Conservation on the Land

Technical & Financial Assistance for Conservation on Missouri Farms

Presenters:

- **Doug Doughty,** Missouri Rural Crisis Center Board Member & Farmer from Livingston County
- **Dr. Kelly Wilson,** University of Missouri Center for Regenerative Agriculture CRCL Project
- **Lauren Cartwright,** USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service State Office
- **Seth Barrioz,** Missouri Department of Conservation
- **Neil Monnig,** State Cost Share administered by Missouri Department of Natural Resources

Moderator: Jill Lucht, Conservation Outreach Coordinator, Missouri Rural Crisis Center

MISSOURI RURAL CRISIS CENTER

MISSOURI
RURAL CRISIS
CENTER



Founded during the Farm Crisis in 1985, MRCC is a statewide farm and rural advocacy membership organization that seeks to:

- **Preserve family farms**
- **Promote stewardship of the land and environmental integrity**
- **Strive for economic and social justice by building unity and mutual understanding among diverse groups, both rural and urban**

Program Areas:

MISSOURI RURAL CRISIS CENTER

- Federal & State Farm & Food Policy
- Rural Healthcare
- Growing Sustainable Farms & Food Security (*including Patchwork Family Farms and Rural Food Cooperative Program*)
- Conservation Outreach Project (part of Midwest Agriculture Conservation Network)









Doug Doughty

Missouri Rural Crisis Center
Board Member & Farmer
from Livingston County

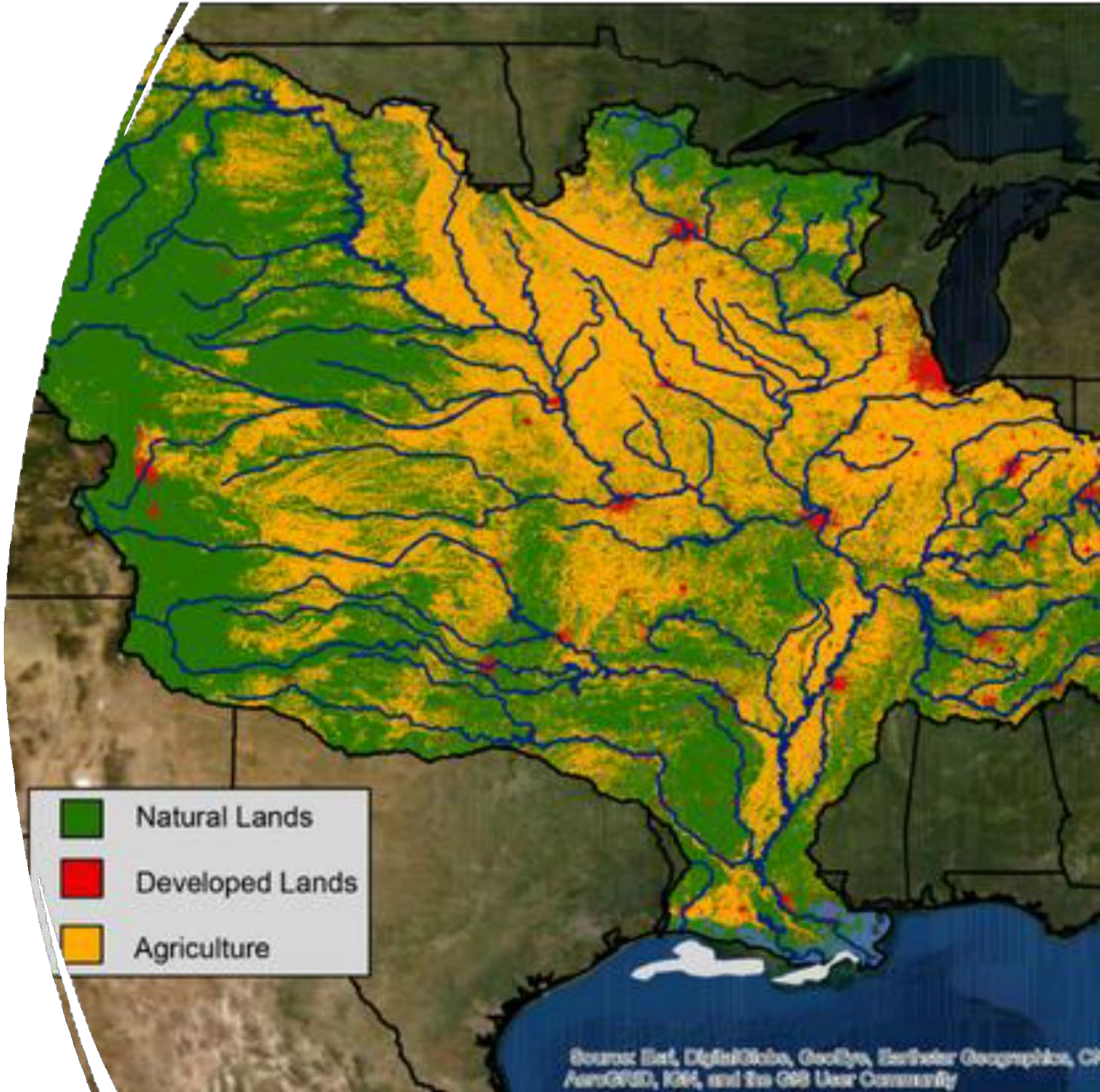
doughty@greenhills.net





Mississippi River Basin

- 31 States
- 2 Canadian Provinces
- Drains 41% of lower 48 States
- Dead Zone in Gulf





Contain our nutrients.



Contain our livestock.





Practice Benefits

- 44% reduction in water runoff
- 95% reduction in soil loss
- 90% reduction in phosphorus runoff
- 84% reduction in nitrate-nitrogen runoff
- No difference in per acre corn and soybean yields
- No difference in weed abundance
- Reduced emissions of heat-trapping gases, especially nitrous oxide
- Potentially improved beneficial insects and wildlife











"You can't just throw money at the problem. You got to teach somebody how to do it. And so far, we're just throwing money at it."



