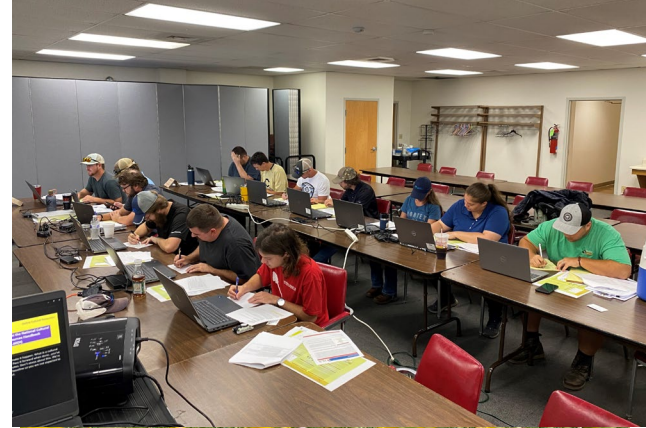




Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



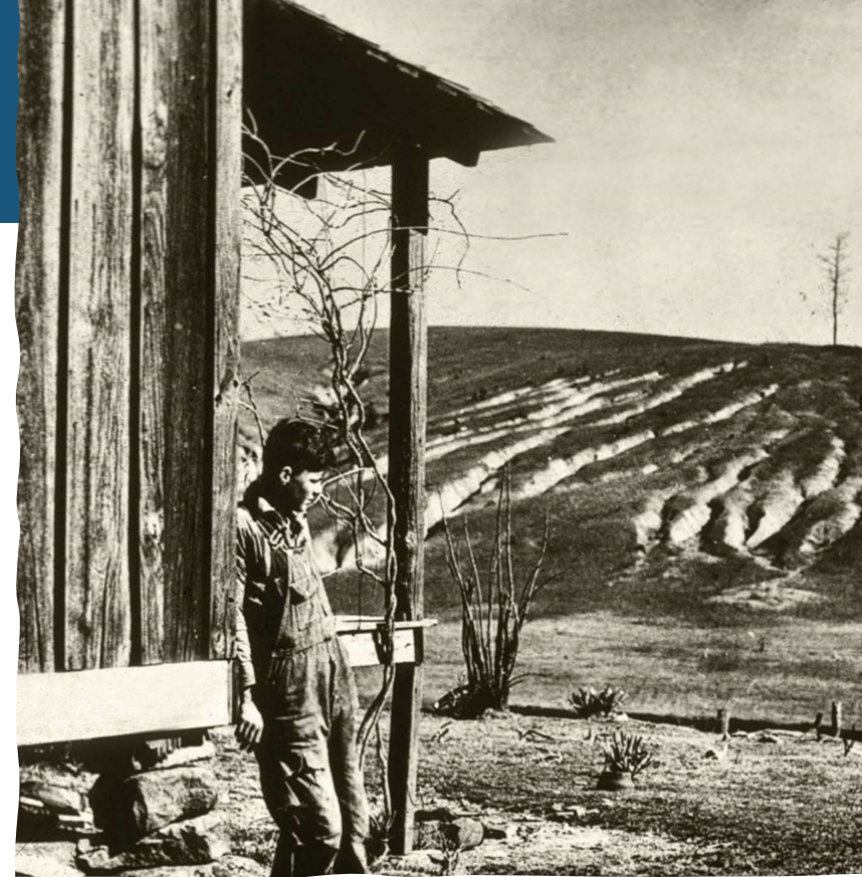
New Conservation District Managers, September, 2024

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



What is Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)?

- Dust Bowl - 1930
 - Soil Erosion Service
 - Soil Conservation Service
 - Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Address Resource Concerns
- Voluntary Conservation Planning
- Non-Regulatory Agency
- Nationwide Field Offices





Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resources...



Soil



Water



Air



Plants



Animals



Energy



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Conservation Service

What does NRCS do?

- Financial Programs (EQIP, AMA, CSP)
- Conservation Planning
 - Resource Concern Evaluations
 - Soil Health Assessments
 - Recommendations
 - Aerial Maps (Soils, Topo, etc.)
 - Designs
- Technical Assistance
 - Irrigation/engineering designs
 - Plan out practices per grower's goals
- Technical training/workshops

Get Started
at your
**USDA Urban
Service Center**

URBAN 
AGRICULTURE
AND INNOVATIVE PRODUCTION

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



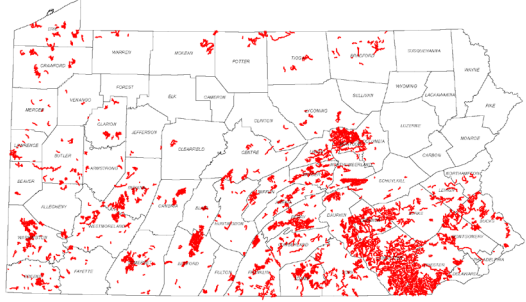
Technical Assistance

- Trained field planners
- Recommendations to improve sustainability
- Conservation Plan = Map of Opportunities
- Availability subject to workload of local office staff

