

Thank you for your attendance and participation in today's meeting!

State Technical Committees serve in an advisory capacity to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and other agencies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) on the implementation of the natural resources conservation provisions of Farm Bill legislation. Committees are intended to include members from a wide variety of natural resource and agricultural interests.

Chaired by the NRCS State Conservationist in each State, these Committees are composed of representatives from Federal and State natural resource agencies, American Indian Tribes, agricultural and environmental organizations, and agricultural producers.

The Committees provide information, analysis, and recommendations to appropriate USDA officials, who strongly consider their advice. Individuals or groups wanting to participate as members on a State Technical Committee may submit requests to the State Conservationist explaining their interest and relevant credentials.



New NRCS State Conservationist **Greg Stone**

Reports January 20, 2019

*Follows Karen Woodrich who is now the
Kansas State Conservationist*

Greg is a 38-year employee of the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service and has served in multiple locations in West Virginia and Ohio. He served as a Soil Conservationist in two Field Offices in WV, as District Conservationist in Noble County, Ohio and the Northern Panhandle Counties in WV for a total of 18 years. Greg currently works as the Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations (13 years) in the South Area of WV and has done details in WV as the SRC & most recently on the EQIP Team in NHQ.

Greg and his wife Beth have been married for 35 years have five grown children and four grandchildren. Greg holds both a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture Degree from West Virginia University and a Master of Divinity Degree from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

New State Resource Conservationist Tim Hafner

Follows Mark Ferguson who is now works in North Carolina

Prior to this position Tim was the NRCS Team Leader for Performance working with National Program Managers, Science and Technology subject matter experts, and Budget staff to determine what NRCS will produce and how to measure it. Prior that, Tim was the Assistant State Conservationist for Operations in Kentucky and Assistant State Conservationist for Field Office Operations in Palmetto, Florida.

Tim spent several years both on the Programs Staff and on the State Resource Conservationist Staff in Gainesville, Florida as both a Water Quality Specialist and Resource Conservationist. Tim has also worked as a Water Quality Specialist and Area Resource Conservationist in Albany, Georgia. Tim started his career in Kentucky in 1987 first with the Division of Conservation as a Soil Scientist, then with the Soil Conservation Service as a Soil Conservationist and a District Conservationist.

Tim graduated from Eastern Kentucky University with a Bachelor's Degree and Western Kentucky University with a Master's Degree in Agronomy. Tim's wife Patti works as a nursing manager. Tim and Patti have two children, Paul who works for the Anne Arundel County Soil and Water Conservation District in Maryland and Mariah who works at City National Bank in Lexington, Kentucky.





New State Conservation Engineer Keith Reed

Follows Coleman Gusler who retired

Prior to being selected for this position, Keith was a field engineer for NRCS for the past 30 years, working out of different locations in the south-central, south-eastern and eastern portions of the state. Work at each of these locations has varied from at first working almost extensively on RAMP, then serving as COR/GR on the construction of the last 2 watershed dams constructed in Kentucky, with his most recent assignments involving engineering practices installed through farm bill programs. Keith started his career as a Soil Conservation Technician, part time, while finishing school.

Keith graduated from University of Kentucky College of Engineering in December, 1987, with a B.S. in Civil Engineering. From that point, upon completing the required internships and sitting for the respective exams, he became a licensed professional engineer and later a licensed land surveyor.

Keith was raised in the rural community of Ingram in Bell County, and, coincidentally, still resides there after living in and working out of Pulaski County for a number of years. He and his wife Tammie have 3 children Dustin (and wife Rachel), Megan, and Austin; and two granddaughters.

New Assistant State Conservationist for Partnerships **Sonya Keith**

Follows Reed Cripps

Sonya graduated from the University of Kentucky with a degree in Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering. She started her career with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Georgia in 2001 before returning to her home state in 2004.

In her prior position as a Planning Engineer, Sonya focused much of her time leading the state through emergency events related to the Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP) and assisting local sponsors with watershed related issues. Working with these watershed programs has enabled Sonya to interact with a broad array of partners - not only at the local, state, and federal levels, but also with private companies.

Sonya Keith was raised in McCreary County, Kentucky. She and her husband, Wayne, and their two children Arissa (14) and Grason (12) now live in Midway, Kentucky.



New Farm Service Agency (FSA)

Conservation Specialist

Angella Watson

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USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

Allen Arthur

Easement Acquisition Coordinator

November 27, 2018

FY-2019 ACEP-WRE GARC

As in prior years, Kentucky uses Area-Wide Market Analysis values and appraisal values to establish easement offers in the state.

Relative to many of the surrounding states, We see a wide range in values for cropland in Kentucky.

Comments/input for establishing Geographic Area Rate Caps for FY-2020?

**2019 WETLAND RESERVE EASEMENT
ENVIRONMENTAL SITE EVALUATION
KENTUCKY**

NEST Number _____

Owner(s) (as listed on deed or POA) _____ Date _____ FSN _____
 _____ County _____ Tract _____
 _____ Mailing Address: _____
 _____ City: _____
 Total Acres in Application: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 *Total Eligible Acres in Application: _____ Phone: (Home) _____ (Work) _____

*Eligible areas can include a 300' riparian buffer on 1st order streams and larger when the buffer connects existing or restorable wetland areas that are protected with an easement or will be protected by the WRE easement.

Permanent Offer 30-year Offer

Latitude _____ Longitude _____ Topo Quad Name: _____

Screening Questions

A yes answer to question 1, 2, 3, or 4 below will result in the application being a low priority. Low priority applications will not be ranked unless funding is available after higher priority applications have been considered for funding.

- 1) Has the boundary been manipulated by the landowner so that the offer cannot be efficiently managed or effectively restored as determine by NRCS? _____
- 2) Are there existing water control structures located on the easement (that cannot be removed by NRCS) that manage water off the easement (unless landowner agrees to convey a non- revocable flooding easement), or existing water control structures located off of the easement that manage water on the easement? _____
- 3) Has a previous offer made to the current landowner(s) been refused within the past 18 months? _____ This question can be waived by the state conservationist if the land offered is considered a high priority.
- 4) Is the offer for a 30-year easement? _____

Ranking Factors

Point Values

I.	Local Significance	
	1) Special Interest Areas.....	= _____
	2) Proximity to Protected Areas.....	= _____
II.	Wildlife Habitat	
	1) Threatened & Endangered Species.....	= _____
	2) Wildlife Corridors.....	= _____
	3) Adjacent Forestland.....	= _____
	4) Easement Size.....	= _____
III.	Water Quality	
	1) Cropping History.....	= _____
	2) Proximity of Main Stem of River System.....	= _____

- IV. Hydrology
 - 1) Percentage of the Easement Composed Of PC Land.....= _____
 - 2) Adequate Source of Hydrology.....= _____
 - 3) Types of Hydrology Restoration Practices.....= _____
 - V. Percent of Total Easement Area that meets identified categories (ACEP Manual 440-528.105) of land eligible for WRE.....= _____
 - VI. Riparian Area.....= _____
 - VII. Operation, Maintenance and Management Factors
 - 1) Existing Timber Quality.....= _____
 - 2) Contiguous Easement.....= _____
 - VIII. Cost Factor
 - 1) Easement Cost Factor.....= _____
 - 2) Restoration Cost Factor.....= _____
- TOTAL POINT VALUE OF RANKING FACTORS.....= _____**

Point Values of Ranking Factors for Kentucky WRE

Ranking Factor	Maximum Point Value	Approximate % of Total Score
Local Significance		
Special Interest Areas	15	2
Proximity to Protected Areas	30	5
Wildlife habitat		
T&E species and State Conservation Agreement Species	25	4
Wildlife Corridors	10	1
Adjacent Forestland	20	3
Size of Easement	60	9
Water Quality		
Cropping History	50	8
Proximity to main stem of river system	30	5
Hydrology		
Percentage of the Easement Composed Of PC Land	95	14
Adequate source of Hydrology	95	14
Types of Hydrology Restoration Practices	70	10
Percent of Total Easement Area that meets identified categories of land eligible for WRE	60	9
Riparian Area	10	1
Operation, Maintenance and Management Factors		
Existing Timber Quality	40	6
Contiguous Easement	25	4
Cost Factors		
Easement Cost Factor	20	3
Restoration Cost Factor	20	3
TOTALS	675	~100

I. LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE

1) Special Interest Areas

Restoration is in or near one of the special interest areas identified on the attached Special Interest Area map.

- Site is in area..... 15
- Site is within 2 miles of area 5
- Site is not in or within 2 miles of area 0

15 Points Maximum _____

2) Proximity to Protected Areas

Proximity of easement area to permanently protected conservation area (federal/state wildlife refuges, nature conservancy lands, and other permanently protected areas (i.e., WRE) with management objectives similar to the easement area).

<u>Distance</u>	<u>Points</u>
Adjacent.....	30
Within 1 mile.....	20
> 1 - 5 miles.....	10
>5 miles.....	0

30 Points Maximum _____

II. WILDLIFE HABITAT

1) Benefits To Threatened & Endangered Species

This question applies to any contribution to protection/recovery of federally listed threatened, endangered or candidate species or the copperbelly water snake. Benefits to these species will be determined and documented by the KY Interagency Coordination Tool (KICT). Species benefited are identified in section I of the KICT report. Potential benefits are described in section IV of the report. (NOTE: Benefits are contingent upon application of any avoidance measures described within the report.) Points shall be awarded for the highest category that applies. If points are awarded for benefits, attach the supporting KICT report.

- Practices planned benefit no species 0 pts
- Practices planned benefit two species (i.e. NLEB and IBAT) 5 pts
- Practices planned benefit species of concern (copperbelly watersnake) 10 pts
- Practices planned benefit NLEB and IBAT and occur within 5 miles of hibernacula 15 pts
- Practices planned benefit NLEB and IBAT and occur within 2.5 miles of maternity colony 20 pts
- Practices planned benefit three or more species (excluding hibernacula and maternity colonies) 25 pts

25 Points Maximum _____

2) Wildlife Corridors

Will the easement area provide a wooded corridor at least 100' wide that connects existing blocks of forested areas of at least 20 acres in size considered quality habitat? (To receive points the forested block must be at least 500' in width somewhere along its length.)

Yes 10
 No 0

10 Points Maximum _____

3) Proximity of Large Blocks of Forestland

Adjacent to >500 acres of forestland or planned forestland.....20
 Adjacent to >300 acres of forestland or planned forestland.....15
 Adjacent to >100 acres of forestland or planned forestland.....5

(To receive points for planned forestland, the acreage must be covered by a CRP or WRE/WRP contract or conservation easement.)

20 Points Maximum _____

4) Total easement acres offered.

<u>Acres</u>	<u>Points</u>
>300.....	60
150-300.....	40
80-149.....	20
20-79.....	10
<20.....	0

60 Points Maximum

III. WATER QUALITY

1) Cropping History

Cropping history will be used to assign a point value for the amount of non-point source pollution reduced as a result of wetland restoration on the easement area. The existing crop or last crop grown will be used for this factor. Offering must have had a crop grown within the last 5 years to receive points. CRP Acreage will be considered as cropland for this question. Grassland must have been mowed or grazed in the last 5 years to receive points. Points will be assigned by a weighted average calculated as follows:

<u>CROP</u>	<u>POINTS</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>WEIGHTED AVERAGE POINTS</u>
Row Crop	50 x	()	= _____
Grassland	25 x	()	= _____
Forestland, wetland and/or	0 x	()	= _____
No Crop or Hay Produced in the last 5 years			

Ranking Point Value = Sum of Weighted Average Points/Total Acres Offered

50 Points Maximum _____

2) Proximity to main stem of river system

Offered easement is part of a floodplain area adjacent to the main stem of a fifth order or larger stream. (National Hydrography Dataset shall be used for this determination)

30 Points Maximum _____

IV. HYDROLOGY RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT

1) Percentage of the Easement Composed Of Prior Converted Cropland (PC)

Percent of the easement area composed of PC land. Farmed Wetland will not receive points for this question. In the absence of a NRCS 026 wetland determination, hydric soils and soils with hydric inclusions that are cleared and drained and not FW may be used to estimate the amount of PC.

Acres Of PC _____ / Total Easement Acres _____ *100 = _____ %

Between 76-100% of the easement acres composed of PC	95
Between 51-75% of the easement acres composed of PC	65
Between 26-50% of the easement acres composed of PC	35
Between 0-25% of the easement acres composed of PC	0

95 Points Maximum _____

2) Adequate Source of Hydrology

Location of easement area ensures a source of hydrology adequate to maintain wetland functions and values.

- a) Majority (>50%) of easement acreage will receive annual flooding from over bankflows 95
- b) Majority (>50%) of easement acreage will receive frequent (at least 3 of 5 years) overbank flow 65
- c) Majority (>50%) of easement acreage within a ponded, depressional area 35
- d) Majority (>50%) of easement acreage historically contained saturated soils due to groundwater or water table conditions 15

95 Points Maximum _____

3) Award points for each of the following practices that will be completed as part of the hydrology restoration plan.

- Tile Break(18 Points)..... _____
- Ditch Plug (18 Points) *Points may be awarded for ditch plug if an embankment will be used to control flow in a ditch that leaves the easement.....* _____
- Levee Break (17 Points)..... _____
- Wetland Microtopography Restoration (17 Points)..... _____

70 Points Maximum _____

V. PERCENT OF TOTAL EASEMENT AREA THAT MEETS IDENTIFIED CATEGORIES (440-528.105) OF LAND ELIGIBLE FOR WRE

WRE provisions allow for the enrollment of “adjacent lands” that will contribute significantly to the functions and values of the restored wetland ecosystem as long as the “adjacent lands” do not exceed 50%* of the total easement area. However, the primary emphasis of WRE is on wetland restoration. Those intentions offering a lower percentage of “adjacent lands” will receive the highest rating for this factor. Lands eligible for WRE and not considered adjacent lands are defined in the ACEP Manual 440-528.105.

- >90% of the easement area..... 60
- 80% - 89% of the easement area 40
- 70% - 79% of the easement area 20
- 60% - 69% of the easement area 10
- less than 60% of the easement area 0

60 Points Maximum _____

VI. RIPARIAN AREA

Easement area includes riparian areas adjacent to a stream that will be restored or enhanced according to the NRCS riparian buffer standard 10

10 Points Maximum _____

VII. EASEMENT, OPERATION, MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT FACTOR

1) Management of Timber Quality:

- a) **NO** timber harvested from the offered acres in the last 3 years..... 40
- b) Timber **HAS** been harvested from the offered acres within the last 3 years 0

40 Points Maximum _____

2) Easement Configuration - If more than one of the following applies, use the one that provides for the least points:

- a) The easement is made up of a contiguous block of land and existing water control structures that manage easement water are located on the easement..... 25
- b) The easement offer is divided by non-eligible acres, a road right-of-way, non-eligible CRP, or other non-easement area that is beyond the control of the landowner 10
- c) The boundary has been manipulated by the landowner so that the offer is cut-up, divided by eligible acres, or separated by non-easement area (block of non-easement area has been cut out of the middle or a long strip extends into the easement)... 0
- d) Existing water control structures located on the easement (that cannot be removed by NRCS) manage water off the easement (unless landowner agrees to convey a non-revocable flooding easement), or existing water control structures located off of the easement manage water on the easement..... 0

25 Points Maximum _____

NOTE: The easement offer must be of sufficient size and properly configured boundaries that allow for the efficient management of the easement.

