

OKLAHOMA STATE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

February 11, 2026

9:00 am – 12:30 pm

Meridian Technology Center, Stillwater, OK

Summary:

Welcome and Opening remarks – Jeanne Jasper, NRCS State Conservationist

- **NRCS Chief Priorities and Regenerative Agriculture Initiative:** Jeanne Jasper outlined Chief Aubrey Bettencourt's five priorities for NRCS, including preserving agricultural lands, modernizing technology, recentering field engagement, strengthening partnerships, and shifting to outcome-based farmer empowerment, with a major focus on the Regenerative Agriculture Pilot Program; further details and technical aspects were discussed by Karla Stephens and Caleb Stone.
- - **Preserving Agricultural Lands:** NRCS is committed to preserving agricultural lands through easement programs and the Regenerative Pilot Program, emphasizing permanent easements for working lands and wetlands to maintain agricultural productivity and health.
 - **Modernizing NRCS Technology:** Jeanne Jasper highlighted efforts to upgrade NRCS's internal technology and infrastructure, aiming to streamline systems, reduce administrative burden:
 - **Recenter Field Engagement and Technical assistance** to enable staff to spend more time in the field with producers, including potential mobile conservation planning tool.
 - **Regenerative Pilot Program Details:** Jeanne Jasper explained that the Regenerative Pilot Program is an initiative using existing EQIP and CSP funds, targeting 25% of those budgets, and requiring a minimum five-year contract with soil health testing at the beginning and end to quantify conservation outcomes.
 - **Outcome-Based Reporting and Farmer Empowerment:** Jeanne Jasper discussed the shift to outcome-based reporting, including benchmarking and post-contract soil health assessments, and emphasized the protection and return of personal data to producers, with a focus on whole-farm planning and tailored conservation solutions.
 - **Technical Requirements for Regenerative Practices:** Caleb Stone provided technical details on qualifying practices, contract requirements, and the Conservation Evaluation and Monitoring Activities (CEMA) 216 soil health testing protocol, including sampling methods, lab requirements, and the role of qualified individuals in supporting producers through the process.

Congressional Updates-

Payton Burns- Senator James Langford-Field Representative

- Shared that he was present to listen and be able to share back with James about what the Federal partners report. Their office is a resource to all and reach out if needed.

Emma Cook- Senator Markwayne Mullin-Field Representative

- Shared that she was present to listen to what was being experienced on the ground and understood that there had been a lot of recent changes. She is willing to visit with constituents afterwards for specific questions.

Megan Hinkens- Representative Tom Cole-Field Representative

- Brief update on Bills. Stating that there were 12 funding bills they would like to get out of the House and passed on to the Senate. Mentioned DHS, National Guard, and FEMA.

NRCS Reports

- **Easement Programs and Wetland Restoration Updates:** Melanie Oliver, Easement Program Manager provided updates on the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, including changes to payment rates, special provisions for Northeast Oklahoma counties, wetland restoration criteria, and the Playa Lakes Joint Venture area, with input from subcommittee members and partners.
- - **Payment Rate Adjustments:** Melanie Oliver explained the adjustment of maximum per-acre payments to \$3,500 statewide and \$4,000 for Northeast counties, based on subcommittee recommendations and appraisals, with 80% of appraised value as the standard except for the special emphasis areas of Playa Lakes and Neosho Bottoms , which may reach up to 95%.
 - **Wetland Restoration Criteria:** The subcommittee reviewed the unchanged wetland restoration criteria and discussed the use of the hydric wetland classification system for policy compliance, with copies of guidelines made available to attendees.
 - **Playa Lakes Joint Venture Area:** Special buffer ratios for Playa Lakes were discussed, with a five-to-one upland-to-wetland ratio approved for certain projects, and the possibility of higher ratios requiring national approval; the ecological and water benefits of larger buffers were highlighted.
 - **Program Participation and Funding Expansion:** Melanie addressed questions about annual agricultural easement participation, noting that funding typically

covers one or two large properties per year, with increasing applications and efforts to secure additional funding for future projects.