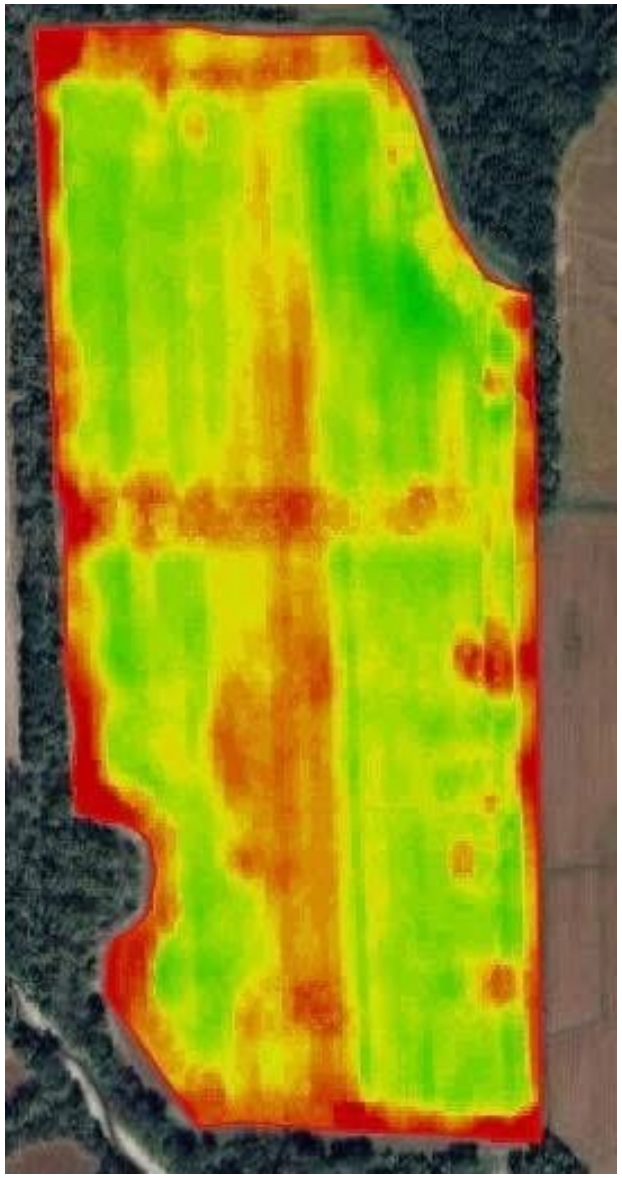






Does your combine yield monitor look like this?

- Low yielding areas (shown in red) likely have negative net profit.
- These areas can get back in the green with edge-of-field conservation buffers.
- Mississippi State University found buffers could increase profits by about 26% when red areas enrolled in USDA Continuous Conservation Reserve Program practices.











- **Not all of us need to incorporate every conservation practice available, but all of us need to do something.**

Let's Talk Enrollment!



Missouri CRCL Project

Regenerative Grazing
&
Conservation Fieldscapes

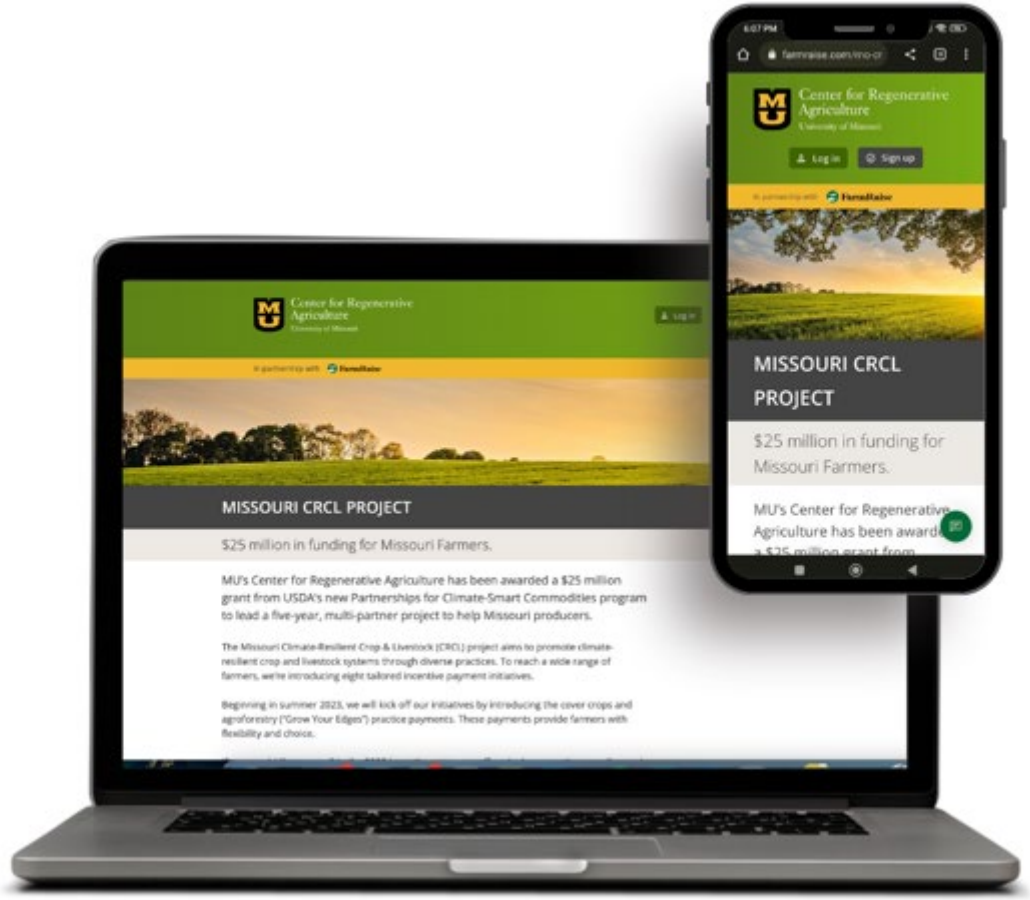
Center for Regenerative Agriculture
University of Missouri

Extension
University of Missouri

Incentive payment programs

	Payment	Application window
Regenerative grazing	**$50 per acre**	**November 1, 2025 – February 17, 2026**
Conservation fieldscapes *Last enrollment!*	**$10,000/farm for a 3-year contract**	**November 1, 2025 – January 31, 2026**
Rye-soy covers	$30 per acre	Next enrollment June 2026
Diverse covers	$40 per acre	Next enrollment June 2026
Late termination cover crop practice	$15 per acre	Next enrollment June 2026
Cover crop grazing	$20 per acre	Next enrollment June 2026
Grow your Edges - agroforestry	Per tree payment	Next enrollment June 2026
4R nutrient management	$20 per acre	Next enrollment August 2026

Web-based application



Eligibility criteria (all programs)

- Registered with Farm Service Agency (have a Farm Service Agency farm number, tract, and field numbers in place)
- Farm/fields located in Missouri
- Current citizen of the U.S. or a lawful alien possessing a valid I-551 (aka Green Card)
- Full operational control of the field
- Commit to all verification of practices and additional farm-level information required by USDA

Conservation Fieldscapes

Last time this opportunity will be offered!



- Competitive grant for small-scale Missouri farmers
- $10,000 over 3-year contract
- Climate-smart fieldscape: integrate 3 conservation practices in the same area (minimum 1/8 acre)
- At least 2 practices need to be new to that area
- List of practices

Conservation Fieldscapes

Last time this opportunity will be offered!



