



United States Department of Agriculture

Maine



Natural Resources Conservation Service
State Conservationist Matt Walker

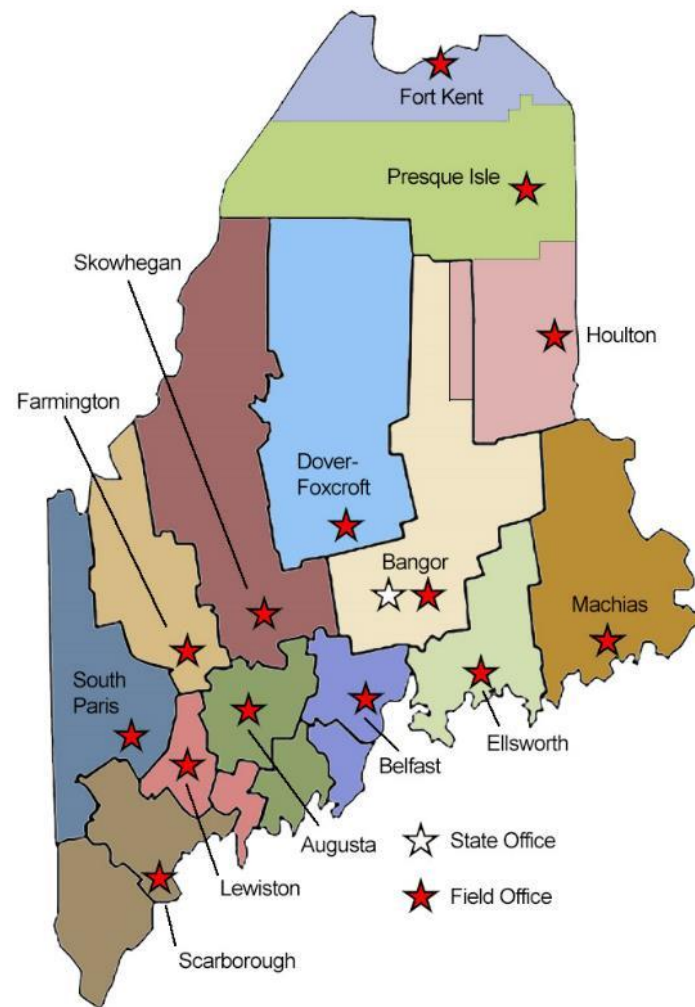
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Leadership and Expertise

The **USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)** provides leadership, financial assistance, and technical assistance to address natural resource conservation issues on private land.

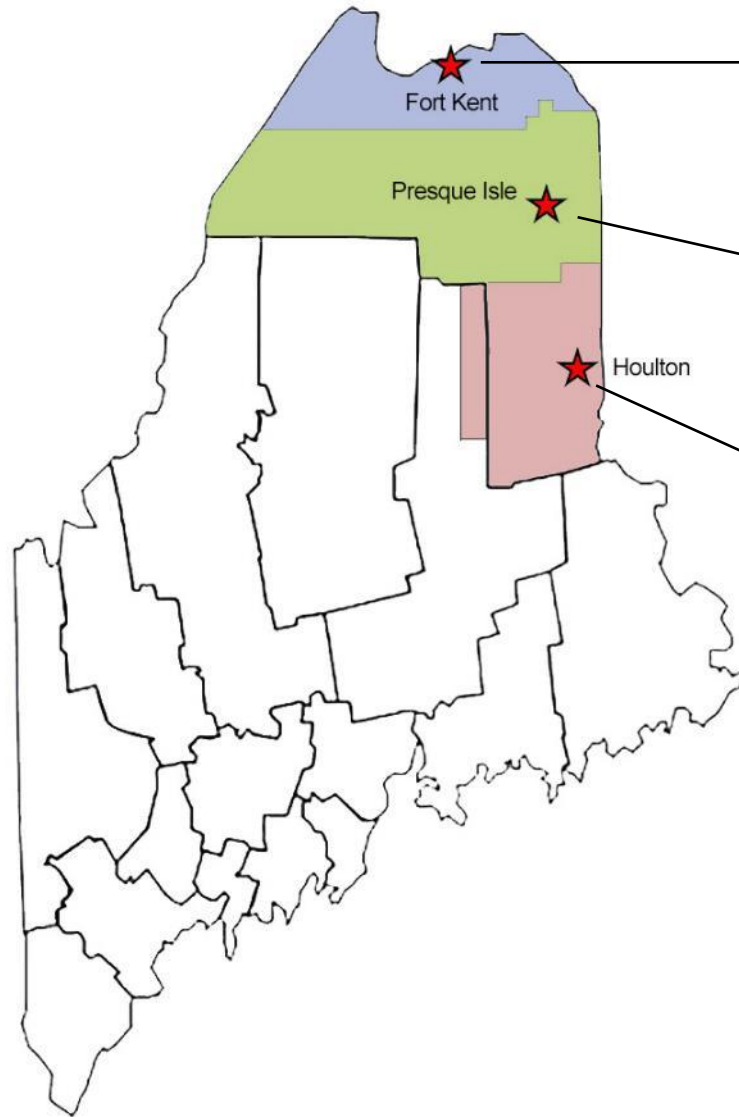
Employees work to **improve and protect natural resources** in partnership with Soil and Water Conservation Districts; federal, state and local agencies; farmers; landowners; and communities.

