



Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

Investing in Georgia - 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 Georgia. 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.

Southern Sentinel Landscapes Conservation

Proposed NRCS Investment: \$7.5 million (National)

Lead Partner: U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities

Number of Partners: 20

Participating State(s): Georgia (**lead state**), Mississippi & North Carolina

This project will protect and restore 17,500 – 21,500 acres of longleaf and other working forest habitats on private lands important for at-risk species. The goal of this multistate effort – Mississippi, Georgia and North Carolina - is to reduce the likelihood that target species will be listed under the Endangered Species Act and to demonstrate the compatibility of working lands management with at-risk species conservation. These sites and species address shared conservation interests of the Departments of Agriculture, Defense, and Interior on proposed or potential Sentinel Landscapes. The proposed project advances goals of the Range-wide Conservation Plan for Longleaf Pine, the NRCS Longleaf Pine Initiative, and each state's Forest and Wildlife Action Plans, while also contributing to military installation compatible-use buffers. By focusing on the overlapping interests of three federal Departments, this proposal delivers more measurable benefits to At-Risk Species than if the agencies followed separate paths. This proposal builds on the RCPP award the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities received in 2014.

Wetlands and Wildlife for Georgia Watersheds

Proposed NRCS Investment: \$802,000 (State)

Lead Partner: The Nature Conservancy – Georgia

Number of Partners: 8

Participating State(s): Georgia

This project will serve two of Georgia's important watersheds in which agricultural and timber producers own significant acreage, and in which natural resource concerns are of great conservation interest. Degraded or drained wetlands, habitat alteration and non-point source pollution threaten native wildlife resources and a broader wetland and pineland ecosystem of the Suwannee River whose natural fire and flood patterns have been altered. NRCS funding will be used to incentivize key producers to protect and restore the most critical wetlands areas and provide models for other producers to emulate.