Participation includes:

- Develop operational plan
- Participate in cohort meetings (virtual) every ~3 months for 3-year contract
- At least 1 demonstration activity
- Contribute to monitoring, reporting, verification of climate-smart practices (required by USDA)

Conservation Fieldscapes - eligibility

- Farm registered with FSA
- Located in Missouri
- Not a foreign person/entity
- Operational control for 3 years
- Meet USDA small farmer definition
- Sell at least $1,000 annually
- 1+ year farming experience OR in complete apprenticeship/training program
- Minimum 1/8 acre to dedicate to fieldscapes

Conservation Fieldscapes - application

- Create free account
  - Name, email, phone
- Field info
  - Farm, tract, field numbers
- Document upload
  - 2026 FSA maps
  - 2026 FSA subsidiary print
- Farm operation description
  - Farm size, products, marketing methods
- Conservation fieldscape vision
  - Describe your vision
  - Identify 3 possible practices from the list
  - Indicate which are new vs existing

Conservation Fieldscapes – after applications

Review process

- All applications reviewed to check eligibility
- Follow-up call with all applicants
- Systematic review of applications & calls
- ~30-40 will be selected for Cohort 3 *(last cohort!)*

If accepted

- Introductory meeting with next steps
- Develop operational plan with TA
  - *Must be approved before contract issued*
- Environmental review (CPA-52) submitted to Missouri NRCS by our team
  - *Must be approved before contract issued*
- OP and CPA-52 □ contract issued
- Contract signed □ issue first payment of $5,000

Conservation Fieldscapes

Last time this opportunity will be offered!



Applications open through January 31, 2026

Questions?

Kelly Wilson
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Regenerative Grazing Program Basics

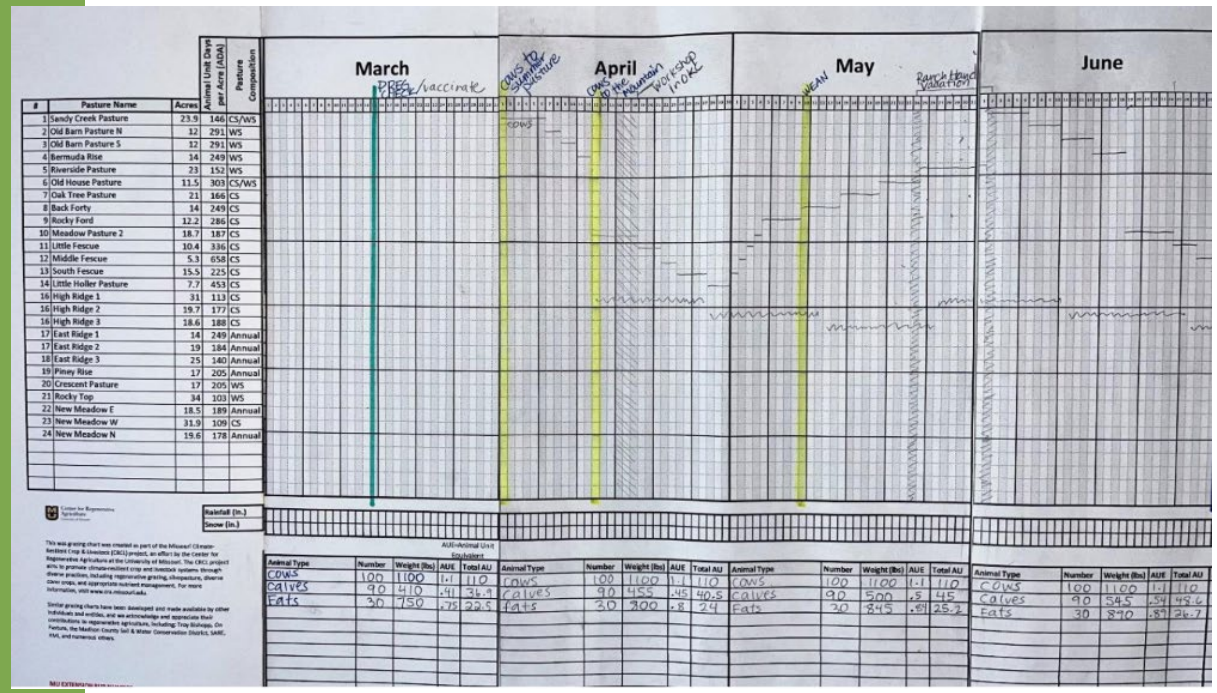
Year 3 – Application Open!



- $50 per acre to implement managed grazing
- Focus on outcomes: enhanced soil health, improved ecosystem biodiversity, increased carbon sequestration
- Program goal: learn how to develop an adaptive grazing plan; how to monitor the plan; how to adjust and adapt both grazing and ecosystem management in real-time based on observations

Regenerative Grazing Program Basics

Year 3 – Application Open!



- Develop and submit a pre-season grazing management plan + chart for enrolled fields
- Monitor and track grazing season livestock movements and management on grazing chart
- Optional cost-share on soil test to include carbon and biological metrics
  - Producer soil baseline setting and practice/skills building

Regenerative Grazing Eligibility

Year 3 – Application Open!

- Farm registered with FSA
- Located in Missouri
- Not a foreign person/entity
- Operational control over grazeable acres in Missouri
- Not **currently** receiving federal or state cost-share for similar grazing practice on same acres (CPS 528)
- One year of livestock management + complete/have completed the Missouri Grazing School within the last 10 years

or

- Must have completed a training workshop/program on managed or adaptive grazing – discuss with program manager

Regenerative Grazing Application

Year 3 – Application Open!

- Create Free FarmRaise Account
  - Name, email, phone
- Farm + Field Info
  - Farm, tract, field numbers
- Document Upload
  - 2026 FSA maps
  - 2026 FSA subsidiary print

Apply now through! February 17, 2026!

Regen Grazing Program

Questions?

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Missouri CRCL Project



Website

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Center for Regenerative Agriculture
University of Missouri

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE









NRCS Conservation Programs Overview

FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION
FSA | NRCS | RMA | Business Center

