



## Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

### Investing in Connecticut - 2016

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 demonstrate the value and efficacy of voluntary, private lands conservation.

In 2016, NRCS is investing up to \$220 million in 84 high-impact projects that impact every state in the nation, including two in Connecticut. This investment, which builds on the \$370 million invested for 2014 and 2015, will help conservation partners and agricultural producers conserve natural resources, leading to cleaner and more abundant water, healthier soil, enhanced wildlife habitat and many other benefits.

### Path to Reduce Pathogens in CT Agricultural Runoff

Proposed NRCS Investment: \$669,000 (State)

Lead Partner: University of Connecticut

Number of Partners: 4

Participating State(s): Connecticut

Bacteria levels in Connecticut's rivers and shellfish beds are unacceptably high. This is, in part, caused by agricultural runoff. To address the degradation of soil and water from agricultural operations, University of Connecticut will enlist partners and apply technical and financial assistance for the following objectives: 1) develop conservation partnerships focused on reducing pathogens associated with agricultural activities; 2) Use multi-tiered bacterial source tracking techniques to identify and target critical areas for treatment approaches; 3) use multi-tiered bacterial source tracking techniques to identify and target critical areas for treatment approaches; and 4) determine the opportunities for and barriers to producers and landowners in adopting pathogen conservation practices and evaluate the potential success of the project. Potential conservation practices to reduce pathogens will include composting, nutrient management, residue and tillage management, cover crops, fencing, buffers and filter strips, vegetated treatment areas and wetlands.

### The Young Forest Initiative for At-Risk Species

Proposed NRCS Investment: \$5.2 million (National)

Lead Partner: Wildlife Management Institute

Number of Partners: 12

Participating State(s): Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire (**lead state**), New York, Rhode Island & Vermont

This project will help increase technical and financial assistance to non-industrial private forestland owners who implement practices outlined in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program that result in an increase in the quantity and quality of young forest habitats. This support is critical, since young forest habitat is necessary to meet the critical needs of several recognized at-risk species.