- **Easement Acquisition Process Improvements:** Recent support from the National Office's easement acquisition branch was announced, expected to reduce title work and due diligence timelines from 36 months to potentially 18 months, streamlining the process for landowners and partners.
- **NRCS Financial Assistance Programs and Funding Allocations:** Karla Stephens, Assistant State Conservationist-Programs presented updates on EQIP, CSP, and ACEP program allocations, including increased funding, targeted initiatives for regenerative agriculture, wildlife, beginning farmers, and disadvantaged groups, and changes to contract and ranking processes.
- - **Funding Allocation Breakdown:** Karla Stephens detailed the 2026 EQIP allocation of \$43 million, with 25% directed to regenerative agriculture, 10% to wildlife, 5% to beginning farmers, and 5% to socially disadvantaged groups, plus national and state initiatives for monarch butterflies, air quality, water quality, and tribal/urban agriculture.
 - **Contract and Ranking Process Changes:** The team explained the shift to a single general sign-up deadline, reduction in ranking pools from over 30 to 3, elimination of CSP renewals, and simplification of enhancement requirements, aiming to streamline administrative processes and focus on locally identified resource concerns.
 - **Practice Standards and Payment Caps:** CSP minimum payments were raised to \$4,000, with annual caps increased from \$40,000 to \$60,000 for individuals, and a move toward conservation practice-based installations rather than complex enhancements.
 - **Regenerative Agriculture Funding:** The regenerative pilot program uses existing EQIP and CSP funds, with Oklahoma targeting approximately \$10 million for EQIP and \$4.5 million for CSP, supporting both new and existing regenerative practices.
- **Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) Overview and Updates:** Tiffany Nelson, RCPP Coordinator provided an overview of RCPP, including project types, partner roles, funding arrangements, eligibility, and the status of upcoming funding opportunities, with discussion of recent multi-state projects and anticipated process improvements.
- - **RCPP Project Types and Partner Roles:** Tiffany described classic RCPP projects, where NRCS handles most implementation, and alternative funding arrangements (AFA), where partners manage program delivery, including technical assistance, payments, and third-party contracting.

- **Eligibility and Resource Concerns:** Eligible partners include a wide range of organizations, with projects targeting specific resource concerns in designated critical conservation areas or state/multi-state regions; Oklahoma's Prairie Grasslands Region is a key focus for CCA funding.
 - **Funding and Implementation Details:** RCPP projects require 75% of funds to go to producers and 25% for implementation and outreach, with programmatic partnership agreements and supplemental agreements outlining roles, reporting, and payment processes.
 - **Recent Multi-State Project Example:** A new multi-state AFA project with the Intertribal Buffalo Council was announced, targeting tribal entities with buffalo herds for native rangeland restoration across Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Florida, with priority for ITBC member tribes.
 - **Anticipated Process Improvements:** Tiffany discussed ongoing efforts to streamline RCPP processes, including negotiating agreements simultaneously and improving partner access to program portals, with updates to be shared as new funding opportunities are released.
- **Technical Updates- Caleb Stone, Acting State Resource Specialist**
 - Focused on the Regenerative Agriculture Pilot Program; details and technical aspects were discussed. Stone provided technical details on qualifying practices, contract requirements, and the Conservation Evaluation and Monitoring Activities (CEMA) 216 soil health testing protocol, including sampling methods, lab requirements, and the role of qualified individuals in supporting producers through the process. Stone discussed the shift to outcome-based reporting, including benchmarking and post-contract soil health assessments, and emphasized the protection and return of personal data to producers, with a focus on whole-farm planning and tailored conservation solutions.
- **Partner Agency Reports and Collaborative Initiatives:** Representatives from FSA, Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts, OSU Prescribed Burn Association, the Barn Group, Comanche Pool Prairie Resource Foundation, Oklahoma Local AG Collaborative, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and USDA Agricultural Research Service shared updates on their programs, collaborative projects, and upcoming events.
 - - **FSA Program Updates:** Kim Haines reported on FSA's administrative changes, outreach efforts, production and payment eligibility, disaster assistance programs, conservation reserve program sign-ups, livestock assistance, and farm loan activity, including new funding and process improvements.
 - **Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts:** Jean Lam introduced OACD's mission, upcoming state meeting, and efforts to build identity and

culture, emphasizing open participation and support for producers navigating conservation programs.