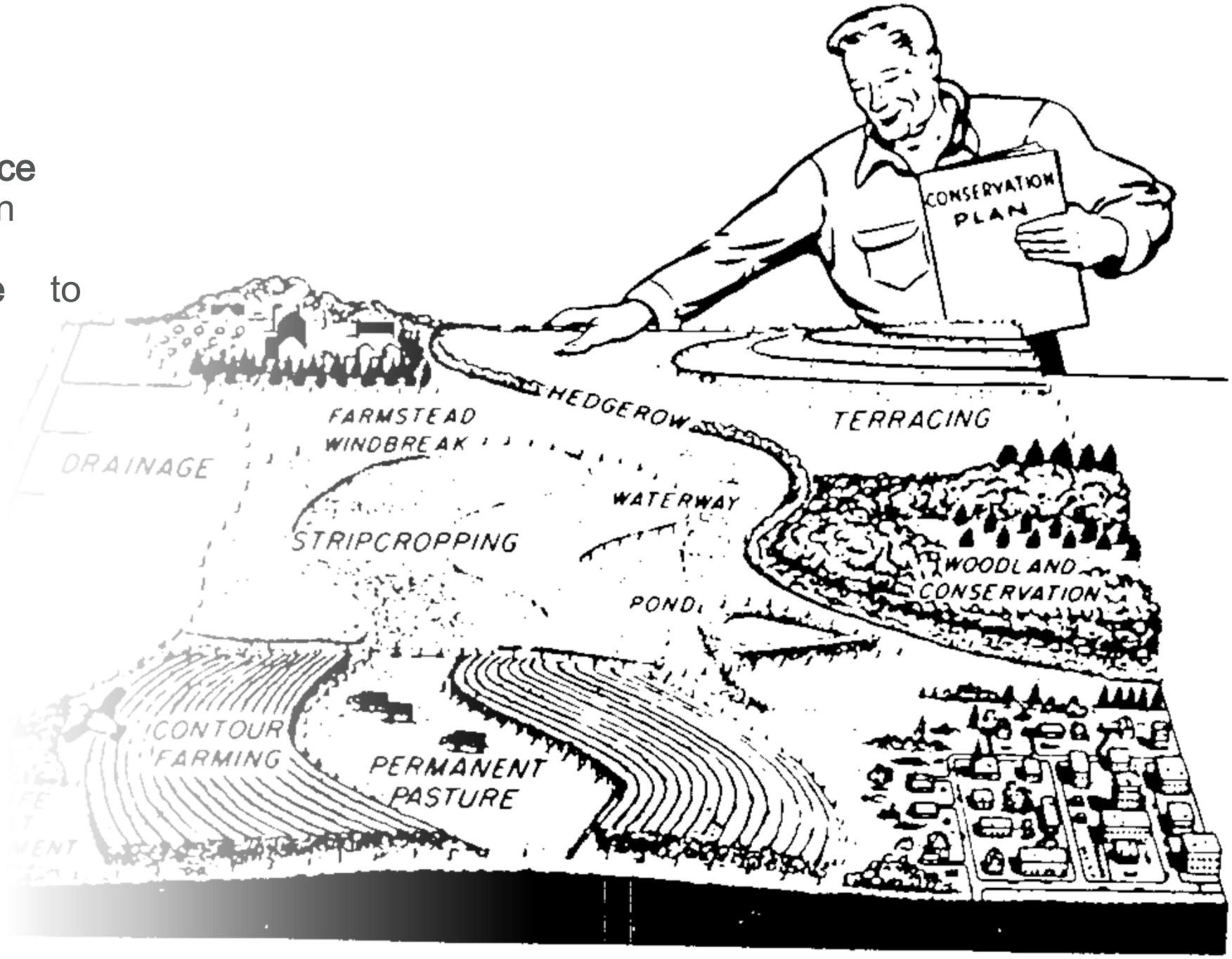




Technical Assistance

Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) provides free, voluntary expert guidance to landowners and producers. The goal of CTA is to help individuals implement conservation practices that enhance the sustainability of their operations while protecting natural resources.

Use NRCS **Technical Assistance** to develop a farm conservation plan, then use Conservation Program **Financial Assistance** to help with the cost of implementing all or part of the plan





Working Land Programs :

EQIP – Environmental Quality Incentives Program
CSP – Conservation Stewardship Program

Easement Programs:

ACEP-Agricultural Conservation Easement Program
ALE – Agricultural Land Easements
WRE – Wetland Reserve Easements

Partner Program :

RCPP – Regional Conservation Partnership Program





A Natural Resource Concern is defined as an expected degradation of the soil, water, air, plant or animal resource base to an extent the sustainability or intended use of the resource is impaired



Cover Crop

Possible resource concerns addressed



Soil - sheet and rill erosion



Soil - compaction



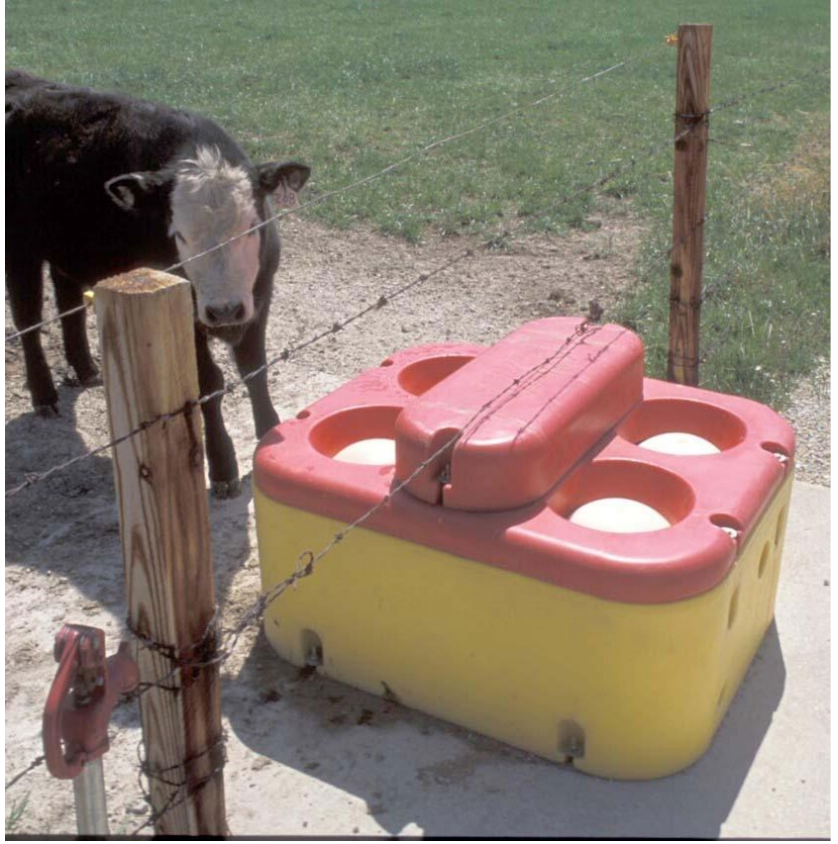
Soil - organic matter depletion













Grazing Systems

(Fence, Livestock Pipeline, Watering Facility, Pasture and Hay Planting, Prescribed Grazing, etc.)

- Possible resource concerns addressed:
- Plants – plant productivity and health
- Animals - feed and forage imbalance
- Animals - inadequate livestock water quantity, quality and distribution

Terrace



Possible resource concerns addressed:

Soil – ephemeral gully erosion

Water – sediment and nutrients transported to surface water

Wildlife Habitat Planting

Possible resource concerns addressed:

Animals – terrestrial habitat for wildlife and invertebrates





Forest Stand Improvement

Possible resource concerns addressed:

Plants – plant productivity and health

Plants – plant structure and composition

Animals – terrestrial habitat for wildlife and invertebrates



CSP– Conservation Stewardship Program

- Reward Program
- For producers who have already addressed their resource concerns at a basic level and want to take their conservation efforts to the next level
- CSP provides financial assistance for five years for CSP contract participants that maintain their existing level of conservation stewardship and are interested in adopting additional conservation activities
- Focus is primarily on vegetative and management practices



Regenerative Pilot Program

https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs -initiatives/regenerative -pilot -program

Regenerative Agriculture is a conservation management approach that emphasizes natural resources through improved soil health, water management, and natural vitality for the productivity and prosperity of American agriculture and communities

The pilot will leverage existing NRCS programs in EQIP and CSP

Requirements

As part of participating in Regenerative Pilot Program, producers must:

- Work with NRCS staff, partners, or technical service providers to conduct a **whole -farm assessment** ;
- Use at least one primary **regenerative management practice** ; and
- Agree to perform **soil health testing** in the first and last year of the contract (at a minimum) to establish a starting baseline and to record the resulting changes.