VIII. COST FACTORS

1) Easement Cost Factor

- Landowner offer is $\leq 90\%$ of the easement compensation value 20
- Landowner offer is $\leq 95\%$ of the easement compensation value 10
- Landowner offer is $> 95\%$ of the easement compensation value 0

20 Points Maximum _____

2) Restoration Cost Factor

- Total average restoration cost/Total RESTORED Acres \leq \$500/acre 20
- Total average restoration cost/Total RESTORED Acres $>$ \$500/acre 0

20 Points Maximum _____

Are there existing easements on the application property? (answer yes or no, there are no points assigned to this question) _____

TOTAL RANKING CRITERIA POINTS

WRE Team Leader (Planning Conservationist)

Date

Supervisory Natural Resources Manager

Date

Biologist

Date

Engineer

Date

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Date

Restoration Responsibility

Landowner intends to complete hydrology restoration	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
Landowner intends to complete reforestation	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>

I (we) have reviewed this evaluation, preliminary plan worksheet, Hydrology Restoration Table, and the Vegetative Restoration Table. I (we) also understand that practice units and cost estimates are approximate on the preliminary plan worksheet and attached tables. (A detailed plan with estimated practice units and costs will be developed if your application is accepted into the Wetland Reserve Easement.)

Applicant

Date

Applicant

Date

Applicant

Date

Preliminary Plan Worksheet

Is the intention eligible? _____ Discuss issues of concern. _____

Eligible Acres

Total Eligible Acres that meet identified categories of land eligible for WRE (excluding adjacent land and problem soils) _____ Acres

*Eligible areas can include a 300' riparian buffer on 1st order streams and larger when eligible soils are included in the offer.

Other Acres

Upland _____ Acres Wetland Forestland _____ Acres

Emergent Freshwater Wetlands _____ Acres

Water supply adequate for restoration objectives? Yes _____ No _____

Water supply adequate for enhancement objectives? Yes _____ No _____

Estimated Hydrology Restoration

Flooding extent (ac)

Current

Projected

Ponding extent (ac)

Water Table Extent (ac)

Flooding duration (wk+, mo+)

Season of flooding (W, S, SU, F)

Ponding duration (wk+, mo+)

Season of ponding (W, S, SU, F)

Table 1. WR-1, Hydrology Restoration.

Approximate location of all hydrologic practices should be documented on an attached aerial photograph.

Practice	Field Nos.	Estimated Amounts (units)	Cost Basis	Cost Share Rate	Total Cost
Water Control Structure					
Ditch Plug					
Dike					
Levee Break					
Tile Break					
List Others:					
Total Cost					

See attached map for approximate placement of hydrology restoration practices.

Table 2. WR-2, Vegetative Restoration

Practice	Field Nos.	Estimated Amounts (Units)	Cost Basis	Cost Share Rate	Total Cost
Tree Planting Seedlings					
Tree Planting Direct Seeded					
Potted Trees					
Natural Regeneration					
Native Grass Planting					
Levee Planting					
List Others:					

See attached map for placement of vegetative practices.

Riparian Areas (land within 300 feet of a water body, stream, or river is considered to be riparian)

Existing Acres _____ Restorable Acres _____

Restoration Plan Comments: _____

Sketch preliminary plan or attach map showing planned extent

**2020 WETLAND RESERVE EASEMENT
ENVIRONMENTAL SITE EVALUATION
KENTUCKY**

NEST Number _____

Owner(s) (as listed on deed or POA) _____ Date _____ FSN _____
 _____ County _____ Tract _____
 _____ Mailing Address: _____
 _____ City: _____
 Total Acres in Application: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 *Total Eligible Acres in Application: _____ Phone: (Home) _____ (Work) _____

*Eligible areas can include a 300' riparian buffer on 1" order streams and larger when the buffer connects existing or restorable wetland areas that are protected with an easement or will be protected by the WRE easement.

Permanent Offer 30-year Offer

Latitude _____ Longitude _____ Topo Quad Name: _____

Screening Questions

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- 1) Has the boundary been manipulated by the landowner so that the offer cannot be efficiently managed or effectively restored as determine by NRCS? _____
- 2) Are there existing water control structures located on the easement (that cannot be removed by NRCS) that manage water off the easement (unless landowner agrees to convey a non- revocable flooding easement), or existing water control structures located off of the easement that manage water on the easement? _____
- 3) Has a previous offer made to the current landowner(s) been refused within the past 18 months? _____ This question can be waived by the state conservationist if the land offered is considered a high priority.
- 4) Is the offer for a 30-year easement? _____

Ranking Factors

Point Values

I.	Local Significance	
	1) Special Interest Areas.....	= _____
	2) Proximity to Protected Areas.....	= _____
II.	Wildlife Habitat	
	1) Threatened & Endangered Species.....	= _____
	2) Wildlife Corridors.....	= _____
	3) Adjacent Forestland.....	= _____
	4) Easement Size.....	= _____
III.	Water Quality	
	1) Cropping History.....	= _____
	2) Proximity of Main Stem of River System.....	= _____

- IV. Hydrology
 1) Percentage of the Easement Composed Of PC Land.....= _____
 2) Adequate Source of Hydrology.....= _____
 3) Types of Hydrology Restoration Practices.....= _____
- V. Percent of Total Easement Area that meets identified categories (ACEP Manual 440-528.105) of land eligible for WRE.....= _____
- VI. Riparian Area.....= _____
- VII. Operation, Maintenance and Management Factors
 1) Existing Timber Quality.....= _____
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- VIII. Cost Factor
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- TOTAL POINT VALUE OF RANKING FACTORS.....= _____**

Point Values of Ranking Factors for Kentucky WRE

Ranking Factor	Maximum Point Value	Approximate % of Total Score
Local Significance		
Special Interest Areas	15	2
Proximity to Protected Areas	30	5
Wildlife habitat		
T&E species and State Conservation Agreement Species	25	4
Wildlife Corridors	10	1
Adjacent Forestland	20	3
Size of Easement	60	9
Water Quality		
Cropping History	50	8
Proximity to main stem of river system	30	5
Hydrology		
Percentage of the Easement Composed Of PC Land	95	14
Adequate source of Hydrology	95	14
Types of Hydrology Restoration Practices	70	10
Percent of Total Easement Area that meets identified categories of land eligible for WRE	60	9
Riparian Area	10	1
Operation, Maintenance and Management Factors		
Existing Timber Quality	40	6
Contiguous Easement	25	4
Cost Factors		
Easement Cost Factor	20	3
Restoration Cost Factor	20	3
TOTALS	675	~100

I. LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE

1) Special Interest Areas

Restoration is in or near one of the special interest areas identified on the attached Special Interest Area map. Note: For the Jackson Purchase Area Only, offers inside identified WREP areas will receive 15 points and all other offers will receive 5 points.

Site is in area.....	15
Site is within 2 miles of area	5
Site is not in or within 2 miles of area.....	0

15 Points Maximum _____

2) Proximity to Protected Areas

Proximity of easement area to permanently protected conservation area (federal/state wildlife refuges, nature conservancy lands, and other permanently protected areas (i.e., WRE) with management objectives similar to the easement area).

<u>Distance</u>	<u>Points</u>
Adjacent.....	30
Within 1 mile.....	20
> 1 - 5 miles.....	10
>5 miles.....	0

30 Points Maximum _____

II. WILDLIFE HABITAT

1) Benefits To Threatened & Endangered Species

This question applies to any contribution to protection/recovery of federally listed threatened, endangered or candidate species or the copperbelly water snake. Benefits to these species will be determined and documented by the KY Interagency Coordination Tool (KICT). Species benefited are identified in section I of the KICT report. Potential benefits are described in section IV of the report. (NOTE: Benefits are contingent upon application of any avoidance measures described within the report.) Points shall be awarded for the highest category that applies. If points are awarded for benefits, attach the supporting KICT report.

Practices planned benefit no species	0 pts
Practices planned benefit two species (i.e. NLEB and IBAT)	5 pts
Practices planned benefit species of concern (copperbelly watersnake)	10 pts
Practices planned benefit NLEB and IBAT and occur within 5 miles of hibernacula	15 pts
Practices planned benefit NLEB and IBAT and occur within 2.5 miles of maternity colony	20 pts
Practices planned benefit three or more species (excluding hibernacula and maternity colonies)	25 pts

25 Points Maximum _____

2) Wildlife Corridors

Will the easement area provide a wooded corridor at least 100' wide that connects existing blocks of forested areas of at least 20 acres in size considered quality habitat? (To receive points the forested block must be at least 500' in width somewhere along its length.)

Yes 10
 No 0

10 Points Maximum _____

3) Proximity of Large Blocks of Forestland

Adjacent to >500 acres of forestland or planned forestland20
 Adjacent to >300 acres of forestland or planned forestland15
 Adjacent to >100 acres of forestland or planned forestland5

(To receive points for planned forestland, the acreage must be covered by a CRP or WRE/WRP contract or conservation easement.)

20 Points Maximum _____

4) Total easement acres offered.

<u>Acres</u>	<u>Points</u>
>300.....	60
150-300.....	40
80-149.....	20
20-79.....	10
<20.....	0

60 Points Maximum

III. WATER QUALITY

1) Cropping History

Cropping history will be used to assign a point value for the amount of non-point source pollution reduced as a result of wetland restoration on the easement area. The existing crop or last crop grown will be used for this factor. Offering must have had a crop grown within the last 5 years to receive points. CRP Acreage will be considered as cropland for this question. Grassland must have been mowed or grazed in the last 5 years to receive points. Points will be assigned by a weighted average calculated as follows:

<u>CROP</u>	<u>POINTS</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>WEIGHTED AVERAGE</u>
			<u>POINTS</u>
Row Crop	50 x	()	= _____
Grassland	25 x	()	= _____
Forestland, wetland and/or	0 x	()	= _____
No Crop or Hay Produced in the last 5 years			

Ranking Point Value = Sum of Weighted Average Points/Total Acres Offered

50 Points Maximum _____

2) Proximity to main stem of river system

Offered easement is part of a floodplain area adjacent to the main stem of a fifth order or larger stream. (National Hydrography Dataset shall be used for this determination)

30 Points Maximum _____

IV. HYDROLOGY RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT

1) Percentage of the Easement Composed Of Prior Converted Cropland (PC)

Percent of the easement area composed of PC land. Farmed Wetland will not receive points for this question. In the absence of a NRCS 026 wetland determination, hydric soils and soils with hydric inclusions that are cleared and drained and not FW may be used to estimate the amount of PC.

Acres Of PC _____ / Total Easement Acres _____ *100 = _____ %

Between 76-100% of the easement acres composed of PC	95
Between 51-75% of the easement acres composed of PC	65
Between 26-50% of the easement acres composed of PC	35
Between 0-25% of the easement acres composed of PC	0

95 Points Maximum _____

2) Adequate Source of Hydrology

Location of easement area ensures a source of hydrology adequate to maintain wetland functions and values.

- a) Majority (>50%) of easement acreage will receive annual flooding from over bankflows 95
- b) Majority (>50%) of easement acreage will receive frequent (at least 3 of 5 years) overbank flow 65
- c) Majority (>50%) of easement acreage within a ponded, depressional area 35
- d) Majority (>50%) of easement acreage historically contained saturated soils due to groundwater or water table conditions..... 15

95 Points Maximum _____

3) Award points for each of the following practices that will be completed as part of the hydrology restoration plan.

- Tile Break (18 Points)..... _____
- Ditch Plug (18 Points) *Points may be awarded for ditch plug if an embankment will be used to control flow in a ditch that leaves the easement.....* _____
- Levee Break (17 Points)..... _____
- Wetland Microtopography Restoration (17 Points)..... _____

70 Points Maximum _____

V. PERCENT OF TOTAL EASEMENT AREA THAT MEETS IDENTIFIED CATEGORIES (440-528.105) OF LAND ELIGIBLE FOR WRE

WRE provisions allow for the enrollment of “adjacent lands” that will contribute significantly to the functions and values of the restored wetland ecosystem as long as the “adjacent lands” do not exceed 50%* of the total easement area. However, the primary emphasis of WRE is on wetland restoration. Those intentions offering a lower percentage of “adjacent lands” will receive the highest rating for this factor. Lands eligible for WRE and not considered adjacent lands are defined in the ACEP Manual 440-528.105.

- > 90% of the easement area..... 60
- 80% - 89% of the easement area..... 40
- 70% - 79% of the easement area 20
- 60% - 69% of the easement area 10
- less than 60% of the easement area 0

60 Points Maximum _____

VI. RIPARIAN AREA

Easement area includes riparian areas adjacent to a stream that will be restored or enhanced according to the NRCS riparian buffer standard..... 10

10 Points Maximum _____

VII. EASEMENT, OPERATION, MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT FACTOR

1) Management of Timber Quality:

- a) **NO** timber harvested from the offered acres in the last 3 years..... 40
- b) Timber **HAS** been harvested from the offered acres within the last 3 years 0

40 Points Maximum _____

2) Easement Configuration - If more than one of the following applies, use the one that provides for the least points:

- a) The easement is made up of a contiguous block of land and existing water control structures that manage easement water are located on the easement..... 25
- b) The easement offer is divided by non-eligible acres, a road right-of-way, non-eligible CRP, or other non-easement area that is beyond the control of the landowner 10
- c) The boundary has been manipulated by the landowner so that the offer is cut-up, divided by eligible acres, or separated by non-easement area (block of non-easement area has been cut out of the middle or a long strip extends into the easement)... 0
- d) Existing water control structures located on the easement (that cannot be removed by NRCS) manage water off the easement (unless landowner agrees to convey a non-revocable flooding easement), or existing water control structures located off of the easement manage water on the easement..... 0

25 Points Maximum _____

NOTE: The easement offer must be of sufficient size and properly configured boundaries that allow for the efficient management of the easement.

VIII. COST FACTORS

1) Easement Cost Factor

Landowner offer is $\leq 90\%$ of the easement compensation value 20

Landowner offer is $\leq 95\%$ of the easement compensation value 10

Landowner offer is $> 95\%$ of the easement compensation value 0

20 Points Maximum _____

2) Restoration Cost Factor

Total average restoration cost/Total RESTORED Acres \leq \$800/acre 20

Total average restoration cost/Total RESTORED Acres $>$ \$800/acre 0

20 Points Maximum _____

Are there existing easements on the application property? (answer yes or no, there are no points assigned to this question) _____

TOTAL RANKING CRITERIA POINTS

[Empty box for total ranking criteria points]

WRE Team Leader (Planning Conservationist)

Date

Supervisory Natural Resources Manager

Date

Biologist

Date

Engineer

Date

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Date

Restoration Responsibility

Landowner intends to complete hydrology restoration	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
Landowner intends to complete reforestation	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>

I (we) have reviewed this evaluation, preliminary plan worksheet, Hydrology Restoration Table, and the Vegetative Restoration Table. I (we) also understand that practice units and cost estimates are approximate on the preliminary plan worksheet and attached tables. (A detailed plan with estimated practice units and costs will be developed if your application is accepted into the Wetland Reserve Easement.)

Applicant

Date

Applicant

Date

Applicant

Date

Preliminary Plan Worksheet

Is the intention eligible? _____ Discuss issues of concern. _____

Eligible Acres

Total Eligible Acres that meet identified categories of land eligible for WRE (excluding adjacent land and problem soils) _____ Acres

*Eligible areas can include a 300' riparian buffer on 1st order streams and larger when eligible soils are included in the offer.

Other Acres

Upland _____ Acres Wetland Forestland _____ Acres

Emergent Freshwater Wetlands _____ Acres

Water supply adequate for restoration objectives? Yes _____ No _____

Water supply adequate for enhancement objectives? Yes _____ No _____

Estimated Hydrology Restoration

Flooding extent (ac)

Current

Projected

Ponding extent (ac)

Water Table Extent (ac)

Flooding duration (wk+, mo+)

Season of flooding (W, S, SU, F)

Ponding duration (wk+, mo+)

Season of ponding (W, S, SU, F)

Table 1. WR-1, Hydrology Restoration.

