

FEDERAL CONSERVATION PROGRAMS AND THEIR ASSOCIATED FUNDING

U.S. Department of Agriculture: *Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Programs*

Revised: June 2026

*** Farm Bill Conservation Programs** – Their purpose is to work with private landowners, especially farmers and other landowners, to reduce erosion, improve water quality and wetlands, and improve wildlife habitat. They are funded at \$6 billion annually; Mississippi receives approximately \$145 million annually in Farm Bill conservation funds. The average amount per state is \$120 million, so we get 20% more than the average. This includes the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), which is funded at \$450 million annually. ACEP consists of the Agricultural Land Easement (ALE) and the Wetlands Reserve Easement (WRE). In Mississippi, the ALE is being utilized to restore/protect the Black Prairie as well as longleaf savanna in the coastal counties. Mississippi ranks #3 in the nation with the most acres enrolled in WRE, with over 225,000 acres of wetlands restored and protected; Mississippi has received approximately \$500 million in funding from this program alone. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) are other programs that Mississippi heavily participates in. In the Southeast, one of every three acres enrolled in CRP is in Mississippi. The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), a grant-based program, is funded at \$300 million annually. Mississippi is getting approximately \$300,000 per year as it requires matching funds. The average funding per state for it is \$6 million – 20% more would be approximately \$7.2 million. So, we are losing almost \$7 million annually (\$70 million over 10 years) because of a lack of matching funds, just in this one program. Nationwide, Mississippi ranks #2 in the most conservation acreage as a percent of total agricultural land, or 30%; this includes CRP, CSP, and EQIP. Eligible entities include private landowners, leases, and non-profits.

Emergency Watershed Protection Program – Its purpose is to provide for design and construction measures to help repair damages from a recent disaster to safeguard life and property. It is funded at \$300 million. It requires at least 25% match. Eligible entity: local sponsor representing owners, managers, and users of public, private, or tribal lands.

**** Watershed Rehabilitation Program** - Its purpose is to extend the life of Department of Agriculture constructed dams (e.g., such as those constructed in North Mississippi through P.L. 566). It is funded at \$118 million. It requires at least a 35% match. Eligible entity: local governments, conservation districts, tribes.

**** Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations** – Its purpose is to provide planning, design, and construction of measures that address resource concerns in a watershed. It is funded at \$500 million. Match requirements vary based on project. Eligible entity: local sponsor or legal subdivision of state or tribal government.

U.S. Department of Agriculture: *Forest Service Programs*

Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program – The purpose of this program is to acquire and establish forests that provide community benefits. Community benefits include economic benefits through active forest management, clean water, wildlife habitat, educational opportunities, and public access for recreation. It is funded at approximately \$4 million annually. It requires at least a 50% match. Eligible entities: tribes, local governments, and non-profits.

Forest Legacy Program – The purpose of this program is to identify and conserve environmentally important forest areas that are threatened by conversion to non-forest uses. Providing economic incentives to landowners to keep their forests as forests encourages sustainable forest management and supports strong markets for forest products. It is funded at approximately \$70 million annually. It requires at least a 50% match. Eligible entities: states, non-profits, and private landowners.

Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership Program – Purpose is for USDA’s Forest Service and NRCS to work together to improve the health of forests where public forests connect to private lands. Through the Joint Chiefs’ Landscape Restoration Partnership, the two Department of Agriculture agencies are restoring landscapes, reducing wildfire threats, protecting water quality and enhancing wildlife habitat. It is funded at \$180 million. Eligible entity: States, non-profits.

Wood Innovation Grants – Its purpose is to invest in proposals that expand traditional wood utilization projects, promote using wood as a construction material in commercial, institutional and multifamily buildings, and expand wood energy markets. It is funded at \$8 million. Match requirements vary based on project. Eligible entities: for-profit entities; state, and local governments; Indian Tribes; school districts; community, not-for-profit organizations; institutions of higher education; and special purpose districts.

