USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# News Release

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## NRCS in Michigan Accepting Applications for Conservation Programs

**EAST LANSING, Sept. 29, 2026 –** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) continues to put Farmers First through a historic investment in conservation on agricultural lands through USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) as a result of the conservation funding provided by the Working Families Tax Cuts Act.

"We know that America's producers know the land the best and are the best stewards," said NRCS State Conservationist Diane Gray in Michigan. "We encourage producers interested in conserving natural resources and keeping their operations productive, profitable and sustainable for future generations to contact their local NRCS office."

While NRCS accepts applications year-round, interested agricultural producers in Michigan should apply by Oct. 30, 2026, to be considered for fiscal year 2027 funding. Programs include:

- Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP): The Agricultural Land Easement component of ACEP enables producers to protect their agricultural land from development by enrolling it in a permanent Agricultural Land Easement. The Wetland Reserve Easement component of ACEP helps landowners protect, restore and enhance wetlands which have been previously degraded due to agricultural uses.
- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP): CSP helps producers build on existing conservation efforts while strengthening their operation.
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP): EQIP provides producers with the technical and financial resources they need to address resource concerns on their land including improved water and air quality, increased soil health, reduced soil erosion, improved natural vitality and more.
- Applications eligible for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) or applications containing stand-alone Conservation Activities, that meet a set ranking threshold, may be eligible to be approved and obligated prior to a final ranking of all applications through the Act Now funding process. Act Now allows producers to implement designated conservation practices or activities faster than through the traditional funding process.

- The Regional Conservation Partnership Program has funding available to producers through the Upper Tittabawassee River Regional Conservation project. Financial assistance is available for designated practices, some of these include cover crops, nutrient management plans, conservation buffers, and filter strips. This funding is available only in the designated project area which includes portions of Midland and Gladwin counties.

NRCS is also providing additional financial assistance nationwide through the Regenerative Pilot Program (RPP), which enables producers to implement whole-farm regenerative practices through a single application for EQIP and CSP. RPP is part of USDA's commitment to putting Farmers First and advancing the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) agenda by building a healthier, more resilient food system.

For more than 90 years, NRCS has helped farmers, ranchers and forestland owners make investments in their operations and local communities to improve the quality of our air, water, soil, and wildlife habitat. NRCS uses the latest science and technology to help keep working lands working, boost agricultural economies, and increase the competitiveness of American agriculture. NRCS provides one-on-one, technical advice and financial assistance and works with producers to help them reach their goals through voluntary, incentive-based conservation programs. For more information, visit nrcs.usda.gov.

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