



United States Department of Agriculture



Farm Bill Training

Bonda Habets  
State Resource  
Conservationist

# Source Water Protection

FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION  
FSA | NRCS | RMA | Business Center



United States Department of Agriculture

# 2018 Farm Bill

Source Water Protection Provision

# Source Water Protection Language in the 2018 Farm Bill

## Section 1244(n): Source Water Protection Through Targeting of Agricultural Practices

The Secretary shall encourage the protection of drinking water sources through the following methods:

- Identify local priority areas for drinking water protection in each state
  - In collaboration with State Technical Committees and community water systems
  - May address water quality or quantity concerns
- Provide increased incentives for practices that relate to water quality and quantity and protect drinking water sources while also benefitting producers
- Dedicate at least 10% of the total funds available for conservation programs (with the exception of CRP), each year beginning in FY 2019 through FY 2023, to be used for source water protection

# SWP Partnerships at the National Level

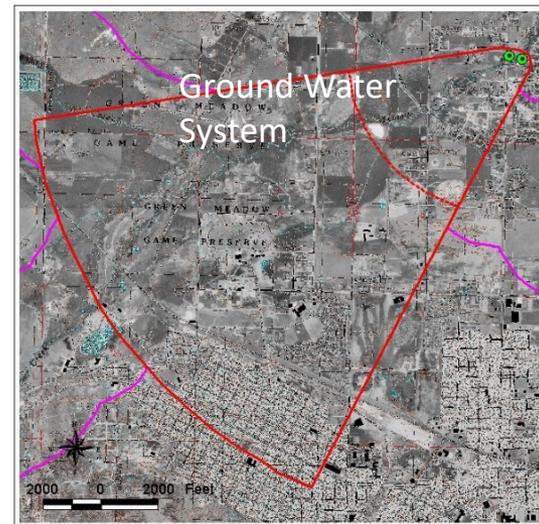
## NRCS working in collaboration with:

- EPA Office of Groundwater and Drinking Water – Source Water Protection
- Association of State Drinking Water Administrators (ASDWA) – state entities that are responsible for the Safe Drinking Water Act regulations
- American Water Works Association (AWWA) – national association of public water supply utilities

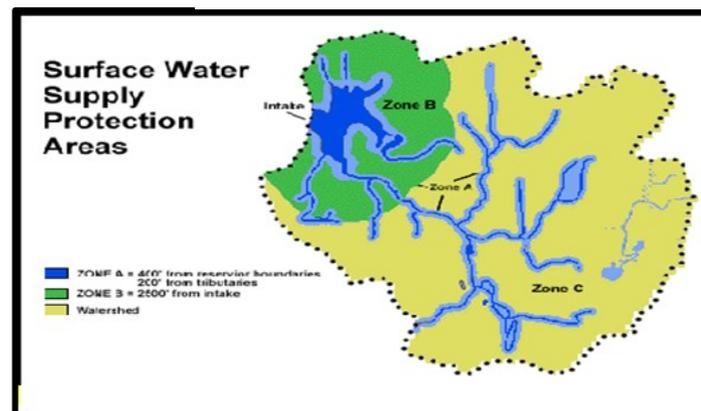
**National partners can help facilitate dialogue with drinking water partners at the state and local levels**