- **OSU Prescribed Burn Association Activities:** John Weir summarized the growth of prescribed burn associations, coordinator activities, burn plans, training events, and the increasing trend of prescribed burns across Oklahoma, including collaboration with NRCS and other partners.
 - **Barn Group Land Trust Initiatives:** Gene Miller described the Barn Group's conservation easement work, partnerships, and efforts to support private land stewardship, with ongoing projects in Texas and plans to expand into Oklahoma.
 - **Comanche Pool Prairie Resource Foundation Grassland Summit:** Kay Decker announced the upcoming grassland summit in Alva, featuring speakers, breakout sessions, ranch tours, and collaborative opportunities for conservation stakeholders.
 - **Oklahoma Local Ag Collaborative Programs:** Dalia Costa highlighted OLAC's collaboration with NRCS, conservation planner onboarding, regional workshops, resource development, farmer mentorship program, and the launch of the Farming with Integrity Conservation Recognition program.
 - **US Fish and Wildlife Service and USDA ARS Updates:** John Hendrix and Sheri Hunter reported on staffing changes, strategic planning, funding for prescribed fire and habitat restoration, and research initiatives, including facility upgrades and new research projects in Oklahoma.
- **Open Discussion and Strategic Planning:** Jeanne Jasper facilitated an open discussion for final questions, comments, and partner agency updates, and announced that Oklahoma NRCS will be developing a new strategic plan aligned with agency priorities, inviting input and future participation.
 - - **Strategic Plan Development:** Jeanne announced that Oklahoma NRCS will be working on a strategic plan to address Chief Bettencourt's priorities, encouraging partners to provide feedback and participate in smaller group meetings as needed.

Follow-up tasks:

- **Easement Program Subcommittee Meeting:** Announce and invite interested parties to attend the small group meeting on agricultural land easements at the State Office at 1:30 PM. (Karla)
- **Wetland Reserve Enhancement Partnership Program (WREP) Preparation:** Identify and begin discussions with groups interested in the wetland purchase program to prepare proposals in advance of potential late-year announcements. (Melanie)
- **Sharing Meeting Materials:** Distribute the meeting slides and summary to all participants after the meeting. (Karla)
- **Producer Feedback for Practice Standards:** Organize and host producer feedback roundtables for upcoming practice standards, ensuring direct input from producers who have implemented or attempted practices in Oklahoma. (Caleb)

- **RCPP Notice of Funding Opportunity Communication:** Email the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NFO) details to interested parties as soon as it is released, using the sign-in sheet to collect emails. (Tiffany Nelson)
- **RCPP Guidance Distribution:** Send guidance on proposal writing and program management for RCPP to interested individuals upon request. (Tiffany Nelson)
- **Oklahoma NRCS Strategic Plan Development:** Develop and communicate the Oklahoma NRCS strategic plan in alignment with new agency priorities, including opportunities for stakeholder input. (Jeanne)
- **US Fish and Wildlife Service Strategic Plan Review:** Review and provide feedback on the US Fish and Wildlife Service's five-year strategic plan, using the copies provided at the meeting. (All partners)



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State Technical Advisory Committee

State Conservationist Updates

February 11, 2026



- Agenda
 - Welcome and NRCS OK General Updates
 - Congressional Delegates
 - NRCS Program Updates (Easements, CSP, EQIP, and RCPP)
 - NRCS Technical Updates
 - FSA Reports
 - Partner Reports
 - Open Discussion



Chief's Priorities

1. Preserve and Protect Agricultural Land
 - Reduce the loss of productive farmland and safeguard the long-term viability of America's agricultural landscapes.
2. Modernize NRCS Infrastructure and Technology
 - Transform NRCS into a digitally agile agency that empowers staff and farmers through modern tool and systems.
3. Recenter Field Engagement and Technical Assistance
 - Re-establish NRCS's Presence in the field to deliver hand-on, personalized support to farmers.
4. Strengthen Partnerships by Streamlining Processes and Accountability
 - Leverage partnerships as force multipliers while reducing internal friction to accelerate conservation outcomes.
5. Shift to Outcome Based Conservation and Farmer Empowerment
 - Measure success through outcomes and empower farmers with data, recognition and market access.



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Questions/Comments



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STAC February 11, 2026 Meeting

Karla Stephens, ASTC –Programs

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



Program sign-ups FY 2026

Applications are accepted for all programs year round.

NRCS sets dates each year that applications must be received to be considered for that funding cycle.

