

## **FARM BILL CONSERVATION PROGRAMS ARE POPULAR, EFFECTIVE AND OVERSUBSCRIBED:**

Farm Bill conservation programs are the largest source of conservation funding on private lands. About 70% of all land excluding Alaska is private – nearly 900 million acres. However, current programs don't meet the amount of need for voluntary conservation. Farm Bill conservation programs are routinely oversubscribed. As many as 75% of qualified applicants are turned away. Demand for conservation on 13.8 million acres goes unmet because of inadequate funding every year. More [here](#)

## **THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION HAS SET IMPORTANT GOALS FOR AMERICAN AGRICULTURE'S ROLE IN TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE:**

*"We see farmers making American agriculture first in the world to achieve net-zero emissions and gaining new sources of income in the process."*

- President Joe Biden, [January 27, 2021](#)

*"I think agriculture is probably the first and best way to begin getting some wins in this climate area. I think farmers are prepared for it. Farmers are anxious to do it, if it's voluntary, if it's market based, if it's incentive based, I think you will see farmers, ranchers and producers cooperate extensively."*

- USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack, [February 2, 2021](#)

## **HOW TO ACHIEVE THOSE GOALS: SEN. STABENOW LAYS DOWN MARKER FOR CONSERVATION FUNDING INCREASE:**

*"I'm pushing for \$50 billion more for USDA's traditional conservation programs because the White House's proposal isn't anywhere near enough. We have a once-in-a-decade opportunity to expand these programs and build farm bill baseline at the same time."*

- Senator Stabenow, [May 20, 2021](#)

## **HOW INCREASING CONSERVATION FUNDING FOR FARM BILL PROGRAMS HELPS:**

"Smart land conservation can increase carbon sequestration, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, build resilience to changing environmental conditions, and help communities, landscapes, and wildlife adapt to an ever-changing climate." – [The Conservation Fund](#)

## **SPECIFIC CONSERVATION PROGRAMS FUNDED IN THE FARM BILL THAT WOULD SEE INCREASED FUNDING:**

***Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP and Agricultural Land Easement Program (ALE):*** This program provides matching funds that land trusts can use to purchase conservation easements on agricultural land, grasslands and wetlands. Over the past 25 year, NRCS has worked with landowners to protect more than 4.4 million acres of wetlands and agricultural lands. More [here](#)

***Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP):*** This program funds effective and compelling solutions that address one or more natural resource priorities to help solve natural resource challenges. More [here](#)

**Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP):** A voluntary conservation program that offers farmers and ranchers financial cost-share and technical assistance to implement conservation practices on working agricultural land. More [here](#)

**Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP):** This program offers farmers the opportunity to earn payments for actively managing, maintaining, and expanding conservation activities like cover crops, rotational grazing, ecologically-based pest management, buffer strips, and the transition to organic farming – even while they work their lands for production. More [here](#)

**Conservation Reserve Program (CRP):** In exchange for a yearly rental payment, farmers enrolled in the CRP program agree to remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production and plant species that will improve environmental health and quality. More [here](#)

Read more about each program in this [helpful interactive graphic](#) from the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership.

## **AMERICAN FARMERS ARE READY TO DO THEIR PART TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE:**

*“Agriculture and forestry are central to climate mitigation and adaptation. The agriculture sector accounts for about 10% of current overall U.S. emissions, while U.S forests sequester the equivalent of about 15% of carbon dioxide emissions from combustion of U.S. fossil fuels annually. Through actions in both sectors, agriculture and forests can provide 10- 20% of the additional sequestration and emissions reductions needed to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.”*

- U.S. Department of Agriculture Transition Memo. More [here](#)

Farmers are increasingly being impacted by extreme weather, providing another reason to cut emissions: *“We see more and more farmers acknowledging climate change, actually being affected by it, through droughts or floods or other impacts.”*- Meredith Niles. More [here](#)

According to the 2020 Iowa Farm and Rural Life Poll, 81% of Iowa farmers now say they think climate change is occurring, up from 68% in 2011. More [here](#)

Additional links:

*Farmers are coming around on climate change*, Roll Call, [May 13, 2020](#)

*How young farmers are navigating climate change on their farms*, NBC News, [April 22, 2021](#)

*Farmers Are Warming Up To The Fight Against Climate Change*, NPR, [November 20, 2020](#)

*How a closed-door meeting shows farmers are waking up on climate change*, POLITICO, [December 9, 2019](#)

## **AMERICAN SPORTSMEN AND WOMEN SUPPORT CONSERVATION PROGRAMS AS WELL:**

Conservation title funding also incentivizes property owners to open land access, conserve fish and wildlife habitats. Without them, 40 million sportsmen and women would lose access to hunting and fishing.

Read a report on state-by-state sportsmen and women and outdoor recreation opportunities supported by conservation [here](#)

**OVER 200 FARMER, RANCHER, SPORTSMEN AND WILDLIFE GROUPS ARE NOW CALLING ON THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESS TO DOUBLE INVESTMENT INTO FARM BILL CONSERVATION PROGRAMS THROUGH THE BUILD BACK BETTER PLAN**

*“Increasing baseline funding for the Farm Bill conservation programs and ramping up conservation technical assistance on the ground will enable landowners to mitigate the impacts of drought and flood, improve habitat, improve soil health and long-term food security, create new job opportunities for rural economies, and galvanize the agriculture sector to lead the charge in our fight against climate change. We believe farmers, ranchers, and foresters are ready to move agriculture toward net zero emissions if they are provided the tools and resources to make that goal a reality. Action this year on the climate and infrastructure bill represents the best opportunity in decades to meet farmer demand for conservation programs.”*

Read the full letter here