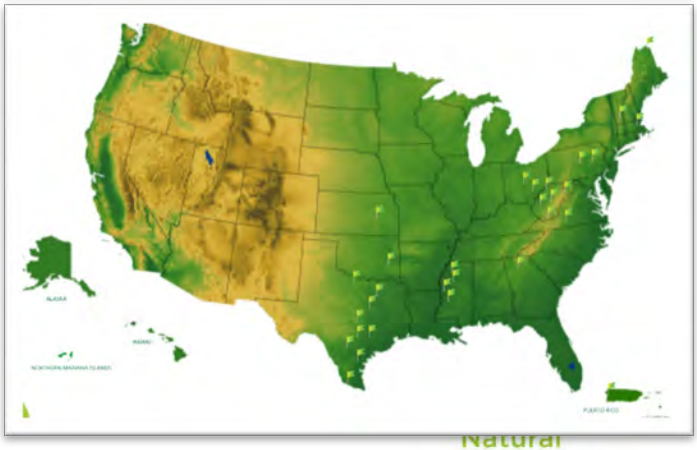
USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service is funding projects in rounds.

1. **In the first wave of funding (March),**
   - 108 projects in 23 states.
2. **The second round of funding (April),**
   - 132 watershed protection projects in 31 states, including rehabilitating dams, flood prevention, and watershed preservation.

NRCS will continue to review and fund requests as funds are available.

Caribbean Area:

- **Isabela Channel Restoration**
- **St. Thomas Bordeaux Water Quality and Quantity improvement**
- **Dam Rehabilitation Ajies**
- **Dam Rehabilitation Daguey**



WATERSHED AND FLOOD PREVENTION OPERATIONS PROGRAM (WFPO)

WATERSHED REHABILITATION PROGRAM (REHAB)

Watershed Operations Program Overview

Types of Projects:

- **Flood Prevention**
- **Watershed Protection**
- **Public Recreation**
- **Public Fish and Wildlife**
- **Municipal and Industrial Water Supply**
- **Water Quality Management**

Requirements:

- **Sponsor must meet eligibility requirements**
  - Public Sponsorship
- **Requests over $25M need to be approved by Congress**
- **Agricultural benefits at least 20%**
- **Project area under 250,000 acres**
- **Structures under 12,500 Acre-ft of flood prevention capacity**

Watershed Operations Program Overview

Projects are worked in Phases:

- **PIFR**
- **Planning**
- **Design**
- **Construction – 25% cost share by sponsor**

https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/landscape

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Emergency Watershed Program Status Update

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Maria Status

Streambank Stabilization

- **Design 100% completed – pending permits and reviews**
  - Caribe Conservation District as Sponsor; Villalba