Approximate location of all hydrologic practices should be documented on an attached aerial photograph.

Practice	Field Nos.	Estimated Amounts (units)	Cost Basis	Cost Share Rate	Total Cost
Water Control Structure					
Ditch Plug					
Dike					
Levee Break					
Tile Break					
List Others:					
Total Cost					

See attached map for approximate placement of hydrology restoration practices.

Table 2. WR-2, Vegetative Restoration

Practice	Field Nos.	Estimated Amounts (Units)	Cost Basis	Cost Share Rate	Total Cost
Tree Planting Seedlings					
Tree Planting Direct Seeded					
Potted Trees					
Natural Regeneration					
Native Grass Planting					
Levee Planting					
List Others:					

See attached map for placement of vegetative practices.

Riparian Areas (land within 300 feet of a water body, stream, or river is considered to be riparian)

Existing Acres _____ Restorable Acres _____

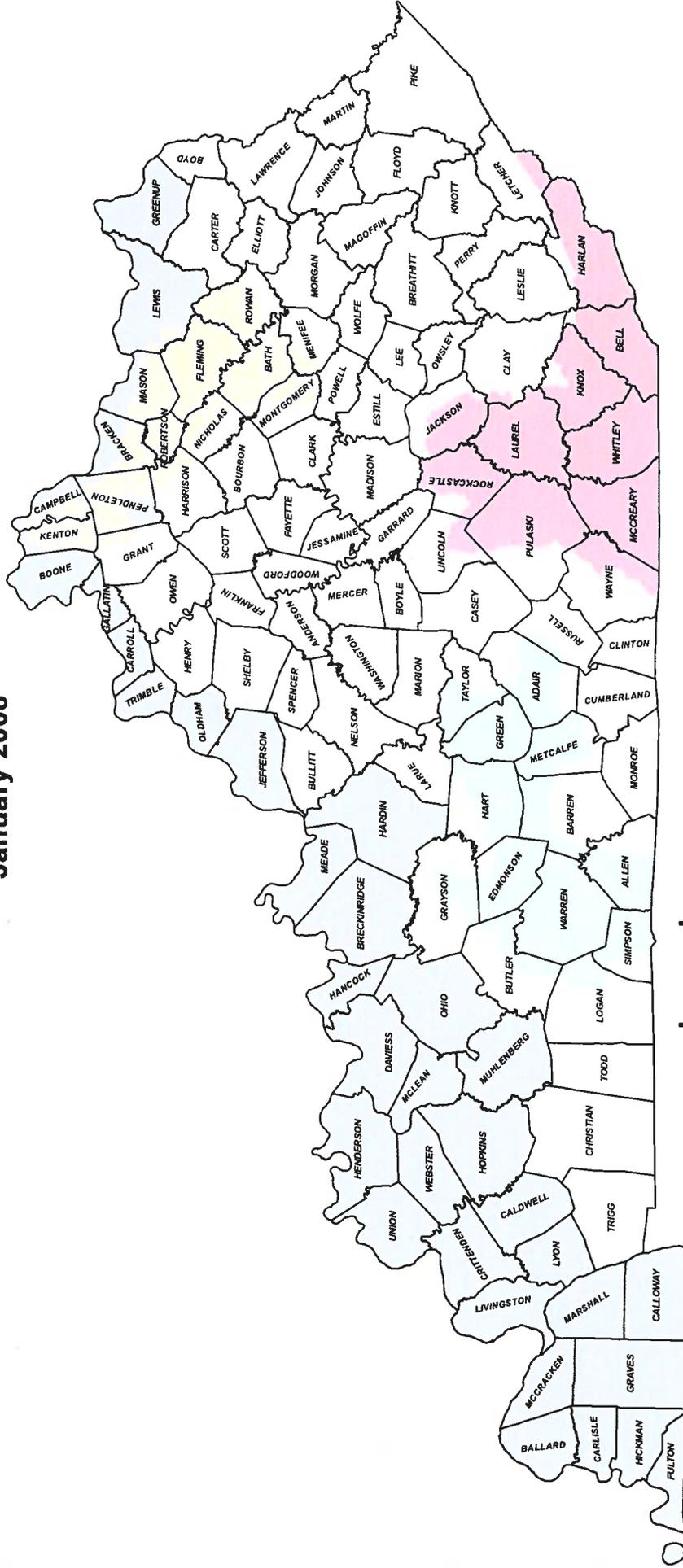
Restoration Plan Comments: _____

Sketch preliminary plan or attach map showing planned extent

Special Interest Areas Map

WRP Ranking Criteria

January 2008



Legend

- Points Not Awarded for Special Interest Area
- CREP Project Area
- North Fork Licking River & Licking River Below Cave Run Dam
- Upper Cumberland Drainage
- North American Waterfowl Management Agreement Area

Kentucky State Technical Committee

Financial Assistance Programs

Fiscal Year 2018 Activities and FY 2019 Updates

December 18, 2018

Deena Wheby

Assistant State Conservationist for Programs

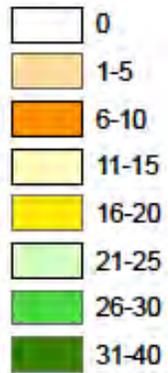
Disclaimer!

The numbers shown in this presentation are not meant to be used for “official” agency numbers for use outside of this presentation.

Should official numbers be needed, please contact Deena Wheby.

EQIP FY 18 Obligated Contracts

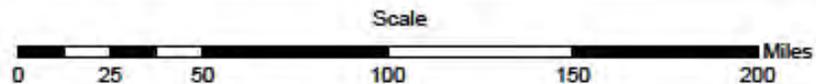
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Regular EQIP

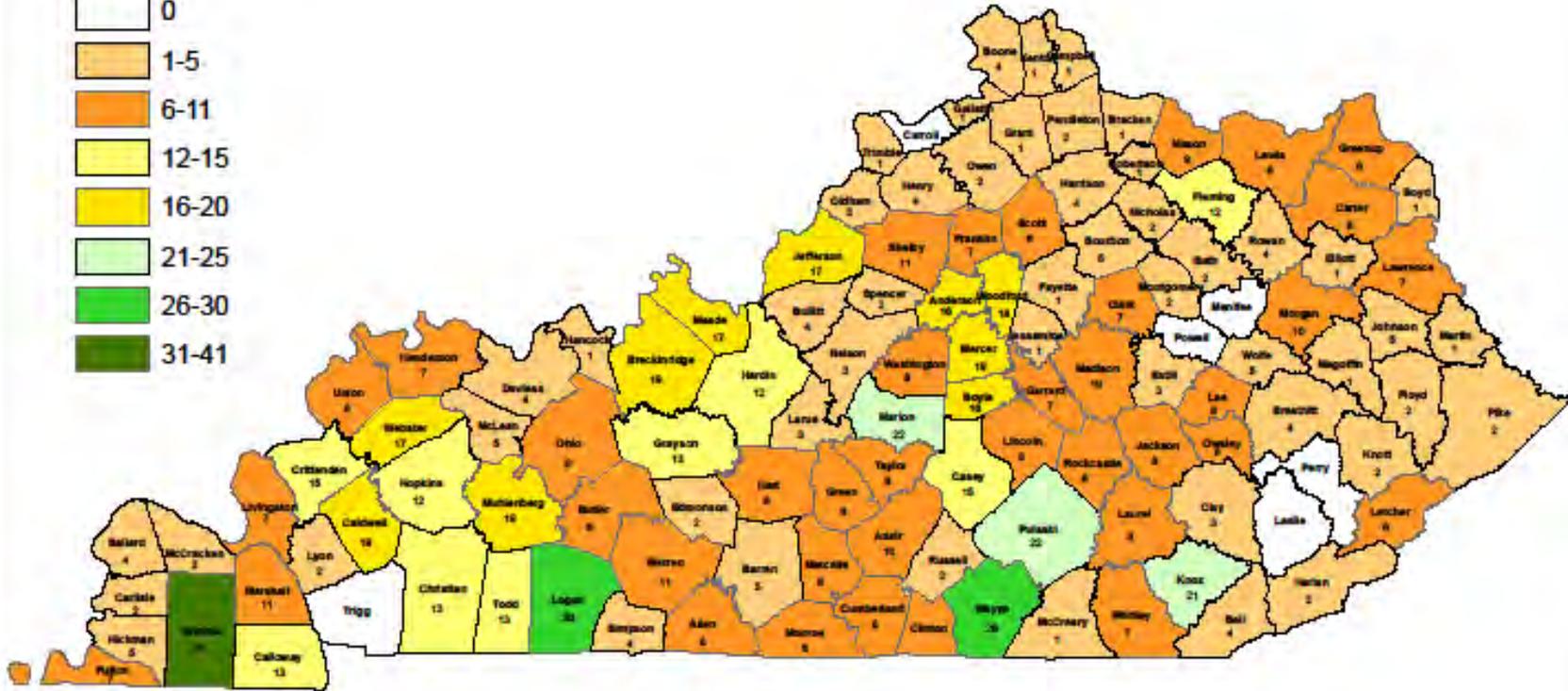
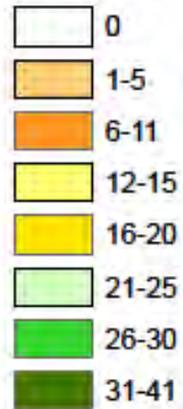
- \$18,474,090 obligated
- 782 contracts
- 66,709 acres

Date: November 2018



FY 2018 General and RCPPP EQIP

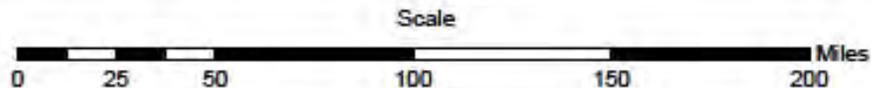
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ALL EQIP

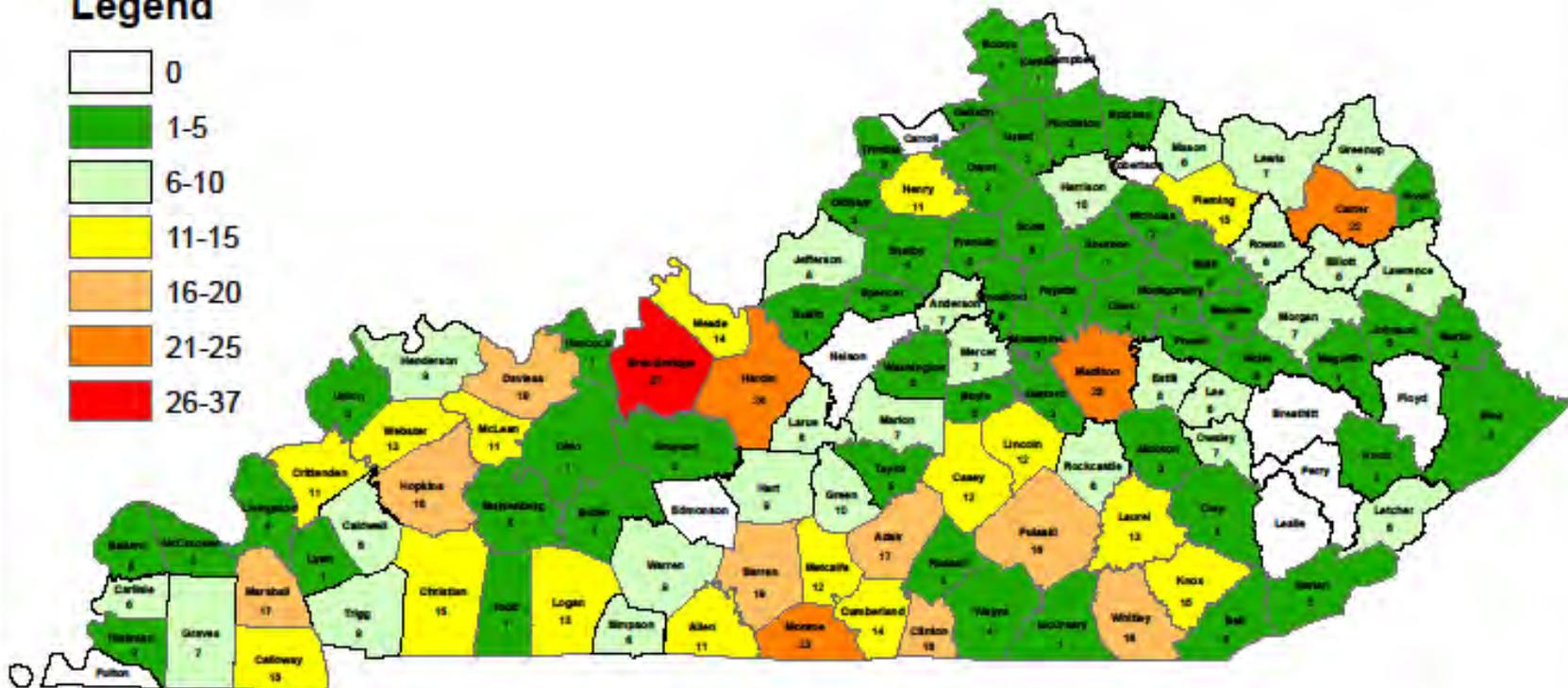
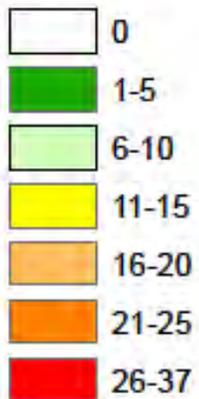
- \$ 19,697,151
- 885 contracts
- 74,494 acres

