

## Watershed Programs

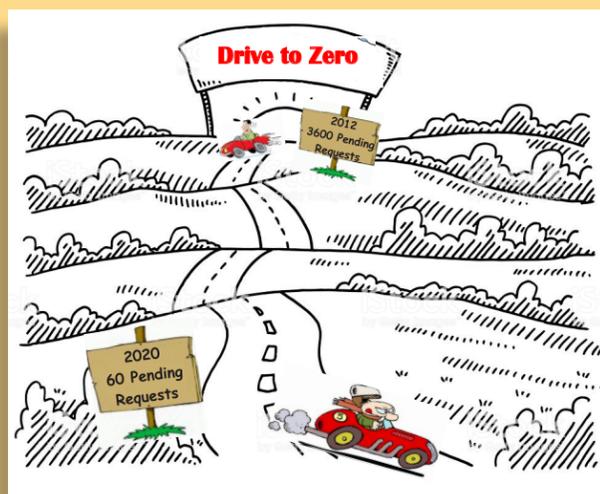
Preliminary engineering designs and draft Plan/Environmental Assessments were completed in FY20 for a \$2.4 million, 2.2 mile levee to protect the community of Amenia from Rush River flooding and a \$6.7 million diversion and 2,590 ac-ft dry dam on the to reduce flood damage to cropland, roads, and the community of Crystal on the North Branch Park River. Other watershed plans for flood damage reduction on the Upper Maple River, Shortfoot Creek, Tongue River, and Antelope Creek are well on their way to completion, and a new watershed planning effort on the Upper Turtle River is just starting up. Watershed Rehabilitation Plans, to bring dams up to current dam safety standards, are well underway and on schedule for completion in 2021-22 on Matecjek, Senator Young, Bourbanis, Olson, Fordville, Bylin, and Larimore Dams. NRCS is currently providing engineering and financial assistance to LaMoure County through the Emergency Watershed Protection Program, to mitigate bank erosion risks to Memorial Park from FY20 flooding.

Since 1958, 50 flood control dams as well as numerous diversion channels and levees have been constructed in North Dakota through NRCS Watershed Programs. A recent economic analysis indicated that these dams provide over \$6.9 million in annual flood damage reduction benefits to agriculture and \$1.7 million in benefits to non-agricultural infrastructure. They have saved 4.4 million tons of soil erosion, and countless tons of nutrients, from reaching waterbodies, by reducing the frequency and duration of cropland inundation. The 103,000 acre-feet of flood storage they provide benefits approximately 200,000 people directly, and provide recreational opportunities for many more residents of the state.

## Conservation Compliance

NRCS continued assisting North Dakota agricultural producers in retaining eligibility for USDA programs in 2020 by completing 410 wetland and 3600 highly erodible land determinations. This year the team of specialists cut through the backlog, increased transparency, and enhanced customer experience in meeting the conservation provisions of the 1985 Farm Bill. NRCS delivers technical assistance in mitigation planning and banking as an alternative in water management.

Visit our refreshed webpage for more information: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/nd/programs/farmland/cc/>.



# FY2020 Accomplishments North Dakota

## Conservation TOP TEN Practices

- 1. FENCE**  
1,272,123 feet applied
- 2. WINDBREAK/SHELTERBELT ESTABLISHMENT**  
1,023,822 feet applied
- 3. LIVESTOCK PIPELINE**  
742,860 feet applied
- 4. CONSERVATION CROP ROTATION**  
308,002 acres applied
- 5. PEST MANAGEMENT CONSERVATION SYSTEM**  
241,689 acres applied
- 6. NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT**  
65,014 acres applied
- 7. RESIDUE AND TILLAGE MANAGEMENT, NO TILL**  
156,332 acres applied
- 8. WINDBREAK/SHELTERBELT RENOVATION**  
108,219 feet applied
- 9. PRESCRIBED GRAZING**  
106,828 acres applied
- 10. COVER CROP**  
105,195 acres applied

## North Dakota Agriculture Leaders Support Local Foods

In demonstration of united support to local farmers and healthy food for all North Dakota, the ND Department of Agriculture and USDA teamed together with the ND Farmers Market and Growers Association to participate in International Tomato Throwing Day. Leaders from each agency volunteered to have tomatoes thrown at them.