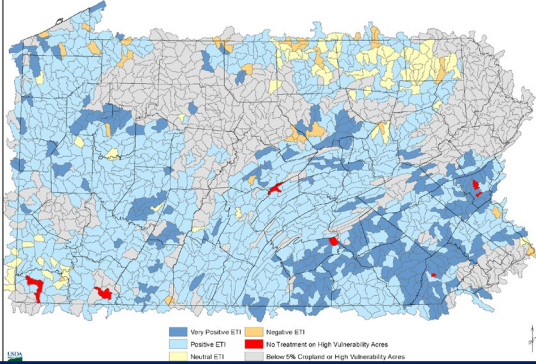


Services are free
and confidential!

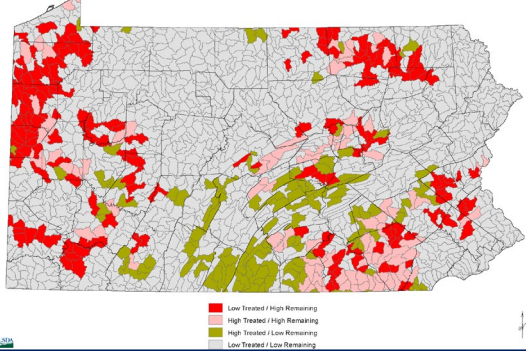
Agricultural Impaired Streams



CCBI High Effective Targeting Index for Surface Loss



CCBI Priority Acres Treated and Remaining to be Treated for Nitrogen Surface Loss

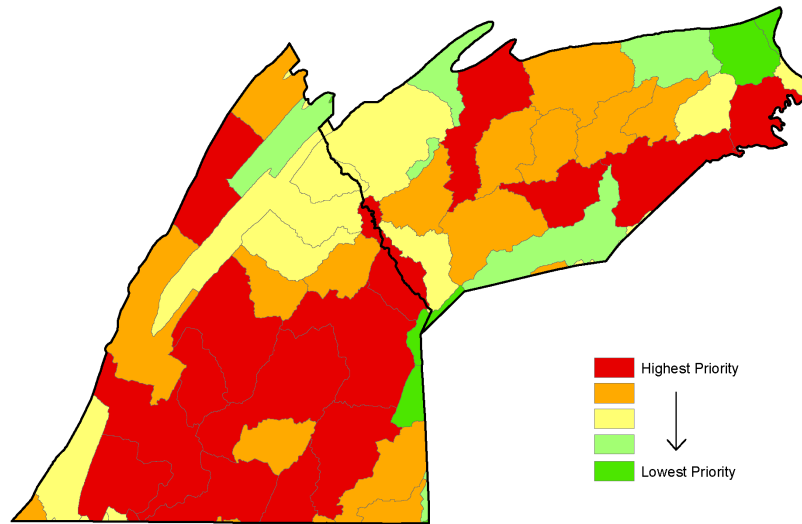


Watershed Priority Maps

Created by combining data from:

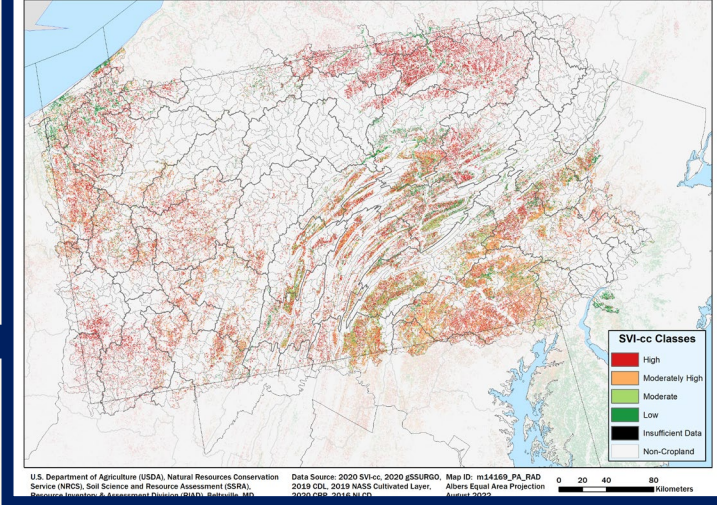
- DEP Agricultural Impaired Streams
- CCBI Effective Targeting Index
- CCBI Priority Acres Treated/Remaining
- Soil Vulnerability Index for Cultivated Cropland
- USGS SPARROW Model for Nitrogen and Phosphorous

