

Regional Conservation Partnership Program

Investing in Alabama



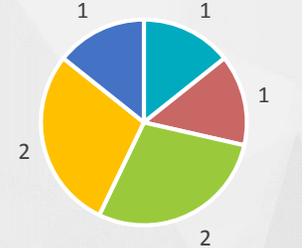
Regional Conservation Partnership Program

Created by the 2014 Farm Bill, the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is a partner-driven, locally-led approach to conservation. It offers new opportunities for USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to harness innovation, welcome new partners to the conservation mission, and demonstrates the value and efficacy of voluntary, private lands conservation.

In 2017, NRCS is investing up to \$225 million in 88 projects that impact nearly every state in the nation, including three in Alabama. Since 2014, NRCS has invested more than \$825 million in 286 high-impact projects, bringing together more than 2,000 conservation partners who have invested an additional \$1.4 billion. By 2018, NRCS and partners will have invested at least \$2.4 billion. These projects are leading to cleaner and more abundant water, better soil and air quality, enhance wildlife habitat, more resilient and productive agricultural lands and stronger rural economies.

Alabama Projects to Date

Projects by Resource Concern



- Soil Health
- Degraded Plant Condition
- Wildlife Habitat
- Water Quantity/Drought
- Climate Change

7

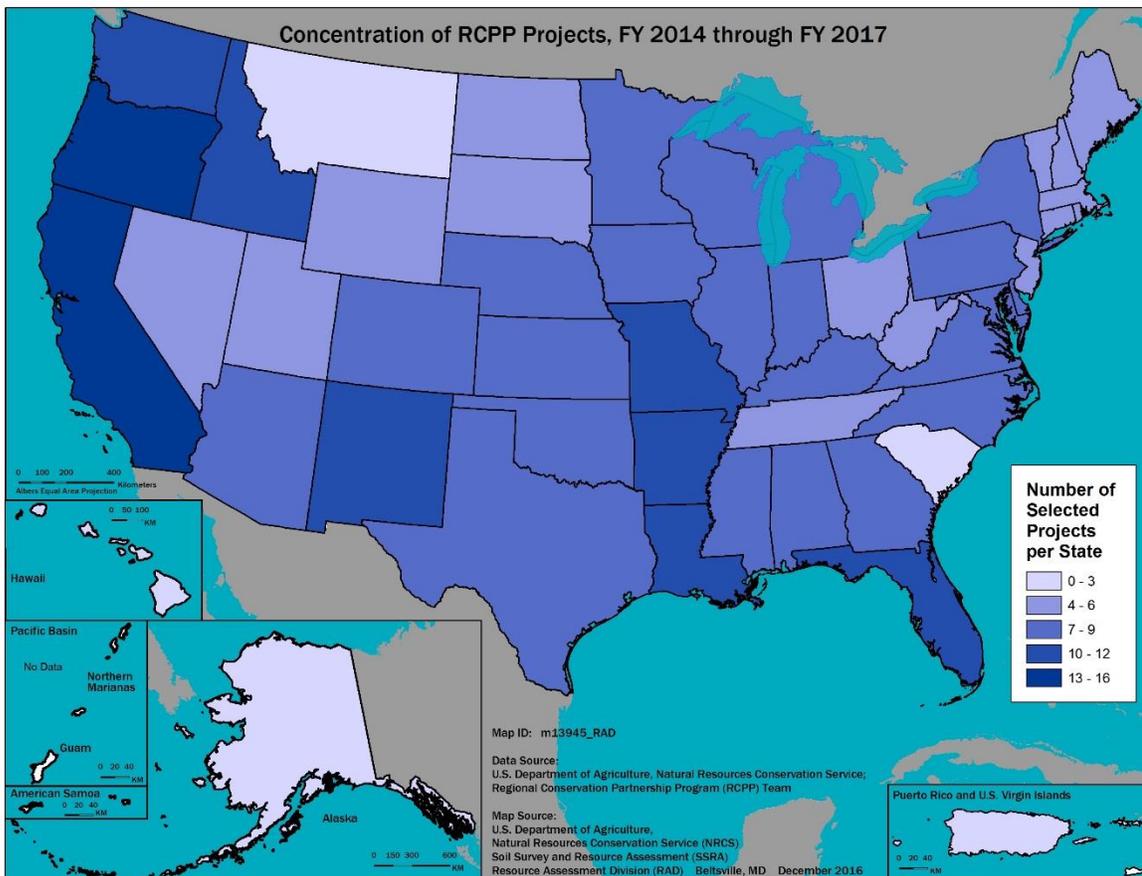
Projects

\$25.3 million

NRCS Investment

112

Partners



Existing RCPP Projects

Year	Title	Funding Pool	Lead Partner	Number of Partners	NRCS Investment
2016	African American Forest Restoration and Retention	CCA	U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities	6	\$1.6 million
2016	Coastal Headwaters Longleaf Forest	CCA	The Conservation Fund	15	\$5.1 million
2014/2015	Alabama Farmers Federation	State	Alabama Farmers Federation	9	\$1.7 million
2014/2015	Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint Rivers (ACFR) Conservation Partnership for Alabama, Florida, and Georgia	National	Flint River soil and Water Conservation District	32	\$4 million

2017 RCPP Projects

Coastal Headwaters Forest Partnership

Proposed NRCS Investment: \$8,000,000 (Critical Conservation Area – Longleaf Pine Range)

Lead Partner: The Conservation Fund

Number of Initial Partners: 15

Participating States: Alabama (Lead State)

