

Regional Conservation Partnership Program

Investing in Washington



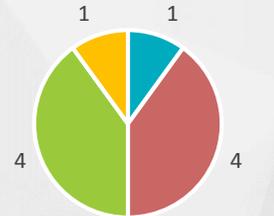
Regional Conservation Partnership Program

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 three in Washington. 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.

Washington Projects to Date

Projects by Resource Concern



- Soil Health
- Water Quality
- Wildlife Habitat
- Water Quantity/Drought

10

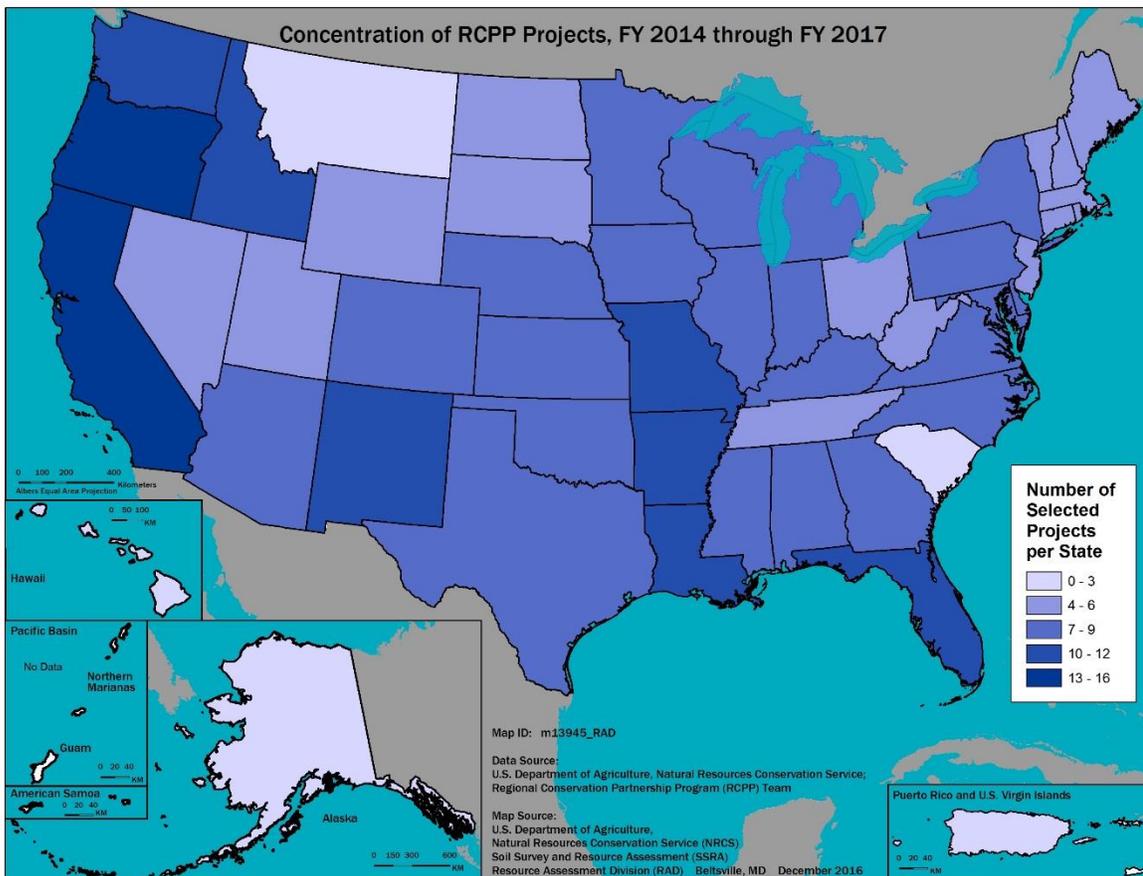
Projects

\$48.5 million

NRCS Investment

116

Partners



Existing RCPP Projects

Year	Title	Funding Pool	Lead Partner	Number of Partners	NRCS Investment
2016	Greater Spokane River Watershed Implementation	National	Spokane Conservation District	21	\$7.7 million
2016	WRIA 1 Salmon Recovery & Water Quality Improvement	State	Whatcom Conservation District	10	\$1 million
2014/2015	Upper Columbia Irrigation Enhancement Project	CCA	Trout Unlimited, Inc.	17	\$1.9 million
2014/2015	Yakama Nation On-Reservation Lower Yakima Basin Restoration Project	CCA	Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation	13	\$4.6 million
2014/2015	Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Project	State	Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation	5	\$2 million
2014/2015	Palouse River Watershed (WRIA 34) Implementation Partnership	National	Palouse Conservation District	16	\$5.5 million
2014/2015	Precision Conservation for Salmon and Water Quality in the Puget Sound	National	Washington State Conservation Commission	5	\$9 million