*Watershed Priority Level
Cumberland and Franklin Counties*

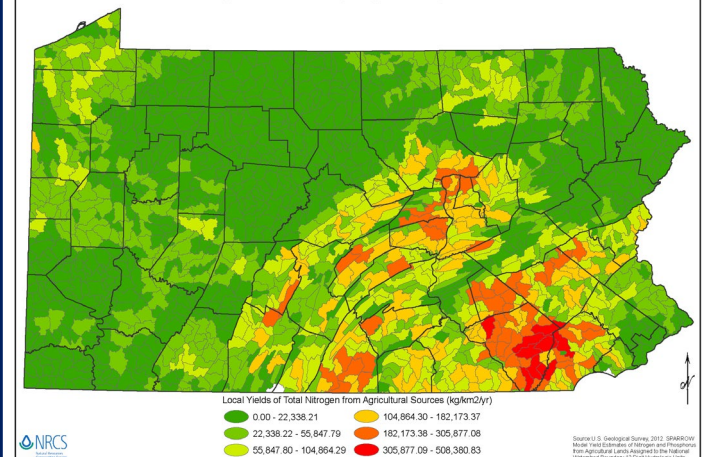


Priority level set based on DEP Agricultural Impaired Streams, USGS SPARROW data for nitrogen and phosphorus, and USDA - NRCS CCBI data.

