



Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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PA NRCS



PA NRCS & Brook Trout

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

Objectives

- What NRCS Does
 - Programs
 - Practices
- What Can We Do Better





NRCS

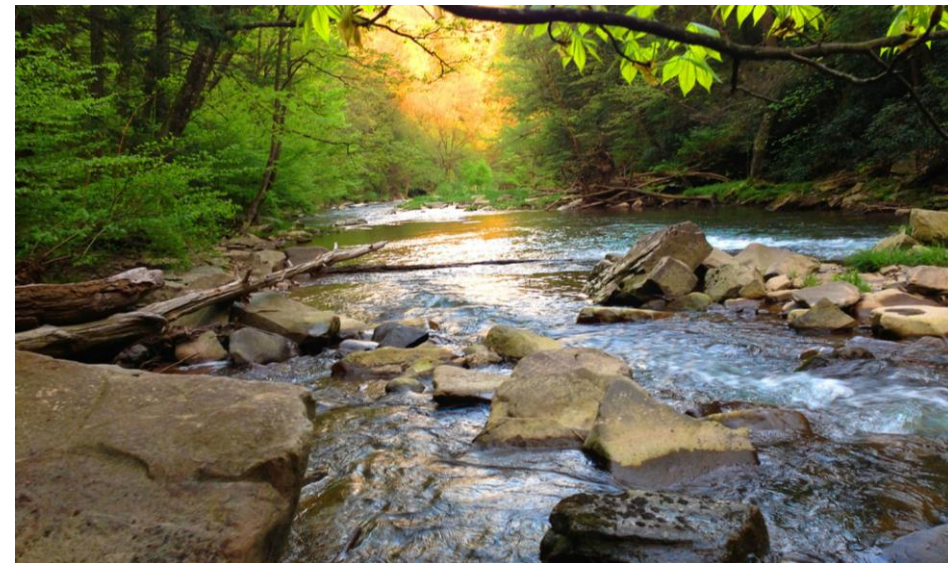
Our Mission: We deliver conservation solutions so agricultural producers can protect natural resources and feed a growing world.

Our Vision: A world of clean and abundant water, healthy soils, resilient landscapes, and thriving agricultural communities through voluntary conservation.

- Balance between sustaining economic vitality and ensuring a healthy environment
- Working *Private* lands that sustain a vibrant agricultural economy and produce environmental benefits

Clean Air | Clean & Abundant Water | Healthy Ecosystems

“Helping People Help the Land”





How NRCS Works

Financial & Technical Assistance to Non-Industrial Private Landowners

Voluntary Conservation Programs



Goal: Address Natural Resource Concerns

Inquiry ⇒ Site Visit ⇒ Technical Assistance

Financial Assistance

Conservation Programs

Farm Bills Give NRCS Authority to Apply Conservation Program Funds on Private Non-Industrial Lands:

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
 - Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
 - Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)
 - Agriculture Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)
- *CREP/CRP - FSA*



EQIP



The NRCS Workhorse

- Addresses existing problems (Resource Concerns) on various land uses including Forest lands, Crop land and Pasture.
- Individual initiatives focus on different regionally identified problems or planning efforts
- Provide assistance to complete conservation practices typically through 2 to 5 year contracts. Up to 10 year contracts.

CSP

Maintain Existing Management Systems & Improve Conservation Efforts

To participate, you must meet or exceed the stewardship threshold on all land uses for both of the following:

- At least two resource concerns at the time of contract offer.
 - At least one additional resource concern by the end of the contract
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- 5 year contracts
 - Payments consist of 2 components:
 1. Annual payment maintaining the existing stewardship level
 2. Payment for installing the new enhancement activity or conservation practices (10% of EQIP rate)



Forest Management Plans

- Required for Forestry Contracts
- The FMP may be any of the following types:
 - A **NRCS Funded Plan:** (Requires TSP)
 - **(CPA-106) Conservation Planned Activity**
 - **(DIA 165) Design & Implementation Activity**
 - A **Forest Stewardship Plan:** that meets current national guidelines
 - A **Tree Farm Plan:** that meets the National Forest Management Plan Template
 - **Another plan** approved by the NRCS State Conservationist.