# Identifying State Local Priority Areas

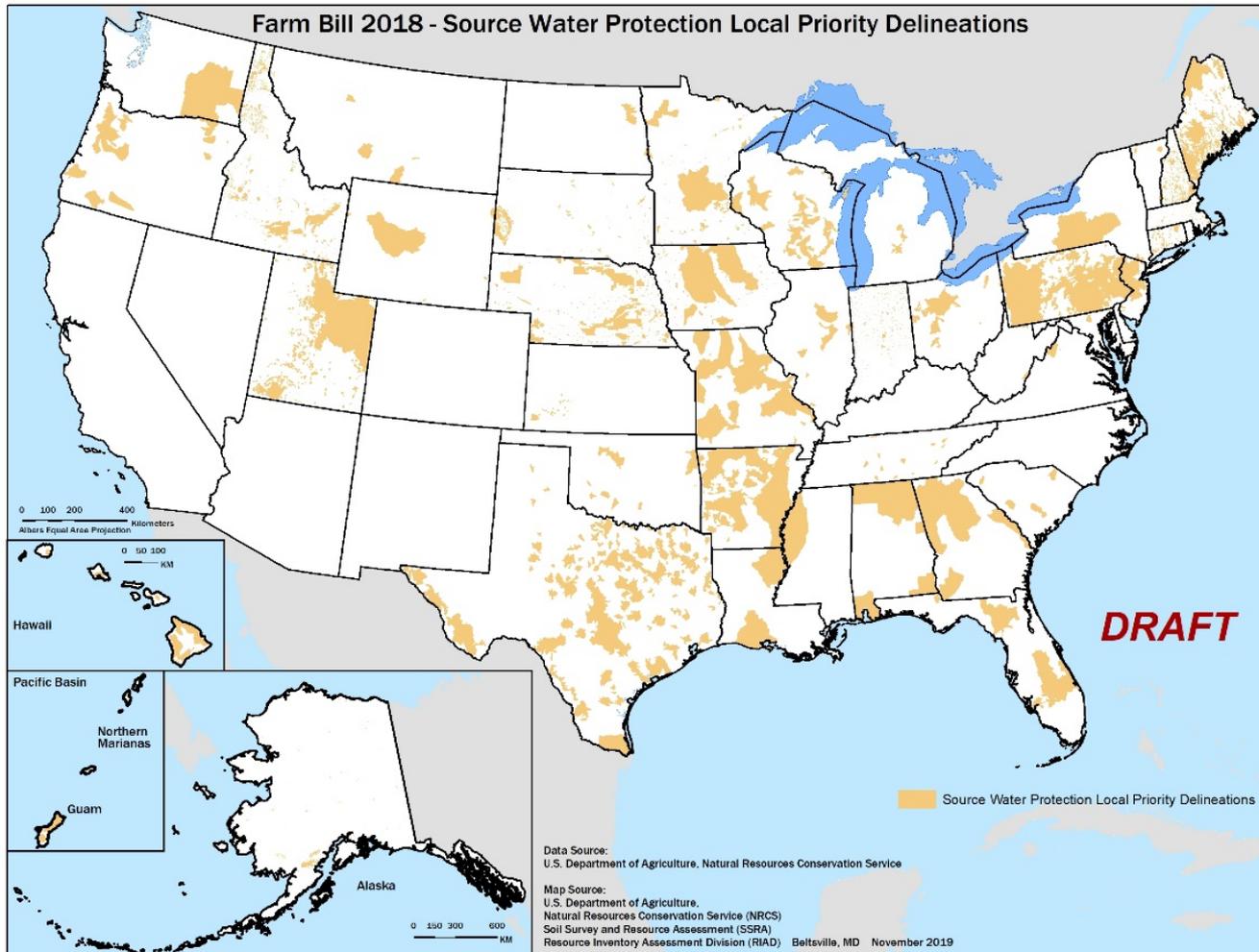
- State Conservationists have worked with either the drinking water program or interested utilities/public water systems in their states to identify priority areas
- Utility/state partners assisted NRCS in developing delineations for the priority areas
  - Sizes vary depending on whether it is a surface water or ground water source, and by the size of the population it serves
  - States have used a variety of approaches in determining local priorities