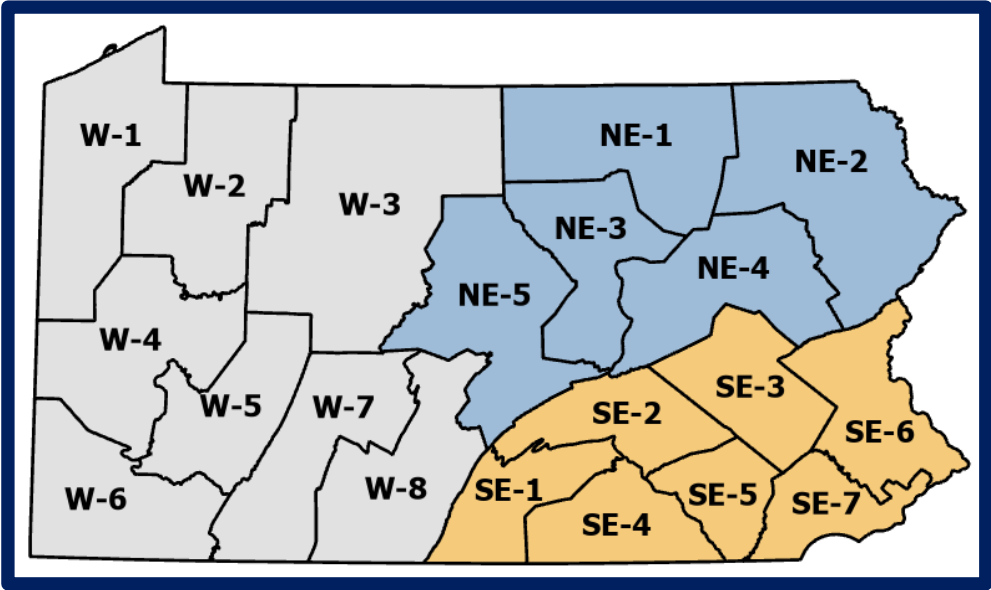
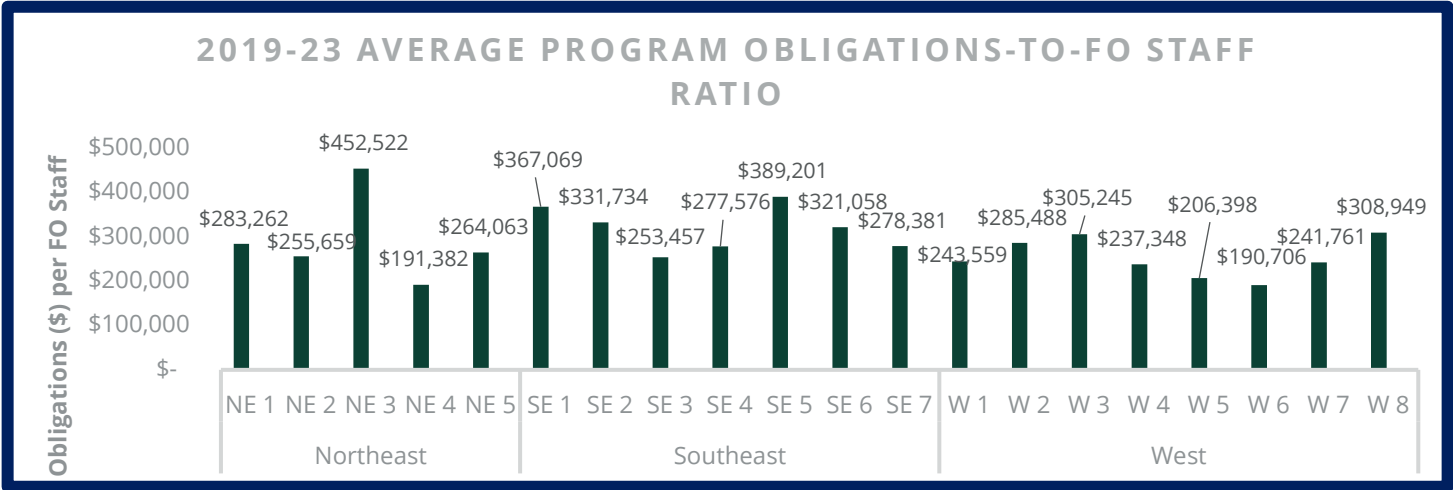
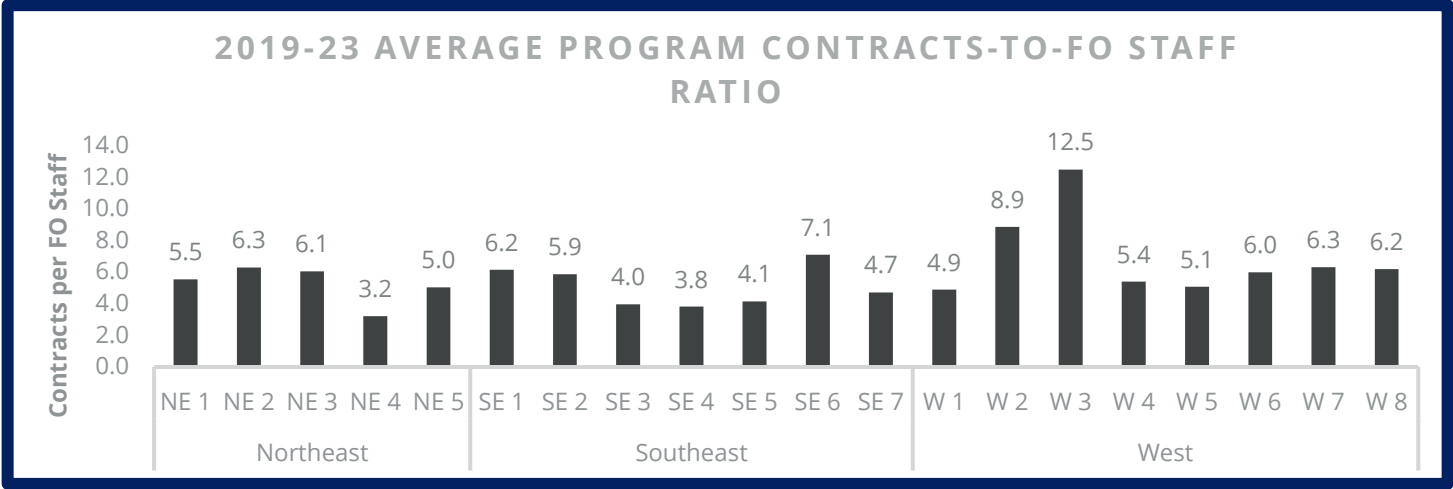
Pennsylvania - Soil Vulnerability Index for Cultivated Cropland (SVI-cc) Surface Loss