U.S. Department of Commerce: *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)*

Coastal Resilience Grants – The purpose of this program is to restore, increase, and strengthen natural infrastructure, the landscapes that help absorb the impacts of storms and floods, to ultimately protect coastal communities from storm and flooding impacts and enhance fish and wildlife habitat. It is funded at approximately \$48 million annually. It requires at least a 50% match. Eligible entities: state and local governments, tribes, non-profits.

**** Coastal Zone Management** – Its purpose is to utilize the Coastal Zone Management competitive and non-competitive grants to restore and protect coastal ecosystems through direct investment by coastal states and territories in ecologically significant habitats. It is funded at \$207 million. It requires at least a 50% match. Eligible entity: states.

Community Based Restoration Program – The purpose of this program is to provide technical and financial assistance to develop high-quality habitat restoration projects that support our nation’s fisheries. It is funded at approximately \$12.9 million annually. It requires at least a 50% match. Eligible entities: state and local governments, tribes, non-profits.

Fish Passage – Its purpose is to restore fish passage by removing in-stream barriers and providing technical assistance under section 117 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006. It is funded at \$400 million. A 50% match is suggested. Eligible entities: non-profit, local, state, tribal, and territorial governments, organizations, educational institutions, or commercial (for-profit) organizations.

Marine Debris – Its purpose is to investigate and prevent the adverse impacts of marine debris. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Marine Debris Program envisions the global ocean and its coasts free from the impacts of marine debris. It is funded at \$150 million. It requires at least a 50% match. Eligible entities: non-profits, local, state and territorial governments, tribal governments and organizations, educational institutions, or commercial (for-profit) organizations.

National Estuarine Research Reserve System – Its purpose is to designate and manage research and educational Reserves. Each Reserve within the National Estuarine Research Reserve System is chosen to

represent a different biogeographic region and to include a variety of ecosystem types. It is funded at \$77 million. No match is required. Eligible entities: State and territorial governments.

**** Ocean and Coastal Observing Systems** – Its purpose is to support and enhance various critical observing systems in the ocean, coasts, and Great Lakes. Many of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s observing systems have been operating for decades and require investment to maintain reliability as well as expand geographic coverage. It is funded at \$100 million. It requires at least a 30% match. Eligible entity: states, counties, cities/townships, special districts, tribal governments, independent school districts, public higher-ed institutions, private higher-ed institutions, nonprofits, and the Department of Commerce.

U.S. Department of Defense Programs

Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) - Its purpose is to reduce encroachment around bases for the Army (e.g., Camp Shelby; partner is the non-profit The Nature Conservancy). Participation in this program greatly helps maintain the mission of the base and keeps the base off the Base Reduction and Closure list. It is funded at approximately \$50 million annually. It requires a 50% match. Eligible entities: state and local governments, and non-profits.

Readiness and Environment Protection Initiative (REPI) – Its purpose is to reduce encroachment around bases for the Navy (e.g., Western Maneuver Area) and Air Force (e.g., Columbus Air Force; partner is the non-profit Wildlife Mississippi). Participation in this program greatly helps maintain the mission of the base and keeps the base off the Base Reduction and Closure list. It is funded at approximately \$50 million annually. It requires a 50% match. Eligible entities: state and local governments, and non-profits.

U.S. Department of Energy Programs

**** Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program** - Its purpose is to develop and implement energy efficiency and conservation strategy, including the installation in government buildings renewable energy technologies. It is funded at \$550 million. No match requirements. Eligible entity: states and local governments, tribes.

**** Grants for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Improvements at Public School Facilities** - Its purpose is to provide competitive grants to make energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades and improvements at public schools. It is funded at \$500 million. Match requirements variable. Eligible entity: schools, non-profits, for-profits, community partners.

**** State Energy Program** - Its purpose is to provide funding to states to reduce carbon emissions, including clean energy in buildings and state government vehicles. It is funded at \$500 million. It requires at least a 20% match. Eligible entity: states.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security: *Federal Emergency Management Agency Programs*

Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Program – The purpose of this program is to reduce or eliminate the risk of repetitive flood damage to buildings and structures insured under the National Flood Insurance Program. It is funded at \$160 million annually. Match ranges from 75% to 90% for repetitive loss properties. Eligible entities: states, territories, tribes, and local governments.