Due to delays caused by the lapse in appropriates, a nationwide deadline of January 15, 2026 was set as the 1st Batching period deadline for applications:

- **Environmental Quality Incentives (EQIP)**
- **Conservation Stewardship (CSP)**
- **Agricultural Conservation Easement (ACEP)**



Farm Bill FY 2026 EQIP funding

General Allocation-43 million

Mandatory

- **25 % Regenerative Pilot Program**
- **10% Wildlife related conservation practices**
- **5% Beginning Farmers & Ranchers**
- **5% Socially Disadvantaged Farmers & Ranchers**

National Initiative Funds- 15 million

- **Regenerative Pilot Program**
- **Monarch Butterfly Initiative**
- **National Air Quality Initiative**
- **National Water Quality Initiative**
- **Northern Bobwhite**



Farm Bill FY 2026 EQIP funding

State determined priorities-4.5 million

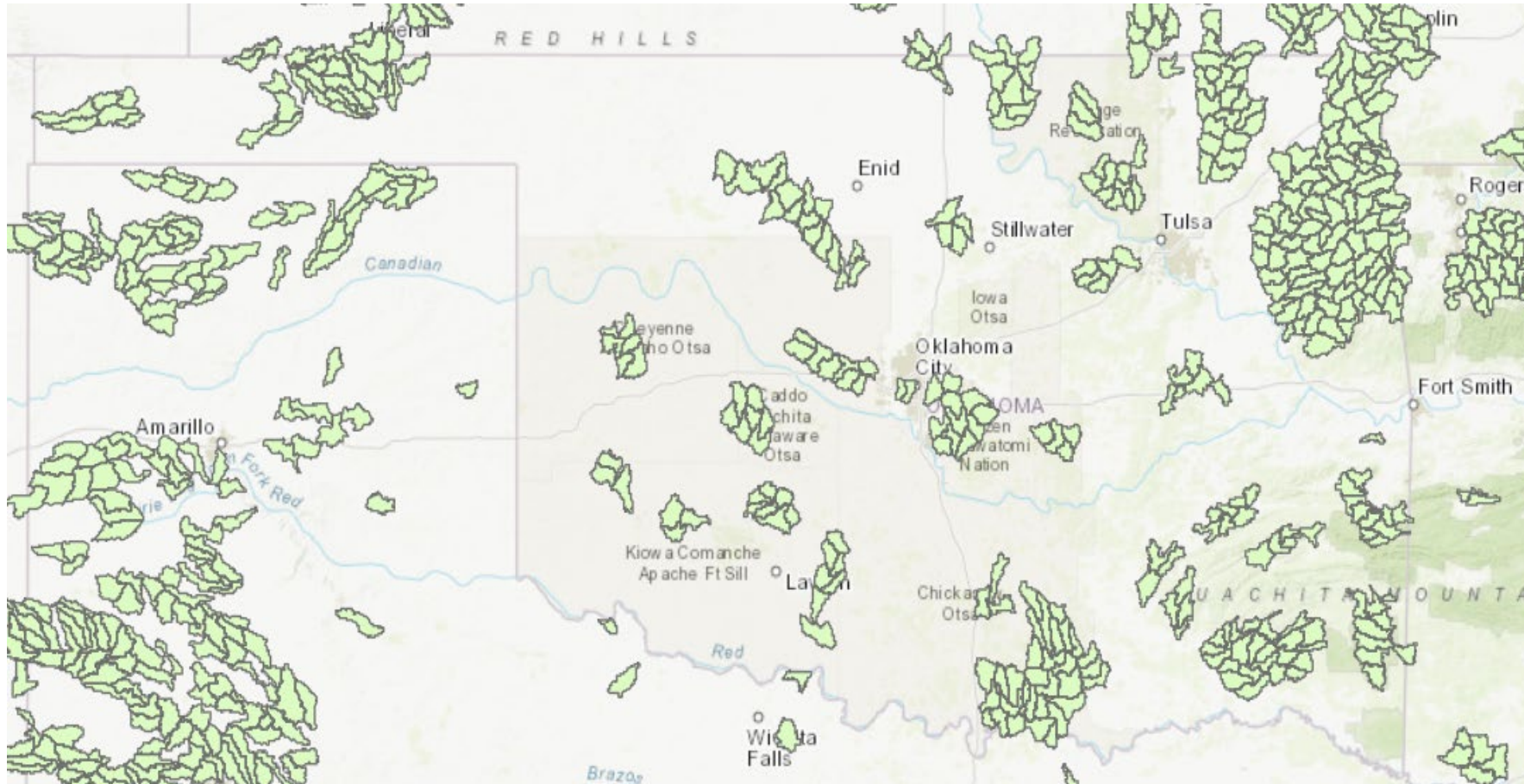
- Tribal
- Urban
- Great Plains Grassland Initiative
- Forestry
- Lagoon Closure