The whole -farm assessment includes all resource concerns, and it must meet NRCS planning criteria in the soil and water resource categories.

Regenerative Pilot Program

https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs -initiatives/regenerative -pilot -program

Primary Regenerative Management Practices
328 Conservation Crop Rotation
330 Contour Farming
340 Cover Crop
554 Drainage Water Management
511 Forage Harvest Management
666 Forest Stand Improvement
449 Irrigation Water Management
484 Mulching
590 Nutrient Management
595 Pest Management Conservation System
528 Prescribed Grazing
329 Residue and Tillage Management, No Till
345 Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced
585 Stripcropping

- Submit a completed application (NRCS -CPA-1200) to you local USDA Service Center
- Applications are taken any time
- Applications are processed in batches based on application deadlines published on each states' NRCS webpage
- In Missouri, applications received by January 15, 2026, are currently being assessed and ranked for funding consideration for EQIP and CSP and the Regenerative Pilot Program under both EQIP and CSP



For more information….

- Main NRCS Webpage: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/
- USDA Farmer Information Portal: https://www.farmers.gov/
  - Find your local USDA Service Center: https://www.farmers.gov/working-with-us/USDA-service-centers

My Contact Information:

Lauren Cartwright, Assistant State Conservationist -Programs

NRCS-Missouri

Lauren.cartwright@usda.gov



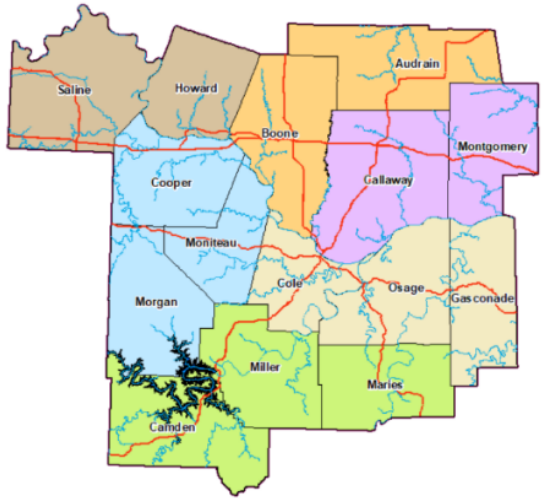
Missouri Rural Crisis Center Webinar

January 23, 2026

Private Landowner Assistance

- 93% privately owned
- 82% of forestland privately owned
- PLCs assigned to every county
- Private land foresters assigned to every county
- Private land fisheries biologists assigned to every county

Central Region Private Land Conservationists



Howard, Saline
Keith Ringler: 660-236-4227
Marshall USDA Office
704 N. Miami
Route 5 Box 41
Marshall, MO 65340-9133
keith.ringler@mdc.mo.gov

Audrain, Boone
Austin Dixon 573-875-5540 ext. 7
Boone County USDA
601 Business Loop 70 W.
Parkade Center, Suite 213-E
Columbia, MO 65203-2546
Austin.Dixon@mdc.mo.gov

Cooper, Moniteau, Morgan
Nathan Cannon 573-796-0286 ext. 4282
Moniteau County USDA
410 W. Buchanan, Suite C California,
MO 65018-1200
Nathan.Cannon@mdc.mo.gov

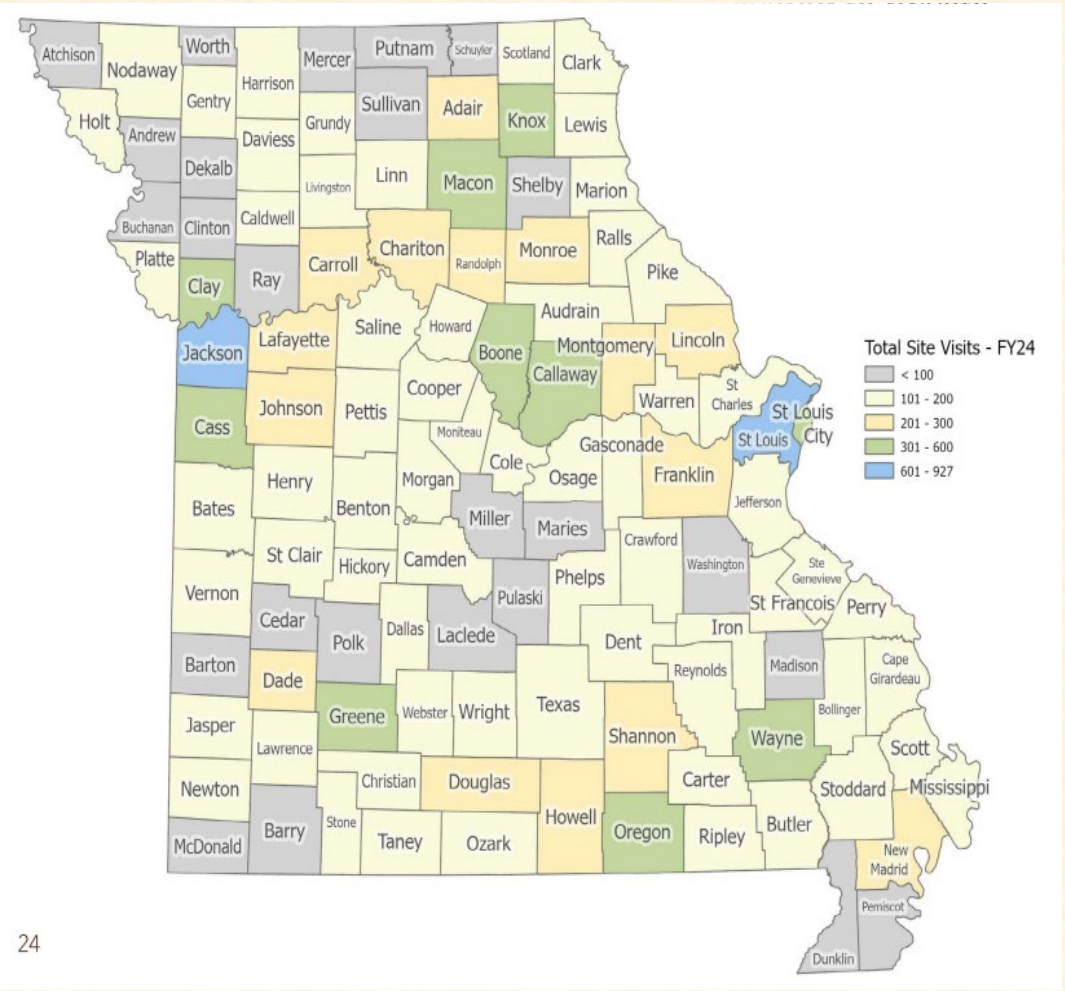
Callaway, Montgomery
Ben Diekmann: 573-592-1400 ext. 3
Callaway County USDA
4549 State Hwy. H
Fulton, MO 65251
Ben.Diekmann@mdc.mo.gov

Camden, Miller, Maries
Cory Gregg: 573-346-2210 ext. 6470
Miller County USDA
101 Industrial Park Roadway Eldon,
MO 65026
Cory.Gregg@mdc.mo.gov