Date: November 2018



EQIP FY 18 Unfunded Eligible Applications

Legend

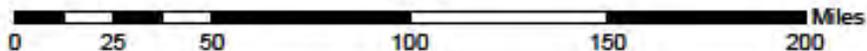


Estimated Unfunded Backlog

- 571 high priority apps
- 42 low priority apps
- Approximately \$11 m

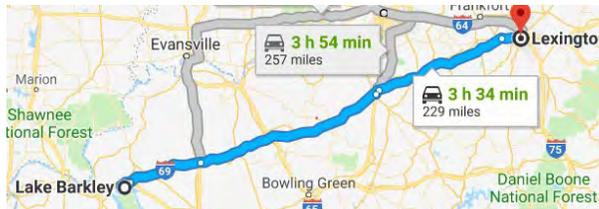
Date: November 2018

Scale



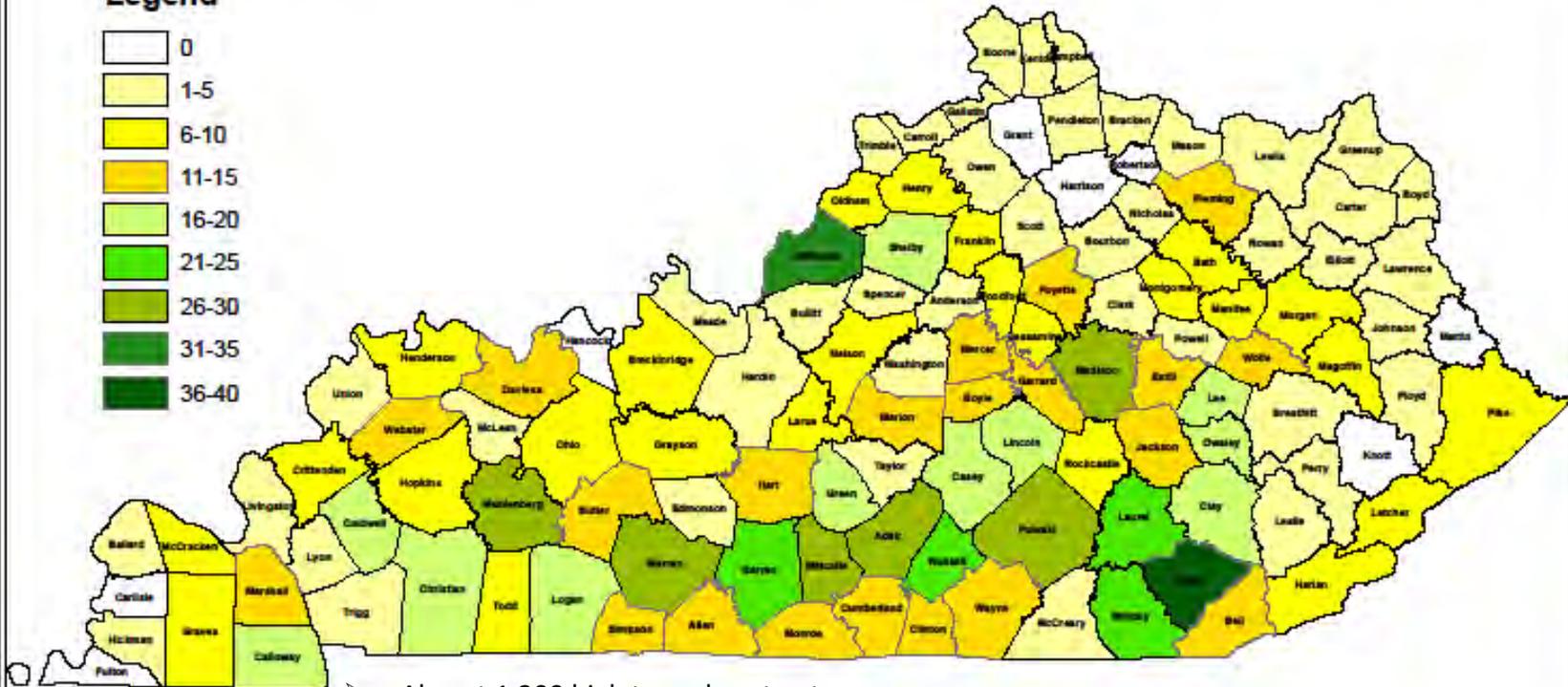
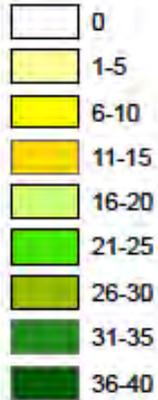
Top EQIP Practices Contracted during FY 2018

- Cover Crops
 - \$2.8 million
 - 400 instances
 - 136 contracts
 - 52,500 acres
- Fence
 - \$2.5 million
 - 630 instances
 - 224 contracts
 - 1.2 million feet (228 miles!!)
- Pipeline/Tank/HUAs
 - \$2.5 million
 - 376 tanks, 410K feet of pipeline (more than 77 miles)
 - 102 contracts
- Seasonal High Tunnel Systems
 - Almost \$1.3 million
 - \$1.6 with companion practices
 - 132 high tunnels



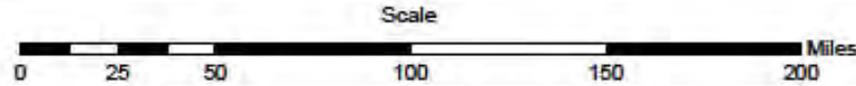
EQIP Seasonal High Tunnels 2012-2018

Legend



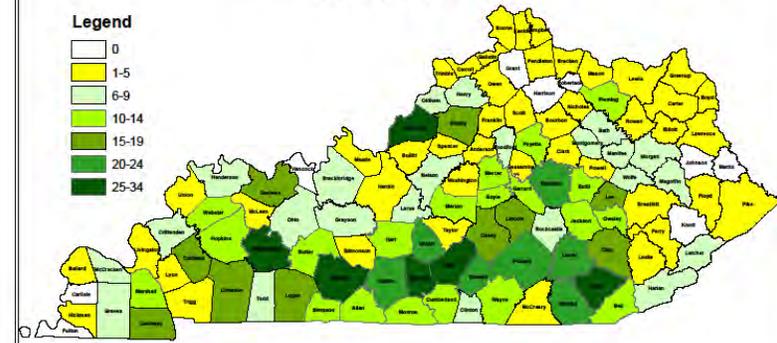
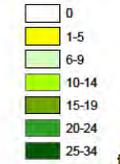
- Almost 1,200 high tunnel contracts
- Obligation of approximately \$9.6 million
- \$8.4 million paid out (almost 900 completed contracts)
- Approximately 100 cancelled/terminated (approx. additional \$1.1 million that was obligated)
- Contracts in all but seven counties (and they may have unfunded applications)

Date: November 2018

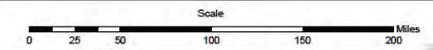


Installed EQIP Seasonal High Tunnels 2012-2018

Legend

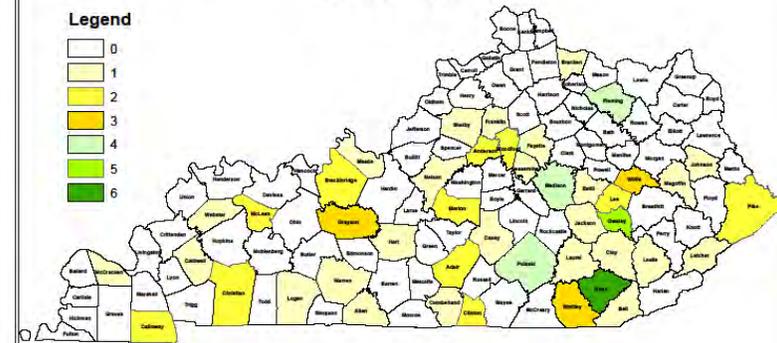
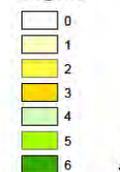


Date: November 2018

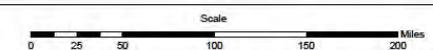


Planned EQIP Seasonal High Tunnels 2012-2018

Legend



Date: November 2018



EQIP by Fund Account Highlights

(funded all high priority applications except MRBI)

- **Manure Management**
 - 16 contracts (\$1 million)
- **Forestland**
 - 79 contracts (\$870K)
- **Wildlife and SE Kentucky Early Successional Habitat**
 - 79 contracts (\$111K)
- **On-Farm Energy**
 - 28 contracts (\$860K)
- **Irrigation Water Management**
 - 1 contract (\$60K)
- **Organic**
 - 28 contracts (\$215K)
- **Conservation Activity Plans**
 - 53 contracts (\$172K)
- **NWQI**
 - 11 contracts (\$183K)
- **MRBI**
 - 20 contracts (\$717K)
- **Edge of Field Monitoring**
 - 1 contract (\$420K)

Historically Underserved Customer Contracts

- Beginning Farmers: 250 contracts (\$6.1 million)
 - Haven't farmed consecutively for 10 years
- Limited Resource Producers: 26 contracts (\$405K)
 - For FY 2019:
 - Gross Farm Sales of less than \$177,300 per year (2016 & 2017) AND
 - Family adjusted gross income does not exceed a certain level
 - Calculated as higher of National Poverty level (family of 4) or 50% of the County Median Household Income
 - Differs by county – most are \$25,100; highest is Oldham County \$48,959 – more than \$10K more than next highest (Boone))
 - <https://lrftool.sc.egov.usda.gov/>
- Socially Disadvantaged: 33 contracts (\$380K)
 - Certain groups including American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Asians, Blacks or African Americans, and Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders and Hispanics
 - Note: Gender alone is not a covered group for the purposes of NRCS conservation programs.

Show me the money!

(does not include RCPP)

Dollars

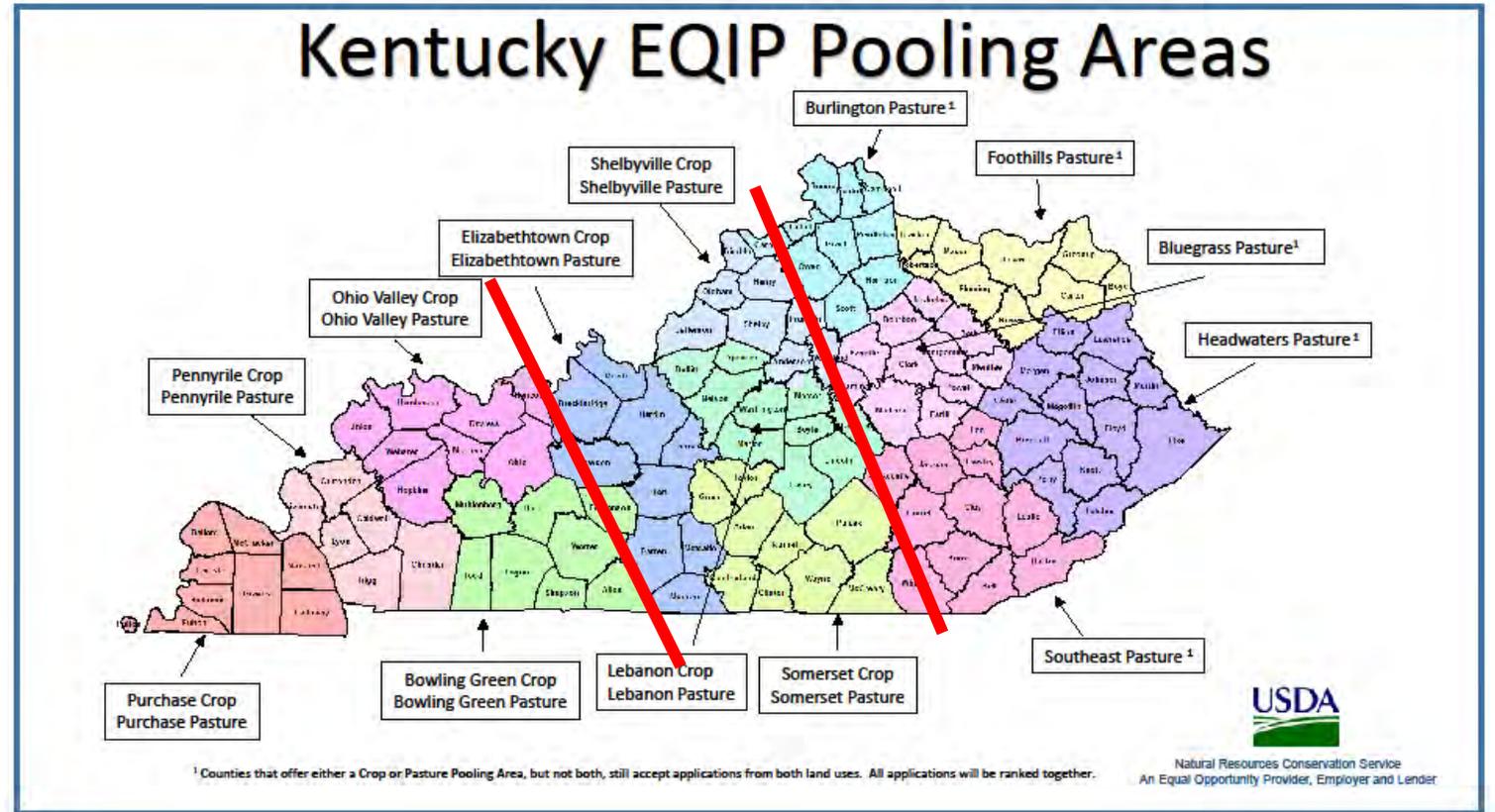
- West: \$7.8 m (276 contracts)
- Central: \$7.2 m (315 contracts)
- Eastern: \$3.5 m (191 contracts)

Regular EQIP Top Dollar:

- Work Unit: Ohio Valley (\$3.1 million)
- County: Breckinridge (\$985 K)

Highest Number Contracts

- Work Unit: Lebanon (101)
- County: Graves (38)



Apples and Oranges!

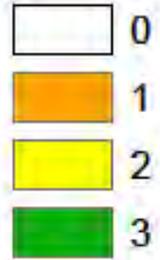
Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) (EQIP)

	Project Name	Primary Partner	FY 18 EQIP Obligation	Acres	Contracts <small>(funded all eligible apps except SEEK)</small>
2015	Cerulean Warbler RCPP Managing Poo • Beef 4 - \$81,860 • Dairy 2 - \$168,764	KY Division of Conservation	\$0	0	No eligible FY 18 apps
2016	Overgrazing & Soil Degradation on Horse Farms	UK	\$137,140	204	11
2016	Seeding Ground Cover on Marginal Lands	Scott Co CD	\$15,625	80	4
2017	Precision Conservation Management	IL Corn Growers	\$302,143	3,009	16
2017	Lake Cumberland RCPP	Wayne Co CD	\$167,092	1,012	17
2017	Season Extension for Eastern Kentucky (SEEK)	Grow Appalachia	\$303,614	22	22 (had 9 unfunded apps)
2017	UK Forestry (21 KDF Central Region, 6 NE Region)	UK/Kentucky Division of Forestry	\$42,907	2,060	27
	FY 2018 RCPP EQIP Total		\$1,219,146	7,785	103

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

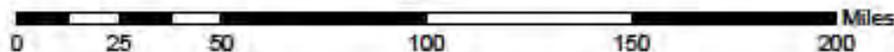
RCPP-CSP FY 18 Obligated Contracts

Legend



Date: November 2018

Scale



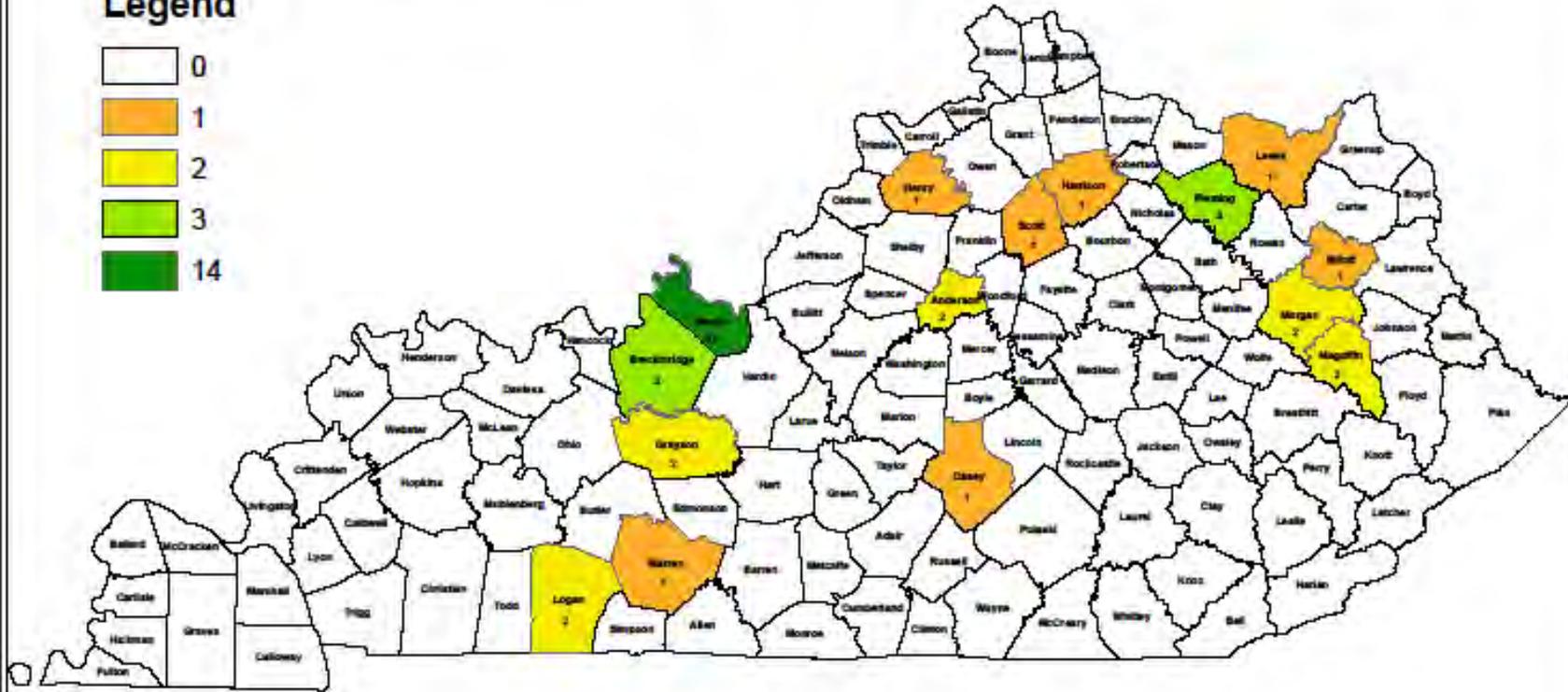
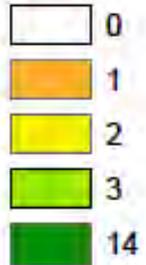
RCPP CSP

Precision Conservation Management
Illinois Corn Growers
Chris Stewart

- \$150,807 (year 1)
- 9 contracts
- 12,054 acres
 - Not including renewal contracts, this represents 25% of our total FY 18 acreage.