Dams

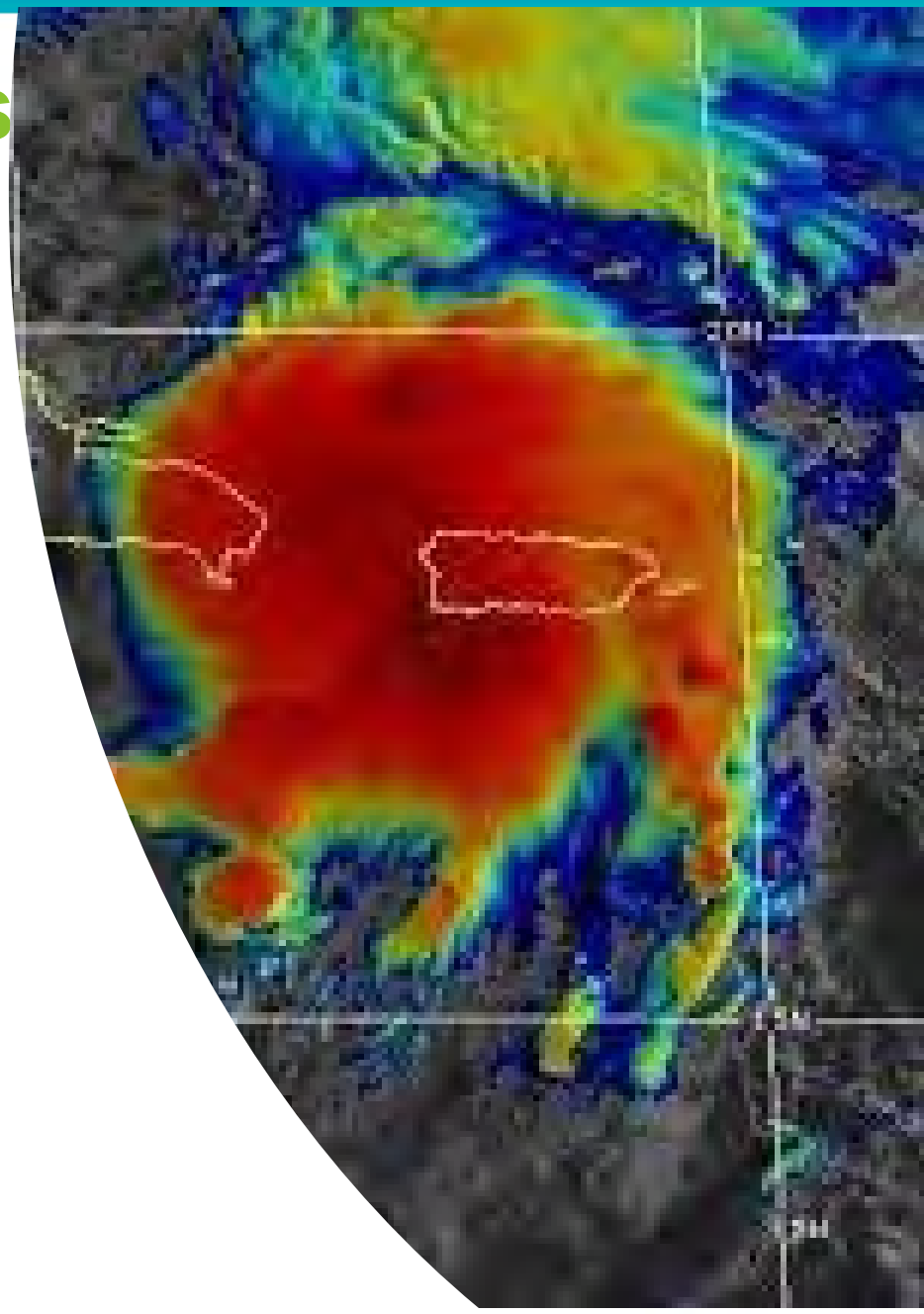
- **Contract award for design of repairs and assessment**
  - Dagüey in Añasco – 1982
  - Ajíes in Añasco –1985

- ✓ **Field data collection Completed**
- ✓ **60% Design**
- ✓ **Dam Assessment**
- ✓ **Ajies Dam 95% Design**

Isaias related projects

Clearing and Snagging

- **Identified/approved 14 sites**
  - 14 completed
    - Yauco
    - Cabo Rojo
    - Guánica
    - San Germán
    - Cabo Rojo
    - Cabo Rojo
    - San Germán
    - Añasco



New Approved Events

Rains PR February 2022

- Municipalities Requesting Support – 164 cases
  1. Aguas Buenas
  2. Caguas
  3. Patillas
  4. Río Grande
  5. Yabucoa
  6. Cataño
  7. San Lorenzo
  8. San Juan
  9. Maunabo
  10. Trujillo Alto
  11. Vega Alta
  12. Toa Alta
  13. Toa Baja
  14. Naranjito

- 12 Municipalities visited – complete visits next week
- DSRs by June 7
  - Might need extension

