



2018 Federal Farm Bill

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Background

- ▶ 5-year authorizations for USDA programs
 - ▶ Title II: Conservation
 - ▶ Enacted in December
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Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

- Authorized, Mandatory Funding Level increases from \$100 M/year to \$300 M/year
- Two Funding Pools– State and Critical Conservation Areas
 - Eliminated National Pool (40%)
 - Split is now 50/50
- Agreements can exceed 5 years if necessary
- Agreements can be extended for one 5-year period
- Alternative Funding Arrangements for “block grants” (no more than 15/year)



CRP/CREP

- Acreage cap increases from 24 M to 27 M acres by 2023
- Cost-share payments retained at 50%
- 100% Riparian Buffer management payments to maintain and enhance
- Food-producing woody plants allowed
- Reimbursement for installation costs and practice incentive payments (PIP) prior to full completion of the entire practice.



Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

- Funding increased from \$1.75 B in 2019 to \$2.025 B in 2023
- States may identify up to 10 most effective conservation practices eligible to receive 90% cost share.
- Allows for 5 to 10-year contracts.
- Reduces livestock set aside from 60% to 50% (grazing and CAFO)



Other Conservation Title Highlights

- Fully funds Conservation Title over 10 years
- Funding for Conservation Easements (ACEP) raised to \$450 M/year (\$2 B 10-year total increase)
- Climate and soil health-smart provisions included in CSP and EQIP
- USDA analysis of practice costs and payment rates to remain competitive and address local natural resource concerns



Next Steps

- ▀ Implementation rules
 - ▀ Project coordination
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