

CTA CONSERVATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

CTA is one of the most FUNDAMENTAL CONSERVATION PROGRAMS NRCS uses to accomplish its goals. CTA provides voluntary conservation technical assistance to landowners, communities, units of state and local government, and other Federal agencies in planning and implementing conservation systems.

CTA in 2007

NRCS employees in New Mexico work from 37 field offices to help the state's farmers and ranchers realize the best conservation on the ground. New Mexico has leveraged this program to make great strides to:

- Deliver science-based technology to our customers
- Provide a local presence in the communities with our conservation partners
- Ensure one-on-one assistance in the voluntary conservation of our natural resources

This work is achieved in the field by our soil conservationists, rangeland management specialists, and soil conservation technicians supported by a cadre of resource conservationists, soil scientists, engineers, administrators, and other specialists.

Congressional District	1	2	3
Just Some of Our Specialists Working in Your Area			
Soil Conservationists	8	24	27
Rangeland Management Specialists	1	12	4
Soil Conservation Technicians	2	4	8
State Total	11	40	39

NRCS New Mexico obligated \$19,058,312 for technical assistance in 2007. This included all technical assistance - both that provided through conservation technical assistance and that which was part of the implementation of other Farm Bill programs.

OTHER NRCS INITIATIVES

SOIL SURVEY

The National Cooperative Soil Survey Program, under the leadership of NRCS, inventories soils, interprets their uses and suitability, publishes the results, and keeps information current of the lands of the United States. Soil survey data is useful to everyone who utilizes the nation's soils in construction activities, to grow crops and livestock, and manage natural resources. Over 90 percent of New Mexico has published soil surveys for public use. Current efforts are focused on updating soil maps at a rate of one million acres per year with continuous updates to the statewide tabular data systems. New data delivery tools provide more accurate, better interpreted, and easier public access of soils information for everyone ranging from backyard gardeners, farmers and ranchers, developers, land managers, and national policy makers.

SNOW SURVEY

NRCS performs the snow surveys throughout New Mexico that are used to develop snow runoff forecasts from January through May. These forecasts are invaluable to irrigation organizations, city managers, and others who depend on our water supply through the summer.

PLANT MATERIALS CENTER

The Los Lunas Plant Material Center has been focused on developing new planting methodologies and plant material stock types, to improve plant establishment and reduce costs of restoring native vegetation at sites where non-native phreatophytic vegetation has been treated. The Center has established more than 30 demonstration plantings in the New Mexico bosque, and provided hands-on workshops on these new planting methodologies. Interested field offices have received 100 varieties of plant materials, and in a typical year, 15,000 plants materials are distributed.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

RC&Ds are concerned about the quality of New Mexico's natural resources, and how they can support strong, successful communities throughout the state. Examples of their work include the acquisition of dry hydrants, wildlife habitat improvements, and assistance in organizing for effective weed in multiple counties.

BUSINESS LINES AND PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

In fulfilling its stated mission, NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to landowners and managers. This technical and financial assistance is delivered through business lines. Business lines are groups of similar products and services that Agency employees deliver to external customers. There are core products and services under the business lines.

BUSINESS LINES	DESCRIPTION
Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation	NRCS provides data, information, or technical expertise that helps people collect and analyze information to identify natural resource problems and opportunities, clarify their objectives, and formulate and evaluate alternatives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Plans reflect a customer's decisions about the management of natural resources for a specific area-which may be a farm or ranch operating unit, a group of units, a community, or a landscape feature such as a watershed. • Technical Consultations and Planning Assistance provide professional advice that helps customers make decisions about natural resource management.
Conservation Implementation	NRCS helps customers install on their land conservation practices and systems that meet established technical standards and specifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designs allow for the application of engineering and management practices (practice survey, practice design, field layout of conservation practices, and so forth) • Follow-up ensures the treatment is working properly and identifies if additional treatment is needed. • Checks and Reviews are formal program status reviews of land where program contracts are in effect or subject to conservation compliance.
Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment	NRCS assesses, acquires, develops, interprets, analyzes, and delivers natural resource data and information to enable knowledge-based natural resource planning and decision making at all landscape scales. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Gathering Protocols ensure that reliable natural resource data are acquired and delivered. • Databases and Delivery include the maintenance and delivery of geospatial datasets and information. • Assessments and analyses include the modeling and interpretation of natural resource data to better inform decision makers and facilitate policy development.
Natural Resource Technology Transfer	NRCS develops, documents, and distributes a wide array of technology pertaining to resource assessment, conservation planning, and conservation systems installation and evaluation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology Tools include conservation standards, specifications, guides and references, and modeling systems. • NRCS has automated much of this technology to facilitate sound conservation decisions by the public. • Training and Certification include technical training to external customers and administration of certification standards and procedures. • Plant Materials and related technologies provide for better land treatment.
Financial Assistance	NRCS provides financial assistance to encourage the adoption of land treatment practices that have been proven to provide significant benefits to the public. Financial assistance is awarded to participants who voluntarily enter into contracts, easements, and agreements to conserve natural resources. Financial assistance is provided through: Cost-share/Incentives, Easements, Grants, and Stewardship Payments.

USDA FARM BILL AND OTHER PROGRAMS

The Conservation programs authorized by the 2002 Farm Bill help to provide the support needed to reduce the gap between the level of environmental quality the general public demands and the level of environmental quality farmers and ranchers can provide.

