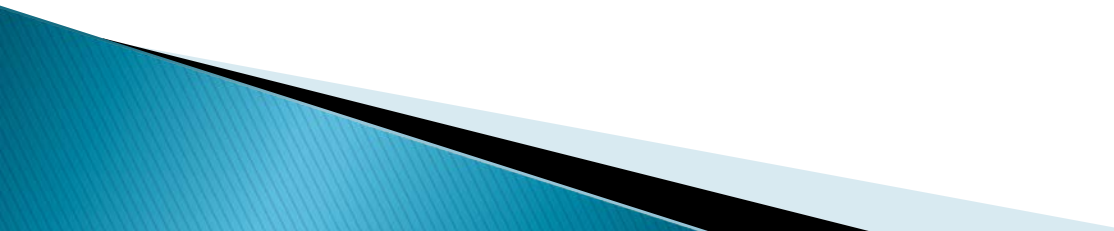


# **Farm Bill Programs to Support Watershed and Riparian Protection**

Dawn Jackson, Assistant State Conservationist  
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Denver, Colorado

# Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

- ▶ The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers through contracts up to a maximum term of ten years in length.
  - ▶ Owners of land in agricultural or forest production or persons who are engaged in livestock, agricultural or forest production on eligible land and that have a natural resource concern on the land may participate in EQIP.
- 

# Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

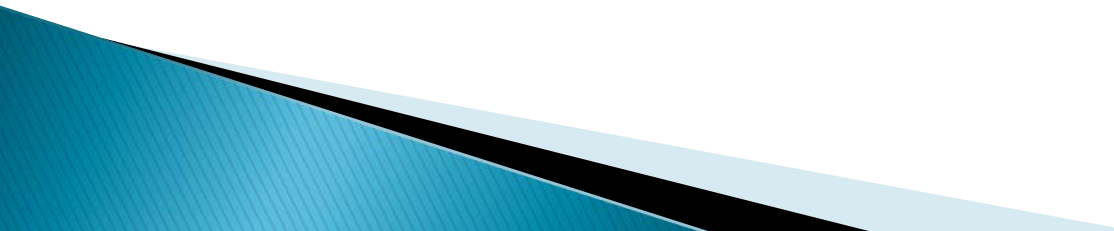
## ▶ Limitations

- Participants may not receive, directly or indirectly, payments that, in the aggregate, exceed \$300,000 for all EQIP contracts entered into during any six-year period.
- Large “Group” Projects
- Funding levels and ‘targets’

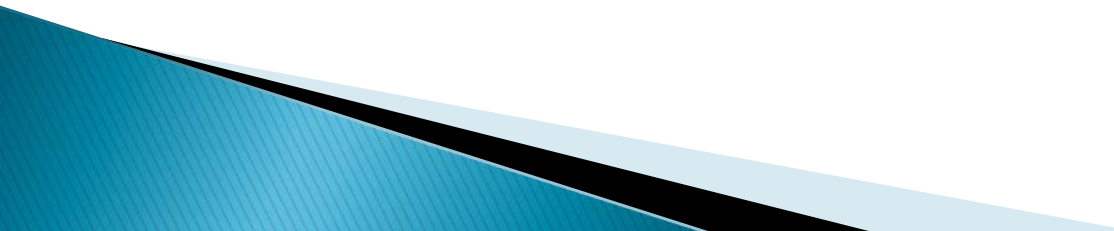
## ▶ Other opportunities under EQIP

- AWEPP
- National Water Quality Initiative
- Other Initiatives or Targeted Conservation Projects

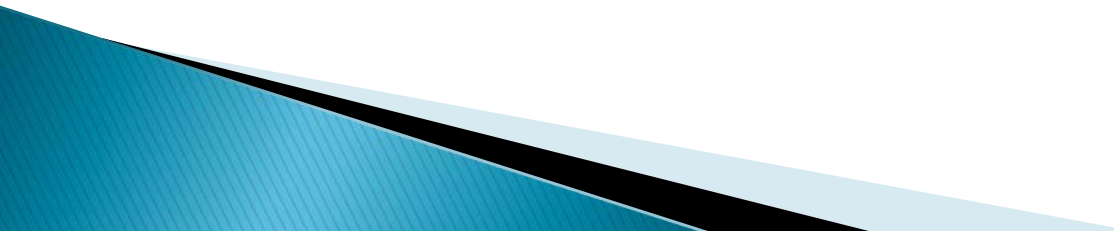
# Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP)

- ▶ AWEP operates through program contracts with producers to plan and implement conservation practices in project areas established through partnership agreements.
  - ▶ NRCS enters into partnership agreements with eligible entities and organizations that want to promote ground and surface water conservation or improve water quality on agricultural lands.
- 

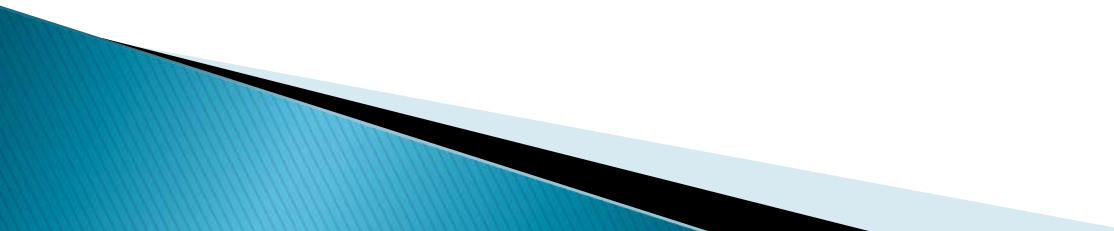
# Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP)