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RCPP Project

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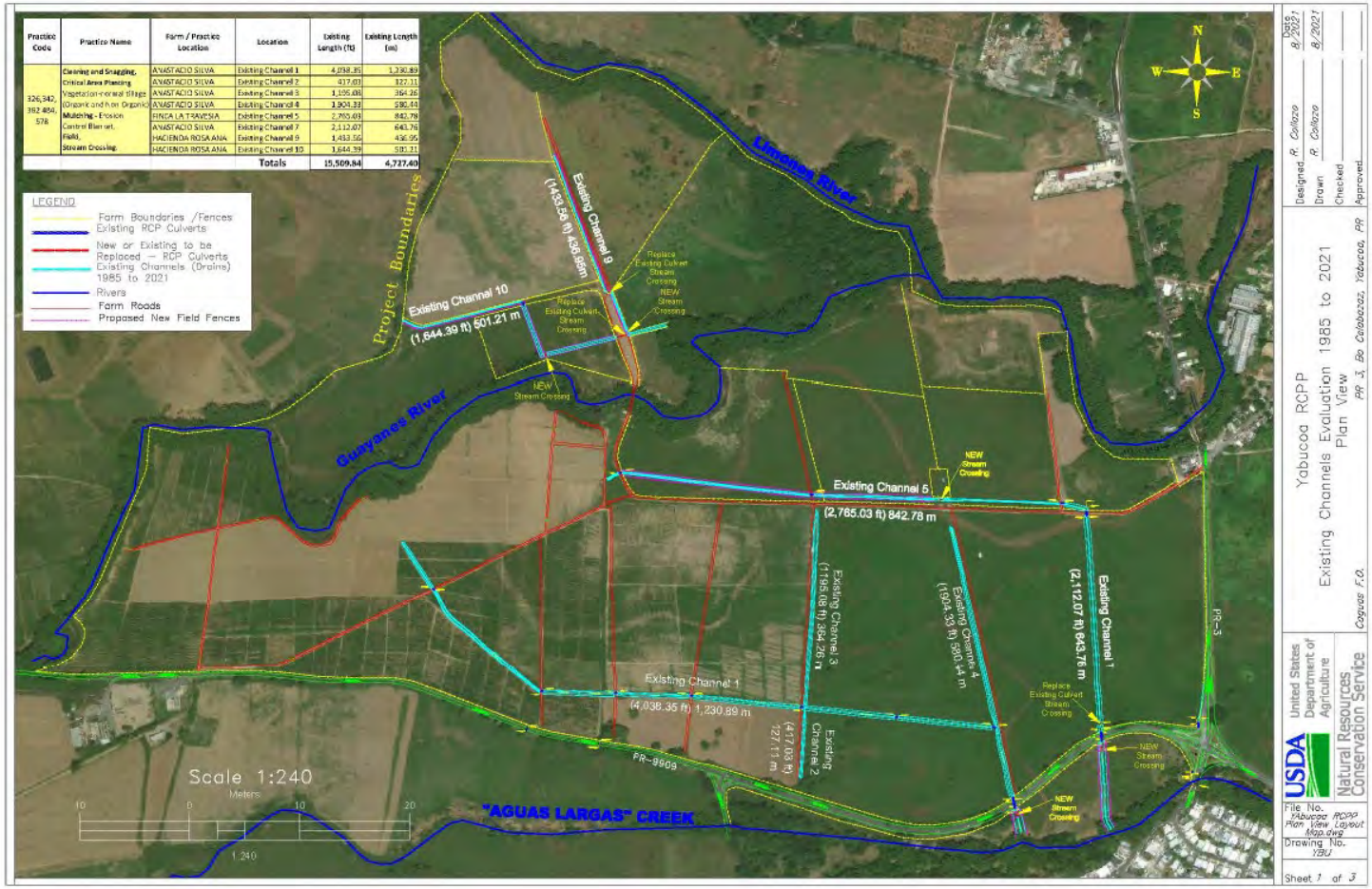
Clean-up of 8 existing channels



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STATUS

- **Design completed**
- **Contractor selected**
- **Permits**
  - ✓ SHPO
  - ✓ FWS
  - ✓ Poda de arboles DNER

  - DNER – Clearing
  - OGPe
  - EPA
- **Expected to kick off this summer**

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State Technical Committee; Programs Update

Wednesday, May 25, 2022

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2022 FAP Implementation Schedule

EQIP :

– Sign Up 1: 10/29/2021, Obligation 5/27/2022
– Sign Up 2: 4/29/2022, Obligation 8/29/2022

EQIP CIC:

– Sign up 1: 3/11/2022, Obligation 6/4/2022

CSP Renewals:

– Sign Up: 4/7/2021, Obligation 12/30/21

CSP Classic:

– Sign up: 12/31/2021, Obligation 8/26/2022

ACEP (ALE/WRE):

– Sign up 4/29/2022

2022 Program Update

Program	Allocation	Approved
EQIP	$10,063,000.00	$4,989,879.00
CSP	$610,000.00	$150,588.00
WRE	$385,000.00	$0.00

Program	Territory	Applications	Contracts
EQIP	PR	623	59
EQIP	USVI	22	8
CSP	PR	36	14
CSP	USVI	0	0

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) helps landowners, land trusts, and other entities protect, restore, and enhance wetlands, grasslands, and working farms and ranches through conservation easements.

