USDA United States Department of Agriculture

Illinois At-A-Glance FY2017

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Accomplishments in Illinois

The information below captures the contracts and agreements Illinois producers have entered into during fiscal year 2017. Different practices and programs make this work possible. Federal funds are allocated and organized in separate funding pools in order to direct funds to specific resource issues or watershed locations. FA = Financial Assistance funds, BF = Beginning Farmer, SD = Socially Disadvantaged.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Funding Pools	Contracts	Acres Enrolled	FA Obligated
General EQIP	78	7,778	$2,749,188
Confined Livestock-Manure Management	20	5,813	$4,678,997
Grazing Land Operations	33	2,758	$3,163,932
Forest Management Implementation	4	168	$69,899
On-Farm Energy	1	5	$63,806
Organic Certified	3	111	$22,581
Organic Transition	6	798	$74,097
Drainage Water Management Implementation	1	78	$5,682
Specialty Crop	33	94	$279,427
Wildlife Habitat Conservation	4	138	$101,019
Illinois Initiatives			
Driftless Area Landscape Conservation Initiative	40	1,098	$498,217
Kinkaid Lake Watershed Restoration	13	594	$186,977
Monarch Butterfly Project	21	139	$76,124
Urban Ag - Cook County	4	1	$54,253
Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative (MRBI)			
Clinton Lake Watershed	4	336	$163,683
Crow - Clear Creek Watershed	3	525	$122,244
Upper Macoupin Creek Watershed	5	1,459	$269,079
Vermilion Headwaters Watershed	11	2,927	$365,402
National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI)			
Crooked Creek Watershed	7	392	$281,179
Conservation Activity Plans			
Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan	12	607	$86,658
Drainage Water Management Plan	2	155	$4,342
Forest Management Plan	54	4,886	$83,722
Grazing Management Plan	2	175	$3,903
Total	**361**	**31,035**	**$13,404,411**

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

Funding Pools	Contracts	Acres Enrolled	FA Obligated
Statewide Ag Lands	163	138,801	$1,568,416
Statewide Ag Lands - BF	30	7,389	$136,816
Statewide NIPF	3	160	$7,996
Statewide NIPF -BF	3	66	$9,865
MRBI – Clinton Lake Ag Lands	1	3,428	$27,730
Total	**200**	**149,844**	**$1,750,823**

CSP Contract Renewals

Funding Pools	Contracts	Acres Enrolled	FA Obligated
Statewide Ag Lands	208	192,545	$2,968,195
Statewide Ag Lands – BF	9	2,839	$69,313
Statewide NIPF	19	5,028	$35,907
Statewide NIPF – BF	1	28	$1,500
Total	**237**	**200,440**	**$3,074,915**

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

Funding Pools	Contracts	Acres Enrolled	FA Obligated
BMP Implementation for Nutrient and Sediment Loss	8	1,159	$115,756
Conservation Cropping Systems For Improving Soil Health	22	2,004	$223,064
Improving Oak - Hickory Forest Health in Illinois	29	2,963	$626,552
Precision Conservation Management	5	602	$60,113
Shorebird Conservation Acreage via Drainage Water	2	85	$4,720
Total	**66**	**6,813**	**$1,030,205**

All contract information has been obtained from ProTracts data pulled October 1, 2017 and certified by the Illinois NRCS State Office.

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

Funding Source	Easements	Acres Enrolled	FA Obligated
Wetland Reserve Easement (WRE)			
52 Applications	22	2,600	$12,000,000
Agricultural Lands Easement (ALE)			
3 - Kane County	3	201	$301,000
Total	**25**	**2,801**	**$12,301,000**

For WRE, NRCS received 52 applications—a great increase from FY 2016. Because interest/need was high and application quality was also high, FA amounts increased by 39% more than the initial Illinois budget allocation.

Conservation @ Farm Progress Show

IL Ag leader panel discussion Aug. 2017.