Cole, Gasconade, Osage
Ryan Westcott: 573-417-3037
Osage County USDA
1315 E. Main
Linn, MO 65051-2503
Ryan.Westcott@mdc.mo.gov

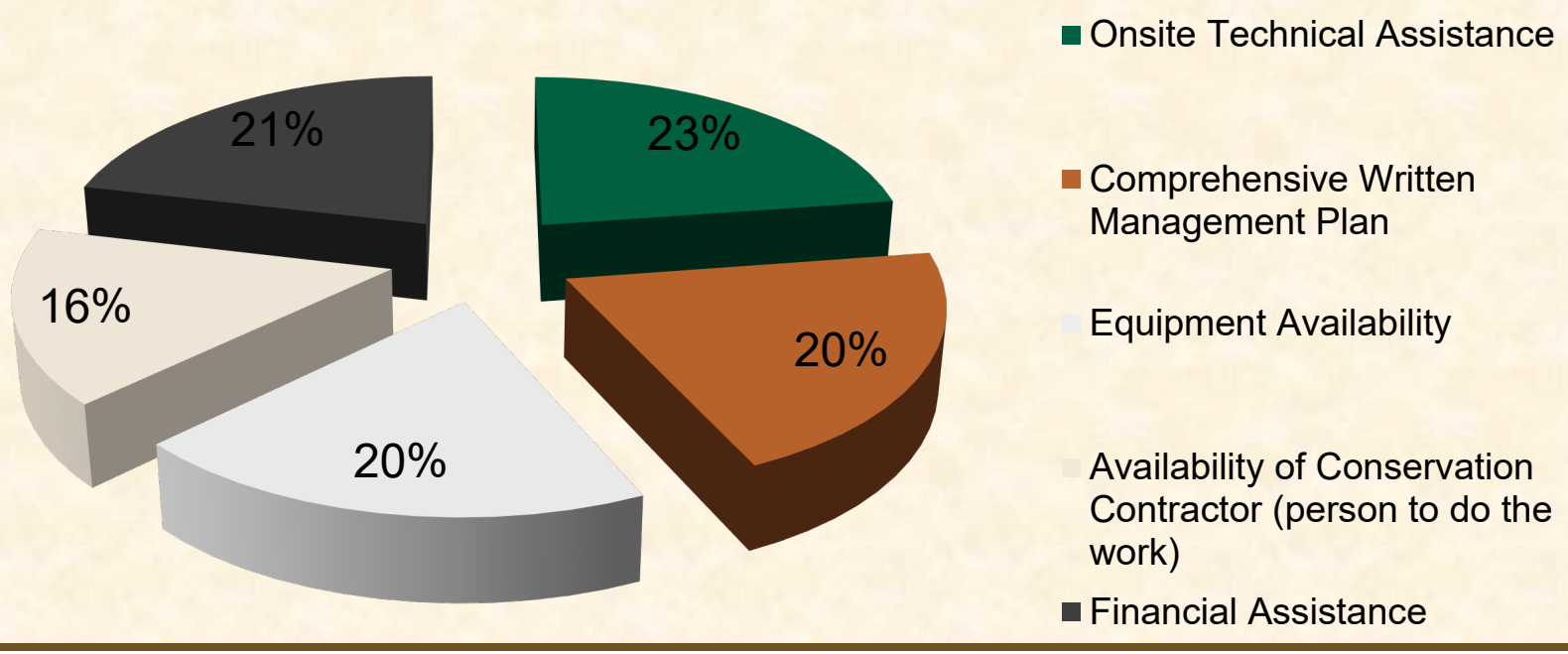
Community & Private Land Conservation

- Over 100 staff dedicated to working with landowners and communities
- $3+ million in MDC cost share
- Annually complete 18,000 technical assistance visits, provide 7,000 site visits, develop 2,700 plans, and review 1,400 plans.
- **Cooperative Partnerships**
- QF/PF
- DU
- NWTF
- QUWF
- MFA
- MO Soybean
- University Extension
- PBAs



Landowner Survey Results

How important are the following to you when installing habitat practice(s) on your property?



Cost Share Opportunities

- LCAP
- Farm Bill Programs- EQIP, CSP, RCPPs, etc.
- DNR cost share



Technical Assistance

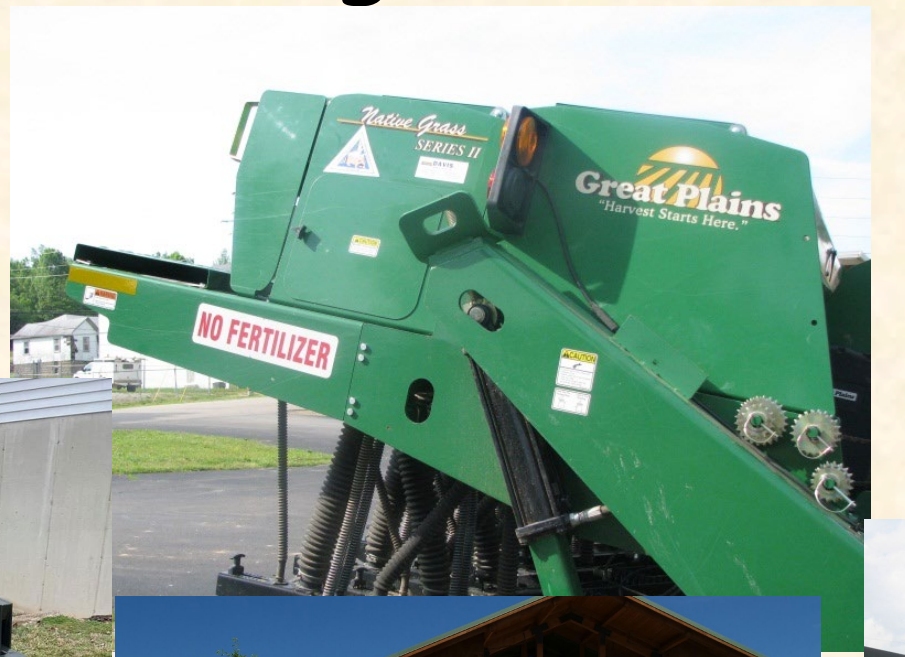
- Onsite visits
- Project plans
- Comprehensive plans
- Workshops/ field days



