



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Oklahoma Newsletter - April 2024

# Oklahoma

Natural Resources Conservation Service



## In This Issue:

- [A Message from the State Conservationist](#)
- [Emergency Funding for Wildfire Recovery](#)
- [RCPP Informational Webinars for Applicants](#)
- [Conservation Practice of the Month](#)
- [Photo of the Month](#)
- [Dates to Remember](#)
- [USDA Offers Wildfire Recovery Assistance](#)

---

## A Message from the State Conservationist

---

It's Spring in Oklahoma and like all of you, the NRCS staff is very busy. We continue to work on contract obligations, practice certification, recruitment, trainings and so much more! We are working to wrap up Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) obligations and gearing up to start Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) contracting. Through EQIP, OK NRCS has already approved over 1,200 contracts and has assisted producers with implementing almost \$2.5 million dollars worth of conservation practices through those 2024 EQIP contracts. We had requests for more activities than we could fund with our initial EQIP allocation, so we have requested additional funding for both our general applications as well as for the wildfire mitigation in Western OK.



Through our recruitment efforts, our staff has grown by almost 20 employees this last year! That leads to more training needs and this year the technical staff will be providing additional training options as well as more defined expectations and timelines for new planners to get comfortable with the planning process and engaging with clients and partners. This will enable us to continue to provide quality customer service to all our potential customers!

In February, I had the opportunity to travel to New Mexico with our Tri-State Leadership Development Cohort and I was excited to watch a group of employees from CO, NM, and OK working together to become stronger leaders in the agency. Oklahoma NRCS was very well represented by Maria Gibson, Tyler Burton, Alex Tune, Terri Jones, and Haylie Dobbs.

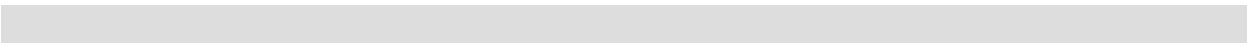
In March, I accompanied our partners with the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and the Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts to Washington, DC where they met with the OK Congressmen/women to advocate for agriculture and conservation in OK. We also had time with NRCS Chief Terry Cosby to talk about the great partnerships that we have here in Oklahoma.

We are planning to hold a State Technical Committee meeting soon so that you can hear more about what we are accomplishing across this great state in the name of conservation, so be on the lookout for that announcement in the near future!

Thanks again for all you do for conserving Oklahoma's natural resources

**Jeanne Hamilton**

State Conservationist





*Tri State Leadership Team*

---



*NRCS and OACD Leadership visiting OK Senator James Lankford in Washington DC*

---

## Emergency Funding for Wildfire Recovery

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is opening a special disaster sign-up for \$1 million in additional funding through the [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) for producers in the Oklahoma who have been impacted by recent wildfires. Producers must submit applications to USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) by **May 10, 2024**, to be considered for this funding opportunity. **Affected counties are Ellis, Roger Mills, Beaver, Harper, Dewey, Woods and Texas.**

[Press Release and more information.](#)

---

## RCPP Informational Webinars for Applicants

NRCS is hosting webinars to provide general information for applicants submitting proposals on April 23, 2024 and May 30, 2024. The same material will be covered at both webinars, followed by a question and answer section.

More information on Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) and links to sign up for both webinars can be found [here](#).

---

## Conservation Practice of the Month Establish Monarch Butterfly Habitat

---



There are several conservation practices that farmers and ranchers are already doing that are tied to Climate-Smart Agriculture.

The [Establish Monarch Butterfly Habitat Fact Sheet](#) encompasses a couple of practices that include seeding or plugging milkweed (*Asclepias* spp.) and high-value monarch butterfly nectar plants to establish or improve monarch habitat. These areas may include, but are not limited to, field borders, vegetative barriers, contour buffer strips, shelterbelts, hedgerows, windbreaks, conservation cover, and riparian forest and herbaceous buffers.

More information about [NRCS Conservation Practices](#).

---

## Job Postings

Current Vacancy Announcements:

There are currently no entry level openings.

The best way to stay updated on job postings is to check [USA Jobs](#) often and sign up for notifications for job announcements.

**All jobs with NRCS are listed and posted on USAJobs.**

---

[NRCS Recruitment Video](#) - Your Field, Your World, Your Future

---

## **Photo of the Month**

---





Photo by Jerome Jones, Grady County. Winners are highlighted here and the [Oklahoma NRCS Webpage](#). To enter a photo in this month's contest, email the full resolution photo with photographer's name and county where taken for credit to [NRCSinfo-OK@usda.gov](mailto:NRCSinfo-OK@usda.gov).

---

## Dates to Remember

NRCS and FSA will have representatives at the following events/meetings if you have questions or want to visit.

### April

- [NRCS RCPP Webinar, April 23](#)
- [America's Conservation Ag Movement's Virtual Peer Meeting, April 23](#)
- [Langston University Conference on Sustainable Agriculture, including Goats and Hair Sheep in Langston, April 26-27](#)
- [National Land and Range Judging Contest in El Reno, Apr. 30- May 2](#)

### May

- [OTCAC Post-Wildfire Recovery Workshop in Shattuck, May 1](#)
  - [Oklahoma State FFA Convention in Tulsa, May 7-8](#)
  - [OLAC Southeast OK Workshop in Stigler, May 22](#)
  - [NRCS RCPP Webinar on May 30th](#)
- 

## USDA Offers Wildfire Recovery Assistance

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers disaster assistance and low-interest loan programs to assist you in your recovery efforts following wildfires or other qualifying natural disasters.

Available programs and loans include:

- [Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program \(NAP\)](#) - provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters including excessive wind and qualifying drought (includes native grass for grazing).
  - [Livestock Indemnity Program \(LIP\)](#) - offers payments to eligible producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather.
-

- Tree Assistance Program (TAP) – provides assistance to eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers for qualifying tree, shrub and vine losses due to natural disasters including excessive wind and qualifying drought.
- Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) - provides emergency relief for losses due to feed or water shortages, disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, which are not adequately addressed by other disaster programs.
- Emergency Loan Program – available to producers with agriculture operations located in a county under a primary or contiguous Presidential or Secretarial disaster designation. These low interest loans help producers recover from production and physical losses.
- Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) - provides emergency funding for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate land severely damaged by natural disasters; includes fence loss.

For more information on these programs, contact your County USDA Service Center or visit [fsa.usda.gov/disaster](https://fsa.usda.gov/disaster)

---

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).



### USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

[www.nrcs.usda.gov](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov) | [contact us](#)



SUBSCRIBER SERVICES:  
[Manage Subscriptions](#) | [Help](#)