North Dakota is a tremendously strong agriculture state with many crops and livestock operations. Agriculture organizations are proud to support produce farmers and farmer's markets, too! North Dakota Farmer's Union, North Dakota Farm Bureau, North Dakota Soil Conservation Committee, FaRRMS, and Strengthen ND all came together to kick off the celebration

What better than a tomato to recognize the hard work of farmers? Farms in North Dakota are big and small, traditional, organic and precision, livestock related and found in community (urban) settings; In ND, we grow too many crops to list but tomatoes can represent all and are a staple at most all Farmer's Markets.

In North Dakota, we continue to support USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue's motto of "Do right and feed everyone" - one vegetable at a time.

## Helping People Help the Land

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender

"As a Nation we need to renew our acquaintance with the land and reaffirm our faith in its continuity of productiveness - when properly treated.

If we are bold in our thinking, courageous in accepting new ideas, and willing to work with instead of against our land, we shall find in conservation farming an avenue to the greatest food production the world has ever known—not only for the war, but for the peace that is to follow."

- Hugh Hammond Bennet

# Financial Assistance

## WBP Water Bank Program

The purpose is to preserve and improve major wetlands as habitat for migratory waterfowl and other wildlife, conserve surface waters, reduce runoff and soil and wind erosion, contribute to flood control, improve water quality, improve subsurface moisture and change the natural beauty of the landscape.

**\$4,291,022 Obligated**  
78 Contracts  
9,368.9 Acres

## WRE Wetland Reserve Easements

NRCS provides technical and financial assistance directly to private landowners and Indian tribes to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands through the purchase of a wetland reserve easement.

For acreage owned by an Indian tribe, there is an additional enrollment option of a 30-year contract.

**\$2,414,685 Total Dollars**  
8 New Easements  
1,763 Acres Enrolled

## EQIP Environmental Quality Incentives Program

EQIP provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers in order to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, reduced soil erosion and sedimentation and improve or create wildlife habitat. Projects include solar well systems, pipelines for livestock, high tunnel systems, irrigation systems and pollinator and wildlife habitat.

**\$21,175,268 Obligated**  
445 Contracts  
271,317 Acres

## CSP Conservation Stewardship Program

CSP is the largest voluntary conservation program in the Nation that helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority resource concerns. Participants earn CSP payments for conservation performance - the higher the performance, the higher the payment available.

### CSP Grassland Conservation Initiative

**\$806,285 Obligated**  
154 Contracts  
8,956.2 Acres

### CSP Renewals

**\$7,239,192.55 Obligated**  
50 Contracts  
103,002.7 Acres

### CSP Classic

**\$11,304,171.80 Obligated**  
72 Contracts  
186,095.3 Acres

## Prairie Pothole Water Quality and Wildlife Program

The **Prairie Pothole Water Quality and Wildlife Program** is a new funding opportunity available through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). When enrolled, producers are eligible for payment on cropped wetlands, two acres or less in size as identified on the National Wetland Inventory, and with intact hydrology. The payment rate will differ by region.

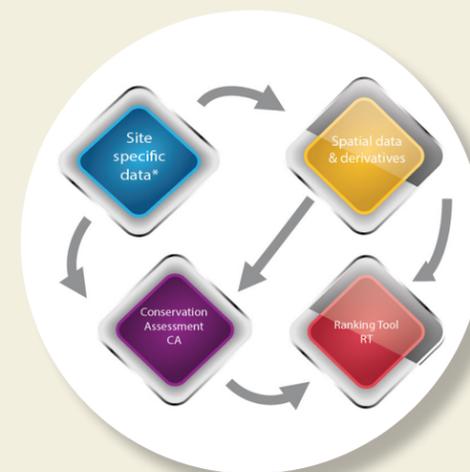
**\$2,260,589 Obligated**  
103 Contracts  
3,646 Acres

# Technical Assistance

## Conservation Planning

North Dakota field staff planned 1,145,000 acres using CART in FY20. The Conservation Assessment Ranking Tool (CART) is designed to assist conservation planners as they assess site vulnerability, existing conditions, and identify potential resource concerns on land unit(s).

