

# Regional Conservation Partnership Program

Investing in South Dakota



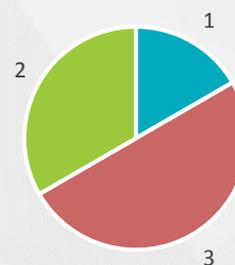
## Regional Conservation Partnership Program

Created by the 2014 Farm Bill, the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is a partner-driven, locally-led approach to conservation. It offers new opportunities for USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to harness innovation, welcome new partners to the conservation mission, and demonstrates the value and efficacy of voluntary, private lands conservation.

In 2017, NRCS is investing up to \$225 million in 88 projects that impact every state in the nation, including two in South Dakota. Since 2014, NRCS has invested more than \$825 million in 286 high-impact projects, bringing together more than 2,000 conservation partners who have invested an additional \$1.4 billion. By 2018, NRCS and partners will have invested at least \$2.4 billion. These projects are leading to cleaner and more abundant water, better soil and air quality, enhance wildlife habitat, more resilient and productive agricultural lands and stronger rural economies.

### South Dakota Projects to Date

#### Projects by Resource Concern



- Soil Health
- Water Quality
- Water Quantity/Drought

6

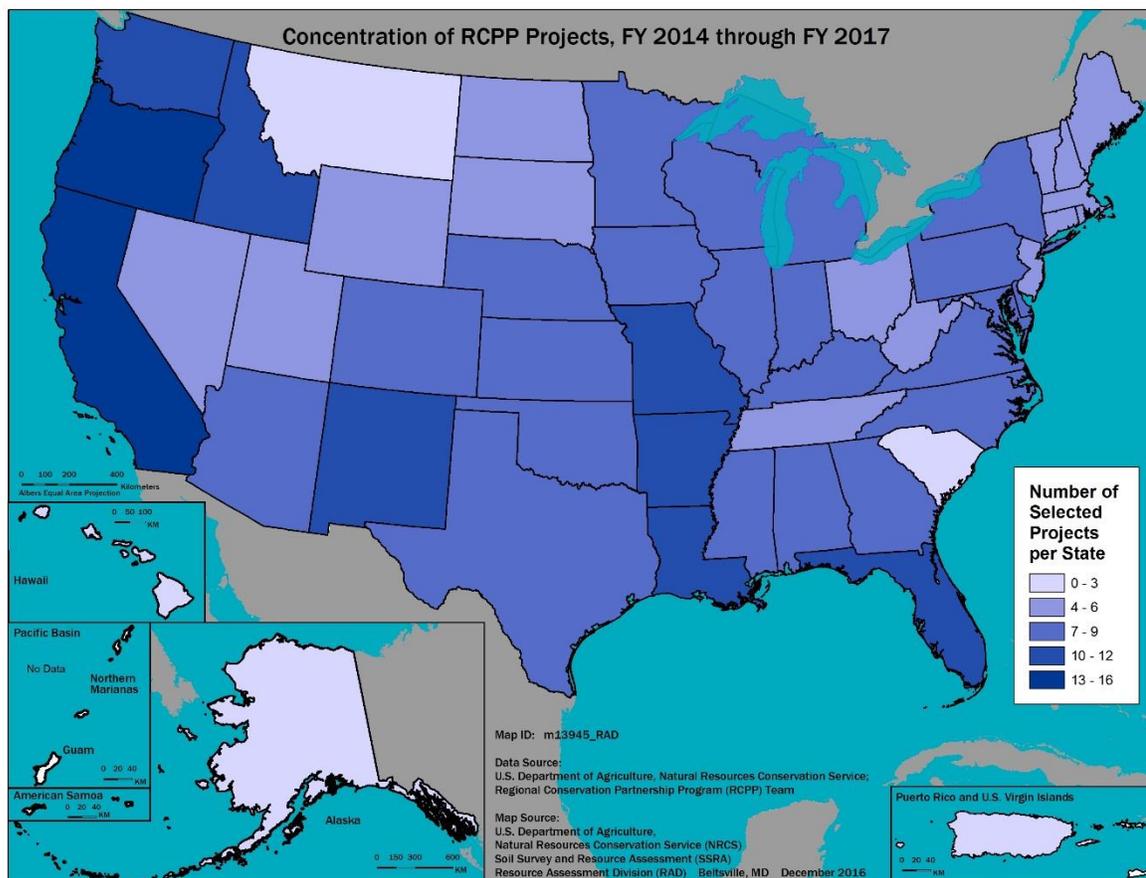
Projects

\$25.4  
million

NRCS Investment

67

Partners



## Existing RCPP Projects

Year	Title	Funding Pool	Lead Partner	Number of Partners	NRCS Investment
2016	Innovative Tribal Conservation and GHG Management	National	Intertribal Agriculture Council	9	\$1.8 million
2016	Lewis & Clark/Lower James River WQ Project	State	James River Water Development District	7	\$2.7 million
2014/2015	Red River Basin of the North Flood Prevention Plan	CCA	Red River Retention Authority	8	\$12 million
2014/2015	Central Big Sioux River Water Quality Project	State	Minnehaha Conservation District	11	\$2 million

## 2017 RCPP Projects

### Prairie Pothole Working Lands Partnership

Proposed NRCS Investment: \$4,188,000 (Critical Conservation Area – Prairie Grasslands Region)

Lead Partner: Ducks Unlimited, Inc.

Number of Initial Partners: 22

Participating States: South Dakota (Lead State)

Through the Prairie Pothole Working Lands Partnerships, Ducks Unlimited and over twenty conservation partners will improve water quality, soil health and wildlife habitat within the Mississippi River watershed through working lands solutions for agricultural producers at local scales. The project will provide additive acres to federal EQIP, ACEP, and CSP financial assistance programs while utilizing additional partner contributions and programs to leverage federal funds and promote program opportunities. Through EQIP, cost-sharing practices to promote the retention of expired CRP contracts into “working grasslands” projects will be prioritized. Under CSP, partners will provide incentive payments to producers who experiment with fall seeded cover crops, small grain crops in problem soils and protect cropped wetlands from drainage. By leveraging additional funds, the ACEP program will provide easement payments and cost share for practice implementation on enrolled properties. The project will also utilize existing local partnership programs to provide incentive payments to landowners who voluntarily conserve wetlands.

### James River Watershed

Proposed NRCS Investment: \$2,738,270 (State)

Lead Partner: Ducks Unlimited, Inc.

Number of Initial Partners: 10

Participating States: South Dakota (Lead State)

Ducks Unlimited and ten diverse partners will offer innovative cost-share assistance and incentives to increase the quantity and quality of certain conservation practices being applied within the James River Watershed. The partners will promote sustainable conservation practices with landowners through targeted application of National Resources Conservation Service financial. On a broader scale, the partners will establish a series of "long-term demonstration farms" in key landscapes that will be instrumental in changing attitudes towards various conservation farming strategies being promoted. The project partners expect the work to improve water quality, soil health, wildlife habitat and long-term sustainability of the James River Watershed.