Hazard Mitigation Revolving Loan Funds/Safeguarding Tomorrow through Ongoing Risk Mitigation (STORM) Act (Robert T Stafford Act, Sec. 205) – Its purpose is to establish revolving loan funds to provide hazard mitigation assistance to local governments. It is funded at \$500 million. It

requires at least a 10% match. Eligible entity: state or Indian tribal government that has received a major disaster declaration during the 5-year period ending on the date of enactment of the STORM Act.

**** National Dam Safety Program** - Its purpose is to reduce the risks associated with dams. It is funded at \$148 million. No match requirements. Eligible entity: states.

**** Rehabilitation of High Hazard Potential Dams** - Its purpose is to rehabilitate high hazard dams. It is funded at \$585 million. Match requirements are variable. Eligible entity: states.

U.S. Department of Interior Programs

Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration and Protection Projects – Its purpose is to support projects that design, study, and construct aquatic ecosystem restoration and protection projects to improve habitat, including restoration. It is funded at \$250 million. It requires at least a 35% match. Eligible entity: open.

Grants for States and Tribes for Voluntary Restoration – Its purpose is to implement voluntary restoration projects on private and public lands. It is funded at \$400 million. Match requirements range from 10 to 50%. Eligible entity: state, tribal.

Ecosystem Fish Passage – Its purpose is for the removal of barriers and for technical assistance under the National Fish Passage Program. The National Fish Passage Program is an existing program that relies on a network of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologists and engineers stationed throughout the country. It is funded at \$200 million. It requires at least a 50% match. Eligible entity: open.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) – The purpose of this program is to support a nationwide legacy of high-quality recreation and conservation areas. Some of the funds are invested by agencies to protect Federal lands for public outdoor recreation use and enjoyment – including National Parks, National Forests, National Recreation Areas, and National Wildlife Refuges and Conservation Areas. Agencies also partner with landowners to support voluntary conservation activities on private lands. Some of the funds are distributed directly to States and local communities through grant programs. Tribes can work with States through the grant programs to secure LWCF funding for recreation and conservation projects. These grants can be used for a range of projects from establishing baseball fields and community green spaces; to providing public access to rivers, lakes, and other water resources; to protecting historic and cultural sites; and conserving natural landscapes. It is funded at \$900 million annually. It requires at least a 50% match. Eligible entities: federal government, state government, local governments, tribes, non-profits.

U.S. Department of Interior: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Programs

*** Coastal Program**- Its purpose is to support coastal ecosystems. It is funded at approximately \$40 million annually. It requires at least a 50% match. Eligible entities: federal government, tribes, and non-profits.

Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund (CESCF) – Its purpose is to foster participation in voluntary conservation projects for species on the federal Lists of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants. It is funded at approximately \$52 million annually. It requires at least a 50% match. Eligible entity: state government.

North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) -Its purpose is to foster the development of public-private partnerships to protect North America’s migratory bird habitat. To date, Mississippi has received \$7,998,889 in NAWCA funding to restore and/or protect 50,723 acres. It is funded at

approximately \$60 million annually. It requires at least a 50% match. Eligible entities: state and local governments, and non-profits.

***Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (Partners Program)** - Its purpose is to provide financial and technical assistance to private landowners and other eligible entities for voluntary, on-the-ground habitat restoration and conservation projects. It is funded at approximately \$45 million annually. It requires at least a 50% match. Eligible entities: federal government, tribes, and non-profits.

U.S. Department of Transportation: Federal Highway Administration Programs

**** Federal Lands Transportation Program** - Its purpose is to provide access within national parks, national forests, national wildlife refuges, and other federal public lands. It is funded at \$130 million. Eligible entities: federal government or a state, county, or unit of local government may apply for funding under the Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects (NSFLTP) Program only if sponsored by an eligible Federal Land Management Agency (FLMA) or federally recognized Tribe.

**** National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant** - Its purpose is to replace, remove, and repair culvert and weirs to improve and/or restore fish passage. It is funded at \$1 billion. It requires at least a 20% match with the exception of tribes. Eligible entities: state and local governments, tribes.

