

Farm/Ranch Conservation Issues: NRCS Initiatives



The NRCS has a number of initiatives within their program assistance. The following discussion will cover several of those initiatives.

Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW) Initiative

- Initiative overview
- Conservation model
- WLFW website:
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/?cid=stelprdb1046975>



Through Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW), NRCS works with partners and private landowners to focus voluntary conservation on working landscapes. NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to agricultural producers, helping them plan and implement conservation practices that benefit target species and priority landscapes. Since 2012, NRCS has restored and protected 6.7 million acres of much-needed habitat for a variety of wildlife. These efforts have led to the rebound and recovery of many species, demonstrating the WLFW conservation model works.

This model builds on successes in wildlife conservation over the years. The model includes:

Trust and Credibility: NRCS takes a community, grassroots approach to conservation that's based on the principles of neighborliness.

Shared Vision: NRCS-recommended conservation practices benefit wildlife and agriculture.

Strategic Approach: NRCS directs resources where the biological returns are the highest.

Accountability: NRCS and conservation partners use science to measure conservation effectiveness and quantify outcomes.

Leverage: NRCS brings together partners to multiply investments to achieve more conservation.

Regulatory Predictability: Through WLFW, the NRCS partners with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to provide predictability under the Endangered Species Act, providing peace of mind to participating landowners.

Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW) Initiative

■ Project Areas

- Great sage-grouse
- Lesser prairie-chicken
- Gopher tortoise
- New England cottontail
- Golden-winged warbler
- Southwestern willow flycatcher
- Bog turtle
- Monarch butterfly



WLFW has eight nationally-identified target species. The habitat needs of these species are representative of healthy, functioning ecosystems where conservation efforts benefit a much broader suite of species. Target species include: [Greater sage-grouse](#), [Lesser prairie-chicken](#), [Gopher tortoise](#), [New England cottontail](#), [Golden-winged warbler](#), [Southwestern willow flycatcher](#), [Bog turtle](#), [Monarch butterfly](#). Additionally, WLFW has 11 projects, which are further accelerating conservation activities for many different species on a variety of working landscapes in 30 states from Florida to Alaska.

Projects focus on declining species that have needs compatible with agricultural practices and rural land management and that can benefit from conservation on private lands. Projects cover the northern bobwhite, rare turtles in the Northeast, salmon in Alaska and many others.

To learn more about assistance available to **agricultural producers** through WLFW, contact your [local USDA service center](#).

Soil Health Initiative

- Initiative overview
- Soil health videos
- Resources for landowners
- Soil Health website:
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/soils/health/>



As world population and food production demands rise, keeping soil healthy and productive is of paramount importance. By farming using soil health principles and systems that include no-till, cover cropping and diverse rotations, more and more farmers are increasing their soil's organic matter and improving microbial activity. As a result, farmers are sequestering more carbon, increasing water infiltration, improving wildlife and pollinator habitat—all while harvesting better profits and often better yields.

Soil health resources are designed to help people understand the basics and benefits of soil health—and to learn about Soil Health Management Systems from farmers who are using those systems.

Soil health videos are from some of America's top soil health experts and innovative soil health farmers. Videos range from video demonstrations on soil health to videos featuring the men and women who are farming with Soil Health Management Systems.

Healthy soils are the key to fostering more productive, profitable and sustainable farms—for healthy, sustainable, long-term returns. The Soil Health Information

Starter Kit will provide information on the basics and benefits of soil health, and ideas on how farmer's can use soil health management systems that include cover crops, diverse rotations and no-till practices.

Summary

- Locate your nearest Service Center at:
<https://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>



You may go online to locate your nearest Service Center.