NRCS participated in the 2017 Farm Progress Show held August 29-31 in Decatur, Illinois. The ***Partners in Conservation Tent*** housed 21 organizations that pooled resources to have a powerful presence at the show. The groups held nearly 20 panel discussions on conservation topics and offered a soil health demonstration. A soil pit was created onsite, which the crowd especially enjoyed. NRCS and partners showcased the installation of a Denitrifying Bioreactor, a new conservation practice designed to improve water quality and support the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy. It was a great show!

Denitrifying Bioreactor in Piatt County.

Chicago school children learn about nature at restored FPDCC locations.

Great Lakes "Chicago Style"

As part of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), Illinois NRCS provided $70,000 in 2017 for technical assistance to the Forest Preserve District of Cook County (FPDCC). Funds addressed natural resource issues associated with invasive species. Using NRCS guidance, FPDCC staff and volunteers removed invasive plants in strategic locations in preserve areas. Sites were restored as quality, native wildlife habitat.To learn the full story and see specific management practices used, visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/il/newsroom/stories/.

Areawide Conservation Planning

In FY 2017, NRCS worked with local people, communities, and partners to address natural resource challenges in 61 watersheds across Illinois. Through a voluntary and collaborative locally-led conservation planning process, NRCS helps local people assess their natural resource conditions, needs, and goals. By working together, these local groups identify specific conservation solutions and find financial resources to achieve those goals and put conservation solutions on the land for long-term success.

Illinois' 61 Areawide Conservation Planning projects address water quality, soil erosion and sedimentation, fish and wildlife habitat, and so much more. NRCS provides support with planning and offers science-based, technical expertise. We work with individual decision-makers to design and install conservation practices that fit the watershed needs. Want to be part of an effort? Reach out to NRCS in your community to learn more www.il.nrcs.usda.gov.

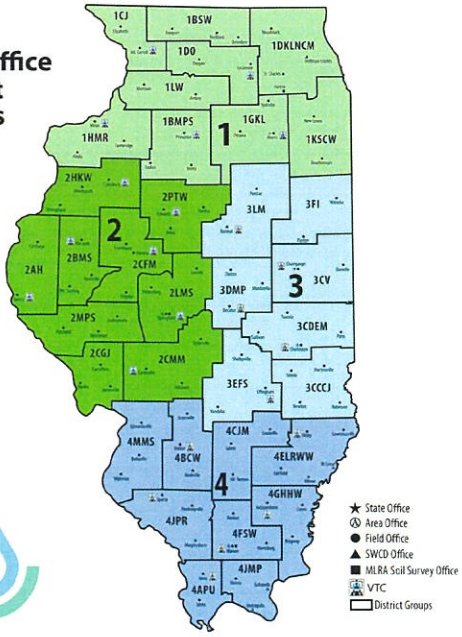
Annual Seminars Teach Farmers

CONSERVATION CROPPING 2017 SEMINARS

Managing your inputs for healthy soils...

NRCS, the Illinois Department of Agriculture, local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and other key conservation partners organized three meetings during January 2017. The Conservation Cropping Seminars are one-day meetings where agency staff and leaders, non-profit organizations, researchers, and farmers gather to talk, learn, and share data and on-farm experiences. Topics center around conservation systems, the use and benefits of cover crops, soil health, and on-farm research. 2017 events were held in Rockford, Jacksonville, and Carbondale, IL. 2018 events are scheduled for Kankakee, Olney, and Peoria, IL. Hundreds of Illinois farmers attend these seminars to help them make wise resources decisions. Learn more at www.ccswcd.org

Illinois Field Office District Groups



ILLINOIS Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Illinois At-A-Glance