This commitment to conservation provides a solid foundation to a locally led program delivery system, and is also committed to a **voluntary**, incentive-based approach to private land stewardship and conservation treatment.





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St. John Valley

District Conservationist Alex Zetterman

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Central Aroostook

District Conservationist Helena Swiatek

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Southern Aroostook

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Technical Assistance

Conservation Technical Assistance

Helps producers identify *conservation objectives* and a roadmap for conservation on their operation.

Conservation Concerns Tools

Information on farmers.gov to help public identify *resource concerns*.

Engineering

NRCS applies *sound engineering tools and principles* to plan, design, and implement conservation practices and systems through designated approval authority.

Technical Service Providers

Technical Service Providers (TSPs) offer *planning, design, and implementation services* to agricultural producers on behalf of NRCS.



Financial Assistance

Programs

Financial assistance provided through unique and perennial conservation programs like EQIP, AMA, RCPP.

Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)

Voluntary program intended to stimulate development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies.



About our Programs

Soil



Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) offers financial and technical assistance to eligible producers to help install or implement conservation practices on eligible agricultural land.

Water



Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) helps agricultural producers manage financial risk through diversification, marketing or natural resource conservation practices.

Air



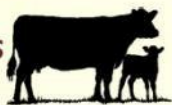
Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is merit-based and targets specific vulnerable areas and is administered through partnership agreements and through program contracts or easement agreements.

Plants



Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP/CStP) helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority resource concerns.

Animals



Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands and their related benefits.



FY 2022 Summary of Financial Assistance for NRCS-Maine

Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)

AMA (to include Risk Management Agency RMA-AMA):

61 contracts obligated for **\$1,146,910** (*151 acres*)

Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP)

28 contracts obligated for **\$569,955** (*9,096 acres*)

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

394 contracts obligated for **\$11,433,910** (*35,780 acres*)



FY 2022 Summary of Financial Assistance (Aroostook County)

Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)

8 contracts obligated for **\$229,705** (77.1 acres)

Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP)

10 contracts obligated for **\$180,647** (5,074.4 acres)

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

88 contracts obligated for **\$3,482,407** (9,783 acres)



Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)

Helps producers manage financial risk through diversification, marketing, or natural resource conservation practices.

Benefits

- Construction or improvement of water management structures or irrigation structures
- Plant trees for windbreaks or to improve water quality
- Mitigate risk through production diversification or resource conservation practices

AMA provides financial assistance up to 75 percent of the cost of installing conservation practices.

Total AMA payments shall not exceed \$50,000 per participant for any fiscal year.



Agricultural Management Assistance for Aroostook County FY22

Top Five Practices

- 5 **High Tunnels** for *12,240 Sq. Ft.*
- 3 **Irrigation Pipeline** items for *4,259 Ft.*
- 3 **pumping plants**
- 2 **Microirrigation** systems for *4,320 Sq. Ft.*
- 2 **Sprinkler Systems** for *76 acres*



Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

Helps build on existing conservation efforts while strengthening operations. CSP is for working lands and is the largest conservation program in the U.S.

Benefits

- Enhanced resiliency to weather and market volatility
- Decreased need for agricultural inputs
- Improved wildlife habitat conditions

NRCS works one-on-one with producers to develop a conservation plan that outlines and enhances existing efforts, using new conservation practices or activities. Producers implement practices and activities in their conservation plan that expands on the benefits of *cleaner water and air, healthier soil and better wildlife habitat, all while improving their agricultural operations.*



Conservation Stewardship Program for Aroostook County FY22

Top Five Practices

- 10 instances of use of **multi-species cover crops** to improve soil health and increase soil organic matter for a total of *954.6 acres*
- 10 instances of **Upland Wildlife Habitat Management** for a total of *190.7 acres*
- 8 instances of **Structures for Wildlife** for a total of *38 acres*
- 6 instances of **snags, den trees, and coarse woody debris for wildlife habitat** for a total of *17 acres*
- 5 instances of **Forest Stand Improvement** for a total of *144 acres*



Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Flagship conservation program helping farmers, ranchers and forest landowners integrate conservation into working lands.

Benefits

- Improved water and air quality
- Conserved ground and surface water
- Increased soil health
- Reduced soil erosion and sedimentation
- Improved or created wildlife habitat
- Mitigation against drought and increasing weather volatility



NRCS will help you develop a conservation plan that meets your goals and vision. This plan becomes your roadmap for selecting the right conservation practices for your land. NRCS offers about 200 unique practices designed for working farms and forests.