Equipment Agreements









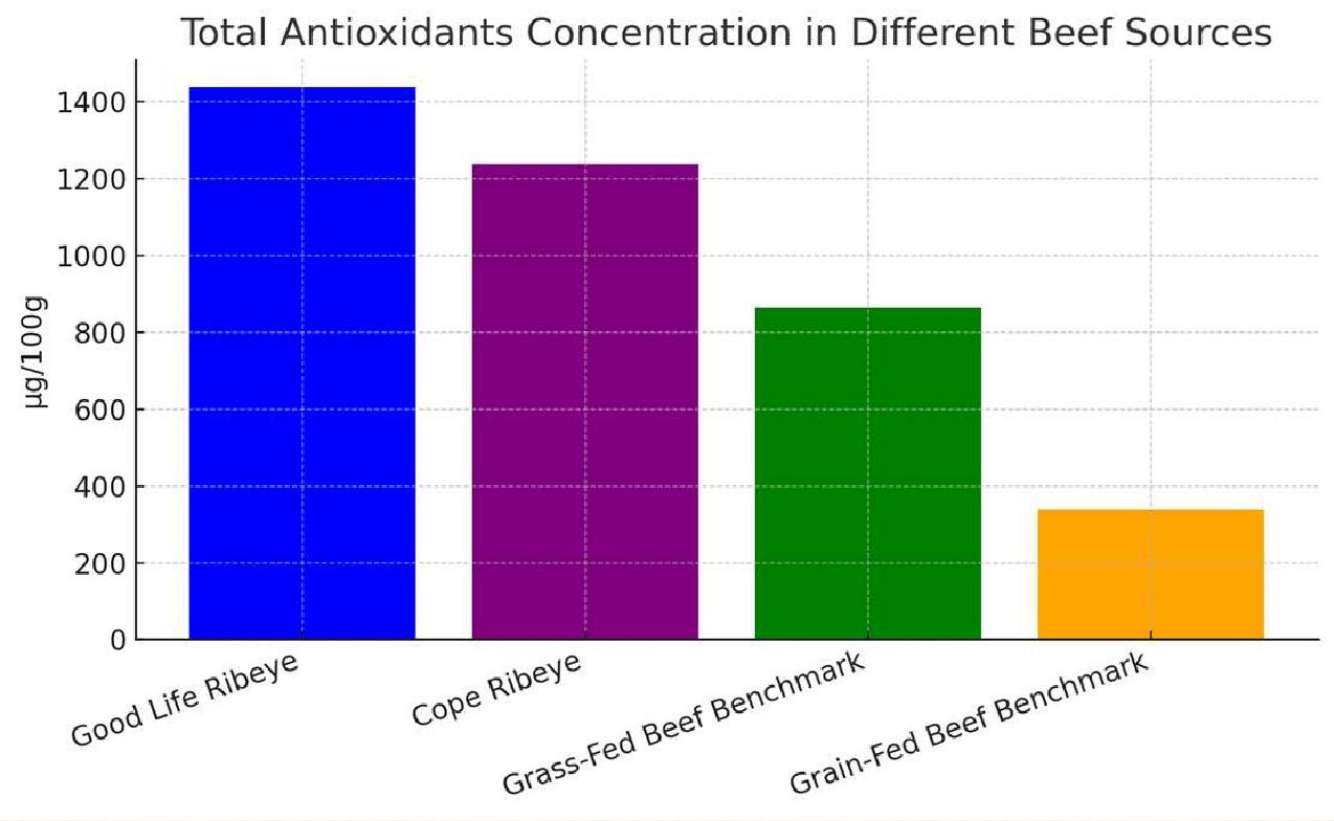




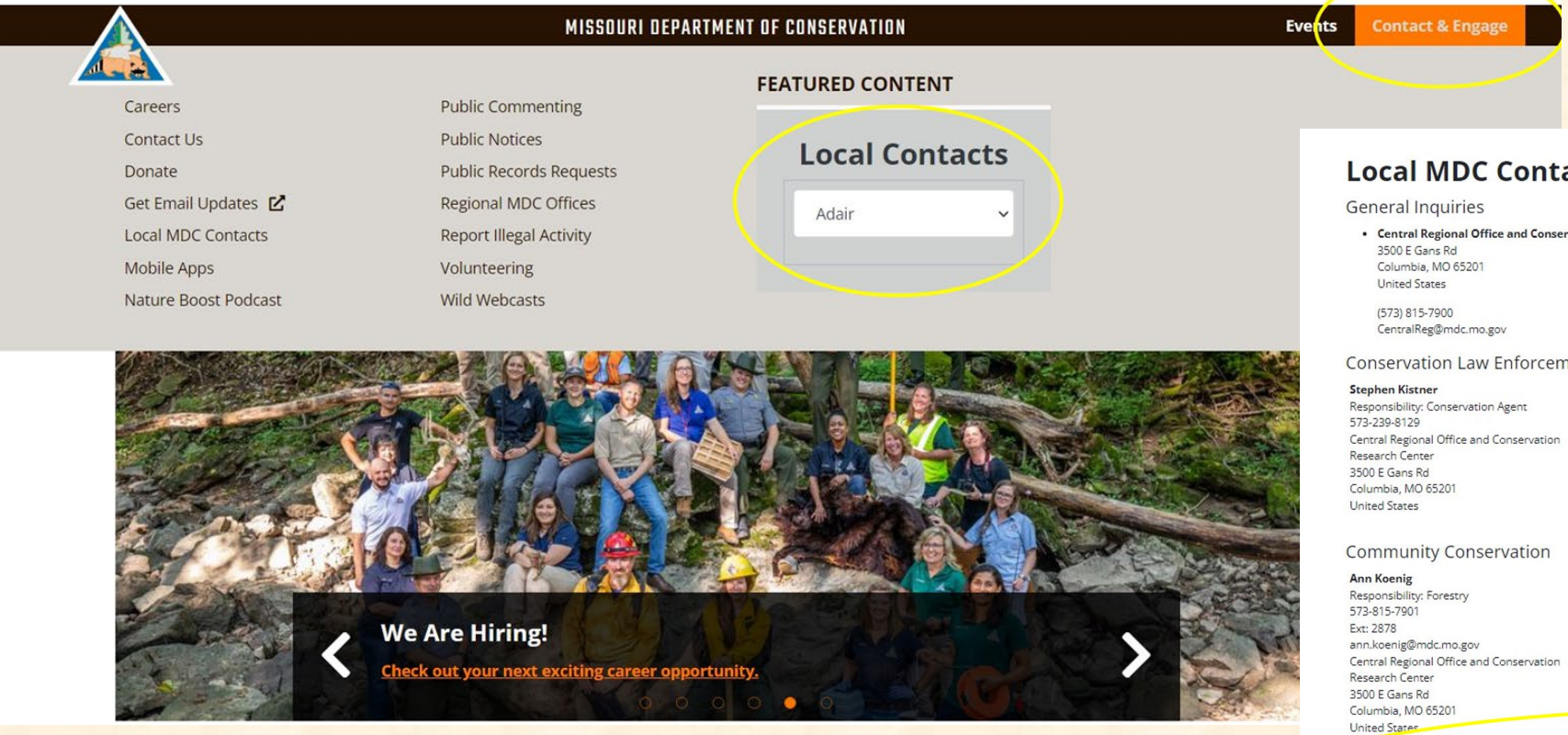
Dedicated to our Mission | Responsible Stewards | Trusted Professionals | One MDC

Focus On Healthy Grasslands

- Diversify forage w/ NWSG ~ 20-30%
- Allows stockpiling- less hay
- Good for cows: 2# gains during summer slump, fescue toxicity
- Good for soil: deep rooted, drought tolerant
- Good for the environment: filter sediment, chemicals, prairie strips
- Good for wildlife: pollinators, grassland dependent species
- Good for people



Find Local MDC Contacts



Local MDC Contacts for Callaway County

General Inquiries

- **Central Regional Office and Conservation Research Center**
  3500 E Gans Rd
  Columbia, MO 65201
  United States

  (573) 815-7900
  CentralReg@mdc.mo.gov

Conservation Law Enforcement

Stephen Kistner
Responsibility: Conservation Agent
573-239-8129
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3500 E Gans Rd
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VACANT VACANT
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Columbia, MO 65201
United States

Missouri State Cost Share: What it is and How it works

Neil Monnig- Urban Agriculture and Small Farms Program

Conservation on the land

January 23 2026

Why State Cost Share Exists

- Protect and improve Missouri's soil and water resources
- Reduce erosion and prevent nutrient and sediment loss
- Support conservation on working lands
- Help landowners implement conservation practices
- Encourage voluntary, locally led conservation
- Support long-term land productivity
- To assist cooperators with soil and water conservation efforts on their farms by providing partial reimbursement through a voluntary cost-share program.