FY2018

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Accomplishments in Illinois

The information below captures the contracts and agreements Illinois producers have entered into during fiscal year (FY) 2018. Different practices and programs make this work possible. Federal funds are allocated and organized in separate funding pools in order to direct funds to specific resource issues or watershed locations. FA = Financial Assistance funds, BF = Beginning Farmer.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Funding Pools	Contracts	Acres Enrolled	FA Obligated
General EQIP	110	12,757	$5,889,476
Confined Livestock-Manure Management	23	7,563	$4,097,332
Grazing Land Operations	45	3,685	$3,416,673
Forest Management Implementation	12	478	$125,729
On-Farm Energy	7	40	$349,397
Organic Certified	1	187	$16,965
Organic Transition	8	1,057	$165,632
Specialty Crop	27	165	$235,148
Wildlife Habitat Conservation	5	128	$67,141
Illinois Initiatives			
Monarch Butterfly Project	9	45	$49,681
Urban Ag - Cook County	4	4	$35,469
Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative (MRBI)			
Clinton Lake Watershed	5	745	$94,015
Crow - Clear Creek Watershed	8	1,196	$303,637
Upper Macoupin Creek Watershed	16	836	$264,084
Vermilion Headwaters Watershed	12	1,138	$280,375
National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI)			
Crooked Creek Watershed	6	403	$196,310
Lake Bloomington Watershed	1	42	$16,882
Lake Vermilion Watershed	1	62	$8,450
Conservation Activity Plans			
Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan	21	909	$155,571
Drainage Water Management Plan	3	401	$6,149
Fish and Wildlife Habitat Plan	2	49	$5,723
Forest Management Plan	122	8,554	$190,333
Grazing Management Plan	5	545	$10,160
Total	**453**	**40,989**	**$15,980,332**

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

Funding Pools	Contracts	Acres Enrolled	FA Obligated
Statewide Ag Lands	217	177,781	$1,865,189
Statewide Ag Lands - BF	34	18,149	$226,770
Statewide NIPF	42	3,923	$91,306
Statewide NIPF - BF	3	163	$7,826
MRBI-Upper Macoupin Ag Lands	1	222	$7,399
MRBI-Upper Macoupin Ag Lands - BF	2	217	$6,661
Total	**299**	**200,455**	**$2,205,151**

CSP Contract Renewals

Funding Pools	Contracts	Acres Enrolled	FA Obligated
Statewide Ag Lands	142	141,650	$1,996,443
Statewide Ag Lands – BF	8	4,257	$62,157
Statewide NIPF	6	736	$18,332
Statewide NIPF – BF	1	55	$2,209
Total	**157**	**146,698**	**$2,079,141**

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

Funding Pools	No. of Easements	Acres Protected	FA Obligated
ACEP-WRE	2	260	$1,200,000
ACEP-WRE	Dollars for restoration and acquisition of existing agreements and easements		$ 500,000
Backlog	**No. of Potential Easements**	**Acres to Protect**	**FA to Fund All Acres**
ACEP-WRE	60	8,000	$35,000,000
ACEP-ALE	0	0	0
Monitoring Completed = 479 easements (70% completed on site.)			

more ▶

All contract information has been obtained from ProTracts data pulled October 1, 2018 and certified by the Illinois NRCS State Office.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

Funding Pools	Contracts	Acres Enrolled	FA Obligated
BMP Implementation for Nutrient and Sediment Loss			
RCPP-EQIP	3	519	$130,094
IL's Upper Macoupin Creek Watershed Partnership			
RCPP-EQIP	3	858	$77,046
RCPP-CSP	11	6,599	$81,326
Improving Oak - Hickory Forest Health in Illinois			
RCPP-EQIP	57	3,333	$621,516
Precision Conservation Management			
RCPP-EQIP	11	2,616	$379,688
RCPP-CSP	4	1,905	$23,951
Shorebird Conservation via Drainage Water			
RCPP-EQIP	1	84	$1,727
Total	**90**	**15,914**	**$1,315,348**

Programs offered (EQIP, CSP or ACEP) in each RCPP project are chosen by the lead partner submitting the project proposal.

Conservation Drainage Practices

Ag producers know how water works—there's either too much of it or not enough. They need a way to control water; to fine-tune water delivery on THEIR terms. It might be time to consider adding conservation drainage practices to your operation. Check out NRCS's new website link with options to consider at https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/il/water/resources/a42b2de4-9f56-45fe-87ee-f60f6597a47a/

