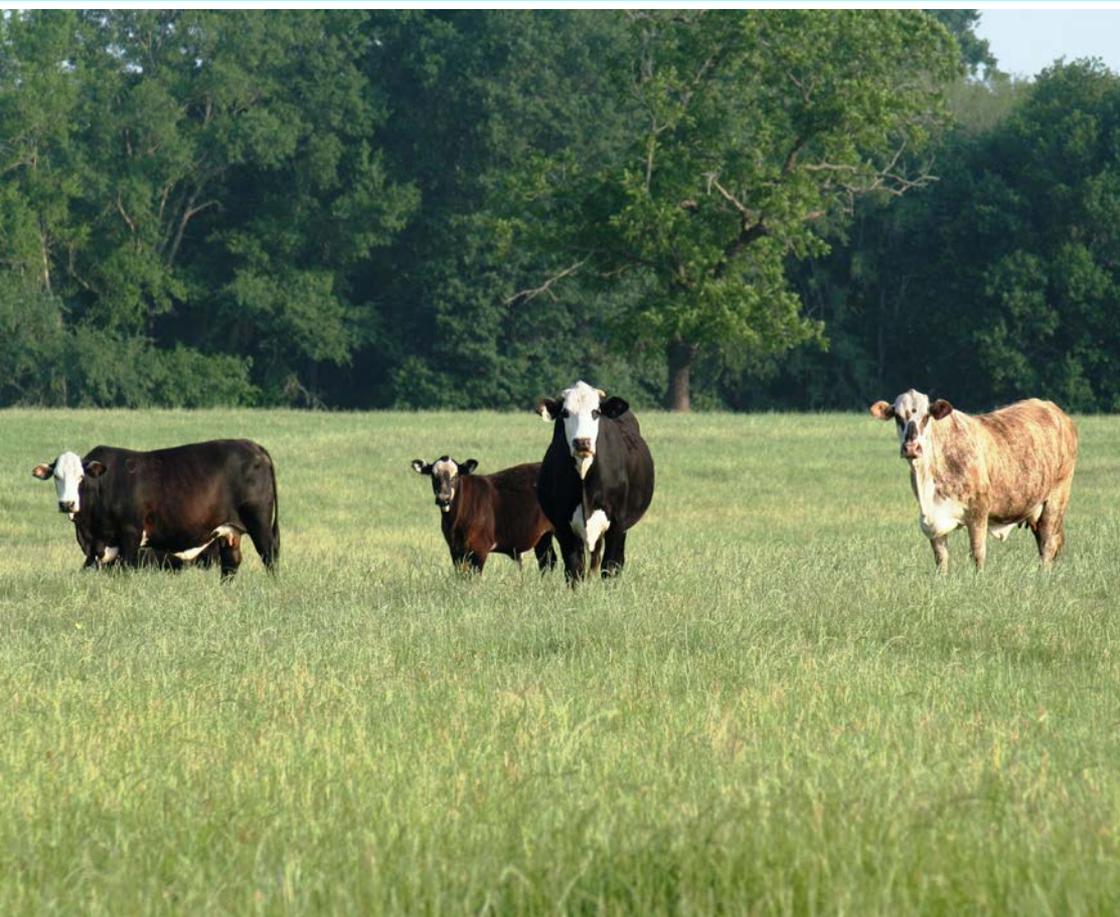




United States Department of Agriculture



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Conservation on Private Lands

Salvador Salinas – NRCS
Texas State Conservationist

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Farm Bill Conservation Programs

- **Agricultural Act of 2014**
Enacted February 7, 2014
 - Financial Assistance Programs
 - Easement Programs



Landowner/Participant Eligibility

- Must have control of the land for term of contract.
- Must be in compliance with the Highly Erodible Lands (HEL) and Wetland Compliance (WC) provisions of the 1985 Food Security Act.
- Landowners/participants are subject to Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) provisions.
 - \$900,000 over 3 year average (all income)
 - No waiver provisions



Farm Bill Conservation Programs



Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

EQIP offers financial and technical assistance to promote agriculture production and environmental quality as compatible goals.



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Key EQIP Facts

- No minimum acreage size or amount of practice units.
- No caps to restrict participation against large or small operations.
- Payment limitation is \$450,000 for the Farm Bill's life.
- No restrictions on the number of applications submitted by a participant.
- Applications are accepted on a continual basis.
- Payment method used is the Payment Rate (PR).
- Higher payment rate for historically underserved and beginning farmers and ranchers.
- Minimum 5% to wildlife.



Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

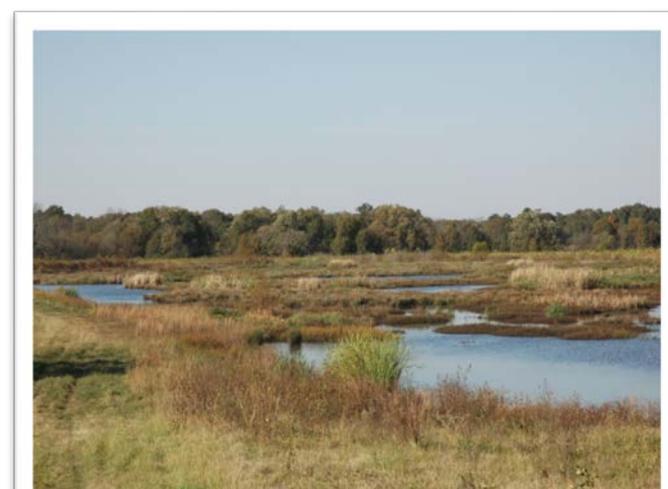
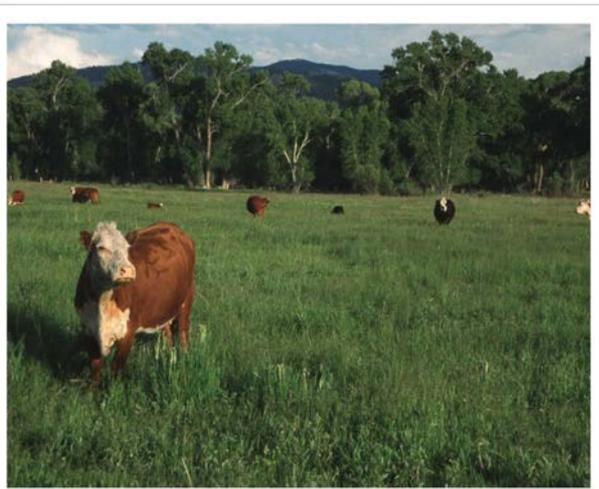
- CSP offers financial and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers practicing good conservation measures on their working lands.
- Encourages the continuance of practices that benefit soil, water and air resources.
- CSP payments are capped at \$200,000 per person or legal entity during five-year period of the agreement.



Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

Agricultural Land Easement (ALE)

Wetland Reserve Easement (WRE)



Protects the agricultural use, viability, and related conservation values

 **FRPP**

Protect grazing uses and related conservation values

GRP

Restore, protect, and enhance wetlands

WRP

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Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

ACEP-ALE



CSP



EQIP



ACEP-WRE



Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW)



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Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW)

- Partnership between USDA-NRCS and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Private Landowners.
- Up to 30 years of predictability from Endangered Species Act.
- Based on a conservation plan, practice maintenance, and self certification.
- Helps improve/restore habitats of specific declining wildlife species.
- Strengthens rural economies by protecting the productivity of working lands.
- Exempts landowners from incidental take of species of concern caused by implementation of conservation practice in a WLFW plan.



Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW)

The conservation model builds on successes in wildlife conservation over the years.

The model includes:

- Trust and Credibility
- Shared Vision
- Strategic Approach
- Accountability
- Leverage
- Regulatory Predictability