- ▶ AWEP is not a grant program. Eligible partners enter into multi-year agreements with NRCS to promote ground and surface water conservation, or improve water quality on eligible agricultural lands. AWEP is intended to leverage investment in natural resources conservation along with services and non-Federal resources of other eligible partners.
- 

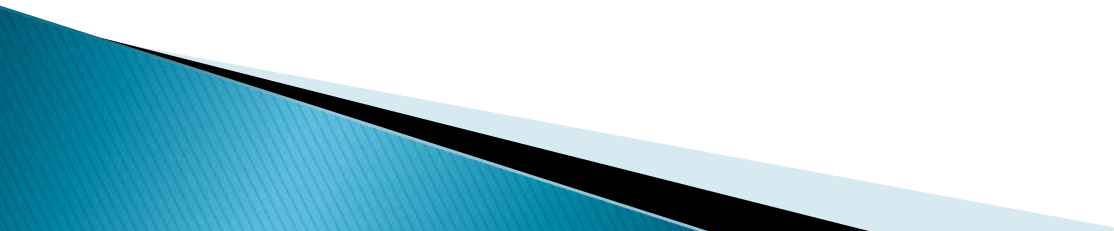
# National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI)

- ▶ The National Water Quality Initiative will work in priority watersheds to help farmers, ranchers and forest landowners improve water quality and aquatic habitats in impaired streams.
  - ▶ The landowners and farmers participating in the initiative will receive conservation payments to work on the land in a sustainable way which provides cleaner water.
- 

# Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP)

- ▶ The Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program for conservation-minded landowners who want to develop and improve wildlife habitat on agricultural land, nonindustrial private forest land, and Indian land.
  - ▶ Works much like EQIP where we enter into up to 10 year contracts with eligible participants, and provide financial and technical assistance.
- 

# WHIP Priorities

- ▶ Promote the restoration of declining or important native fish and wildlife habitats
  - ▶ Protect, restore, develop or enhance fish and wildlife habitat to benefit at-risk species
  - ▶ Reduce the impacts of invasive species on fish and wildlife habitats; and
  - ▶ Protect, restore, develop or enhance declining or important aquatic wildlife species' habitats
  - ▶ Protect, restore, develop or enhance important migration and other movement corridors for wildlife
- 



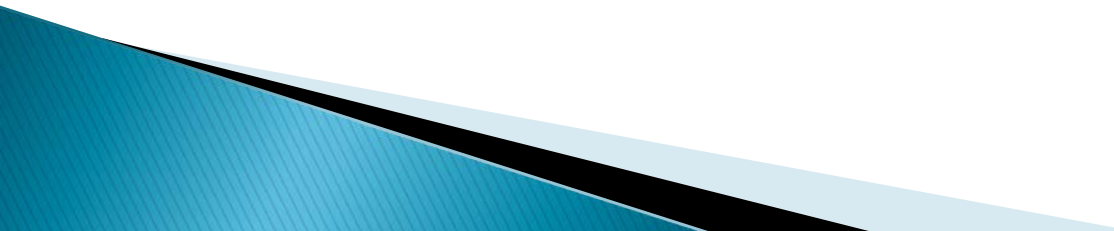
# Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW)

- ▶ Working Lands for Wildlife is a new partnership between NRCS and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to combat the decline of seven specific wildlife species whose decline can be reversed and will benefit other species with similar habitat needs.
- ▶ Species targeted: Greater and Gunnison Sage Grouse, Lesser Prairie Chicken and South Western Willow Flycatcher (add others)

# Easement Programs

- ▶ Farm & Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP)
  - Work with state, tribal or local government or local farm protection entities to provide up to 50% of the fair market easement value. These funds help purchase development rights to keep productive farm and ranchlands in agricultural use.
- ▶ Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)
  - Offers landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property through 30-year or perpetual easements and financial and technical assistance to restore or enhance wetland and supporting lands functions. Riparian areas that link protected wetlands are also eligible under this easement program.

# Conservation Partnership Program

- ▶ Earlier conservation programs provide financial assistance to landowners or operators to get conservation on the ground
  - ▶ The Conservation Partnership Program makes technical assistance funds available for leveraging with other partner funds to provide additional staff members to assist landowners and operators
- 

# Conservation Partnership Program

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## What We Do

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## Conservation Partners RFP Spring 2013

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: April 23, 2013**

### Overview

Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), Conservation Partners will fund organizations to partner with NRCS field offices to deliver technical assistance for high priority conservation objectives.

Conservation Partners is a collaborative effort between the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) ([www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov)), the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) ([www.nfwf.org](http://www.nfwf.org)) and other regional/initiative specific partners. The purpose of

### RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [PDF Version](#)
- [2013 Webinar Slideshow](#)

# Web Sites

- ▶ National USDA Web Site
  - [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)
- ▶ National NRCS Web Site
  - [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov)
- ▶ Colorado NRCS Web Site
  - [www.co.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.co.nrcs.usda.gov)