

Delivering Conservation in Rhode Island

Fiscal Year 2025



The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) continues to put Farmers First by ensuring farmers, ranchers and private landowners are at the heart of every aspect of our mission, operations and technology. Our focus is on making life easier, more profitable and more rewarding for the American farmer and to put American dollars to work on the land.

2025 marked a pivotal year for NRCS, both nationwide and here in Rhode Island. NRCS worked with RI producers to implement conservation practices on more than 7,745 acres. See table for more details on implementation of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) in Rhode Island.

America's agriculture producers will continue to be the main focus in 2026 as additional assistance is made possible by the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), the largest long-term investment in NRCS conservation programs in decades. The OBBBA provides \$34 billion beginning in fiscal year 2026 through fiscal year 2031. Additionally, NRCS offered new opportunities in 2026, including the new Regenerative Pilot Program. These investments in conserving our land and vital resources help ensure American agriculture continues to thrive now and for future generations.

NRCS also invested in communities to help them prepare for or recover from natural disasters. In Rhode Island, NRCS invested over \$1 million in the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program and \$176K in the Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (WFPO) Program. Beginning in fiscal year 2026, the OBBBA will provide \$150 million annually for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Operations programs.

Rhode Island Contact:

Thomas L. Morgart, Acting State Conservationist — 401-822-8820, Thomas.Morgart@usda.gov. "We and our partners continued our commitment to our farmers, woodland owners, and aquaculture growers to advance conservation, strengthen service delivery, and support food production across the Ocean State."

255 Years of Growing Grapes at Greenvale Vineyards

Last year, NRCS helped Portsmouth, Rhode Island, landowners Bill and Nancy Wilson to protect 13 acres of their beloved vineyard with an Agricultural Conservation Easement Program-Agricultural Land Easement (ACEP-ALE), allowing their land to be forever farmed.

The land, with its excellent farm soil, has been working farmland for centuries. The land is also connected to other conservation properties, adding to the protected corridor of lands on the eastern side of Aquidneck Island, known as the Sakonnet Greenway. The Sakonnet Greenway Trail is the longest contiguous nature trail on Aquidneck Island.



"We have some of the best farming soils in the state here on Aquidneck Island, yet our farms are under tremendous development pressure. The state has lost 80 percent of its farmland since the 1940s," said Terry Sullivan, executive director of the Aquidneck Island Land Trust. "Our island's working farms are essential to our economy and community."

This project is a partnership between NRCS, the Aquidneck Island Land Trust, and the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management through the State Land Conservation Program, Agricultural Land Preservation Commission (ALPC).

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CONSERVATION IN RHODE ISLAND				
PROGRAM	OBLIGATIONS	ACRES	CONTRACTS	APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
ACEP - ALE	\$ 1,267,500	160.8	2	5
ACEP - WRE	\$ 0	0	0	6
CSP	\$ 1,188,390	1,173.3	43	67
EQIP	\$ 8,955,938	6,300.1	203	313
RCPP	\$ 293,500	111.3	2	37
GRAND TOTAL	\$ 11,705,328	7,745.5	250	430

Top 5 EQIP Practices in RHODE ISLAND

1. Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities
2. Brush Management
3. Mulching
4. Combustion System Improvement
5. Structures for Wildlife



Rhode Island oyster farmers place spat-on-shell for oyster reef restoration under the Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities practice.



Top Rhode Island conservation practices, left to right: Structures for Wildlife (bird box); Combustion System Improvement (tractor); and Mulching (with drip irrigation in a high tunnel).

RHODE ISLAND OBLIGATIONS BY CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT FY 2025		
	CSP	EQIP
District 1	\$ 619,454	\$ 1,831,672
District 2	\$ 568,936	\$ 7,124,266
Grand Total	\$ 1,188,390	\$ 8,955,938

Note: Congressional district data for ACEP is unavailable.

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