CSP FY 18 Renewals

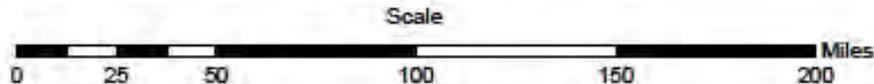
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Renewal CSP

- \$482,541 (1st year obligation)
- 37 contracts
- 26,042 acres

Date: November 2018



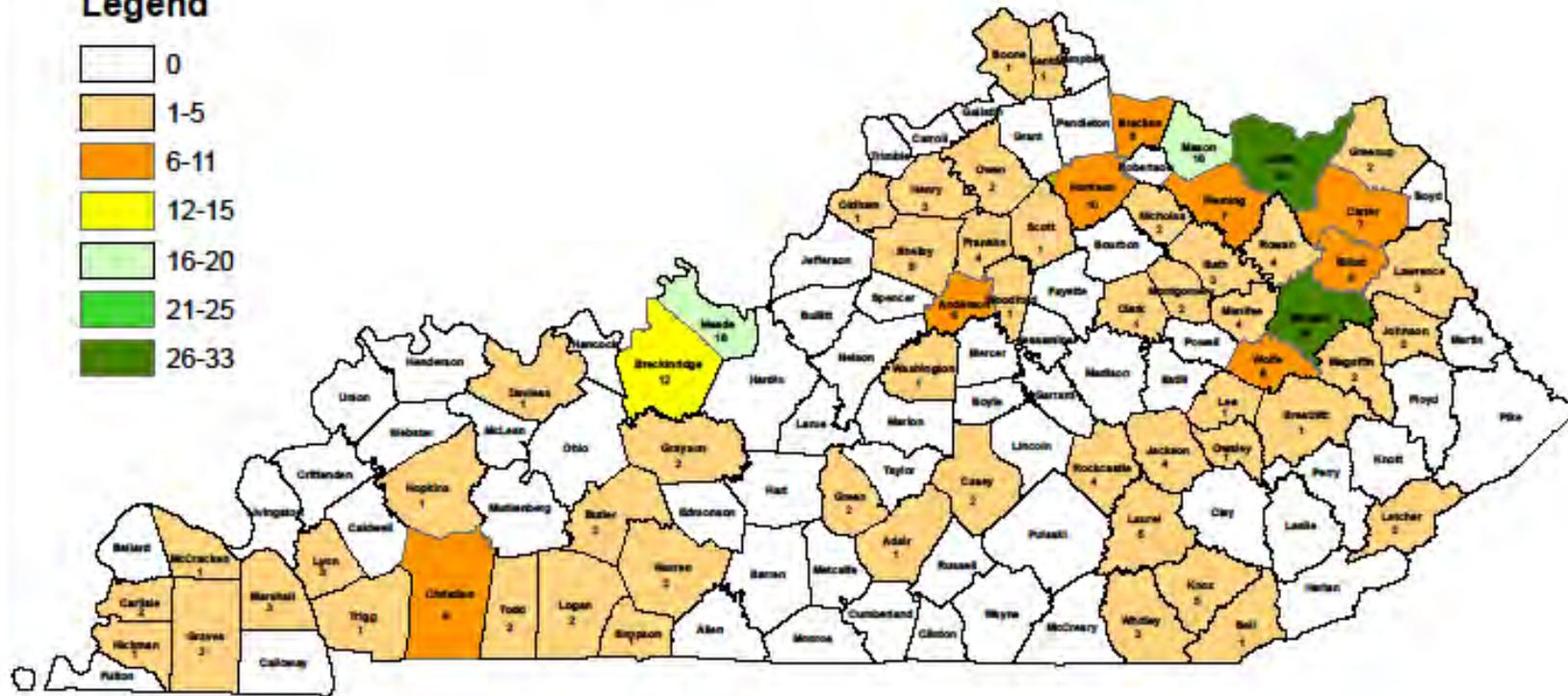
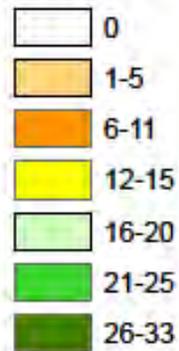
FY 2018 General, RCPPP CSP, and CSP Renewals

All CSP

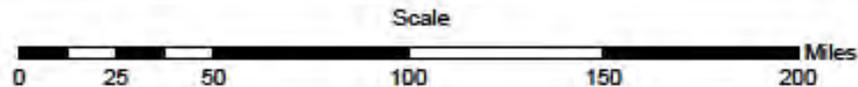
- \$1,649,714 (1st year obligation)
- 272 contracts
- 74,003 acres

- All eligible applications were funded – no backlog

Legend



Date: November 2018



Agricultural Conservation Easement Program – Ag Land Easements (ACEP-ALE) FY 2018 Activity

NRCS works with entities to secure perpetual easements to protect prime and important farmland from development.

- 12 easements closed
 - Fayette and Christian Counties
 - Fayette County Rural Land Management Board and Compatible Lands Foundation
 - Protecting 1,017 acres
 - \$1,244,737 in federal funds
 - And an additional \$1,256,345 in partner funds
- 5 new parcels enrolled for FY 2018 (will be closed later)
 - 235 acres
 - \$571,081 federal funds
 - At least \$571,081 in partner funds

Farmland Protection Program (FPP)
Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program (FRPP)
Agricultural Conservation Easement Program – Ag Land Easements (ACEP-ALE)

Total Kentucky Activity 1996 - 2018

- 221 easements purchased
- Easements with 6 cooperating entities
 - State Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE), Fayette County Rural Land Management Board, Compatible Lands Foundation, Scott County Rural Land Management Board, Civil War Preservation Trust/Bluegrass Conservancy, Taylor Co Fiscal Court/TNC
- 19 counties with at least one easement
- Over 35,120 acres
- Nearly \$33 million in federal funding
- More than \$72.5 million total combined value (federal, entity, landowner)
- Protected for ag use in perpetuity

New for Fiscal Year 2019

FY 2019 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

- No significant changes except Eastern Kentucky pooling area boundaries (from 5 to 3)
- At end of FY 18, were on hold for new EQIP due to Farm Bill, but were allowed to have an “early start” for certain applications.
 - Were not allowed to change ranking questions or make other significant changes.
- November 2, 2018 for:
 - High Tunnel Systems
 - On-Farm Energy
 - Conservation Activity Plans
 - Organic (Certified and Transitioning)
 - National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI)
 - Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative (MRBI)
- Received 594 applications (plus 56 cancelled/ineligible), preapproved 250 applications and are working those now with obligation goal of January 31, 2019.
- Remainder of general EQIP was finally approved to move forward:
 - **Application batching period ends January 18, 2019**
- RCPP projects will have different dates – check web for dates by project

FY 2019 Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

- Making payments for current/active contracts
- No national sign-up at this time

FY 2019 Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

- Prior year project activity ongoing
- Currently no national Announcement for Program Funding
- Newly approved in FY 2018 (that use EQIP and/or CSP):
 - Security Seed (Advanced Precision Agriculture for Sustainable Conservation)
 - KSU (Improving Wildlife and Pollinator Habitat on Farms)
 - Pine Mountain Settlement School (Profitable Farms: Soil, Water and Plant Quality)
 - Knox County (Knox County RCPP)
 - American Bird Conservancy (Reversing Declines in Grassland Biodiversity) (TN is lead)
- Will have sign-ups for FY 2019

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USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

**Agricultural Conservation Easement Program - Agricultural Land Easement (ACEP-ALE)
 Example Parcel Eligibility and Ranking Form**

Fiscal Year	
Landowner Name and Address	
Eligible entities names and addresses	
Parcel Location:	Locality (Town/Township):
County:	State:
Are all landowners of record AGI eligible? (Y/N)	
Are all landowners of record HEL eligible? (Y/N)	
Are all landowners of record WC eligible? (Y/N)	
NRCS employee confirming landowner eligibility:	
Name:	Signature:
Is the entity eligible? (Y/N)	
NRCS employee confirming entity eligibility:	
Name:	Signature:
Does the eligible entity have a written pending offer for the parcel? (Y/N)	
NRCS employee confirming written pending offer:	
Name:	Signature:
Does the land (<i>enter a response for each</i>):	
_____ Have 50-percent prime, unique, and important farmland? (Y/N)	
_____ Have historical or archeological resources? (Y/N)	
_____ Protect grazing uses and related conservation values by restoring and conserving land? (Y/N)	
_____ Have land that supports the policy of a State or local farm and ranch land protection program? (Y/N)	
Is the land eligible? (Y/N)	
Which land eligibility criteria is the land being enrolled under? (<i>Identify only one eligibility category</i>)	

NRCS employee confirming land eligibility:	
Name:	Signature:

ACEP-ALE National Ranking Criteria (Must be 200 Points Maximum)		
National Ranking Factors and Scaling	Maximum Points	Points
Percent of prime, unique, and important soils in the parcel to be protected (0 points for 50 percent or less, 4 points for greater than 50 percent and less than or equal to 60 percent, 8 points for greater than 60 percent and less than or equal to 70 percent, 12 points for greater than 70 percent and less than or equal to 80 percent, 17 points for greater than 80 percent)	17	
Percent of cropland, pastureland, grassland, and rangeland in the parcel to be protected (0 points for 33 percent or less, 4 points for greater than 33 percent and less than or equal to 40 percent, 8 points for greater than 40 percent and less than or equal to 50 percent, 17 points for greater than 50 percent)	17	
Ratio of the total acres of land in the parcel to be protected to average farm size in the county according to the most recent USDA Census of Agriculture (USDA - NASS - Census of Agriculture) (0 points for a ratio of 1.0 or less, 7 points for ratios of greater than 1.0 and less than or equal to 2.0, 15 points for ratios of greater than 2.0)	15	
Decrease in the percentage of acreage of farm and ranch land in the county in which the parcel is located between the last two USDA Censuses of Agriculture (USDA - NASS - Census of Agriculture) (0 points for decrease of 0 percent or less, 1 points for decreases of greater than 0 and less than or equal to 5 percent, 5 points for decrease of greater than 5 and less than or equal to 10 percent, 9 points for decreases of greater than 10 and less than or equal to 15 percent, 16 points for decreases of more than 15 percent)	16	
Decrease in the percentage of acreage of permanent grassland, pasture, and rangeland, other than cropland and woodland pasture, in the county in which the parcel is located between the last two USDA Censuses of Agriculture (USDA - NASS - Census of Agriculture) (0 points for decrease of 0 percent or less, 3 points for decreases of greater than 0 and less than or equal to 5 percent, 5 points for decrease of greater than 5 and less than or equal to 10 percent, 8 points for decreases of greater than 10 and less than or equal to 15 percent, 15 points for decreases of more than 15 percent)	15	

National Ranking Factors and Scaling	Maximum Points	Points
<p><u>Percent population growth in the county as documented by the most recent United States Census (Census Bureau Home Page)</u></p> <p>(0 points for growth rate of less than one times the State growth rate, 4 points for growth rate of greater than one and less than or equal to two times the State growth rate, 7 points for growth rate of two and less than or equal to three times the State growth rate, 15 points for growth rate of more than three times the State growth rate)</p>	15	
<p><u>Population density (population per square mile) as documented by the most recent United States Census (Census Bureau Home Page)</u></p> <p>(0 points for population density less than one times the State population density, 4 points for population density of greater than one and less than or equal to two times the State population density, 7 points for population density of greater than two and less than or equal to three times the State population density, 15 points for population density of greater than three times the State population density)</p>	15	
<p>Existence of a farm or ranch succession plan or similar plan established to address farm viability for future generations</p> <p>(0 points for no plan, 7 points for a plan, 15 points for plan documented and performed by industry professional)</p>	15	
<p>Proximity of the parcel to other protected land, such as compatible military installations; land owned in fee title by the United States or an Indian Tribe, State or local government, or by a nongovernmental organization whose purpose is to protect agricultural use and related conservation values; or land that is already subject to an easement or deed restriction that limits the conversion of the land to nonagricultural use or protects grazing uses and related conservation values.</p> <p>(0 points easement offer area (EOA) boundary greater than 3 miles from the protected land boundary, 4 points EOA is greater than 1 miles but less than 3 miles from protected land, 7 points EOA is within 1 mile of protected land boundary, 15 points EOA boundary adjoins protected land boundary)</p>	15	
<p>Proximity of the parcel to other agricultural operations and agricultural infrastructure</p> <p>(0 points if EOA boundary greater than 3 miles in proximity, 4 points if EOA is greater than or equal to 1 miles but less than 3 miles in proximity, 7 points EOA is within 1 mile in proximity, 15 points EOA boundary adjoins)</p>	15	
<p>Parcel ability to maximize the protection of contiguous or proximal acres devoted to agricultural use</p> <p>(15 points if the parcel links two noncontinuous corridors of protected agricultural use, 6 points if parcel is a contiguous or proximal expansion of agricultural use protected area, 0 points parcel does not increase a protected agricultural use area)</p>	15	

National Ranking Factors and Scaling	Maximum Points	Points
Currently enrolled in CRP in a contract that is set to expire within a year (15 points for Yes, 0 points for No)	15	
The parcel is a grassland of special environmental significance that will benefit from the protection under the long-term easement (15 points if Yes, 0 points if No)	15	
Total Points for National Ranking Factors	200	

ACEP-ALE State Ranking Criteria (Maximum of 200 Points)		
State Ranking Factors and Scaling	Maximum Points	Points
The parcel is located in an area zoned for agricultural use (10 points for Yes, 0 points for No)	10	
The parcel is located in a Certified Agricultural District (per KRS 262.850) (20 points for Yes, 0 points for No)	20	
Eligible entity has demonstrated performance in managing and enforcing easements by monitoring 80 percent or more of its easements each year (40 points for Yes, 0 points for no or if there is no documentation to support a “Yes” determination)	40	
Parcel contains habitat for species of interest (35 points for federally listed threatened and endangered species, 20 points for federally listed candidate species, 10 points for State species of concern, 5 points for species of interest (according to State criteria), 0 points for no species)	35	
Parcel is in a geographic region where enrollment achieves landscape, regional, or other conservation goals and objectives, or enhances existing private or government projects (65 points highly achieves or enhances, 30 points moderately achieves or enhances, 10 points somewhat achieves or enhances, 0 points doesn't achieve or enhance)	65	
Parcel contains historical or archaeological resources that will be protected by the easement area (30 points if on National or State Historic Register, 20 points if eligible for Register, 10 points if other relevant special feature is identified)	30	
Total Points for State Ranking Factors	200	