Local priorities-21 million

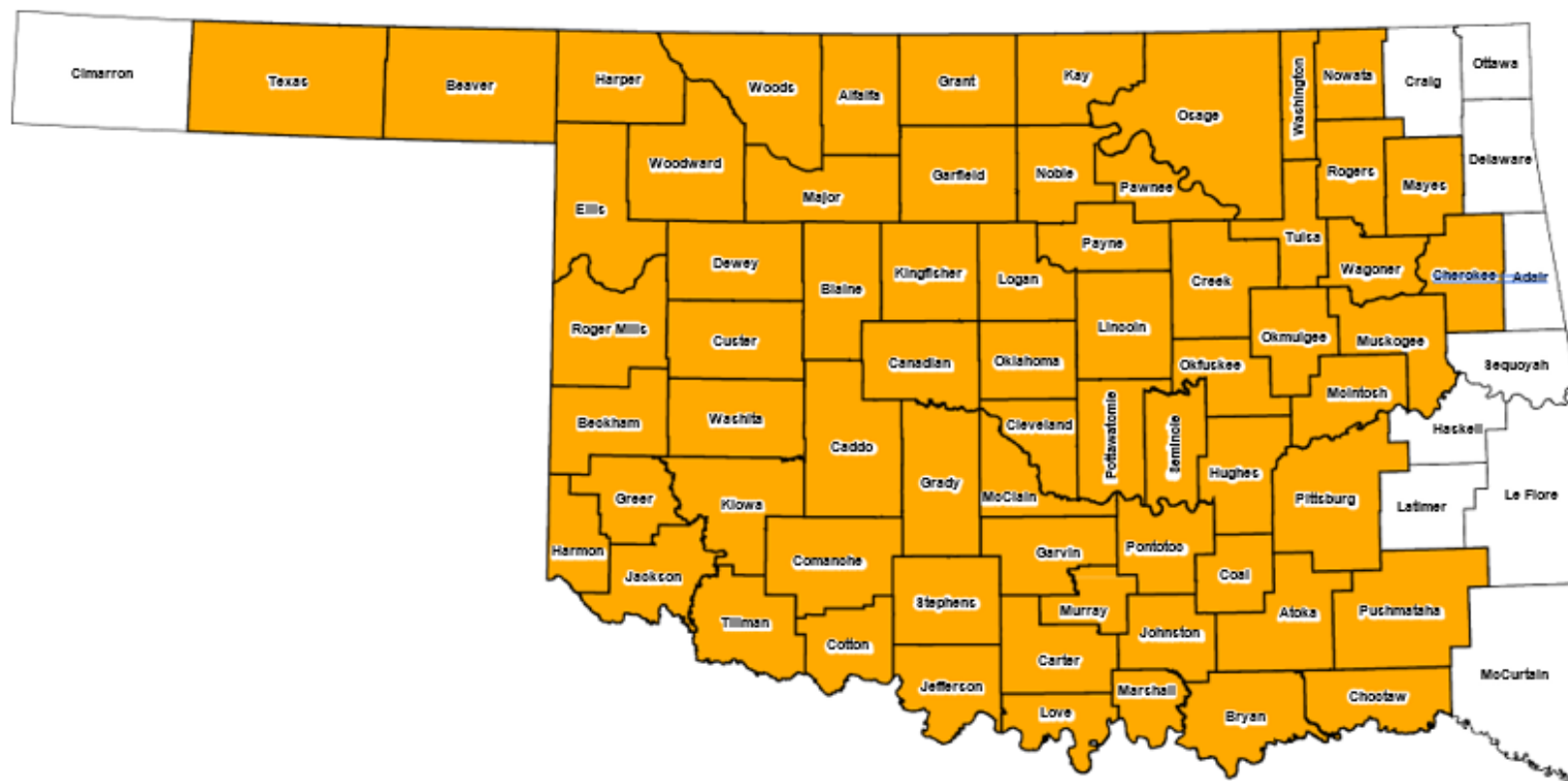
- Treats locally identified concerns per 26 Teams
\$800 K per Team

Source Water Protection Priority Areas

* Food Security Act of 1985 – Protection of drinking water by ensuring 10% funds nationwide are available 2019-2031.