CART provides a streamlined framework to assess any of the 47 resource concerns identified by NRCS. Assessment of resource concerns is determined by the planner's interaction with a client and considers the client's conservation objectives. Accordingly, a planner may choose to assess and document a subset of the 47 resource concerns consistent with the progressive planning process. The tool is designed to document resource concerns and the need for conservation practices to meet the assessment threshold. No assessment can completely capture all the potential variability a conservation planner may encounter across the nation and CART is designed to document cases when a planner identifies a basis to override the CART Assessment. This override can be used when a planner can identify through observation, or other assessment methods, that the threshold has or has not been met but may be outside or improperly recognized using the streamlined CART questions, information, and analysis framework designed to capture typical conditions. All information is captured on a land unit basis which allows CART to maintain this information for future planning efforts on the same operation.

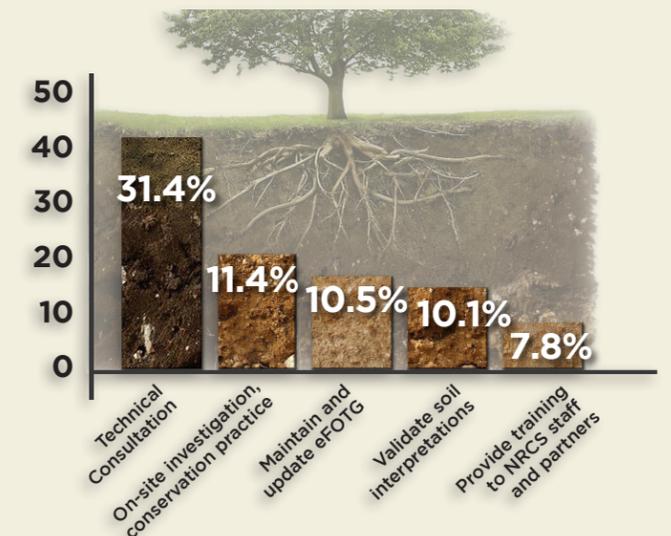


## Soil Science

NRCS Soil Scientists documented 1,569 Technical Soil Services (TSS) and logged over 5,050 hours while doing so.

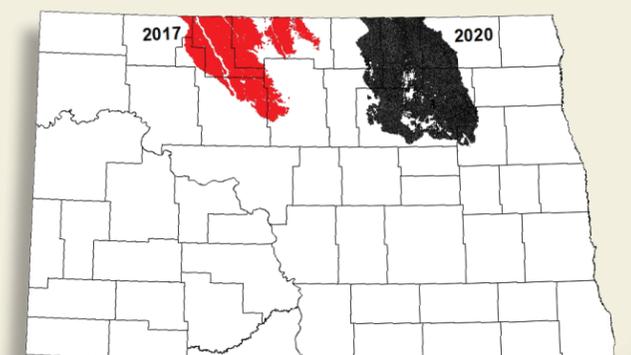
### The top 5 activities include:

- 31.4% Technical consultation
- 11.4% On-site investigation, conservation practice
- 10.5% Maintain and update eFOTG
- 10.1% Validate soil interpretations
- 7.8% Provide training to NRCS staff and partners



Three commodity crop productivity indices based on the National Commodity Crop Productivity Index (NCCPI) and normalized to ND were developed for corn, small grains, and soybeans and are available for use in Web Soil Survey.

1,047,092 acres were added to the ND Raster Soil Survey (RSS) bringing the total number of acres available to 3,031,521 or approximately 6.7% of ND. The 10 m resolution RSS is NRCS's next generation soil survey product.



ND raster soil survey availability.