



Conservation Assistance Programs—USVI



NRCS Caribbean Area is committed to providing emergency assistance to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) via the **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** and the **Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)**.

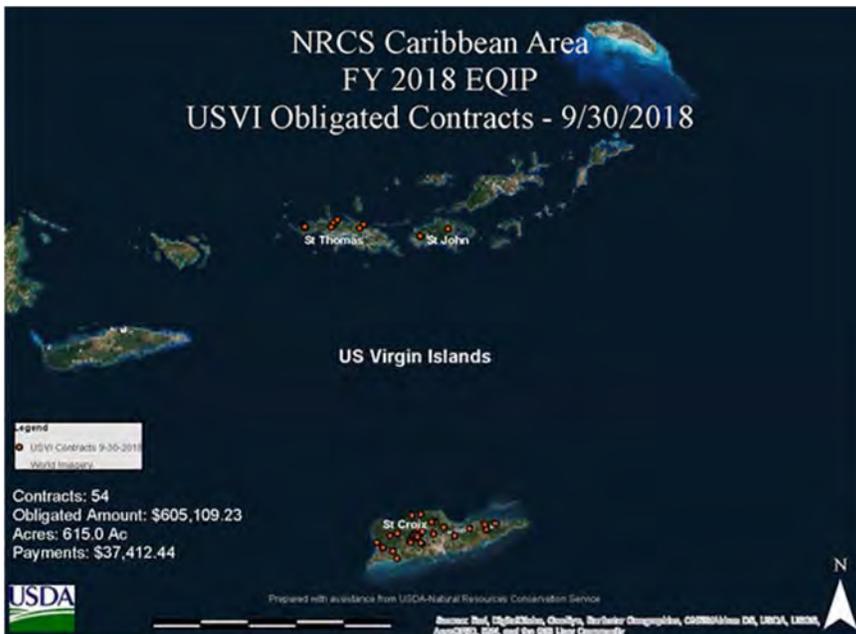
EQIP helps farmers and ranchers improve and protect environmental quality on their land by offering financial and technical assistance to voluntarily implement conservation practices. To help farmers recover from storm damage and rebuild conservation practices damaged by the 2017 hurricanes, NRCS initiated **EQIP** equitable relief assistance. Five emergency recovery practices were made available in fiscal year (FY) 2018 to all farmers: obstruction removal, roofs and covers, clearing and snagging (of debris in waterways) and emergency animal mortality management. In FY 2019, NRCS added three recovery practices for farmers: fencing, roof runoff structures, and heavy use area protection.

NRCS partnered with conservation districts, and territorial Departments of Agriculture to assess damage and apply conservation practices in priority areas.



St. Thomas farmer, Gerald Hodge's farm post hurricane Irma - Sep. 11, 2017 and after completion of EQIP debris removal contract - May 3, 2018.

EQIP Status Update:



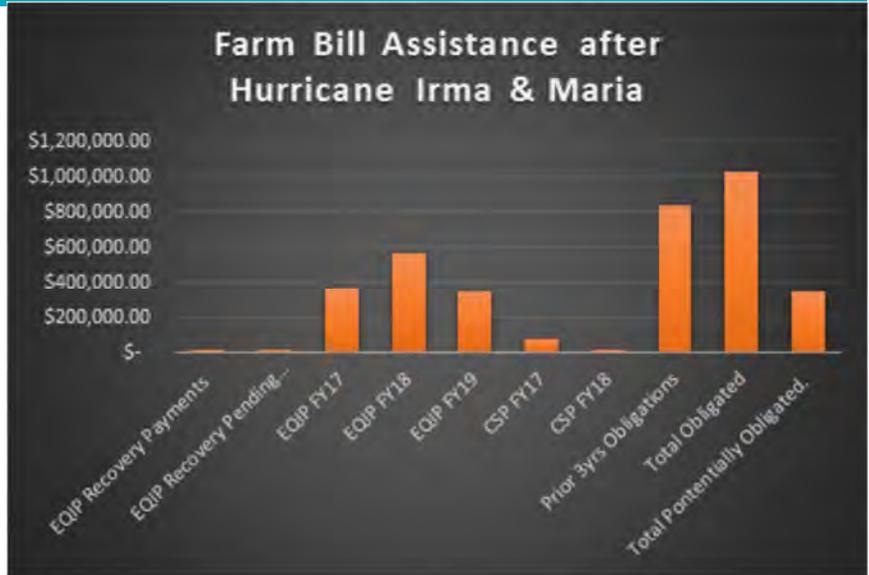
In the months after hurricanes Irma & María, Caribbean Area NRCS processed over **3,000** FY 2018 EQIP applications. Of those, **1,222** were for emergency EQIP assistance. FY 2018 recorded **828** obligated contracts to provide over **\$23.7 million** in financial assistance.

In the USVI to date, NRCS has obligated **55** CSP and EQIP contracts for over **\$582,250** to provide conservation assistance on over **676** acres. At least **16** contracts had payments for **39** completed practices for over **\$77,600**.

USVI Conservation Assistance Programs

USVI Program Assistance Summary

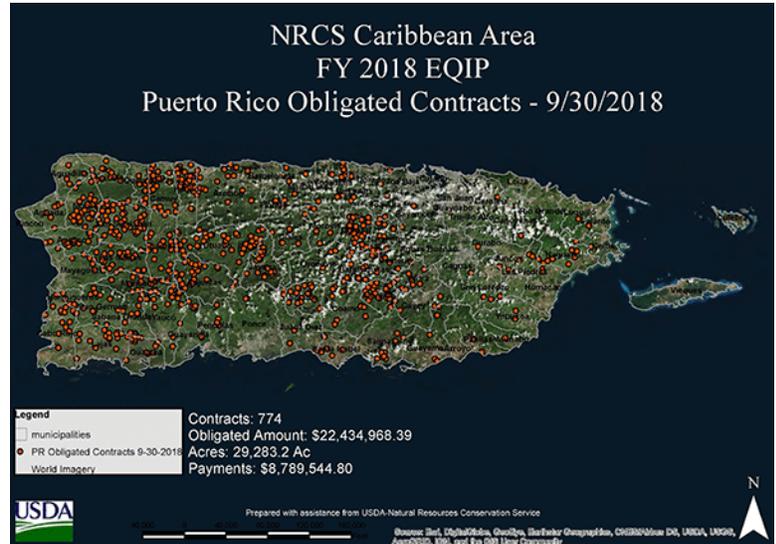
EQIP Recovery Payments	\$ 18,821.86
EQIP Recovery Pending Payments	\$ 3,835.00
EQIP FY17	\$ 366,872.29
EQIP FY18	\$ 569,224.71
EQIP FY19	\$ 341,987.00
CSP FY17	\$ 76,839.84
CSP FY18	\$ 13,034.00
Prior 3 years of Obligations	\$ 832,045.95
Total Obligated	\$ 1,025,970.84
Total Potentially Obligated	\$ 341,987.00



Overall, over **364** Caribbean Area contracts had payments for completed practices for over **\$8.8 million**, with an average payment of **\$24,195**. Over **24,380** acres of conservation implementation was completed, including **11,854** acres of conservation applied to improve water quality and **2,466** acres of grazing land conservation applied. Over **99%** of the financial assistance we provided went to beginning, limited-resource or socially-disadvantaged farmers.



St. Croix District Conservationist, Rudy G. O'Reilly, Jr. (right) surveys damage to Clevan Robert's farm on the west end of St. Croix on Sep. 28, 2017.



More Information:

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