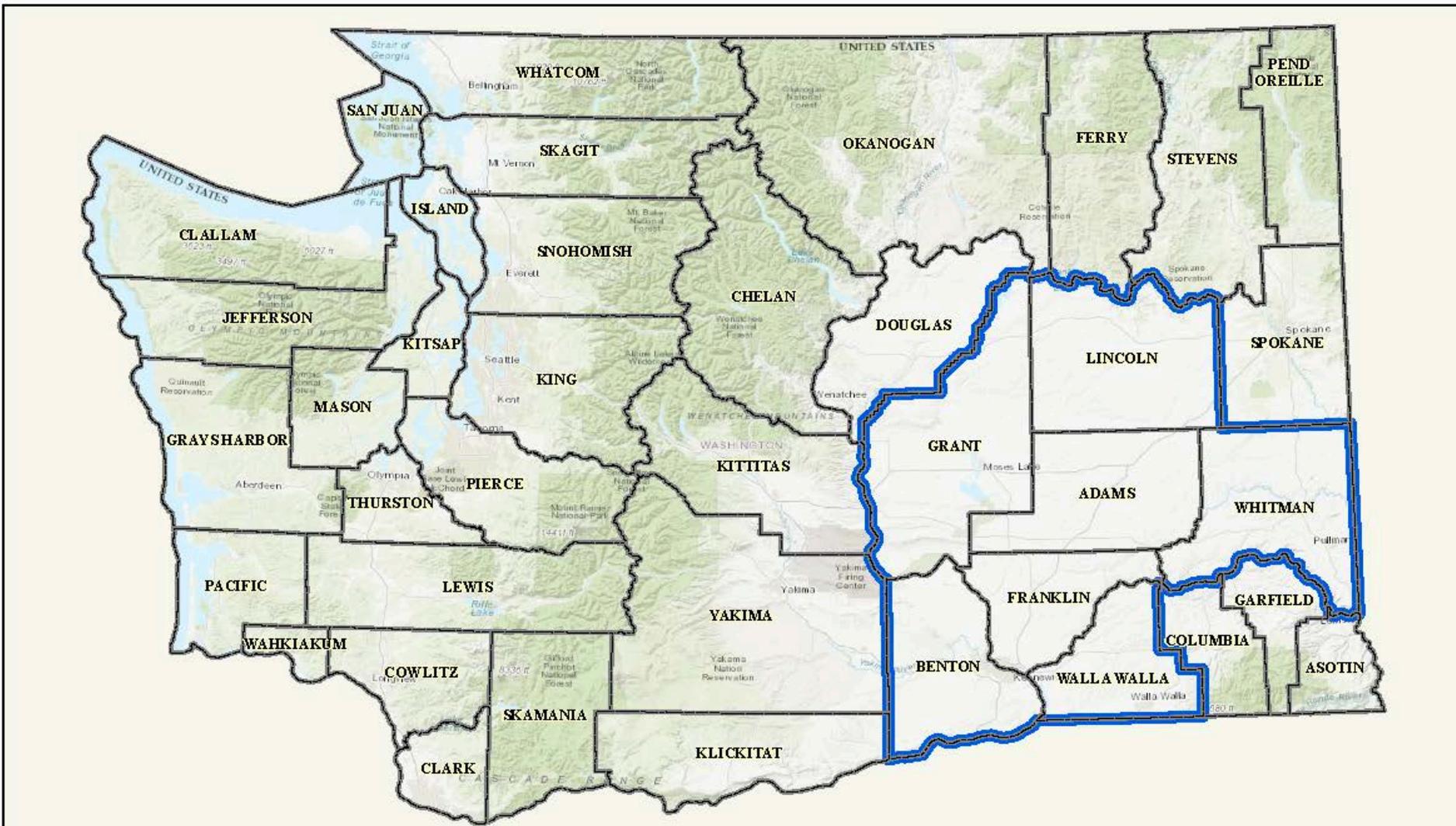
Surface Water Delineation



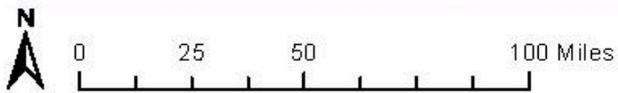
# Draft National SWP Local Priorities



# FY2020 WASHINGTON SOURCE WATER PROTECTION ACTIVITIES (SWPA) PRIORITY AREA



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



- County Boundaries
- SWPA Area



September 17th, 2019

# Identifying State Local Priority Areas

**Source water protection is MORE than just addressing water quality or water quantity within priority areas...**

Use SWP area assessments developed for the Safe Drinking Water Act, or more current updates

- Identification of areas of concern
- Identification of potential threats
- Description of source water protection goals
- An action plan for implementation
- Conservation practices need to address the specific threats that have been identified

# Practice Incentives

- State Conservationists will collaborate with partners to identify practices that are needed to support the objectives of the source water protection assessments in priority areas
- Practices can receive increased payment rates, up to 90% of practice costs for both water quality and water quantity, as appropriate.
- Practices should be available on your payment schedules – higher payment rates are **ONLY** applicable within the local priorities delineated
- Determine for FY21 if additional practice scenarios are needed, due to Payment Team by January 30?



# Selection of Priority Practices

## Guidance from Science and Technology:

- Use the NWQI core practices as guidance for practice selection
- Select only those practices that have a significant impact on either water quality or water quantity (or both if applicable), based on the threats to drinking water in the local priority area(s)
  - Be selective – consider selecting only major practices that have impact (i.e., not all supporting practices)
  - Practices selected should specifically address the source of the drinking water (ground vs. surface)
  - Use the CPPE to assist in determining impacts
  - Include management practices where applicable
  - With respect to irrigation practices and water quantity – consider whether water savings will actually be realized

# Dedication of 10% Funds

- NRCS will track compliance with the requirement to dedicate 10% of conservation program funds based on agency investments within identified priority areas using GIS (done at NHQ)

## Tracking the 10%

- Both financial assistance and technical assistance that addresses water quality and water quantity concerns will be included
- Includes practices implemented through EQIP, CSP and RCPP
- Includes Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP):
  - ALE – Agricultural Land Easements to protect conservation values
  - WRE – Wetland Reserve Easements
- Tracking will consider type of system(s) (surface vs. ground water) in determining applicable contracts/practices

# NRCS Programs for Source Water Protection – Additional Funding Opportunities

## National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI)

- NWQI source water protection component can provide funding for specific projects
- SWP areas must have assessments that meet NWQI guidance, or can start as readiness areas to develop assessments prior to receiving financial assistance

## Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

- Promotes coordination of NRCS conservation activities with partners that offer value-added contributions to expand our collective ability to address source water protection

# Questions/Discussion