Local Yields of Total Nitrogen from Agricultural Sources



2019 – 2023 Average Programs Workload by Field Team

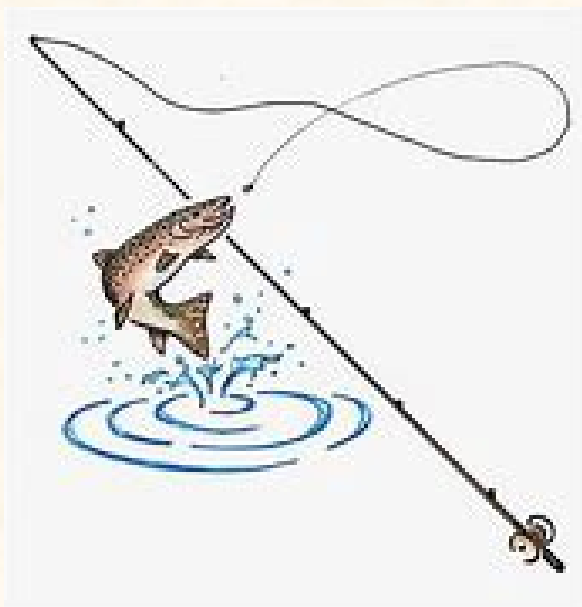


Technical Expertise

- **The Center for Agricultural Conservation Assistance Training** - The mission of the Center for Agricultural Conservation Assistance Training is to help farmers, ag landowners, and conservation professionals implement best practices, ensure the health of land and water in our communities, and leverage funding and partnerships.
- The Center was formed in 2023 with partners at NRCS, SCC, and PSU.
- Increased staffing to assist with higher workload (EQIP/ACAP) to help get additional conservation on the ground
- Partnered on projects that are funded by both EQIP/RCPP and ACAP
- Continue to offer Technical Trainings to get NRCS and partner staff the training they need to succeed



NRCS & Partner Technical Trainings 2024



Discipline Lead	Name	Length (days)	Trainers			Attendees		
			NRCS	Non-NRCS	Total	NRCS	Non-NRCS	Total
Eng	ACA and Manure Storage (Act 38)	1	1	1	2	11	22	33
Eng	ACA and Manure Storage (Act 38)	1	1	1	2	11	22	33
Eng	Basic Survey Training (Southeast Area) - October 17, 2023	1	6	0	6	2	4	6
Eng	Basic Survey Training (West Area) - July 2023	1	6	0	6	11	28	39
Eng/Soils/ES	Boot Camp Basic (4 days + 3 virtual half days)	5.5	23	12	35	7	29	36
Eng/Soils/ES	Boot Camp II - April 29-May 3 (5 days + 2 virtual half days)	6	27	0	27	11	24	35
Eng/Soils/ES	Boot Camp II (Agronomy Only) - May 13-17	5	17	0	17	7	15	22
ES	Certified Planner Training Part Two - September 2024	5	9	0	9	12	8	20
Eng	Concrete Fundamentals - May 2024	5	7	0	7	20	10	30
Soils	Conservation Desktop Training - December 2023	3	2	0	2	7	8	15
Soils	Conservation Desktop Training - March 2024	3	2	0	2	7	8	15
Eng	Construction Inspection (Northeast Area) - March 12, 2024	1	6	0	6	22	12	34
Eng	Construction Inspection (West Area) - Fall 2024	1	4	0	4	11	28	39
Eng	Cultural Resources Modules 7-8	2.5	1	0	1	12	18	30
Eng	Engineering Technician's Workshop (Southeast Area) - 3/14/24	1	14	4	18	33	21	54
ES	Fence Training (Northeast Area) - June 18, 2024	1	1	1	2	14	9	23
ES	Fencing/Grazing Management (Southeast Area) - 1/25/24	1	2	2	4	16	6	22
ES	Fencing/Grazing Management (Southeast Area) - 1/30/24	1	2	2	4	15	6	21
ES	Fencing/Grazing Management (Southeast Area) - 2/28/24	1	2	2	4	15	5	20
ES	Forage Physiology and Grazing Management (Northeast Area) - 12/2024	0.1	1	0	1	35	5	40
ES	Grazing Training (Northeast Area) - February 22, 2024	1	1	0	1	16	2	18
Eng	Hydrology Training (Southeast Area) - December 5, 2023	1	3	0	3	2	2	4
Soils	Interagency Basic Wetland Identification Training (5/21-24/24 - Bald Eagle State Park)	4	3	1	4	7	28	35
Soils	Interagency Basic Wetland Identification Training (6/25-28/24 - Raystown Lake)	4	3	1	4	7	28	35
ES	Introduction to Conservation Planning (5/7-9/24)	3	9	0	9	15	15	30
ES	Introduction to Conservation Planning (November 2024)	3	9	0	9	15	15	30
ES	Nutrient Management Orientation - March 13, 2024	1	2	3	5	10	30	40
ES	Nutrient Management Orientation - August 6, 2024	1	2	3	5	10	30	40
ES	P Index Workshop - April 18, 2024	1	2	3	5	6	18	24
ES	P Index Workshop - October 3, 2024	1	2	3	5	6	18	24
ES	RUSLE2 field Office/Field Team training (multiple sessions per year)	1	1	0	1	5	2	7
ES	RUSLE2 field Office/Field Team training (multiple sessions per year)	1	1	0	1	5	2	7
ES	RUSLE2 field Office/NE Field Team training - July/August 2024	1	1	0	1	6	2	8
ES	RUSLE2 field Office/NE Field Team training - July/August 2024	1	1	0	1	6	2	8
Eng	Site Visits & Engineering I&E's (Northeast Area) - Feb 7, 2024	1	3	0	3	20	4	24
Soils/ES	Soil Health and Sustainability Training for Field Staff	3	10	0	10	8	12	20
ES	Stormwater & Soil Loss Workshop - April 16-17, 2024	2	2	3	5	6	18	24
ES	Stormwater & Soil Loss Workshop - October 1-2, 2024	2	2	3	5	6	18	24
Eng	Terrace Training (Northeast Area)	1	1	0	1	15	2	17
TOTALS		79.1	192	45	237	450	536	986

