

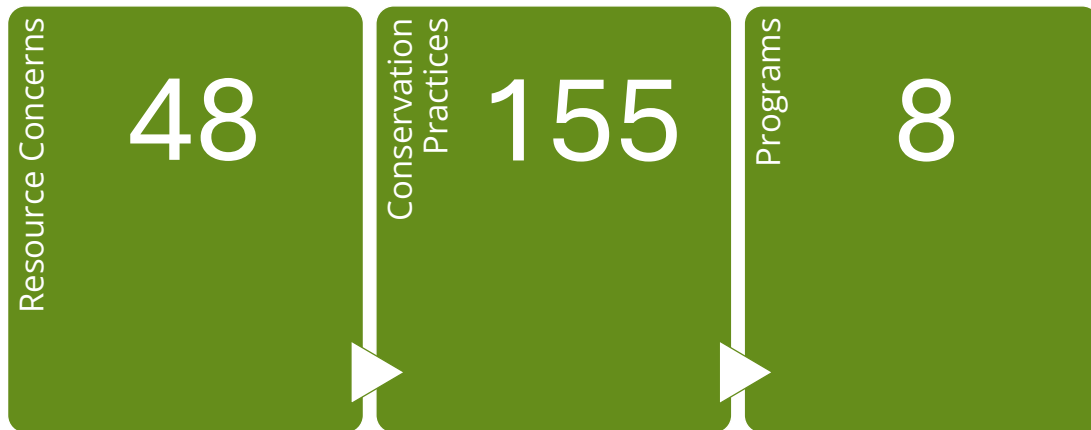
NRCS Program Opportunities and Program Review

2025 UNR Cattlemen's Update
January 13-17, 2025



FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION
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How does NRCS work?



NRCS works with farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners to protect and conserve natural resources by identifying resource concerns like soil, water, air, plants, animals, and energy affecting their operation, determining which of our conservation practices could address the concerns through the development of a conservation plan then, if financial assistance is needed to implement the practices, determining which of our programs is best suited to meet their need.

This presentation will mainly focus on the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

How to get assistance from NRCS

- 1 • Think about what the issues and resource concerns (soil, water, air, plants, animals, energy) are for your operation.
- 2 • Contact your local NRCS office to start a conversation and set up a site visit to your operation to look at the issues.
- 3 • Work with the local office to develop a conservation plan and discuss options for technical or financial assistance.
- 4 • If you decide to use NRCS programs to address the issues, complete an application and contract.

Conservation work is done at the local level and builds on the relationship between the producer and the local field office staff. These are the steps that should be completed when producers work with NRCS.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

- Project selection based on ranking and available funding.
- Separate fund pools based on resource concerns, local work groups, and initiatives, so applicants compete against similar projects.
- Contract length typically 1-3 years, can be up to 10.
- Payment is completed once practice is certified.
- Eligible on Public Land.



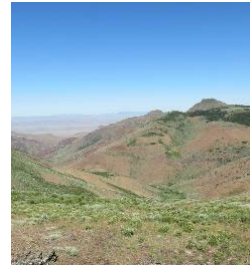
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

- Provide incentives for maintaining good stewardship (existing practices).
- Provides additional incentive for increasing stewardship (new activities).
- Best suited for applicants that have a history of documenting their management strategies and/or have history with NRCS.
- Annual payments over 5 years with option to renew.
- Separate Farm Bill Payment Limitation of \$200,000.
- Eligible on Public Land.



Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

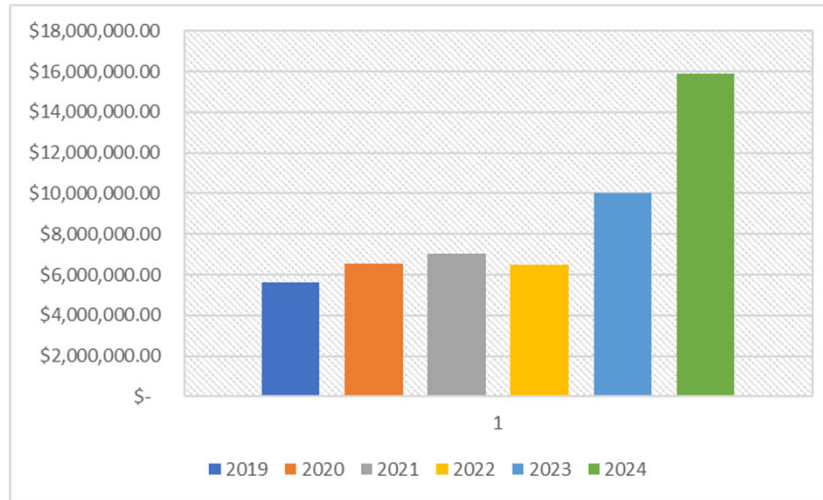
- Helps landowners, land trusts, and other entities protect, restore, and enhance wetlands or protect working farms and ranches through conservation easements.
- Limits nonagricultural uses, protects grazing use and conservation values by restoring and conserving eligible grazing land.
- Sign ups typically occur in December
- IRA funding will be available in FY26



The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)

- Provides additional funding for NRCS programs to implement climate-smart mitigation activities.
- Funding started in FY 2023 and stops at the end of FY 2026.
- Money in contracts written through FY 2026 must be completely spent by the end of FY 2031.
- Nationally, NRCS received \$19.5 billion
- In Nevada, NRCS will receive between \$45-50 million
 - IRA funding is in addition to normal program funding

What has IRA done in Nevada?



This graph shows NRCS program spending in Nevada from 2019-2024. IRA funding has allowed NRCS to increase the amount of funding providing conservation on the ground and increase obligations by 60% from FY23 to FY24.

Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry (CSAF) Mitigation Activities

- Several CSAF lists have been issued since IRA was implemented. The current version is FY 2025
- Includes 55 conservation practices eligible for IRA funding
- Includes primary practices, supporting practices and restrictions
- Your local office can provide more information

Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry (CSAF) Mitigation Activities List for FY2025

Highlighted activities have been added or updated in FY2025.

Code	Conservation Practice Standard Name ^[1] (practice unit)	Code	Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) Enhancement Activities ^[2]
311	Alley Cropping (acres)		None Available
213	Waste Storage Facility (number) * Used to implement on-site bedded pack ^[1]		None Available
214	Brush Management (acres) * Used to remove woody invasive vegetation in arid regions and the removed material will be left onsite.	E214A	Brush management to improve wildlife habitat

Notes
In addition to the designated CSAF conservation activities listed, conservation practices that facilitate the management or the function of a CSAF activity but may not achieve the desired effects on their own (and may not have a quantifiable benefit), may be planned as applicable in consultation with your local professional conservation planner. Examples: Tree/Shrub Establishment (632) may need facilitating practices such as Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (490) or Access Control (472); Conservation Crop Rotation (228) may need facilitating practices such as Pest Management Conservation System (595); Cover Crops (340), Irrigation Water Management (449), or Drainage Water Management (554); Waste Separation Facility (632) may need facilitating practices such as Waste Transfer (634) or Roofs and Covers (367); Prescribed Grazing (528) may need facilitating practices such as Watering Facility (614); Stream Crossing (578); Brush Management (514), Fence (382); or Livestock Shelter Structure (576).

The following was removed from the list for FY2025: Enhancement (3388): Strategically planned, patch burning for grazing distribution and wildlife habitat. Bundles for CSP and NRCS Easement activities are not listed in this document, please refer to program guidance for information.

[1] The included Conservation Practice Standard and Conservation Stewardship Program links provide national information. Please consult the NRCS office at your local USDA Service Center for any local and state level criteria. Visit farmers.gov/service-locator to find contact information for your local office.

