

Wisconsin: Overview

Through the National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is offering financial and technical assistance to farmers, and forest landowners interested in improving water quality and aquatic habitats in priority watersheds with impaired streams. NRCS will help producers implement conservation and management practices through a systems approach to control and trap nutrient and manure runoff. Qualified producers will receive assistance for installing conservation practices such as cover crops, filter strips and terraces. For over 75 years, NRCS has provided agricultural producers with assistance to implement voluntary conservation practices that protect natural resources while maintaining production and profits.

Wisconsin: Priority Watersheds

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will manage the initiative by making funds available to farmers and forest landowners in three selected watersheds. All landowners within the watershed boundary are eligible. Special consideration is given to the targeted areas.

Watersheds in Wisconsin:

1. Ward Creek-Little Sugar River watershed in Dane and Green Counties. There are two streams targeted in this county. Affected streams include Legler School Branch and Pioneer Valley Creek.



Charles Pierce shows off his cover crop of annual rye grass. This conservation practice keeps the soil in place reducing erosion and improving water quality.

photo by JeeHye Lee
NRCS

2. Big Green Lake watershed in Green Lake County. Targeted streams are Roy and Wuerchs Creeks.
3. Lower Waumandee Creek watershed in Buffalo County.

The selected watersheds were identified with help from state agencies, partners, and the Wisconsin State Technical Committee.

The National Water Quality Initiative will work in selected watersheds to help farmers, ranchers and forest landowners improve water quality and aquatic habitats in impaired streams.

Conservation Funding and Practices

NRCS conservation professionals will provide technical assistance and planning tools to determine which conservation actions will provide the best results to improve water quality on your land. Nutrient management systems, erosion control, conservation tillage, pest management, and buffers systems are just some of the practices being offered as part of the National Water Quality Initiative. To help install these conservation practices, financial assistance to share in the cost of these conservation practices is available through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

Partnerships

NRCS identified priority watersheds through the help of local partnerships and state water quality agencies. Partners sometimes offer financial assistance in addition to NRCS programs. NRCS will continue to coordinate with local and state agencies, conservation districts, nongovernmental organizations and others to implement this initiative. This strategic approach will leverage funds and provide streamlined assistance to help individual agricultural producers take needed actions to reduce the flow of sediment, nutrients and other runoff into impaired waterways.

Producer Benefits

Water quality conservation practices benefit agricultural producers by lowering input costs and enhancing the productivity of working lands. Conservation investments are good for all Americans because well managed farms limit pollution from runoff, produce food and fiber, sustain rural economies, and provide food security to the Nation. All across the country—farmers, ranchers and forest landowners are voluntarily taking action and putting conservation on the ground to improve water quality on millions of acres!

Public Benefits

NRCS is proud to be involved in a nationwide effort with landowners and communities to improve and protect our water resources. 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. In addition to the financial assistance, the land will remain productive into the future. Communities benefit by having clean waterways, safer drinking water and healthy habitat for fish and wildlife.

How to Apply

Almost every county in the Nation has a **USDA Service Center**. To get started, make an appointment at your local office. You will need to establish eligibility and farm records for your land. NRCS will

help you complete an application while explaining which conservation practices are available in your watershed. Remember to check with your local NRCS office to see if you are located in a selected watershed. All applications for funding consideration, during fiscal year 2012, must be received by June 15, 2012.

For more Information

Contact your local office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service located at your USDA Service Center.

www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov

2012 National Water Quality Initiative Watersheds

2012 WI EQIP National Water Quality Initiative Proposed Watersheds



United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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