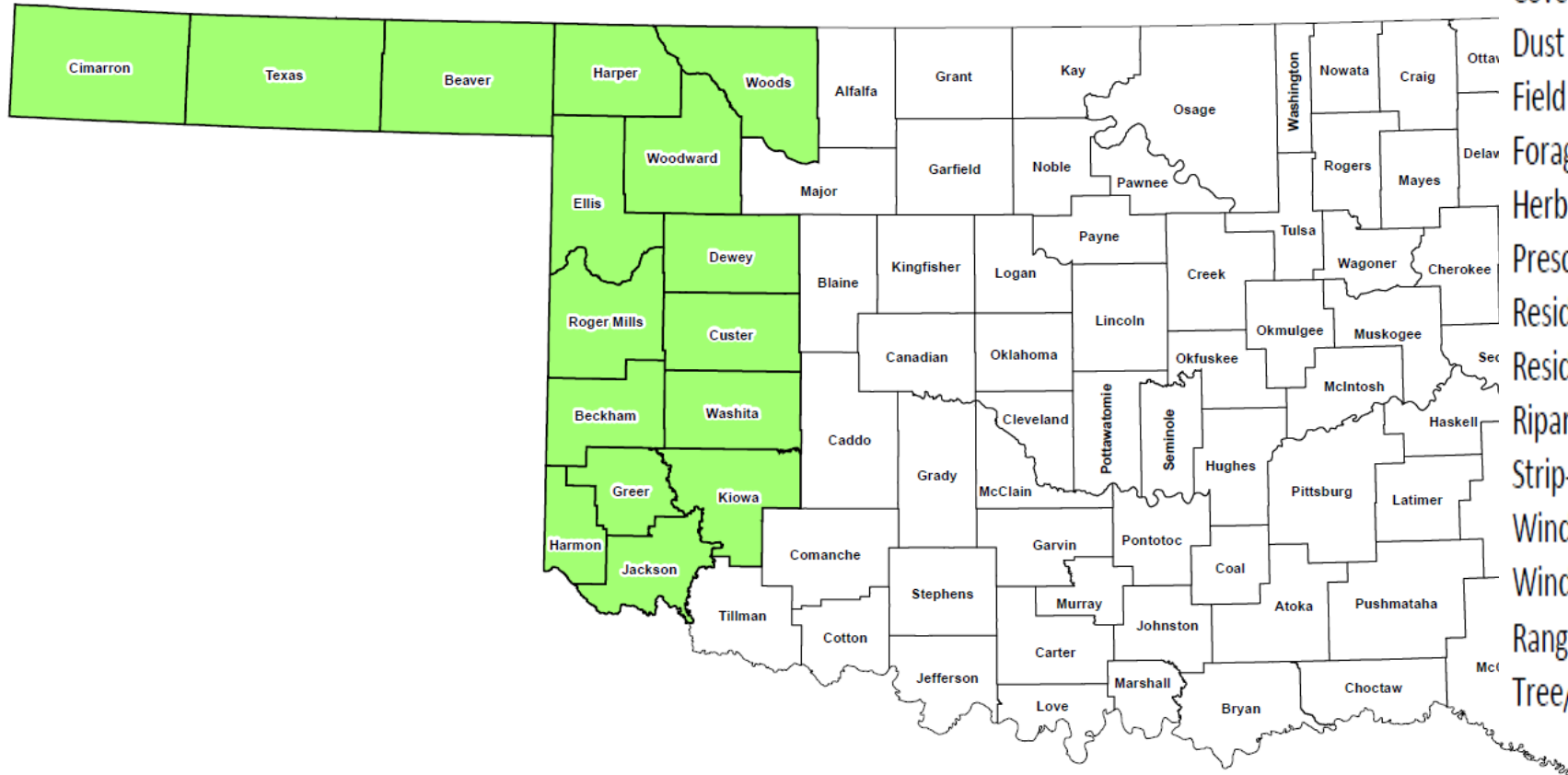


NRCS Monarch Butterfly Project



Brush Management (314)
 Conservation Cover (327)
 Early Successional Habitat
 Development/Management
 (647)
 Field Border (386)
 Forage Harvest Management
 (511)
 Prescribed Burning (338)
 Prescribed Grazing (528)
 Range Planting (550)
 Riparian Herbaceous Cover
 (390)
 Wildlife Habitat Planting (420)
 Upland Wildlife Habitat
 Management (645)

Oklahoma NRCS Air Quality Initiative



Conservation Cover (327)

Cover Crop (340)

Dust Control from Animal Activity on Open Lot Surfaces (375)