[2] The practice is considered a mitigation activity only when implemented in a specified way. The practice is considered a mitigation activity only when implemented in the specified way as identified in the brief description. See the associated narrative and additional planner guidance section at the end of this document.

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Primary practices are those on the CSAF list that can be implemented as written.

Supporting practices may be eligible for IRA funding if they support a primary practice.

Some practices are more restricted under the CSAF list than they would be if normally implemented under EQIP or CSP. The red arrows point to an example of brush management that indicates it would only be considered a mitigation activity when implemented in a specified way. Your local NRCS will work with you to determine what funding might be best applied to your contract.

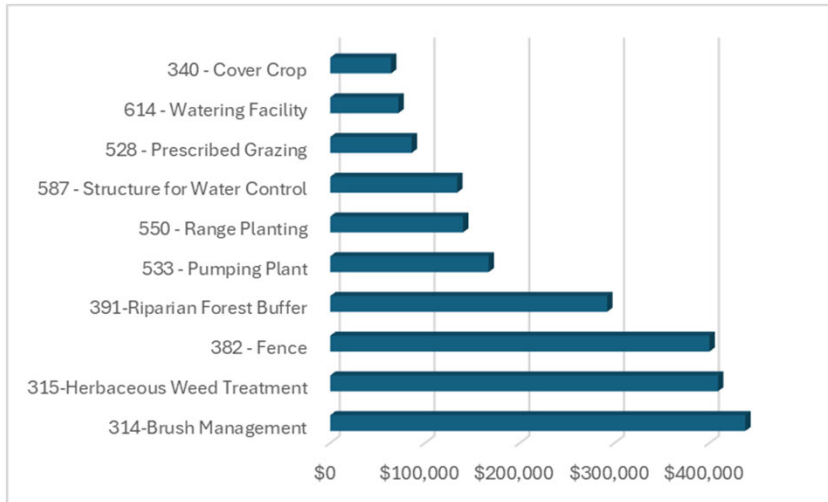
Another example would be 430, Irrigation Pipeline, which would fall under CSAF when it is used to convert and open earthen ditch to a closed pipe.

EQIP-IRA

- All EQIP information applies plus...
 - All practices contracted must be a primary practice from the **Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry (CSAF)** list or will be a supporting practice to the primary practice
 - Some Primary Practices are restricted to specific narratives
 - Eligible on Public Land



Top EQIP-IRA Practices for Fy 2024



Not Listed:
430-Irrigation Pipeline
\$2.43 million
442-Sprinkler System
\$848,000

This slide is an example of the conservation practices that were obligated in contracts during FY 2024.

430, Irrigation Pipeline, and 442, Sprinkler System, were not included in the chart since the amounts obligated for those practices were much larger than the others and would have made the chart difficult to read.

CSP-IRA

- All requirements from CSP plus...
 - All “activities” contracted must be on the CSAF list and/or supporting practices from the CSAF list.
 - Eligible on Public Land.



Fiscal Year 2025 Funding

Program	Allocation
EQIP	\$ 15,855,230
CSP	\$ 1,380,000
ACEP	\$ 500,000

Program-IRA	Allocation
EQIP-IRA	\$ 9,389,635
CSP-IRA	\$ 1,398,000
ACEP	\$ 1,067,100

Total (All funding)	Allocation
EQIP	\$ 25,244,865
CSP	\$ 2,778,000
ACEP	\$ 1,567,100

Payment Information for Fiscal Year 2025

- The Farm Bill payment limitation has been reset for FY25
- Producers who had previously reached their Farm Bill maximum can apply for NRCS programs
- EQIP maximum: \$450,000
- CSP maximum: \$200,000

ACT NOW-IRA

- Faster process for approving applications to accelerate conservation program funding for eligible practices.
- If an application meets the ‘threshold-score’ established by NV state office the application will be selected for funding and can be obligated by the field office.
- **ACT NOW-IRA Eligible Practices:**
 - 315 Herbaceous Weed Treatment
 - 314 Brush Management
 - 550 Range Seeding
 - 612 Tree/Shrub Establishment
 - 422 Hedgerow Planting
 - 391 Riparian Forest Buffer
 - 327 Conservation Cover
 - 512 Pasture and Hay Planting
 - 340 Cover Crop

Applications can be accepted at any time and are not subject to the normal batching period.