- For **Agricultural Land Easements,** NRCS provides financial assistance to **partners** (American Indian tribes, state and local governments, and non-governmental organizations) to purchase Agricultural Land Easements that protect the agricultural use and conservation values of land.

- For **Wetland Reserve Easements,** NRCS provides technical and financial assistance **directly to private landowners and American Indian tribes** to restore, enhance, and protect wetlands through the purchase of a wetland reserve easement.

Agricultura Conservation Easement Program

Role of the State Technical Committee (STC)

(1) Developing and updating State ranking criteria and procedures.

(2) Identifying priority resource concerns or land treatment areas to focus program implementation at the State level.

(3) Other technical issues, which may include but are not limited to operation and maintenance criteria, easement management, and long-term monitoring procedures.

(4) ACEP-ALE

A. Recommending highest-priority areas and projects that will yield the highest conservation benefits.
B. Help identify highly sensitive natural resources appropriate for consideration under the "Grassland of Special Environmental Significance" enrollment option.

Agricultura Conservation Easement Program

Role of the State Technical Committee (STC)

(5) ACEP-WRE

(i) Recommending highest-priority areas and projects that will yield the highest conservation benefits.

(ii) Recommending a list of eligible practices for ACEP-WRE.

(iii) Reviewing proposed geographic area rate caps for use in determining ACEP-WRE easement compensation values.

(iv) Assisting in the development and review of the State-specific Wetland Restoration Criteria & Guidelines (WRCG) document.

(v) Identifying areas of consideration for reservation of grazing rights option of ACEP-WRE, if applicable.

(vi) Establishing guidelines for authorization of compatible uses on ACEP-WRE easements.

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State Technical Committee – Soils Division

Manuel Matos, *State Soil Scientist*

May 18, 2022

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Caribbean Area Soil and Climate Analysis Network Stations

- **Monitors soil moisture at several depths, air temperature, relative humidity, solar radiation, wind speed and direction, liquid precipitation, and barometric pressure.**
- **Updated 8 Stations in PR (Mayaguez, Isabela, Cabo Rojo, Guanica, Adjuntas, Juana Diaz, Maricao and Corozal).**
- **Updated St. Croix and removed St. John.**
- **Evaluated sites in St. Thomas to relocate St. John.**

9 stations in the Caribbean Area

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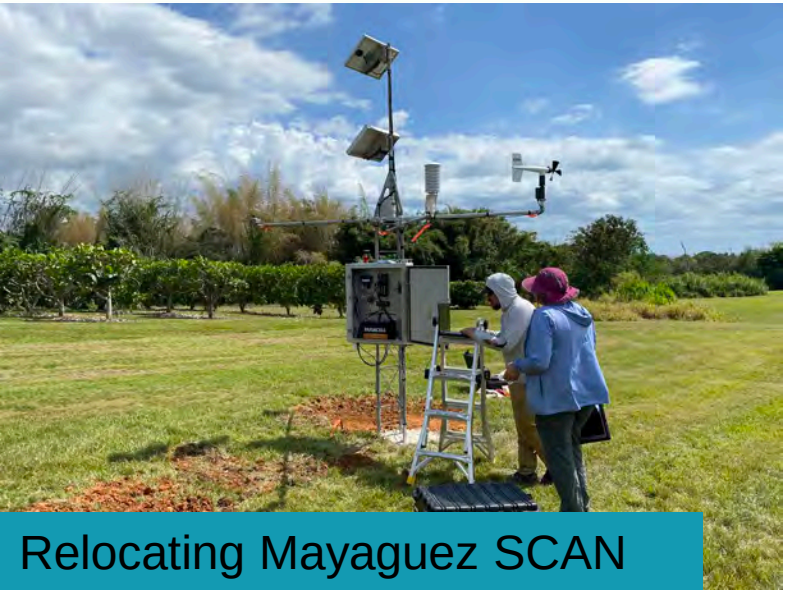