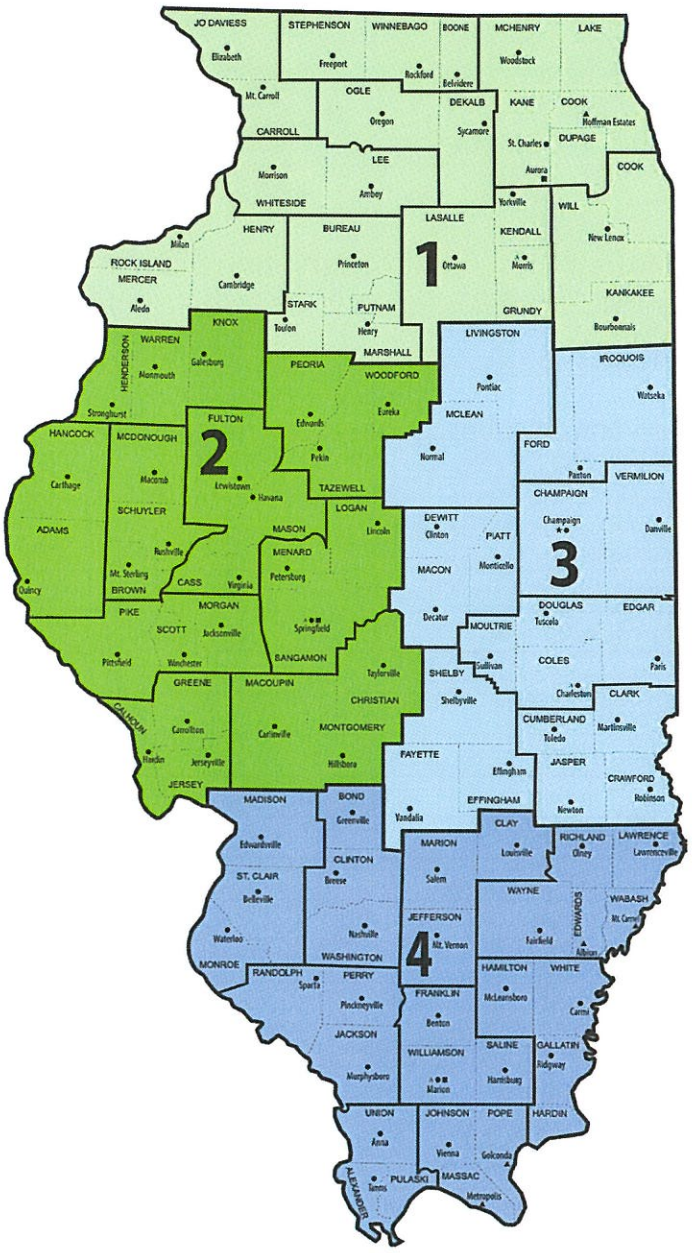
Denitrifying Bioreactor — An edge of field structure containing a carbon source, such as wood chips, installed to reduce the concentration of nitrate-nitrogen in subsurface agricultural drainage flow via enhanced denitrification.

Drainage Water Management — Drainage Water Management (DWM) allows you to hold water in the root zone when crops need it and drain the field when there's too much. This practice works best on relatively flat crop fields but can be made to work on more sloping ground if the tile laterals are laid across the slope instead of straight up and down.

Saturated Buffer — The Saturated Buffer treats tile water by running some of the water to a lateral distribution pipe placed along the length of a ditch or streambank. Bacteria in the soil work to remove nitrates and the plants in the buffer take up nutrients as well. The saturated buffer works in places where the soil has plenty of organic matter, and where it's possible to maintain a high water table.

Constructed Wetland — Another treatment option for the end of a tile line is the Constructed Wetland–sometimes nicknamed "Nature's Kidneys." The wetland is sized to remove nitrates from tile water through plant uptake and denitrifying bacteria. The wetland can also remove phosphorus and provide wildlife habitat—added benefits! The wetland surface area should be at least 1% of the acres drained by the tile system.

Illinois NRCS Organizational Structure



For more information, contact:

Ivan Dozier, Illinois State Conservationist	217.353.6600
Jeremy Bowers, Assistant State Conservationist Area 1	815.318.2177
Annette Holmes, Assistant State Conservationist Area 2	217.331.7109
Stewart Smith, Assistant State Conservationist Area 3	217.345.3901 ext. 118
Ron Ziehm, Assistant State Conservationist Area 4	618.993.5396 ext. 116

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