Although contract may be obligated and funded, the planning/NEPA process still needs to be completed before work can begin.

So what does IRA mean for Producers?

- IRA is just another funding stream, not a separate program.
- It creates opportunities for more projects to be funded
- No change to the way producers apply for programs



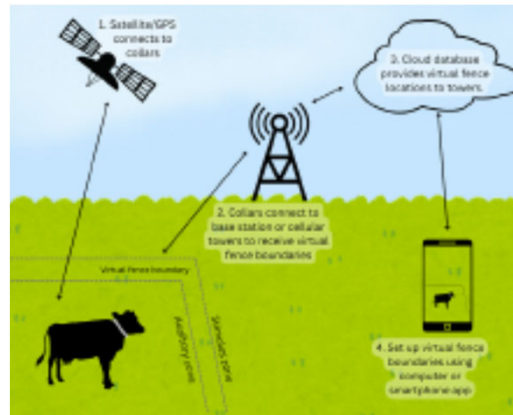
New Practices for Fiscal Year 2025

- Virtual Fencing
- Combustion System Improvement



Virtual Fencing

- New Technology that contains livestock with boundaries created on a farmer's phone.
- No physical fence needed
- Reduces maintenance and building labor
- Not intended to replace all physical fences.



Virtual Fencing Practices

- 382- Fence (Virtual Fence)
- 582- Prescribed Grazing
- Costs vary based on number of animals
- A fact sheet is available on the 2025 Cattlemen's Update Section on the NRCS Nevada website
- For more information reach out to your local office.

Virtual Fence Example Payment

100 Cattle – Lyon County

CIN 1, Year 1 382 - Fence -\$14225.13
CIN 2, Year 2 528 – Prescribed Grazing –\$6436.61
CIN 3, Year 3 528 – Prescribed Grazing –\$6436.61
Contract Total - \$27,098.35 Producer Cost \$40,700

approximately 67% (Nofence 2023)

Historically Underserved Producer Scenario

CIN 1, Year 1 382 - Fence - \$17070.36
CIN 2, Year 2 528 – Prescribed Grazing –\$7724.34
CIN 3, Year 3 528 – Prescribed Grazing –\$7724.34
Contract Total - \$32519.04 Producer Cost \$40,700

approximately 80% (Nofence 2023)

CIN is Contract Item Number

NoFence as an example \$240/cow collar purchased, no base station and 52/cow annual subscription, but other companies will be less and may need base stations. Costs are variable cost with each company and availability varies as well.

Historically Underserved Farmers and Ranchers include multiple categories including Beginning, Socially Disadvantaged, Veterans, and Limited Resource. They are eligible for higher payment rates for some of NRCS' programs.

Combustion System Improvement

- Help producers replace old high-emitting diesel engine equipment with low emitting diesel or electric equipment.
- Eligible equipment types include
 - Tractors
 - Loaders and forklifts
 - Motor graders and backhoes
 - Diesel-powered irrigation systems
- Old equipment replaced under the program must be destroyed
- For more information contact your local office.



Links and Other Information

- The following items are available on the NRCS website (use QR code) under the 2025 UNR Cattlemen’s Update section.
- Information includes:
 - NRCS Program Opportunities and Program Review Presentation
 - Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry (CSAF) Mitigation Activities List FY 2025
 - Fact Sheet: Virtual Fence
 - Fact Sheet: Combustion System Improvement
 - Office Locator Map