Part 528 – Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

Subpart E – ACEP-ALE Application, Ranking, and Selection

528.40 ACEP-ALE Application, Ranking, and Selection Overview

A. Application, Ranking and Selection Steps Outline.—The following outlines the procedural steps for ACEP-ALE application, ranking, and selection; some steps may be taken concurrent with other steps, unless otherwise stated:

- (1) Step 1.—Prior to the beginning of each fiscal year, the State Conservationist, with advice from the State Technical Committee, will review and update as necessary the States ACEP-ALE ranking worksheet and submit a copy to the Easement Programs Division (EPD) prior to posting.
- (2) Step 2.—By November 1 or at least 30 days prior to an announced application cutoff date, States will post the current fiscal year’s ACEP-ALE ranking worksheet to the State Web page.
- (3) Step 3.—NRCS accepts ACEP-ALE applications on a continuous basis. However, at the discretion of the State Conservationist and in coordination with any required national application cutoff dates, States may establish and advertise one or more application cutoff dates during the fiscal year. This announcement must be made at least 30 days in advance of the application cutoff date. Complete applications received prior to the cutoff date will be reviewed for eligibility and ranked. Eligible applications will be considered for funding. Applications received after the cutoff date may be considered in the next application period.
- (4) Step 4.—Landowners interested in participating in ACEP-ALE will submit applications to entities that have an existing agricultural lands protection program.
- (5) Step 5.—Entities will submit ACEP-ALE applications to the State Conservationist, including supporting documentation and any requests for waivers of the eligible entity cash contribution requirement.
- (6) Step 6.—NRCS State offices will review application information and supporting documentation provided by the entity and determine entity eligibility, land eligibility, and landowner eligibility.
- (7) Step 7.—NRCS will conduct onsite visits and rank eligible parcel applications using the current ACEP-ALE ranking worksheet. During this visit, States should complete the “Landowner Disclosure Worksheet,” the “Hazardous Materials Field Inspection” checklist, and the “Hazardous Materials Landowner Interview.” At this time, States will upload the application, eligibility, and ranking information for all eligible parcels into NEST.
- (8) Step 8.—After ranking all eligible parcels, the State Conservationists will select eligible parcels for funding in order of ranking priority using ACEP-ALE funds allocated for new enrollment for that fiscal year. The State Conservationist will complete determinations on eligible entity cash contribution waiver requests for tentatively selected parcels and notify entities of waiver request determinations.
- (9) Step 9.—All ALE agreements are submitted to the National Headquarters (NHQ) Grants and Agreements Service Branch (GASB) for review and to obtain “Notice of Grant and Agreement Award” (“Notice of Award”). Additionally, for ALE agreements with a Federal share exceeding \$100,000 State Conservationists must receive a delegation of authority (DOA) in accordance with applicable fiscal year procedures. For additional information, consult National Instruction 120-301, the current GASB customer guide, and ALE agreement guidance applicable for the fiscal year the agreement is submitted.

- (10) Step 10.—Prior to obligating funds, States must complete the preobligation review pursuant to the most current easement internal controls policy and guidance.
- (11) Step 11.—After receiving any needed delegations of authority and completing internal control reviews, the State Conservationist notifies eligible entities of tentative selection and provides a copy of the unsigned template ALE agreement (for new agreements) or an amendment (for existing agreements), with all exhibits and attachments, including the listing of parcels selected for funding and any approved, unfunded substitute parcels.
- (12) Step 12.—After the eligible entity returns a properly signed ALE agreement or amendment, the State Conservationist certifies the internal controls review and executes the ALE agreement or amendment on behalf of NRCS. Once the ALE agreement or amendment is fully and properly executed by all parties, NRCS then obligates the funds in FMMI, and, within 10 business days of such obligation, promotes the agreement and all associated parcels in NEST and provides a copy of the fully executed ALE agreement to the eligible entity.

Note: An eligible parcel selected for funding in a given fiscal year and identified on agreement or amendment that is not successfully executed before the end of that fiscal year may be identified on an agreement or amendment executed in the subsequent fiscal year without being reranked if the State Conservationist requests and receives authorization from National Headquarters, the eligibility requirements are met for that subsequent fiscal year, and the State fund allocation is sufficient.
- (13) Step 13.—All eligible entity applications not selected or considered during a given evaluation period will be deferred to subsequent evaluation periods through the term of the Farm Bill in which the entity application was submitted, except for those cancelled or determined ineligible. Eligibility determinations must be updated for the fiscal year in which the deferred entity application and the parcel applications associated with that deferred entity application, are considered for funding. (See Subpart U, “Exhibits,” for a sample deferral letter.)

B. General Notice Provisions

When notifying entities, landowners, or the general public about the availability of ACEP-ALE, States should provide information that includes, but is not limited to—

- (i) ACEP-ALE purpose and goals.
- (ii) Application cutoff dates for funding consideration.
- (iii) Conditions under which cost-share assistance is available.
- (iv) Description of program benefits available.
- (v) How to submit a proposal and where to apply.
- (vi) Land, landowner, and entity eligibility requirements.
- (vii) The current ranking worksheet.
- (viii) Copy of or link to the most recently published ACEP-ALE cooperative agreement for noncertified eligible entities and ACEP-ALE grant agreement for certified entities.
- (ix) Copies of the current ACEP-ALE application forms (CPA-41 and CPA-41A) or information on where to locate these forms.

528.41 ACEP-ALE Ranking Process

A. Purpose and Introduction

- (1) The ranking process enables the State Conservationist to prioritize applications by determining projects that most merit enrollment. The ranking process is how NRCS determines the conservation value of a parcel for the purposes of ACEP-ALE. This process does not guarantee or entitle the applicant to funding.

- (2) The State Conservationist will use ranking factors consisting of national and State criteria to score and rank each eligible application. The national criteria will comprise at least half of the total ranking score. When developing the State ranking factors, the State Conservationist must use factors that are consistent with the purpose and goals of ACEP-ALE.

B. Ranking Process Overview

- (1) The State Conservationist, with advice from the State Technical Committee, will establish and maintain a weighted ranking process to prioritize all eligible applications, using the national and State criteria and other the factors described in this subpart. Each fiscal year, the criteria and ranking factors must be evaluated and updated as needed to ensure that the parcels that best meet the purpose, goals, and objectives of ACEP-ALE are given the highest priority.
- (2) Representatives from eligible entities participating in or applying to participate in ACEP-ALE must not be involved in developing State ranking criteria or assigning weights to the factors.
- (3) The ranking process's point spread will be from zero to 400 points, with zero being the lowest possible score and least deserving of enrollment and 400 being the highest possible and most deserving of enrollment. At least 200 points must come from the national ranking criteria. The State Conservationist may establish the ranking point values of the individual ranking factors that comprise the 200 available points based on the national criteria and the 200 available points based on the State criteria.
- (4) The State Conservationist will develop a single ACEP-ALE ranking worksheet that will be updated each fiscal year and made available to the public through the State's Web page a minimum of 30 days before any application cutoff dates or other application deadlines. (See Subpart U, "Exhibits," for example ACEP-ALE parcel eligibility and ranking form.)
- (5) NRCS will conduct an onsite ranking of each eligible application. All eligible applications submitted within an individual application cutoff period will be ranked using the same ranking worksheet.
- (6) Within a given application period, the ranking process must be followed and parcels funded in order of ranking priority unless inadequate funds are available to fund the next highest ranked parcel. If adequate funds are not available, the State may select the next-highest-ranked parcel for which sufficient funding is available.
- (7) State Conservationists should establish ranking thresholds below which parcels will not be funded.
- (8) State Conservationists must return funds to NHQ for reallocation to other States rather than fund low-ranking parcels that do not effectively meet ACEP-ALE purposes.
- (9) Prior to the end of each fiscal year, the State Conservationist must upload into NEST the information for each application received or considered for funding during that fiscal year, including ranking score, eligibility status, and funding status.

C. Ranking Criteria

- (1) At least 50 percent of the weight of the ranking factors must be based on the national criteria comprising 200 points out of a total of 400 points. The national criteria are as follows:
 - (i) Percent of prime, unique, and important soils in the parcel to be protected
 - (ii) Percent of cropland, pastureland, grassland, and rangeland in the parcel to be protected
 - (iii) Ratio of the total acres of land in the parcel to be protected to average farm size in the county according to the most recent USDA Census of Agriculture (<http://www.agcensus.usda.gov>).
 - (iv) Decrease in the percentage of acreage of farm and ranch land in the county in which the parcel is located between the last two USDA Censuses of Agriculture (<http://www.agcensus.usda.gov>).

- (v) Percent population growth in the county as documented by the U.S. Census (<http://www.census.gov>).
 - (vi) Population density (population per square mile) as documented by the most recent U.S. Census (<http://www.census.gov>).
 - (vii) Existence of a farm or ranch succession plan or similar plan established to address farm viability for future generations
 - (viii) Proximity of the parcel to other protected land, such as compatible military installations; land owned in fee title by the United States or an Indian Tribe, State or local government, or by a nongovernmental organization whose purpose is to protect agricultural use and related conservation values; or land that is already subject to an easement or deed restriction that limits the conversion of the land to nonagricultural use or protects grazing uses and related conservation values
 - (ix) Proximity of the parcel to other agricultural operations and agricultural infrastructure
 - (x) Maximizing the protection of contiguous or proximal acres devoted to agricultural use
 - (xi) Whether the land is currently enrolled in CRP in a contract that is set to expire within 1 year
 - (xii) Whether the land is grassland of special environmental significance that would benefit from protection under a long-term easement
 - (xiii) Decrease in the percentage of acreage of permanent grassland, pasture, and rangeland, other than cropland and woodland pasture, in the county in which the parcel is located between the last 2 years from the USDA Census of Agriculture
- (2) The remaining weight (200 points out of a total of 400 points) will be applied to NRCS State criteria approved by the State Conservationist. Such criteria may include only the following:
- (i) The location of a parcel in an area zoned for agricultural use.
 - (ii) The eligible entity's performance in managing and enforcing easements. The measure of performance is the efficiency of easement transactions completion or percentage of parcels monitored annually and the percentage of monitoring results reported annually. For noncertified eligible entities, this may also include the eligible entity's election to attach the ALE minimum deed terms addendum as written or the use of an existing EPD approved entity-specific ALE deed template.
 - (iii) Multifunctional conservation values of farm or ranch land protection, including—
 - Social, economic, historical and archaeological benefits
 - Enhancing carbon sequestration
 - Improving climate change resiliency
 - At-risk species protection
 - Other related conservation benefits
 - (iv) Geographic regions where the enrollment of particular lands may help achieve national, State, and regional agricultural or conservation goals and objectives or enhance existing government or private conservation projects.
 - (v) Diversity of natural resources to be protected or improved.
 - (vi) Score in the land evaluation and site assessment system or equivalent measure for grassland enrollments. This score serves as a measure of agricultural viability (access to markets and infrastructure).
- (3) The ranking system may assign negative points or place at the bottom of the ranking list any parcels submitted by an entity that—
- (i) Is delinquent on conducting annual monitoring or whose annual monitoring reports are insufficient, late, or not provided to NRCS annually.
 - (ii) Has an existing FRPP or ACEP-ALE agreement with funds remaining more than 2 years after the attachment execution date without any expenditures or actions towards closings of easements in the third year.

- (iii) Has not submitted required documents in accordance with the timeframes required by the terms an existing ALE agreement.
- (iv) Has not abided by the terms of an existing or closed FPP, FRPP, or ACEP-ALE agreement.
- (v) Has not abided by the terms of or has failed to enforce an FPP, FRPP, or ACEP-ALE funded easement after notification of a violation by the United States.

D. Resource Concerns

- (1) In addition to factors related to the threat of conversion, the NRCS State ranking factors should consider various environmental benefits and prioritize applications that will address multiple resources concerns, including but not limited to the following:
 - (i) Soil
 - Erosion reduction
 - Condition improvement
 - Deposition reduction
 - (ii) Water
 - Quantity improvement
 - Quality improvement
 - Air quality improvement
 - (iii) Plant
 - Suitability enhancement
 - Condition improvement
 - Productivity
 - Species composition
 - (iv) Animal
 - Habitat improvement
 - Habitat diversity
 - Habitat protection
 - (v) Other resource concerns, such as protection of historical and archaeological sites and access to agricultural infrastructure, operations, markets, and labor.
- (2) These resource concerns should be addressed under State ranking criteria provided in paragraphs C(2) (iii)-(v) above.
- (3) For applications selected for funding based on their ability to address specific or multiple resource concerns the eligible entity must ensure that those resource concerns are addressed in the agricultural land easement plan.

E. Ranking Historical and Archaeological Sites.—The State ranking factors may use any of the following criteria to evaluate the relative quality of historical and archaeological sites:

- (1) Diversity of resource types within each individual parcel (i.e., a parcel contains more than one type of historical or archaeological resource)
- (2) Scope, integrity, context, or intactness of resource site
- (3) Association with existing community identity
- (4) Nationally significant designation (i.e., the parcel contains a national designation versus a State designation)
- (5) Other criteria established by the State Conservationist, with advice from the State Technical Committee and SHPO

F. Ranking Grasslands of Special Environmental Significance.—Ranking factors for grasslands of special environmental significance should be addressed under the national criteria provided in paragraph C(1)(xii) above and may also be addressed in the State criteria, and will emphasize all of the following:

- (1) The environmental benefits of enrolling the land
- (2) Cost effectiveness of enrolling the land so as to maximize the environmental benefits per dollar expended
- (3) Protection of grazing uses and related conservation values
- (4) Core grassland areas
- (5) Extent to which the grassland remains intact
- (6) The productivity of the land
- (7) Additional ranking factors that the State determines are appropriate for evaluating grasslands of special environmental significance.

G. Evaluating Applications Based on ACEP-ALE Investment

If the State Conservationist determines that two or more eligible parcels are comparable in achieving ACEP-ALE purpose and goals (i.e., have the same ranking factor), the State Conservationist may not assign a higher priority to any one of these solely on the basis of lesser cost to ACEP-ALE. Criteria other than the cost of the Federal ACEP-ALE contribution must be used to break the tie.

528.42 Applications for ACEP-ALE Cost-Share Assistance

A. Application Requirements

- (1) Although applications may be submitted on a continuous basis, entities that want to be considered for ACEP-ALE cost-share assistance within an identified application period must submit a complete application to the appropriate State Conservationist on or before the announced application cutoff date. A complete ACEP-ALE application must contain all of the following:
 - (i) Form CPA-41, “Entity Application,” identifying every proposed easement holder
 - (ii) Form CPA-41A, “Parcel Sheet,” for each parcel
 - (iii) Standard Form (SF) 424, “Application for Federal Assistance”
 - (iv) SF-424A, “Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs”
 - (v) SF-424B, “Assurances Non-Construction Programs”
 - (vi) Form AD-3030, “Representation Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants,” if applicable
 - (vii) SF-LLL, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities”
 - (viii) Entity information required in subsection (2) below
 - (ix) Parcel information required in subsection (3) below
 - (x) A written request for a waiver of the eligible entity cash contribution requirement for projects of special significance, if applicable, and all information required in subsection B below.
- (2) Entity information submitted with the entity application (CPA-41) must—
 - (i) Document the entity’s commitment to long-term conservation of agricultural lands through the use of voluntary conservation easements that protect farm or ranch lands from conversion to nonagricultural uses.
 - (ii) Document the entity’s capability and record of acquiring, holding, managing, and enforcing conservation easements.
 - This must include a citation to the State conservation easement enabling statute that the entity will rely on to acquire the agricultural land easements.
 - If the entity is a State, local, or Tribal government, then this must include a citation to the entity’s statutory authority to acquire conservation easements consistent with the purposes of ACEP-ALE.
 - (iii) Document the entity capacity to monitor and enforce the agricultural land easements.

