



Natural Resources Conservation Service

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NEWS RELEASE

USDA NRCS Announces Funding Opportunity to Adopt Conservation Practices through Initiatives and Special Projects *Deadline for Applications is Friday, November 2, 2018*

NASHVILLE, September 28, 2018 - The United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) is announcing a funding opportunity through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to facilitate the adoption of conservation practices for several of the NRCS National Initiatives and Special Projects. To be considered in this fiscal year (FY) 2019 first funding cycle, applications must be received by **Friday, November 2, 2018**.

“While we accept applications for this program on a continuous basis, only the applications received by November 2 will be considered for funding this fiscal year,” said Sheldon Hightower, Tennessee NRCS State Conservationist. *“This early sign-up places a priority on water quality, water conservation, and promotes soil health practices by offering assistance to landowners to address resource concerns on eligible agricultural land.”*

EQIP is an incentives-based program that provides technical and financial assistance to eligible private landowners for conservation systems such as animal waste management facilities, irrigation system efficiency improvements, fencing, and water supply development for improved grazing management, riparian protection, and wildlife habitat enhancement.

Projects to be considered for this early funding cycle include:

- **Mississippi River Basin Initiative:** To address water quality concerns and agricultural sources of nutrients and sediment, NRCS works with farmers and conservation partners to implement conservation practices that help trap sediment and reduce nutrient runoff to improve the overall health of the Mississippi River.



- **Conservation Activity Plan (CAP):** EQIP funding is available for the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP). A CAP helps producers identify conservation practices needed to address a specific natural resource need. Typically, these plans are specific to certain kinds of land use such as transitioning to organic operations, grazing land, forest land, or can also address a specific resource need such a plan for management of nutrients.
- **StrikeForce Initiative:** Through StrikeForce, NRCS is working help producers prosper in rural communities that face persistent poverty. StrikeForce aims to increase investment in these communities through intensive outreach and stronger partnership. NRCS also provides technical assistance and explanation as needed to ensure that these communities can fully access USDA programs and services.



Interested applicants must meet the specific funding pool’s required criteria to be considered for funding in this early signup. EQIP applications submitted after the cut-off date of November 2, 2018 will be accepted on a continuous basis and may be considered for funding at a later date in the fiscal year.

For more information about signing up for EQIP please visit your [local service center](#). For more information about Tennessee NRCS, visit the website at www.tn.nrcs.usda.gov.

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