Environmental Quality Incentives Program for Aroostook County FY22

Top Five Practices

- 91 instances of **Cover Crop** for a total of *5007.8 acres*
- 34 instances of **Forest Management Plan + Forest Management Practice Design** for a total of *6,027.1 acres*
- 27 instances of **Forest Stand Improvement** for a total of *544.6 acres*
- 25 instances of **Mulching** for a total of *763.1 acres*
- 21 instances of **Conservation Crop Rotation** for a total of *239.1 acres*



Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)



Partner-driven approach to conservation that funds solutions to natural resource challenges on agricultural land.

Projects may include a range of on-the-ground conservation activities implemented by farmers and landowners. These include:

- Land management/land improvement/restoration practices
- Land rentals
- Entity-held easements
- United States-held easements
- Public works/watersheds

Potential partners are invited to propose RCPP projects where NRCS and partners co-invest in impactful and innovative solutions to on-farm, watershed, and regional natural resource concerns.



Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

Helps landowners, land trusts, and other entities protect, restore, and enhance wetlands or protect working farms and ranches through Agricultural Land and Wetland Reserve conservation easements.

Benefits

- Protects the long-term viability of the nation's food supply by preventing conversion of productive working lands to non-agricultural uses
- Environmental quality, historic preservation, wildlife habitat and protection of open space
- Provides resilience to climate change
- Improved wildlife habitat conditions

ACEP protects the agricultural viability and related conservation values of eligible land by limiting nonagricultural uses which negatively affect agricultural uses and conservation values, protect grazing uses and related conservation values by restoring or conserving eligible grazing land, and protecting and restoring and enhancing wetlands on eligible land.





NRCS Clients Include:

- Farmers & Woodlot Operators
- Cities and Towns
- Community groups
- Conservation groups
- ALL Private landowners or operators of private land who need natural resource help!



9 Step Planning Process



Conservation Plan

- Developed by NRCS based on landowner's or operator's goals for the land
- A road map on how conservation can work for you on your land
- Identifies natural resource concerns/opportunities and conservation practices to address those concerns

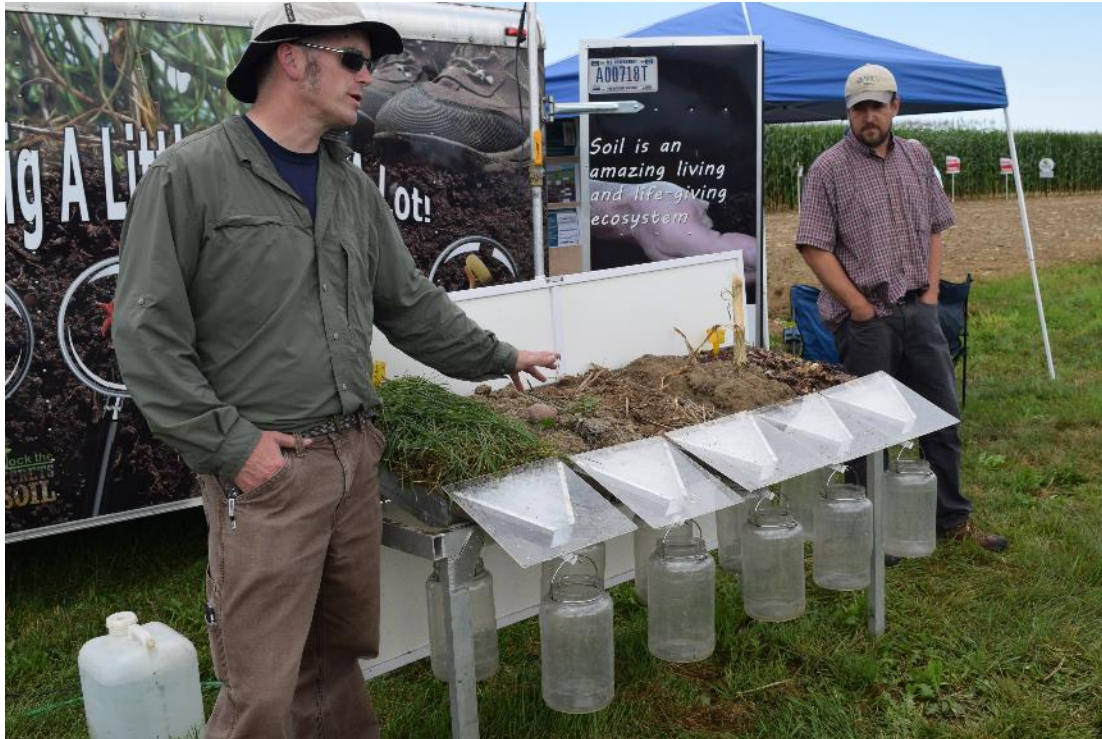


Area Erosion - *Before*



Area Erosion - *After*


Science-based Technology



NRCS uses *science-based* technology to provide conservation planning and assistance to landowners and operators and others to benefit the **soil, water, air, plants and animals** for **productive lands and healthy ecosystems**.



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2022 | **CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE**

Coronavirus Updates

- [Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops Program \(FSCSC\)](#)
- [Commodity Container Assistance Program \(CCAP\)](#)
- [Coronavirus and USDA Program Flexibilities](#)
- [USDA's Coronavirus Page](#)





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Natural Resources Conservation Service

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