Kentucky USDA State Technical Committee

State Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee

December 18, 2018

Steve Kull
Assistant Director
Kentucky Division of Forestry



Kentucky Forest Stewardship Program FFY18



- 2,706 Landowners Assisted
- 414 Forest Stewardship/Forest Management Plans Completed
- 56,304 Forest Stewardship Plan Acres



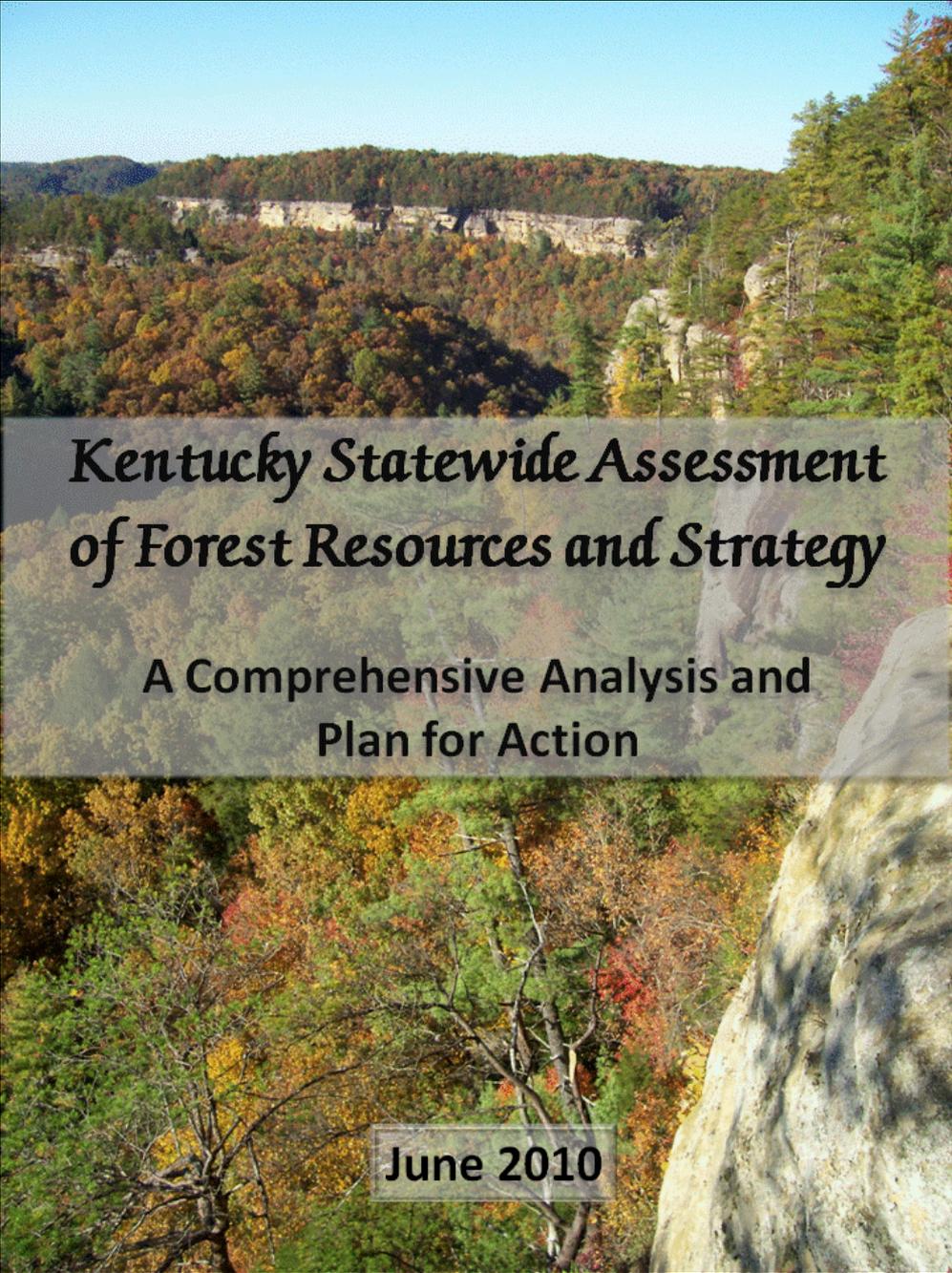
- 76 Practice Plans for CRP, EQIP, CREP and WRP
- 4,537 Practice Plan Acres for CRP, EQIP, CREP and WRP
- 88 Forest Stand Improvement Cases
- 1,301 Wildlife Habitat Improvement Case Acres



Education and Awareness

- 5,636 Landowners Participated in Education Programs
- Partner with the University of Kentucky to conduct three woodland owner short courses in July and August 2018
- Continue to provide technical assistance
- Inspect forests that are certified by the American Tree Farm System
- William and Chris Lagermann (Red Lick Ranch, LLC) received the 2018 Outstanding Forest Steward of the Year

Kentucky Forest Action Plan



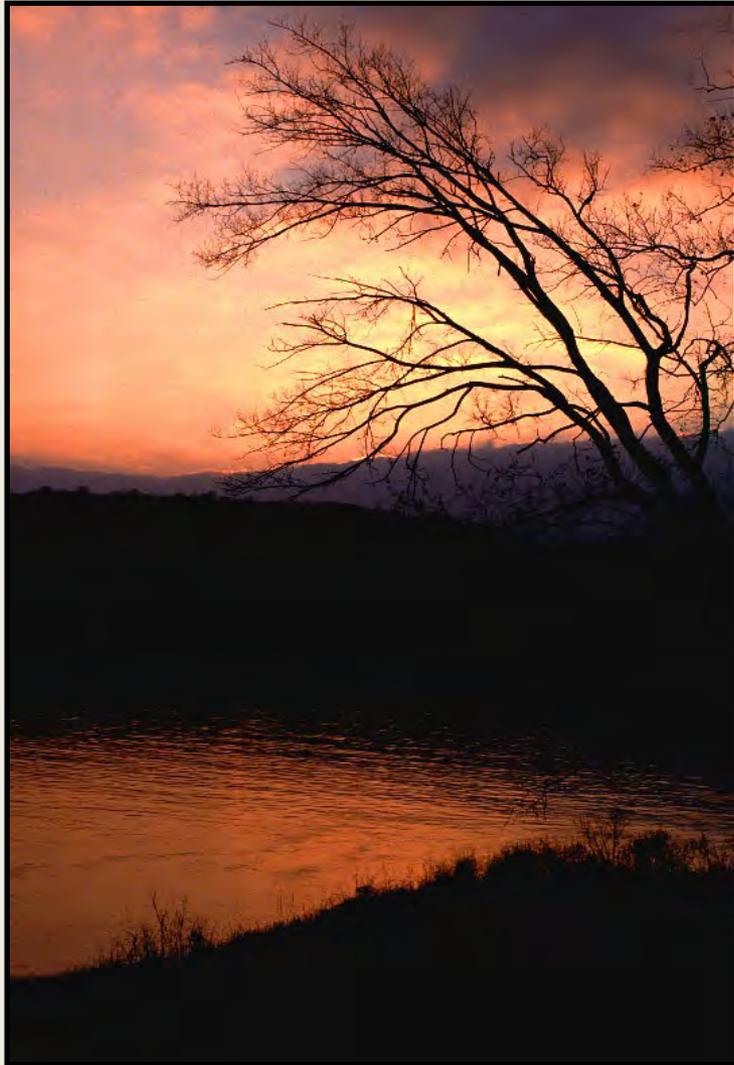
*Kentucky Statewide Assessment
of Forest Resources and Strategy*

A Comprehensive Analysis and
Plan for Action

June 2010

[http://forestry.ky.gov/Landowner
Services/Pages/ForestlandAssessment.aspx](http://forestry.ky.gov/LandownerServices/Pages/ForestlandAssessment.aspx)

The 2008 Farm Bill required states to develop a statewide assessment of forest resources.



The assessment must include:

- Conditions and Trends
- Threats and Resources to
 - * Conserve
 - * Enhance
 - * Protect
- Priority Areas
- Multi-State Priority Areas



One document – three parts

Assessment

Priority Areas

Strategy

The Top Five Issues Identified by Kentuckians

1. Forest Health



2. Water Quality and Quantity



3. Forest Loss and Fragmentation



4. Forest Management



5. Funding





Other issues of importance:

- **Public Awareness**
- **Urban and Community Forestry**
- **Unlawful Activity (i.e. timber theft and trespass)**
- **Wildfire**
- **Forest Economy**
- **Mountain Top Removal**
- **Public Access**
- **Prescribed Fires**
- **Corollary Issues (i.e. renewable energy, carbon sequestration, ecosystem services, etc.)**

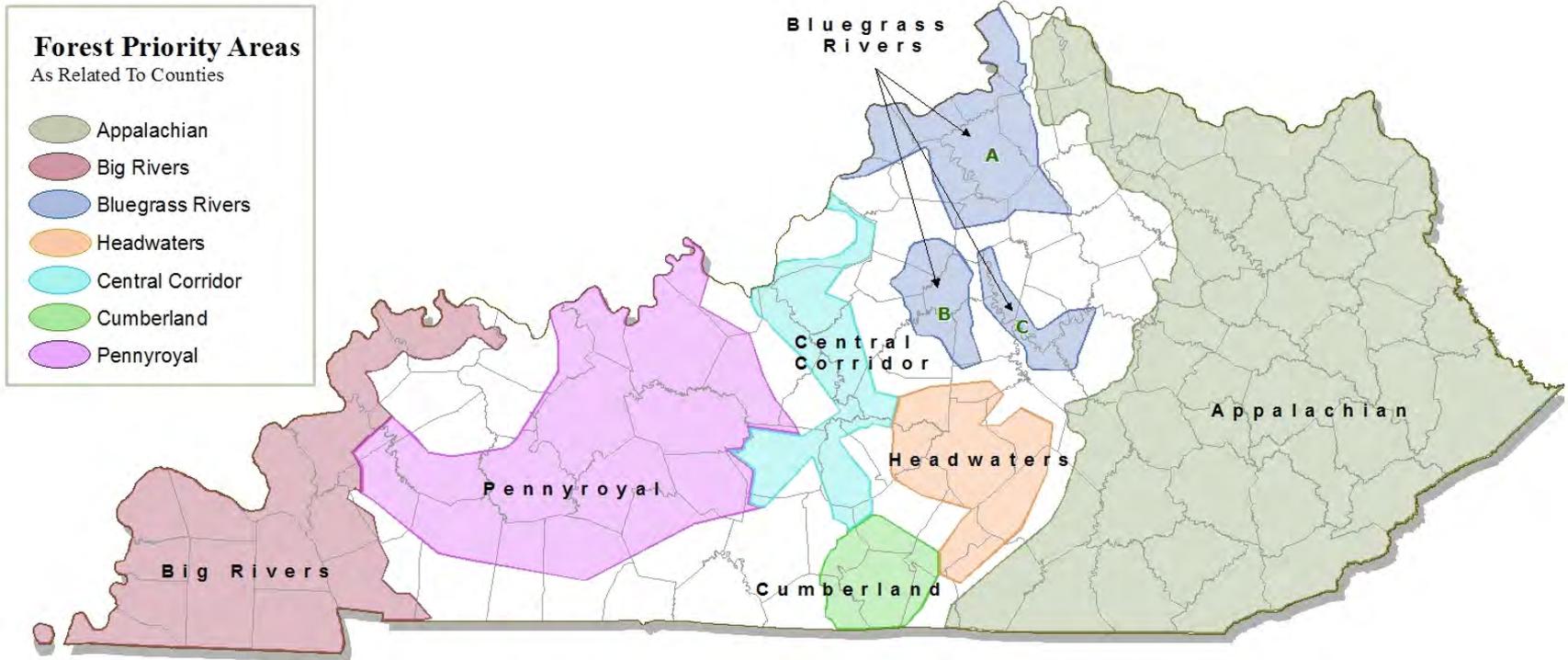


For each of the five issues, the following parameters were defined:

- Issue Description
- Forest Resources
- Public Benefits
- Key Conditions
- Direct Threats
- Contributing Factors
- Opportunities

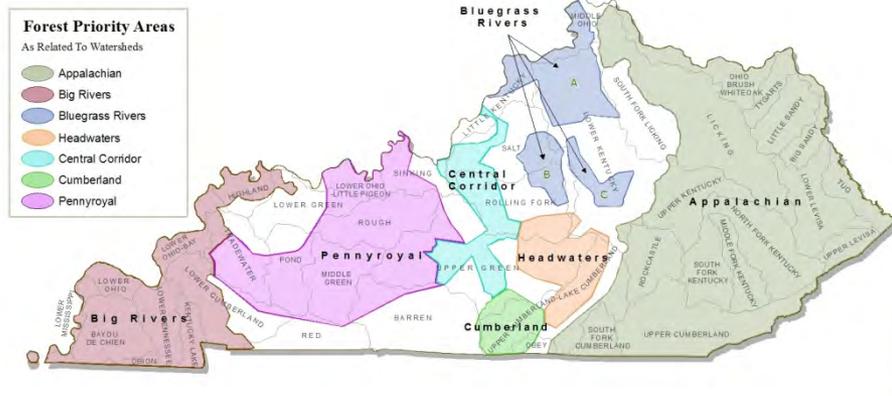
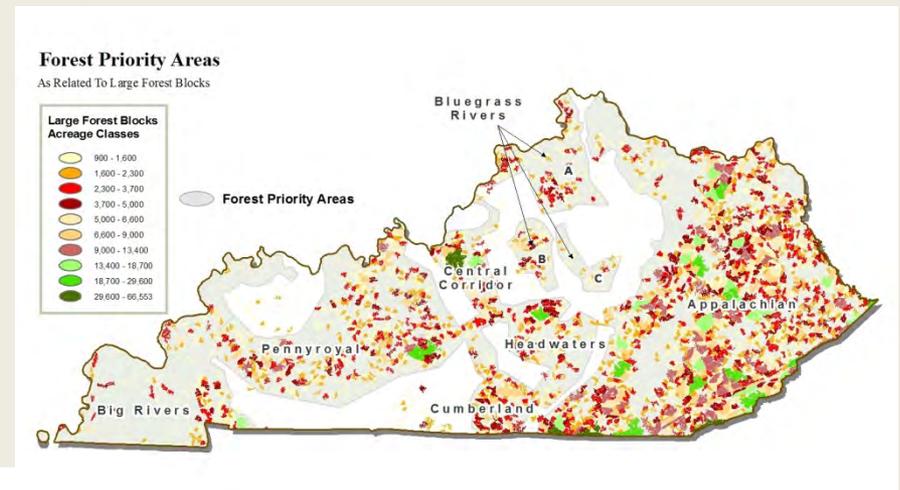
Priority Areas

Each area on the map below was identified by partnering agencies or organizations as having areas of concern.

