

NRCS Watersheds in TN

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General Info

NRCS TN has been implementing flood control in TN watersheds since 1960's.

Mainly through the design and construction of flood control watershed dams.

BUT....

The NRCS Watershed Program is much more than building dams.

Today's talk – Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act



Legislative Provisions of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)

Watershed & Flood Prevention Operations - (WFPO)

- \$500m to remain available until expended

Watershed Rehabilitation Program - (Rehab)

- \$118m to remain available until expended

Emergency Watershed Protection Program - (EWPP)

- \$300m to remain available until expended
- to repair damages to the waterways and watersheds resulting from natural disasters.



Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal Implementation plans

Watershed & Flood Prevention Operations - (WFPO)

Priorities

- LRA and HU communities
 - LRA – Hancock, Hardeman, Lake Co (as of 4/6/22)
- Tribal communities
- Ag-water management needs in western states.
- Backlog project funding.



Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal Implementation plans

Watershed Rehabilitation - (Rehab)

Priorities

- High Hazard dams that have reached design life
 - 1,159 high hazard potential dams in 38 states.
- Projects that have an authorized plan and where sponsors are committed to complete construction.



Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal Implementation plans

WFPO & Rehab

Key Policy Decisions

- Priority will be given to funding design and construction.



Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal Implementation plans

WFPO & Rehab

Key Policy Decisions

- Priority will be given to funding projects in LRA and HU communities.



Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal Implementation plans

WFPO & Rehab

Key Policy Decisions

- To reduce the number of projects taking 10-15 years to complete, NRCS could prioritize funding to projects that can be planned, designed, and constructed within 5 years.



Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal Implementation plans

WFPO & Rehab

Some of the key barriers to timely execution of funding and projects include:

- NRCS will need additional dedicated technical staff to support the timely implementation of these projects.
- The review of environmental notices posted to the federal register is delaying the process for implementing Plan-EIS documents.



Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal Implementation plans

WFPO & Rehab

Implementation Support:

- To be effective reaching the underserved communities we will need help from State Outreach Coordinators and Tribal Liaisons.
- For additional accountability, NRCS will need to enhance the customer experience survey so that there are no barriers to equity in these program.



Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal Implementation plans

WFPO & Rehab

Stakeholder Engagement

- Outreach to notify sponsors of funding opportunities.
- Provide training and guidance webinars to educate sponsors on the process for accessing funds.
- Work with partner organizations to increase access to the program.



Typical Watershed Process

Operations - New Projects

PIFR → Watershed Plan → Design → Construction

Rehab - Update dam to current hazard/design standards

Assessment → Design → Construction



Additional Guidance & Resources

Performance Timelines

Phase	Duration
Assessment (REHAB)	Up to 12 months
PIFR	Up to 6 months
Plan EA/EIS (Watershed Plan)	Up to 18 months
Design	Up to 24 months
Construction (WFPO/Rehab)	2-3 years
Construction (EWPP-Recovery)	220 days after funding



Timeline

Funds allocation process - REHAB

National Rehab PM will coordinate with states on project submittals.

Projects will be evaluated and ranked based on REHAB implementation plan: **high hazard dams**; sponsors commitment to complete construction; state's ability to complete projects; LRA, Tribal, and HU communities.

Project selection and fund allocation will be monthly.



Project Purposes

- Flood Prevention
- Municipal and Industrial Water Supply
- Watershed Protection (land treatment)
- Public Recreation
- Public Fish and Wildlife
- Agricultural Water management
- Water Quality Management



Eligible Sponsor

Sponsor(s) must be able to execute the following functions:

- Eminent Domain
- Authority to Levy Taxes
- Financial
- Watershed Management (i.e. zoning, land use, easements, etc.)
- Operation and Maintenance

Other requirements and details may be found in 390-500.11-M.



USDA NRCS Financial Assistance

Purpose	Engineering Technical Assistance	Installation Construction	Real Property Rights
Flood Prevention	100%	100%	0%
Watershed Protection	100%	Variable	0%
Agricultural Water Management (Drainage, Irrigation, Ground Water Recharge, Agricultural Water Supply Structure, Water Conservation, Water Quality)	Up to 100%	Up to 75%	0%
Nonagricultural Water Management			
- Public Fish & Wildlife Development	100%	No more than 50%	No more than 50%
- Public Recreation Development	100%	No more than 50%	No more than 50%
- Recreation Facilities	100%	No more than 50%	No more than 50%
- Water Quality Management	Up to 100%	TBD	0%
- Municipal & Industrial Water Supply	0%	No more than 50%	0%
Groundwater Recharge	100%	Up to 75%	0%
Rehabilitation	100%	65%	0%
This table is an excerpt from the National Watershed Manual Figure 500-E2, it should not be used to establish program cost sharing amounts by Purpose.			



Active Projects

Active projects approx. \$5.88M

Project	Project Stage	Priority Group(s)	Notes
Fentress County Obey River	Watershed Planning – Water Supply	-	To develop SOW, etc. Water supply issues is an economic development barrier for the community. (\$886,000)
Shelby County Mary's Creek 4, 10, & 11	Rehab Planning – Flood Control	-	Planning to be complete by winter 2022. Expected request for design funds during FY 2023. (\$748,000)
Town of Oneida Pine 4	Rehab Planning	-	Planning expected to be complete in fall 2022. Potential request for design and construction funds in FY 23, however project cost is barrier for community. (\$657,000)
Town of Oneida Water Supply	Watershed Planning – Water Supply	-	This project is studying the areas inadequate water supply with area suffering chronic water use restrictions. Project has regional potential. Expect request for design funds during FY 2023. (\$585,000)



Active Projects

Project	Request	Priority Group(s)	Notes
Humphreys County Trace Creek	Watershed Planning – Flood Control	-	Community suffered historic flooding in August 2021 that killed 20 people. Disaster has received national attention and strong congressional backing for addressing reoccurring flooding issues. (\$1.45M)
City of Spencer	Water Supply – PIFR	LRA, New Applicant	Water supply lake is not sufficient. Study will investigate possible solutions for additional water. (\$55,000)
McNairy County	Flood Control – Re-feasibility & Watershed Plan Revision	LRA	Flood protection for town of Selmer. Town experiencing recurring flooding and many improvements in original watershed plan were not constructed. (1.5 M)



Questions

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