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Partnership Agreements, Ongoing

- Conservation District Agreements (managed by PACD):
 - Direct agreements with Districts: 7.8 FTE
 - DEP: 7 FTE Engineers/Technicians (TAG)
 - SCC: 5 FTE Engineers/6 FTE for Planners
 - NRCS pays 75% of staffing; Partners by 25% and Administrative Costs*
- Bootcamp agreement current obligation \$153,446 NRCS funds.
 - NRCS 50% PACD 50%
- Mentoring Cadre with SCC – 6 staff providing mentoring FY25
NRCS cost exceeds 160,000 per year. NEW ACES agreement estimate 900,000 for the cadre positions
- PF Biologists with PGC: 10; Forestry positions with PGC 3, 2 ABC

3 Guidelines for how NRCS & partners will work together

1) Offer similar / same incentive payments for practices

2) Use NRCS practice standards and specifications

3) Collaborate on funding to minimize farmer out-of-pocket expenses





NRCS Estimated Financial and Technical Assistance

	<u>FY 2022</u>		<u>FY 2023</u>		<u>FY 2024</u>		<u>FY 2025</u>	
	Contracts	FA \$	Contracts	FA \$	Contracts	FA \$	Contracts	FA \$
EQIP	436	\$ 29,000,000	468	\$ 29,000,000	677	\$ 62,000,000	880	\$ 80,000,000
CSP	220	\$ 10,000,000	318	\$ 11,000,000	304	\$ 12,000,000	395	\$ 15,000,000
NRCS Technical Staff	128		151		176		200	

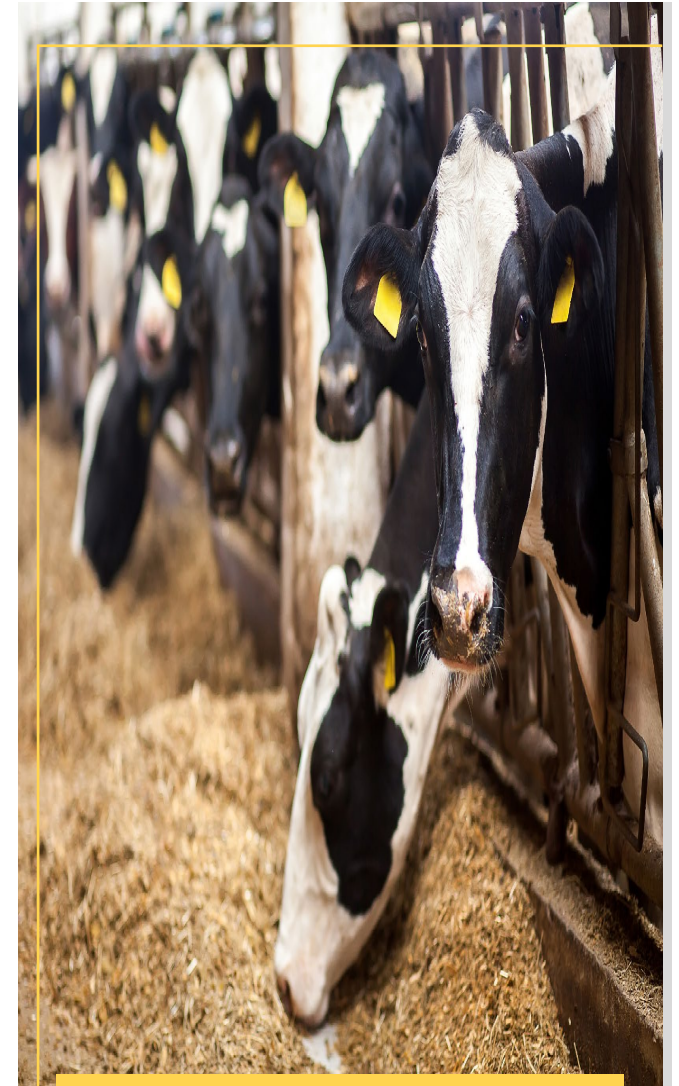
EQIP & ACAP Partnering on Projects

- The numbers in the table below are actual (FY23 and earlier) EQIP obligated/contracted amounts that have an active ACAP contract tied to it.

