

New USDA Leadership in Georgia

Terrance Rudolph is the new NRCS State Conservationist for Georgia, effective July 13. Mr. Rudolph comes to Georgia after serving as NRCS Area Conservationist in Knoxville, Tenn. Katura Wright became Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, effective June 30. Katura Wright transferred from Missouri where she served as Assistant State Conservationist for Programs.



Dr. Fred Harrison Jr. has been appointed the USDA FSA Executive Director for Georgia, effective June 2. Dr. Harrison's background includes serving as Dean of the College of Agriculture, Home Economics and Allied Programs at Fort Valley State University. We look forward to continuing our partnership with both agencies in promoting soil and water conservation.

RCPP - New USDA-NRCS Program

The new Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) promotes coordination between USDA-NRCS and its partners to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners. NRCS provides assistance to producers through partnership agreements and through program contracts or easement agreements. NRCS supports locally driven projects and encourages landowners and producers to get involved in the design of project proposals.

RCPP combines the authorities of four former conservation programs – the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program, the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program, the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative and the Great Lakes Basin Program. Assistance is delivered in accordance with the rules of EQIP, CSP, ACEP and HFRP; and in certain areas the Watershed Operations and Flood Prevention Program.

The program establishes three pots of money for grants.

- 35 percent of total funding will be divided among eight critical conservation areas (CCAs) including the Longleaf Pine Range here in Georgia.
- 40 percent will go to regional or multi-state projects selected on a competitive basis.
- 25 percent to state-level projects through a competitive process administered by State Technical Committees.

In Georgia, NRCS has identified the need to address the following critical priorities for projects:



1. Excess/Insufficient Water
2. Inadequate Habitat for Fish and Wildlife
3. Inefficient Energy Use
4. Livestock Production Limitation
5. Water Quality Degradation

Preproposal applications were due July 14, 2014, and full proposals will be due September 26, 2014. Full proposals will be accepted only from applicants who are notified at the end of the preproposal review process that their application has been identified for further evaluation.

Once projects are approved, farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners located within project areas will be able to contact their local USDA Service Center to find out how to apply for financial assistance. The project partner will also conduct outreach to landowners and producers and will be able to provide assistance with applying to NRCS programs. Beginning in fall 2014, NRCS will post selected RCPP projects on their website at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/ga/programs/farmbill/rcpp/>.