



# Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) North Carolina - The Update

## Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Program Updates

### Obligations for FY 2025

FY 2025 Farm Bill conservation financial assistance programs, special funding pools and initiatives included:

\$23,880,271.00 being allocated for FY2025 to fund EQIP applications received during the past FY. Total EQIP Classic contracts were 520 contracts that were obligated for a total of \$23,565,414.

\$14,340,000.00 being allocated for FY2025 to fund CSP Classic applications received during the past FY. Total CSP Classic contracts were 198 contracts that were obligated for a total of \$14,134,057.

To demonstrate where the workload was this past FY, here are the number of total contracts by area:

- Area 1- 180 (EQIP), 22 (CSP): 202 total
- Area 2- 178 (EQIP), 108 (CSP): 286 total
- Area 3- 162 (EQIP), 68 (CSP): 230 total

### General Updates

#### Fiscal Year 2026 State Advisory Allocations

- \$33,931,000 - EQIP
- \$19,739,000 - CSP

Application deadline dates for EQIP and CSP for FY2026 were scheduled for Nov. 7. Understandably that there has been a challenge with this date. An additional sign-up deadline has been discussed and is scheduled for Jan. 15, 2026. This date would include applicants interested in the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP).

### Easements

Currently, N.C.- NRCS requested \$25,412,906 for 30 applications on 4,417 acres under ACEP-ALE.

Easements that fall under the Regional Conservation Partnership Program will have their own separate sign-up dates that will be announced by the lead entity.

## General Updates Cont.

### Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWPP)

#### TS Helene

225 site Damage Survey Reports (DSRs) were submitted for entry into the National Headquarters (NHQ) Portal and approved, totaling: \$39,373,548.

- 2 additional DSRs entered but need modified (5044-107 & 5044-111), covering 43 sites
- Dollar amount to be determined after adjustments

Additional sponsors' requests for assistance were accepted until Dec. 24, 2025. DSRs will be accepted until Feb. 24, 2026.

#### TS Debby/Cyclone 8

Robeson County moving forward on 11 sites, Cumberland is also moving ahead with their agreement which covers 8 sites. The state's allocation for these sites is:

- TA:\$ 3,706,635.88
- FA:\$ 21,848,388.21

The other counties DSRs and their estimated budgets:

- Columbus: 1 site, ~\$15.3mil
- Scotland: 8 sites, ~\$13.3mil
- Hoke: 12 sites, ~\$16.8mil
- Bladen: 7 sites, ~\$5.8mil

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## General Updates Cont.

### TS Chantal

Orange County submitted 2 Field Damage Reports (FDR), 1 will be move on as a DSR, NRCS Area 2 will be lead.

### **Source Water Protection and High Priority Practice Identification**

Following the recent State Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) meeting in August, our Ecological Science Section conducted an evaluation of the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Source Water Practice recommendations. These recommendations were reviewed in coordination with our Program staff, ensuring that our final selections align with state resource priorities, partner input, and NRCS program requirements. As part of this collaborative effort, we also assessed potential duplication between the Source Water practices and the existing High Priority practice list. We removed overlapping practices to maintain program clarity and to ensure that Source Water practices remain strategically targeted. Here are those lists:

#### **High Priority Practice List:**

Animal Mortality Facility (316)  
Conservation Crop Rotation (328)  
Residue and Tillage Management (329) No Till  
Cover Crop (340)  
Waste Facility Closure (360)  
Fence (382)  
Wildlife Habitat Planting (420)  
Prescribed Grazing (528)  
Nutrient Management (590)  
Forest Stand Improvement (666)

#### **Source Water Protection:**

Waste Storage Facility (313)  
Riparian Forest Buffer (391)  
Access Control (472)  
Pest Management (595)  
Heavy Use Area (561)  
Water Well (642)  
Watering Facility (614)  
Pumping Plant (533) Conservation  
Cover (327) Critical Area Planting  
(342) Grassed Waterway (412)  
Irrigation Water Management (449)  
Well Decommissioning (351) Field  
Boarder (386)

### **USDA NRCS Launches Office of the Assistant Chief**

The USDA-NRCS announced the launch of the Office of the Assistant Chiefs (OAC). This new structure replaces the Office of the Regional Conservationists (ORC) and represents a key step in Chief Aubrey J.D. Bettencourt's vision to make NRCS more agile, field- focused, and accountable to America's farmers, ranchers, and private landowners. Each Assistant Chief will oversee regional operations and work directly with State Conservationists to ensure consistent, science-based, and producer-driven program delivery.

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