Obligated			
	# of Contracts	EQIP Amount	ACAP Amount
SE	65	\$9,203,786.15	\$8,676,461.53
West	64	\$7,973,135.00	\$6,220,821.00
NE	36	\$6,610,308.77	\$6,615,338.05
total	165	\$23,787,229.92	\$21,512,620.58

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

EQIP provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers and non-industrial forest managers to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, increased soil health and reduced soil erosion and sedimentation, improved or created wildlife habitat, and mitigation against drought and increasing weather volatility.



Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)

- AMA helps agricultural producers manage financial risk through diversification, marketing or natural resource conservation practices. NRCS administers the conservation provisions while Agricultural Marketing Service and Risk Management Agency implement the production diversification and marketing provisions.
- Popular conservation practices:
- Cover crops, irrigation, integrated pest management, high tunnels, and many others
- Pennsylvania is one of 16 states where AMA is available.



Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

- CSP helps you build on your existing conservation efforts while strengthening your operation. Whether you are looking to improve grazing conditions, increase crop resiliency, or develop wildlife habitat, we can custom design a CSP plan to help you meet those goals.
 - A focus on enhanced management
 - Two resource concerns addressed, plus one
 - Base payment and enhancement payments.



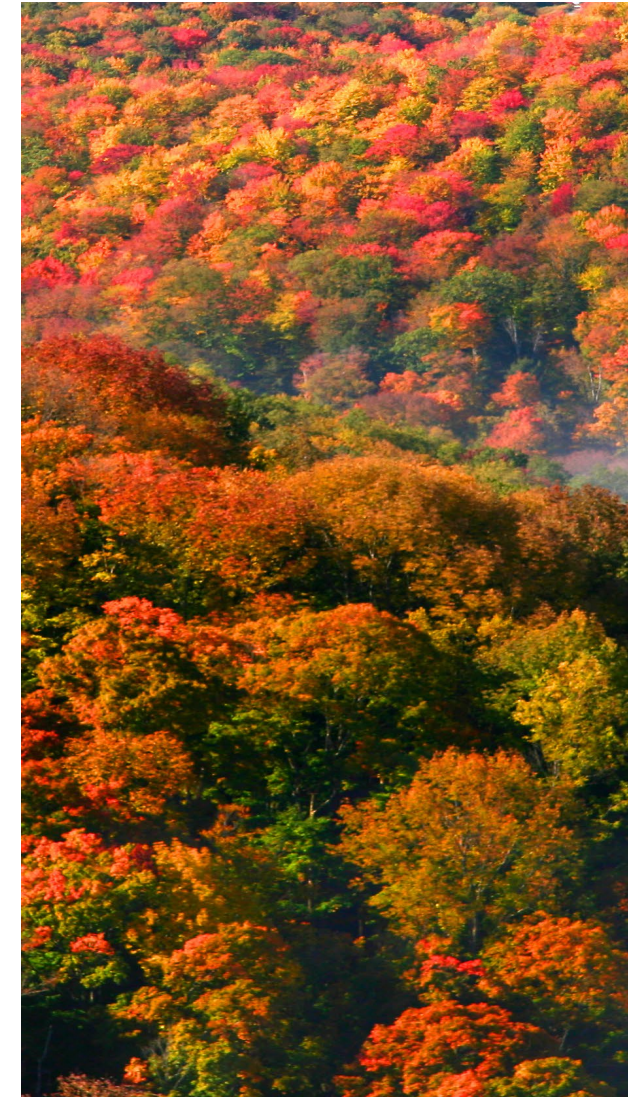
Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

- Restore, protect, and enhance wetlands on eligible land.
- protect the agricultural use, viability, and related conservation values of eligible land by limiting non-agricultural uses.
- Protect grazing uses and related conservation values by restoring and conserving eligible land.



Regional Conservation Partnership Program

- RCPP is offered at the State and Federal level and works to promote coordination between NRCS and partners to deliver conservation assistance. Landowners are only eligible to participate in an active RCPP project area if the land to be enrolled falls within that project boundary. A partnering entity needs to apply for funds in your area to be eligible for assistance.