Conservation Practices

- Forest Stand Improvement
- Tree & Shrub Planting
 - Tree/Shrub Site Prep
- Riparian Forest Buffer
- Road/Trail/Landing Closure & Treatment



Conservation Practices (Not Forestry)

- Access Control
- Fence
- Stream Crossing
- Critical Area Planting
- Bank Stabilization
- Stream Habitat Improvements
- Aquatic Organism Passage
- Dam Removal



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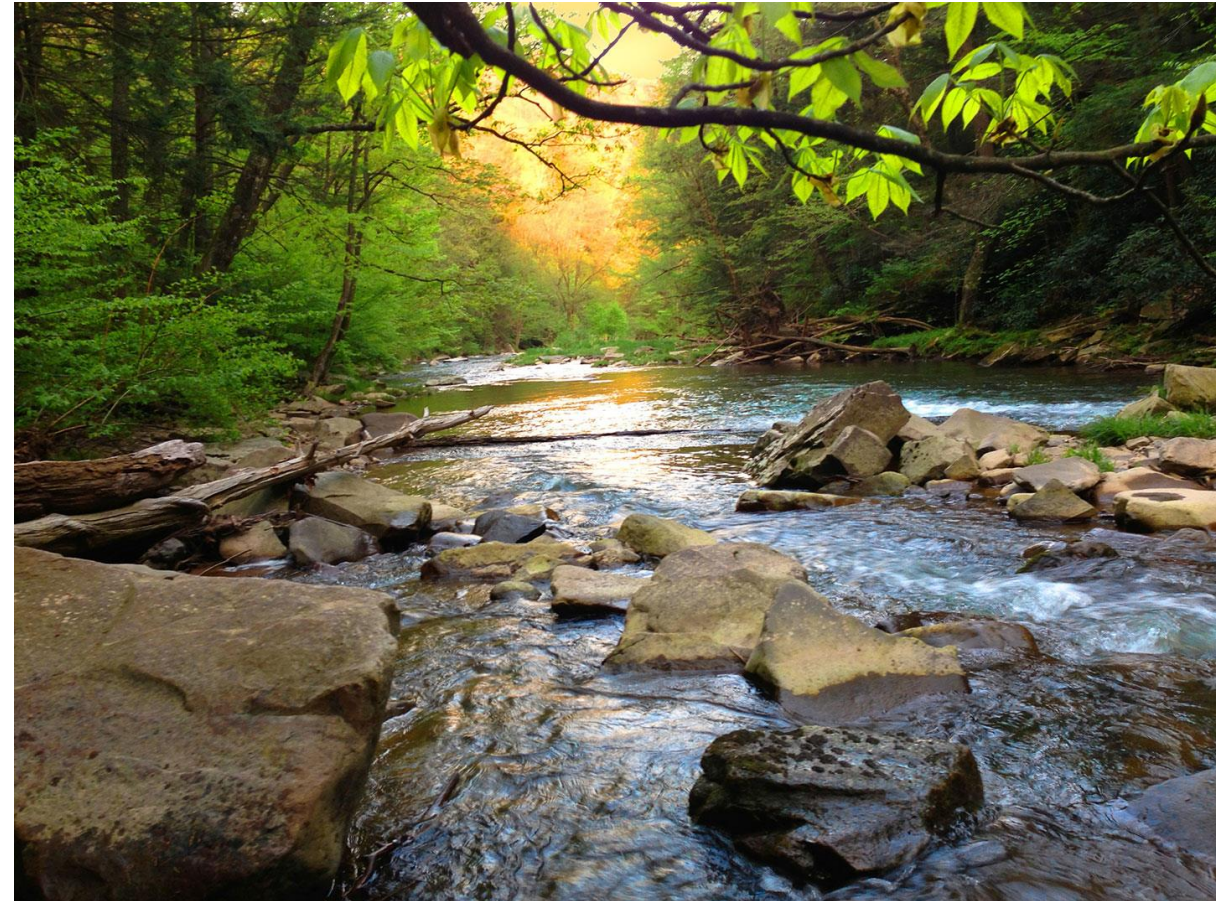
- No Direct Management or Mitigation
- Key Watersheds Are Recognized in Ranking Process
 - Key Watersheds Get Priority



What Can NRCS Do Better?

- Work Closer with Partners
 - RCPP
 - Dedicated Fund Pools
 - Other Cooperation

NRCS does a lot of good work getting conservation on the ground for many different conservation goals. Many of these actions affect brook trout in a positive way. In order to do direct work directly toward brook trout conservation we need partners to help us focus our efforts.



Examples

- 2019 VA Tree Farmer of the Year
- 2 EQIP GWWA Projects
- CSP Forestry
- RCPP with TU
 - Headwaters of Laurel Fork
- Maple Syrup Producer
 - Other Non-Timber Forest Products
- Family Logging Business



Rx Grazing Operation Headwaters of James River

- 62,750' of Stream Exclusion Fence
- 19,500' of Livestock Pipeline
 - 21 Watering Facilities
- 21 Stream Crossings



The background of the slide is a composite image. The left side shows a vast, green mountain valley under a cloudy sky. The right side is a close-up of a fishing scene with a fly fishing rod, reel, and a hand holding a net containing a colorful brook trout.

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