**** Recreational Trails Program (RTP)** - The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Recreational Trails Program (RTP) provides funds to develop and maintain recreational trail-related facilities for both nonmotorized and motorized recreational trail uses. It is funded at approximately \$270 million annually. It requires at least a 20% match. Eligible entity: state government.

**** Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program** - Its purpose is to reduce the number of wildlife-vehicle collisions and improve wildlife connectivity. It is funded at \$350 million. It requires at least a 20% match. Eligible entities: federal government, state and local governments, special purpose authority, tribes.

Environmental Protection Agency Programs

Clean Water Act Nonpoint Source Grant (Section 319 Grants) – The purpose of this program is to focus on state and local nonpoint source efforts. Section 319 supports a wide variety of activities, including technical assistance, financial assistance, education, training, technology transfer, demonstration projects, and monitoring to assess the success of specific nonpoint source implementation projects. It is funded at approximately \$175 million annually. Eligible entities: states, territories, and tribes.

Clean Water State Revolving Fund – Its purpose is to provide communities with low-cost financing for a wide range of water quality infrastructure projects. 49% of Clean Water State Revolving Fund funds shall be eligible to be grants or 100% principal forgiveness loans. The Clean Water State Revolving Fund program provides capitalization grants to States, which will provide a long-term source of State financing for the construction of wastewater treatment facilities and implementation of other water quality management activities. It is funded at \$11.713 billion. 10-20% match is required. Eligible entity: states, water utilities and/or municipal and other eligible entities, tribes, and territories.

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Lead Service Lines Replacement – Its purpose is to fund lead service line replacement and associated activities related to identification, planning, design, and removal. 49% of funds shall be eligible to be grants or 100% principal forgiveness loans. It is funded at \$15 billion.

No match is required. Eligible entity: state, water utilities, and/or municipal and other eligible entities, tribes, and territories.

Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan – Its purpose is for federal agencies include those with responsibilities over activities in the Mississippi River and its basin, and in the Gulf of America. The Plan has a near-term target of reducing nutrient-loading to the Gulf of America from the basin by 20 percent by 2025, and a long-term goal of limiting the Gulf hypoxic zone to an average annual size of less than 5,000 square kilometers by 2035. It is funded at \$60 million. No match is required. Eligible entities: 12 state members of Gulf Hypoxia Task Force (along Mississippi corridor/Gulf of America).

Multipurpose Grants – The purpose of this program is to fund high-priority activities to complement activities funded under established environmental statutes. It is funded at approximately \$10 million. No match is required. Eligible entities: states and tribes.

National Estuary Program Grants – Its purpose is to protect and restore the water quality and resources of estuaries and associated watersheds designated by the EPA Administrator as estuaries of national significance. The 28 estuaries of national significance, or National Estuary Programs, use an ecosystem-based management approach to help achieve their protection and restoration goals. It is funded at \$132 million. It requires at least a 50% match. Eligible entity: 28 federally recognized local and national Estuary programs.

Pollution Prevention Grants – Its purpose is to deliver technical assistance to businesses – including those communities with environmental justice concerns – to identify and adopt source reduction practices and technologies that benefit businesses, communities, and local economies. It is funded at \$100 million. It requires at least a 50% match. Eligible entities: states, state-sponsored institutions, and tribes.

The Mississippi Advantage

Mississippi will rank high in many of these programs for several reasons. We have a wealth of non-financial resources, such as 1) good water quality benefits, especially for the Gulf. 2) high carbon sequestration benefits – Mississippi's forests rank #1 in the nation in terms of forest carbon sequestration among all states. 3) good federal trust species benefits – migratory birds and threatened/endangered species. 4) Our high minority population. Where we fail, as not being a wealthy state, is a lack of non-federal matching funds for federal programs.

Total Private Lands Programs Funding: \$6,085,000,000

Total Public and Private Lands Programs Funding: \$31,061,900,000

Total Public Lands Programs Funding: \$4,958,000,000

*Private Land Only Programs

**Public Land Only Programs