Why State Cost Share Exists

- Missouri has long invested in soil and water conservation.
- Created “to save, maintain, improve the soil, water and soil fertility of Missouri”.
- Voluntary and Incentive based.
- Locally led and community focused.
- Offers local cost share for erosion control, soil health, grazing practices, and water conservation projects.

Who Runs State Cost Share?

- Funded by the State of Missouri
- Administered through the Missouri Department of Natural Resources
- Delivered locally by Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Every county in Missouri has a District Office
- Locally elected Soil and Water Conservation District boards help set priorities.

How Is State Cost Share Funded?

- Funded Through the Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax, which has been voter approved for more than 30 years.
- A 1/10 of 1% Sales tax (up for renewal in 2026.)
- The Missouri General Assembly approves annual program funding
- Administered through MO DNR and the Soil and Water Conservation Program
- Allocated to districts each year.
- Funding varies year to year and county to county.

What State Cost Share Provides Assistance For

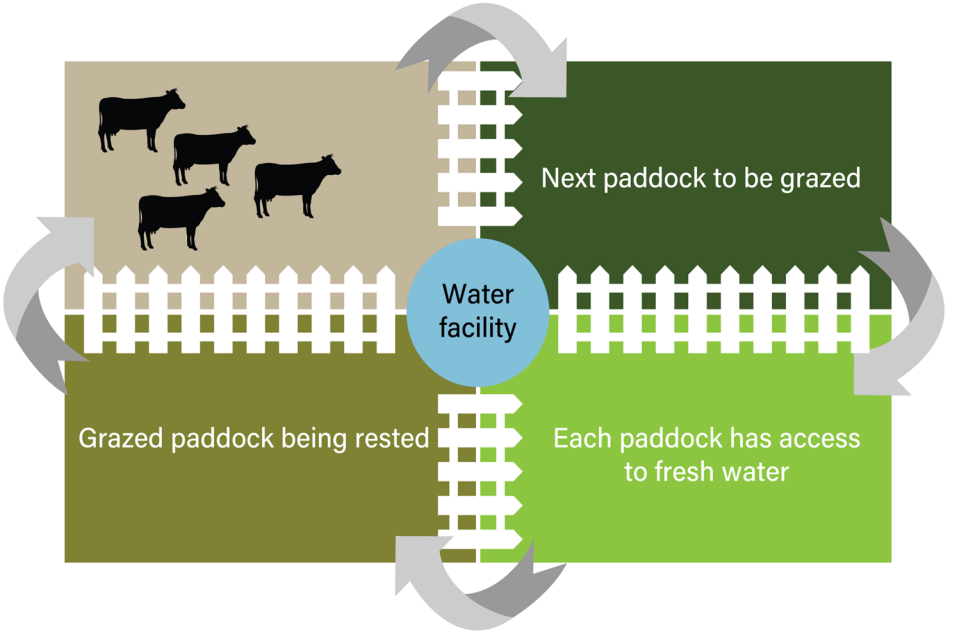
- Soil erosion control
- Water quality protection
- Grazing and pasture improvements/management
- Nutrient management
- Streambank stabilization
- Cover crops
- Structural conservation practices
- The sales tax provides financial incentives to landowners for up to 75 percent of the cost for installation of soil conservation practices that prevent or control excessive erosion. Soil and water conservation districts provide technical support with the design, implementation and maintenance of practices.

 Not an exhaustive list!

Conservation Practice examples



In rotational grazing, livestock are moved in cycles through fenced grazing paddocks



Note: In this graphic depiction of rotational grazing, a herd of cattle is rotated through four paddocks with shared fencing and water. After each grazing period, the herd is rotated to the paddock that has completed a full resting period while the other paddocks recover from prior grazing.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service.

Conservation Practice examples





g upslope at a grass waterway between field
Photo courtesy USDA NRCS

Missouri State Cost Share Payments by Resource Concern 2024

Total paid statewide in FY 2024: $49.5 million

Resource Concern	Amount Paid (2024)
Sheet, Rill & Gully Erosion	$35,064,823
Sensitive Areas	$2,868,678
Irrigation Management	$2,965,949
Animal Waste	$2,267,556
Grazing Management	$5,316,037
Woodland Erosion	$709,584
Nutrient & Pest Management	$242,335
ACT Drought Now	$7,200
Mozingo Lake Watershed	$78,304
TOTAL	**$49,520,467**

What Makes State Cost Share Different From NRCS

- Key Points:
- State-funded vs. Federally funded
- Often simpler applications
- Typically shorter timelines
- Usually one-year contracts
- May be less accessible for very small or urban operations
- More field-by-field conservation rather than whole farm conservation planning
- Complements NRCS whole-farm planning

Typical State Cost Share Process

- Sign up with your local Soil and Water Conservation District
- Each district handles signing up their own way. There may be an annual signup period, or they may have a running list they work from.
- Work with staff on what your conservation needs are.
- Staff will make a site visit and discuss best course of action.
- Staff come up with a plan for the producer to review.
- Once approved, a contract with the producer and the SWCD board is signed and the project can begin.
- Once the practice is installed and certified by SWCD staff, the producer is reimbursed. (Reimbursement ideally is 75%, but can be more or less)

How to Get Started

- Find your local Soil and Water Conservation District Office (Generally in the same office as FSA and NRCS)
- Call or Email to find out about their signup period
- Schedule a visit
- Start the conversation
- You don’t need to show up with a full plan, just reach out. The Staff are there to help you!
- https://mosoilandwater.land/ This Link will bring you to a map of Missouri, simply click on your county and you will be sent to that counties homepage where you can find contact info, upcoming events, and more.

Key Takeaways: Missouri State Cost Share

- Locally led, state funded conservation program
- Available in every Missouri county
- Designed to support conservation on working lands
- Works alongside NRCS and partner programs
- A good entry point for many producers
- Starts with a conversation at your local district office

Contact Information

- Neil Monnig UASF Program Specialist
- Neil.monnig@swcd.mo.gov
- 573-875-5540 extension 3

Conservation on the Land

Technical and Financial Assistance for Conservation on Missouri Farms

Questions?

MISSOURI RURAL CRISIS CENTER

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