2017 RCPP Projects

Puyallup Watershed Partnership

Proposed NRCS Investment: \$8,000,000 (National)

Lead Partner: Pierce Conservation District

Number of Initial Partners: 11

Participating States: Washington (Lead State)

Through the Puyallup Watershed Partnership, the Pierce Conservation District and ten diverse partners will assist landowners with permanent conservation easements and implement restoration activities through Environmental Quality Incentives Program funding assistance. The Puyallup in Washington contains the only remaining prime soils in Pierce County, is home to one of the most urban tribal reservations, and provides essential habitat for Endangered Species Act listed species of Coho and Chinook Salmon, Steelhead and Bull Trout. Since 2002, Pierce County has lost almost 10,000 acres of farmland, nearly five times the state average, due to rapidly encroaching development from the Seattle/Tacoma metropolitan area. That loss not only impacts farmers and food security but also diminishes the ecosystem benefits that farmland provides to water and soil quality.



Yakima Integrated Plan - Toppenish to Teanaway

Proposed NRCS Investment: \$7,540,740 (National)

Lead Partner: Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation

Number of Initial Partners: 12

Participating States: Washington (Lead State)

The Yakima Integrated Plan will accelerate the recovery of threatened Middle Columbia Steelhead by targeting high-priority watersheds which currently produce more than 50% of the wild steelhead run in the Yakima River Basin. These actions will also increase water supply and water quality for environmental, economic and cultural purposes. This project will fund actions supported by diverse partners to enact holistic, innovative solutions to natural resource conservation issues. These actions will restore fish habitat in over 50 miles of channels across 2,500 acres; restore riparian vegetation on over 10 miles of stream banks; enhance fish access to over 480 acres of aquatic habitat; increase water retention in 2,000 acres of ephemeral channels; and improve grazing management across 3,500 floodplain acres and 34,000 upland grazing acres. In addition, the project will target over 30,000 acres for irrigation efficiency enhancements, over 25,000 acres for Conservation Stewardship practices and protect 500 acres of floodplain farmland through easements. Monitoring of these actions will occur through existing programs. The project stems from extensive collaborative efforts in recent years by Yakima Basin Integrated Plan Workgroup, which represents over 20 stakeholders from environmental, agricultural and tribal interests working to restore habitat and conserve water resources in the Yakima Basin.

Southwest Washington Non-industrial Private Forest Conservation Partnership

Proposed NRCS Investment: \$1,300,000 (State)

Lead Partner: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Number of Initial Partners: 6

Participating States: Washington (Lead State)

Non-industrial private forest lands in southwest Washington are important to the regional and state economies. In addition to timber harvest, these working forests provide many functions including: fish and wildlife habitat, protection of water quality, flood reduction, recreational opportunities and carbon sequestration to help combat climate change. The project area includes Grays Harbor, Mason, Thurston, Lewis Pacific, Wahkiakum, Cowlitz and Clark Counties. Washington Department of Natural Resources and conservation districts will conduct outreach and education activities and provide technical assistance to NIPF owners to develop and implement stewardship plans with funding from the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and Conservation Stewardship Program. Washington State Conservation Commission will distribute NRCS technical assistance funding to the conservation districts. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will administer the RCPP and assess fish and wildlife habitat and species presence on lands enrolled in the Healthy Forests Reserve Program and other participating lands with willing owners. The HFRP program will be focused in the Chehalis Watershed and includes provisions for conservation easements and habitat restoration to benefit Marbled Murrelet and Northern Spotted Owl. Program participants could have multiple options for regulatory certainty by implementing conservation practices. Participating landowners will provide at least 25% cost share to match implementation funding from NRCS. Projects funded by the RCPP will improve fish and wildlife habitat, protect water quality, improve forest resiliency in the face climate change, and help meet regulatory requirements while keeping working forests working.