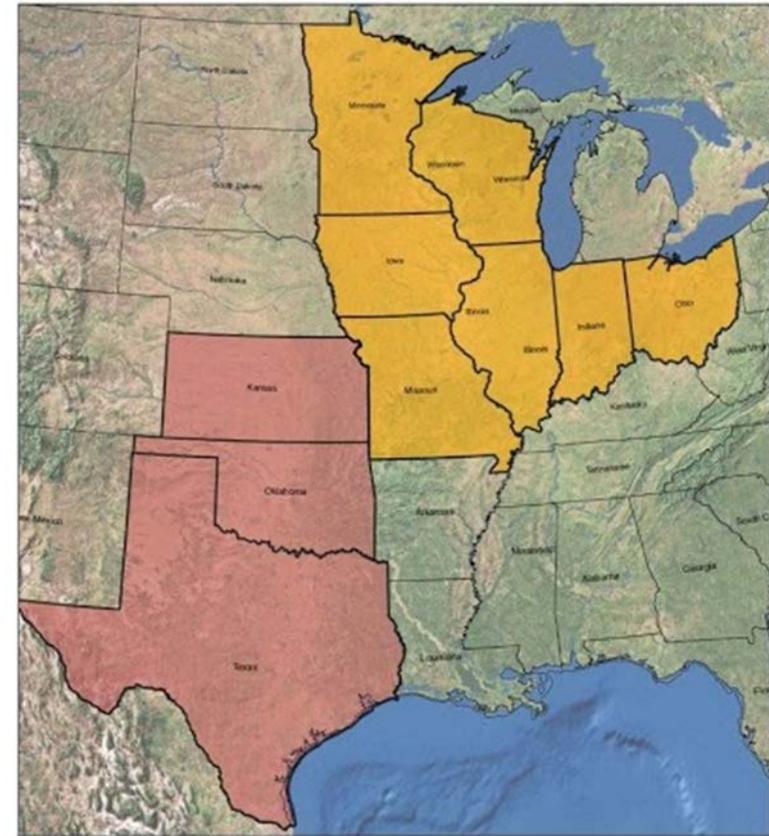


**NRCS
Monarch
WLFW
Texas
Project**

NRCS Monarch WLFW Project

- The FY 2017 NRCS WLFW Monarch Project focuses on a 10 state region.
- The Focus Area was divided into two regions.
 - Mid West
 - Southern Plains
 - Kansas
 - Oklahoma
 - Texas

NRCS Monarch Butterfly Habitat Emphasis Area



MidWestSubregion
 SouthCentralSubregion

Author: Deann Daniels and Lee Davis,
 Central National Technology Support Center
 Fort Worth, TX
 USDA-NRCS, Map No. 2015-30

1:12,000,000

Date: 5/20/2015

Coordinate System: USA Contiguous
 Albers Equal Area Conic USGS
 Projection: Albers
 Datum: North American 1983

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NRCS Monarch WLFW Texas Project

- 28 Texas counties were selected as focal counties for monarch butterfly habitat restoration and development for their strategic positions in the migration pattern.
- Landowners are eligible for financial and technical assistance through Farm Bill programs such as EQIP and CSP.



NRCS Monarch WLFW Texas Project

Core Conservation Practices

Rangeland: (at least two practices to include UWHM)

Prescribed Grazing

Prescribed Burning

Range Planting

Upland Wildlife Habitat Management

Cropland/Pastureland

Conservation Cover

Conservation Crop Rotation

Contour Buffer Strips

Field Borders



Upland Wildlife Habitat Management



Working Lands For Wildlife



Conservation Planning and
Predictability in the Lesser
Prairie Chicken Habitat Range



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Lesser Prairie Chicken Action Area



Legend
 LPC Action Area 2014
 ESRI Basemap

0 15 30 60 90 Miles



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Provide technical assistance to help meet habitat and landowner land use goals through conservation planning and financial assistance through EQIP and CSP.

Main practices:

- Upland Wildlife Habitat
- Cross Fencing
- Prescribed Grazing
- Brush Management



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FY 2017 Farm Bill Accomplishments

Program	Allocations	Applications	Acres	Funding Requested	Contract Dollars	Contracts	Contract Acres
EQIP	\$80.9 million	4,285	528,000	\$119.3 million	\$55.3 million	2,241	1.6 million
CSP	\$28.8 million	471	528,000		\$24.9 million		
RCPP-EQIP		181	243,700	\$8.1 million	\$ 224,500	34	19,700
RCPP-CSP		14	2,000				
ACEP-ALE	\$8.5 million	8	9,800	\$9.5 million			
ACEP-WRE	\$4.5 million	7	1,800	\$4.4 million			



Conservation Technical Assistance

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Conservation plans written with landowners	3,906	4,169,607
Technical consultation with landowners	38,565	



USDA Secretary's Guiding Principles

- 1. Remove Obstacles**
- 2. Prioritize Customer Service**
- 3. Safe and Secure Food Supply**
- 4. Agriculture Bounty Comes From The Land**



USDA Reorganization?

Proposed:

- Create a Farm Production and Conservation Under Secretary
- Move NRCS to Farm Production and Conservation
- Move FSA to Farm Production and Conservation
- Move RMA to Farm Production and Conservation



Questions?



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