Relocating Mayaguez SCAN

St. Croix

Adjuntas

Juana Diaz

Evaluating St. Thomas Sites

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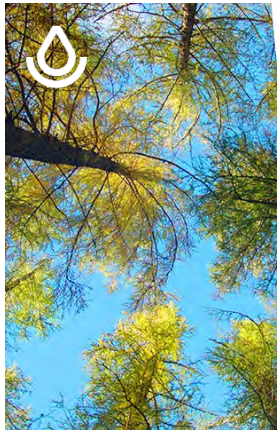

State Technical Committee – Ecological Sciences Division Update

Mario Rodriguez, *State Resource Conservationist*

May 18, 2022

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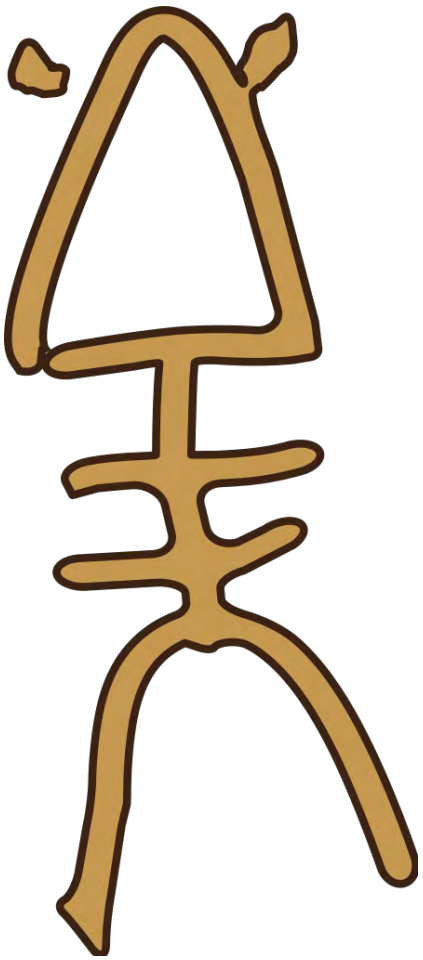
Description Ecological Sciences Division

Lead the technology in ecological, cultural resource, and environmental compliance to ensure science-based conservation for Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in the Caribbean.

Compliance



Taino Fish Drawing

- **Section 7 – Threatened and Endangered Species; and**
- **Section 106 – Cultural Resources Consultations**
- 121 cases for consultation in the first 2 quarters of FY 2022

Standard Specifications

Field Office Technical Guide | CR

137 documents have been revised in the eFOTG

- Practice Standards
- Statement of Work
- Practice Specifications
- Practice Overviews
- Implementation Requirements

Caribbean Area

Change state

Document Tree | Document Search | **Recently Changed** | Subjects | Contacts

Time Range: Last 90 days

Partnership

committed to “helping people help the land”

Trainings / Professional Development

- Webinar for **Conservation Innovation Grants, National Water Quality Initiative and Caribbean Partners for Conservation** provided for potential proponents.

- **Planning course Part 1 -** scheduled for FY 2023 (October 2022)

- **Technical Service Providers Training -** TBD

Agreements

- **UPR AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENTAL STATION**
  - Farm Management of Agricultural Manures and Organic Residues throughout compost or fermentation.
- **PR Agricultural Extension Service-**
  - Emergency Plan - Development of an emergency plan for farmers in the Caribbean Area
- **Envirosurvey, Inc –**
  - Agroforestry practices Assessment and Tree Production
  - Native Shrubs in PR and USVI Guide (pollinators)
  - Forest, Wildlife and Pollinator Conservation Activity Plans

Agreements

- **PROTECTORES DE CUENCAS**
  - NWQI Rio La Plata – Watershed Plan Development
  - NWQI Rio Añasco – Watershed Plan Development
  - CPC Southeast PR – Assessments Development

- **HORSLEY WITTEN GROUP**
  - NWQI St. Thomas – Watershed Plan Development

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QUESTIONS

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