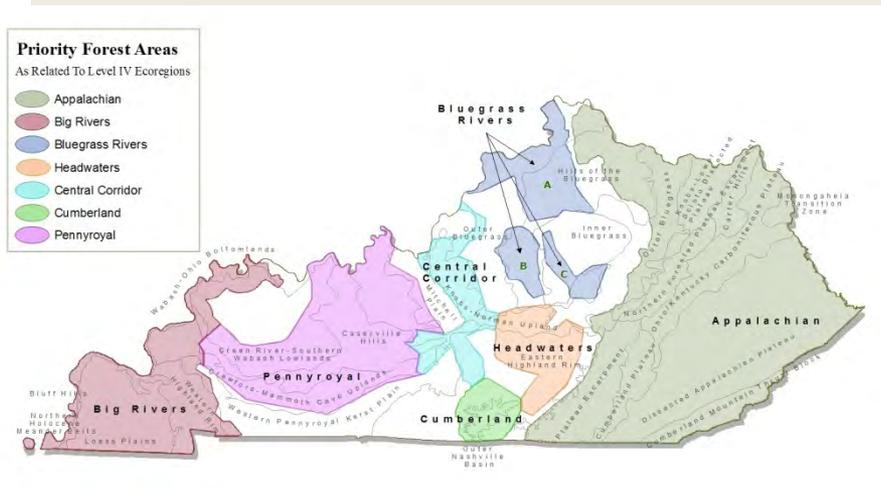


As compared to other features:

Large Forest Blocks

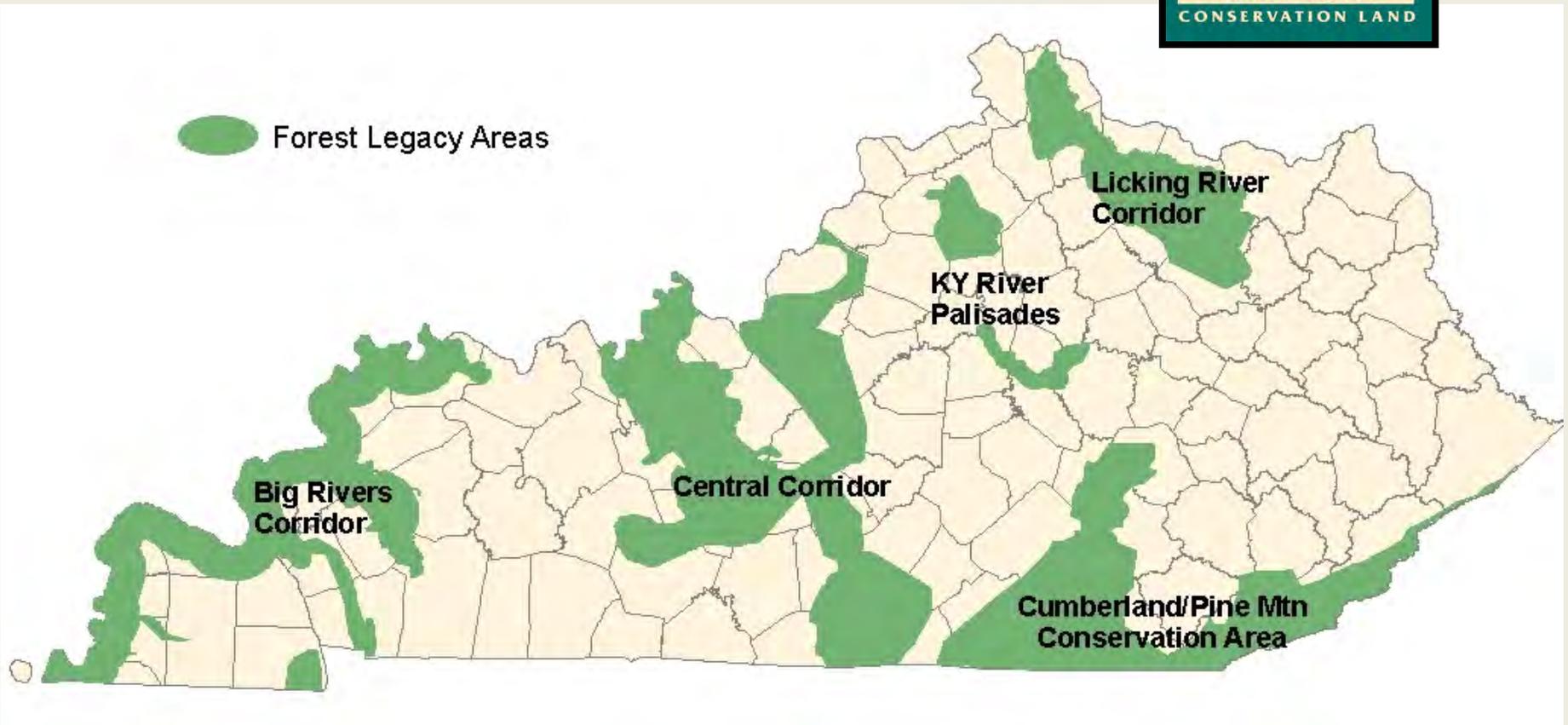
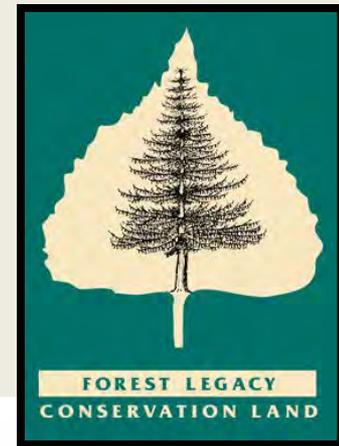


Priority Watersheds



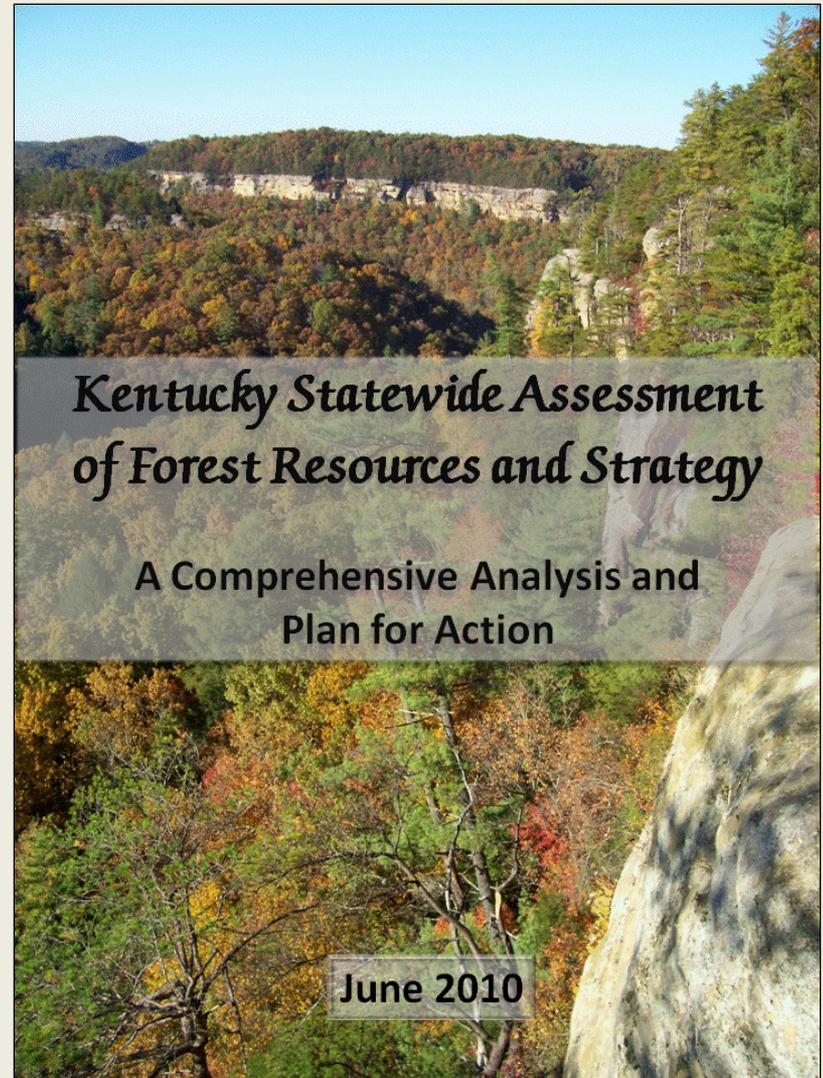
Level IV Ecoregions

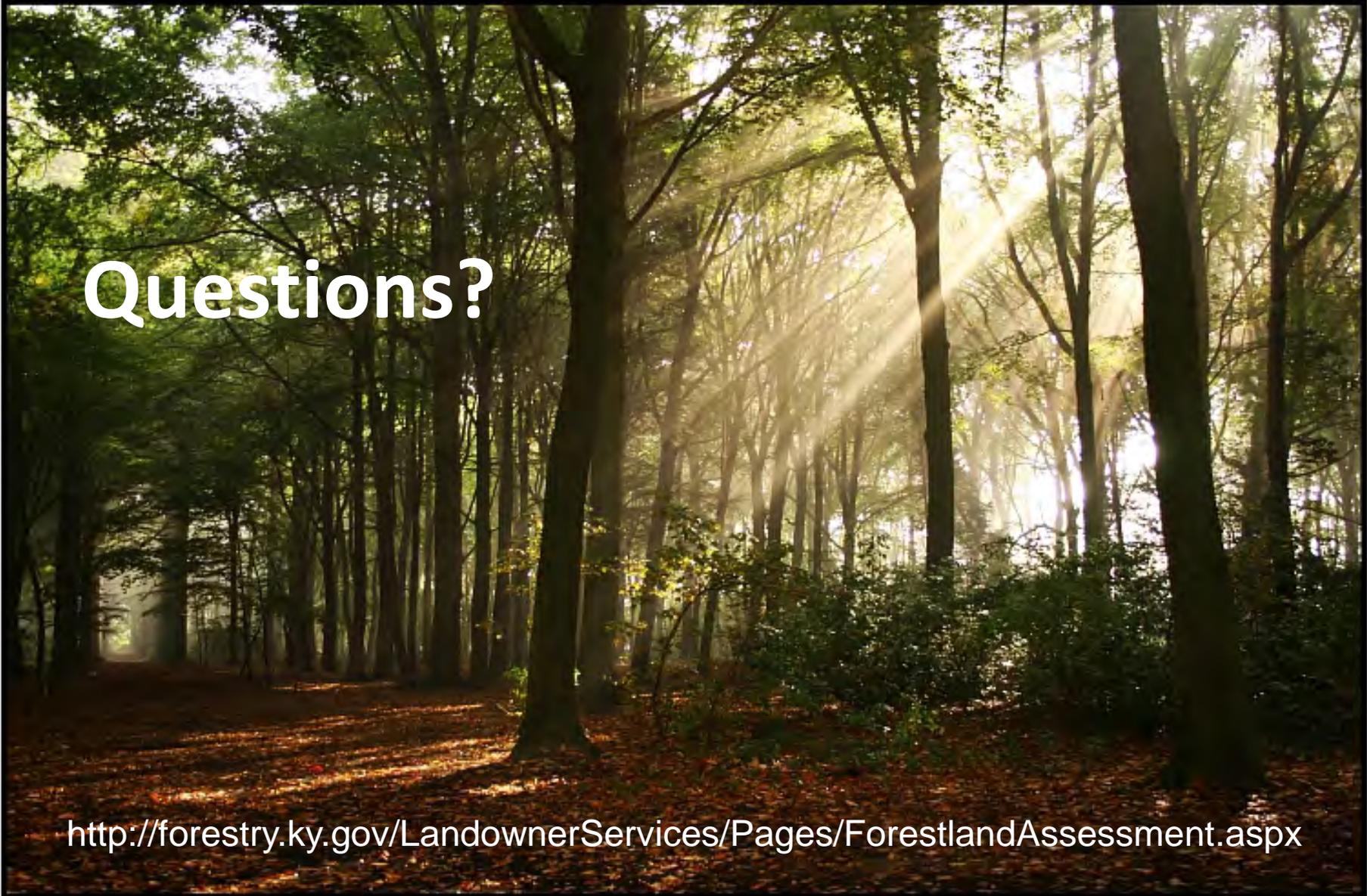
Forest Legacy Areas



What Now?

- **Update due Summer 2020**
- **Internal Audit of Document**
- **Participation from Stakeholders**
- **Refocus of Priority Areas**
- **Revised Forest Action Plan**





Questions?

<http://forestry.ky.gov/LandownerServices/Pages/ForestlandAssessment.aspx>



8TH ANNUAL

Organic Association of KENTUCKY

Healthy Soils, Healthy Farms: Reshaping Kentucky with Organics

MARCH 1-2, 2019 | Lexington, Kentucky



Farm Tours

Salad Days Farm

LEAN FARM PRINCIPLES

Maggie Dungan & Ellen Polishuk

Elmwood Stock Farm

PASTURE POULTRY

Mac Stone

Natures Rhythm Farm

HEMP PRODUCTION

David and Carla Garey

Short Courses

INCREASING EFFICIENCY

USING LEAN FARM

PRINCIPLES

Ellen Polishuk

360 DEGREES OF PASTURED

POULTRY: RAISING MEAT

BIRDS, LAYERS AND TURKEYS

Jeff Mattocks, Steve Skelton &

Mac Stone

GROWING MUSHROOMS

FOR PROFIT

Tradd Cotter

GRASSFED BEEF:

PRODUCTION, PROCESSING

AND SALES PROMOTION

Greg Halich, Joe Weber &

Anna Bays

FEARLESS FARM FINANCES:

Paul Deitmann, Jonathan Carter

GROWING ORGANIC HEMP

IN KENTUCKY:

Shawn Lucas, Doris Hamilton &

Mike Lewis

Regular Sessions

Jerry Steckler, *Steckler Grassfed*: Grassfed Dairy, a Family Farmer Direct Markets Cheese and Milk

Joel Gruver, *WIU*: Organic Corn Production

Ellen Polishuk, *Plant to Profit*: 5 Keys to Increasing Soil Health

Paul Vijayakumar, *UK*: FSMA 101 - What Organic Growers Need to Know

Tradd Cotter, *Mushroom Mountain*:

Using Mycorrhizae to Improve Soil Fertility and Plant Health

Jeff Mattocks, *The Fertrell Company*: Pastured Pork

Meet the Buyers

Tradd Cotter, *Mushroom Mountain*: Entomopathogens for Organic Pest Control

Tony Silvernail, *Beyond the Bridge*, and Megan Lark, *KDA*:

Organic Certification 101

Brett Wolff, *Center for Crop Diversification*: Organic Marketing for All

Ben Cohen, *Small House Farm*: Seed Saving for Small Farms

Greg Brann, *Big Spring Farm*: Forage and Multi-Paddock Management

Steve Diver, *UK*: Soil Health for Row Crops: Cover Crops to Biodynamics

Ellen Polishuk, *Plant to Profit*: Production for Profit

Nathan Howell, *Need More Acres*: Growing Produce Year Round

Bree Pearsall and Ben Abell, *Rootbound Farm*:

Getting Labor Right - Staff and H2A

Hannah Crabtree and Jesse Frost, *Rough Draft Farmstead*:

Telling Your Story - Marketing the Market Farm

Dr. Guy Jodarksi, *CROPP/Organic Valley*:

Homeopathic treatments and remedies for livestock

David Cooke, *Grow Appalachia*: Making the Most of your Woodlands

Jeremy Lowe and Sheri Crabtree, *KSU*:

Organic Pawpaw and Blackberry Production

Clint Quarles, *KDA*: Legal Issues in Farming

Elizabeth Hendricks, *Three Toads Farm*:

Cut Flowers - Production, Developing Markets and Events

For Registration & More Information visit www.oak-ky.org.