FY-07 Expenditures by Congressional District			
Congressional District	Financial Assistance	Technical Assistance	Totals
1	\$ 1,686,402	\$ 1,129,945	\$ 2,816,347
2	\$ 8,969,154	\$10,959,654	\$19,928,808
3	\$ 7,005,112	\$ 7,859,776	\$14,864,888

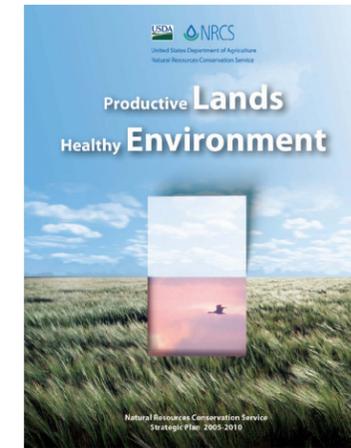
FY-07 Expenditures by Program by Congressional District				
Congressional District	1	2	3	Total
Environmental Quality Incentives Program	A voluntary program that provides technical, educational, and financial assistance to eligible farmers and ranchers to address soil, water, and related natural resource concerns on their land in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner.			
	\$ 1,250,937	\$ 8,537,245	\$ 6,719,617	\$16,507,799
Federal/Private Cooperative Conservation	Part of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program that is voluntary and facilitates conservation on an entire ranching operation where parts of the rangeland are federally owned.			
		\$ 1,163,662		\$ 1,163,662
Ground & Surface Water Conservation	A voluntary program that helps conserve water. An example is the Ogallala Aquifer area.			
		\$ 594,750	\$ 133,073	\$ 727,823
Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program	A voluntary program that encourages creation of high quality wildlife habitat that support wildlife populations of national, state, Tribal, and local significance.			
		\$ 90,697	\$ 108,586	\$ 199,283
Wetlands Reserve Program	A voluntary land retirement program that provides technical and financial assistance to eligible landowners to address wetland, wildlife habitat, soil, water, and related natural resource concerns on private lands.			
			\$ 16,500	\$ 16,500
Conservation Security Program	A voluntary stewardship program that supports ongoing stewardship of private agricultural lands by providing payments for maintaining and enhancing natural resources.			
	\$ 14,700	\$ 573,300	\$ 882,000	\$ 1,470,000
Farm & Ranchland Protection Program	A voluntary program that helps landowners keep their productive land in agriculture through conservation easements limiting conversion of property to non-agricultural uses.			
	\$ 420,765			\$ 420,765
Watershed Rehabilitation	A voluntary program that offers assistance to local sponsors in evaluating and updating as necessary dams constructed with certain types of federal assistance.			
		\$ 157,000	\$ 340,000	\$ 497,000
Watershed & Flood Prevention	A voluntary program for flood prevention; conservation, development, planning, utilization and disposal of water; and conservation and proper utilization of land.			
		\$ 356,189	\$ 48,000	\$ 404,189

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USDA-NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE



USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has released its 2005-2010 Strategic Plan. It outlines the long-term goals, objectives, and strategies to achieve effective results for productive lands and a healthy environment.

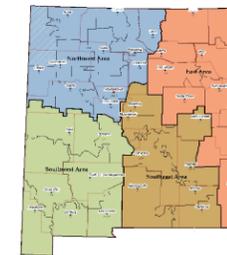
The Plan, called "Productive Lands-Healthy Environment," can be found on the national NRCS Web site at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/about/strategicplan/>. Hard copies are available at 1-888-LANDCARE.

NRCS remains committed to high quality, productive soils; clean and abundant water; and healthy plant and animal communities through its Foundation Goals. However, it also introduced emerging natural resource concerns in the form of Venture Goals for air quality, an adequate energy supply, and working farms and ranch lands. NRCS plans to expand its role in these areas under the new Plan.

NRCS activities will be guided by the three overarching strategies - the watershed approach, a market-based approach, and cooperative conservation - as the Agency works to achieve the six goals.

Helping People Help the Land

New Mexico USDA-NRCS Area and Field Offices



Access to NRCS services typically begins with a visit to any of our 37 field offices located throughout New Mexico, and supported by Area Offices in Clovis, Carrizozo, Socorro, and Albuquerque. There are 47 soil and water conservation districts and eight Resource Conservation & Development offices and councils. Close relationships between NRCS and its state, soil and water conservation district, and federal partners are realized through both traditional and unique programs. Special cooperative efforts with the soil and water conservation districts and federal agencies enable NRCS to assist New Mexico farmers and ranchers to better access Farm Bill programs - and address conservation concerns on ranchlands where parts of the rangeland is federally owned.

Resource Concerns	Program	Dollars in Millions	# of Contracts	Subtotal
Grazing Non-Tribal	EQIP	\$6.6	201	
Grazing Tribal	EQIP	\$0.2	2	
Grazing Fed/EQIP	EQIP	\$1.2	18	\$8.0=221 Contracts
Water Non-Tribal	EQIP	\$6.1	243	
Water G&SW	EQIP	\$0.7	14	
Water Tribal	EQIP	\$0.6	14	
Water Small Acreage	EQIP	\$30 Thousand	3	\$7.4=274 Contracts
Animal Feeding Operations	EQIP	\$2.6	23	
Woodland	EQIP	\$0.4	9	
Wildlife	WHIP	\$0.2	12	
Total		\$18.6	539	

EQIP = Environmental Quality Incentives Program

WHIP = Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program