The Coastal Headwaters Forest Partnership will address the natural resource concerns of the Longleaf Pine Range Critical Conservation Area in Alabama’s Gulf Coastal Plain. Longleaf pine forests once dominated the American Southeast, stretching across 90 million acres. Now only four percent of the original forests remain, mostly on public lands. The CHF Partnership, led by The Conservation Fund and over a dozen diverse partners, will educate private land owners about conservation easements and encourage producers to conserve, restore and manage large properties permanently for longleaf habitat in a way that benefits the economy and environment. By restoring longleaf pine, the project will preserve four major coastal river systems in the Gulf Coast Plain and protect habitat for the threatened gopher tortoise and approximate 600 other species related to longleaf pine habitat.

Climate Resiliency in Florida, Alabama and Georgia

Proposed NRCS Investment: \$3,000,000 (National)

Lead Partner: Flint River Soil and Water Conservation District

Number of Initial Partners: 32

Participating States: Alabama, Florida and Georgia (Lead State)

The Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint River Basin stretches from the base of the Appalachian Mountains in North Georgia to the Gulf of Mexico in the Florida Panhandle. The vibrant ecological Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint River Basin and adjacent Ochlockonee River Basin provide habitat for a rich biodiversity of aquatic and terrestrial species, including many designated as endangered or threatened. Growers in this region provide food, fuel, forest products and fiber to global markets, and they depend upon the areas natural resources to sustain their livelihoods. Over the last few decades, fluctuations in climate patterns have presented challenges to sustainable management of the region’s natural resources. The Flint River Soil and Water Conservation District and over 30 multi-state partners will develop and implement practical solutions for climate change adaptation in the river basins.



Alabama Soil Health

Proposed NRCS Investment: \$1,897,430 (State)

Lead Partner: Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Committee

Number of Initial Partners: 3

Participating States: Alabama (Lead State)

Through the Alabama Soil Health project, the Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Committee and partners will work with Alabama farmers to improve the timeliness of cover crop planting, explore innovative planting methods to get seeds in the ground earlier, and increase access to equipment as needed. The project partners will conduct outreach to farmers through newsletters and social media, workshops and field days along site visits. Among the many benefits of cover crops, the reduction of soil erosion, the improvement of water infiltration and storage, and the enhancement of water quality are among the most important.