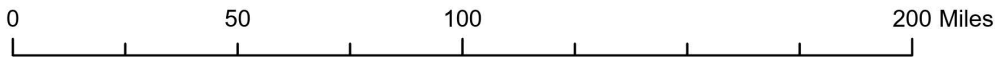
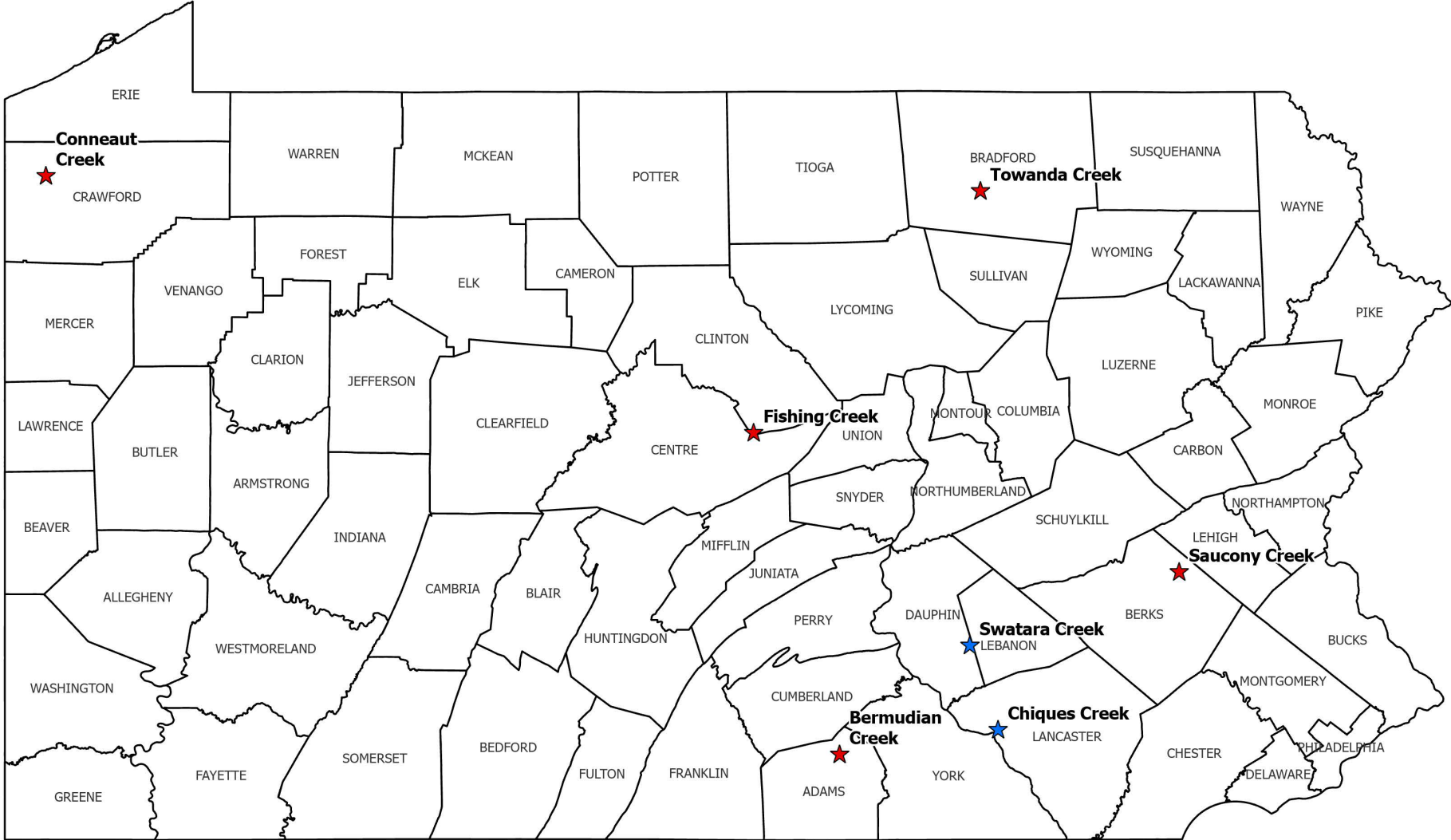




Farm Bill 2018 RCPP Projects

Project	NRCS Funding	Partner Funding
Kittatinny Ridge Conservation Landscape	\$9,928,571	\$38,982,500
Ag BMP Implementation in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed	\$2,232,143	\$2,294,875
Buffalo Creek Watershed Conservation Alliance	\$1,169,618	\$1,163,815
Lancaster's Common Agenda for Clean Water	\$7,400,000	\$13,244,890
Turkey Hill Clean Water Partnership	\$4,000,000	\$5,707,993
Healing Mine-Scarred Landscapes via Restoration	\$2,178,500	\$3,598,745.78
Farmland Preservation and Climate Change Mitigation	\$7,850,000	\$12,795,255
Delisting Ag-Impaired Streams in Central PA	\$9,996,006	\$11,495,313
Scaling Adoption of Adaptive Nutrient Management	\$21,723,626	\$15,284,303
Mid-Atlantic Dairy Climate Smart Solutions	\$10,000,000	\$3,789,900
Total	\$76,478,464	\$105,997,113

Super Gauge Station Locations



- ★ Selected Sites
- ★ Funded Sites