Field Border (386)

Forage and Biomass Planting (512)

Herbaceous Wind Barriers (603)

Prescribed Grazing (528)

Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced Till (345)

Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till (329)

Riparian Herbaceous Cover (390)

Strip-cropping (585)

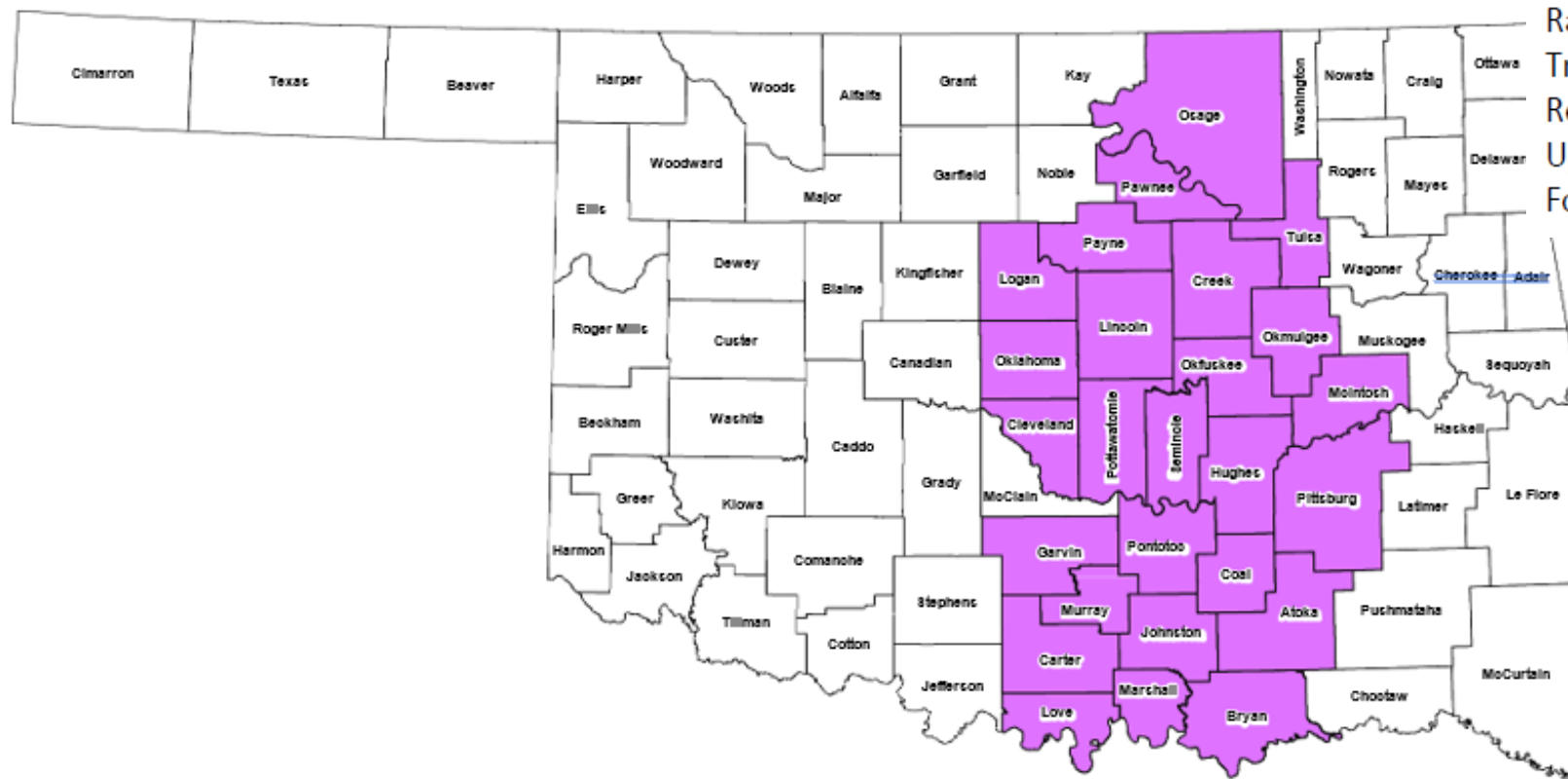
Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380)

Windbreak/Shelterbelt Renovation (650)

Range Planting (550)

Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)(Replaces 422 Hedgerow Planting)

NRCS Northern Bobwhite Initiative



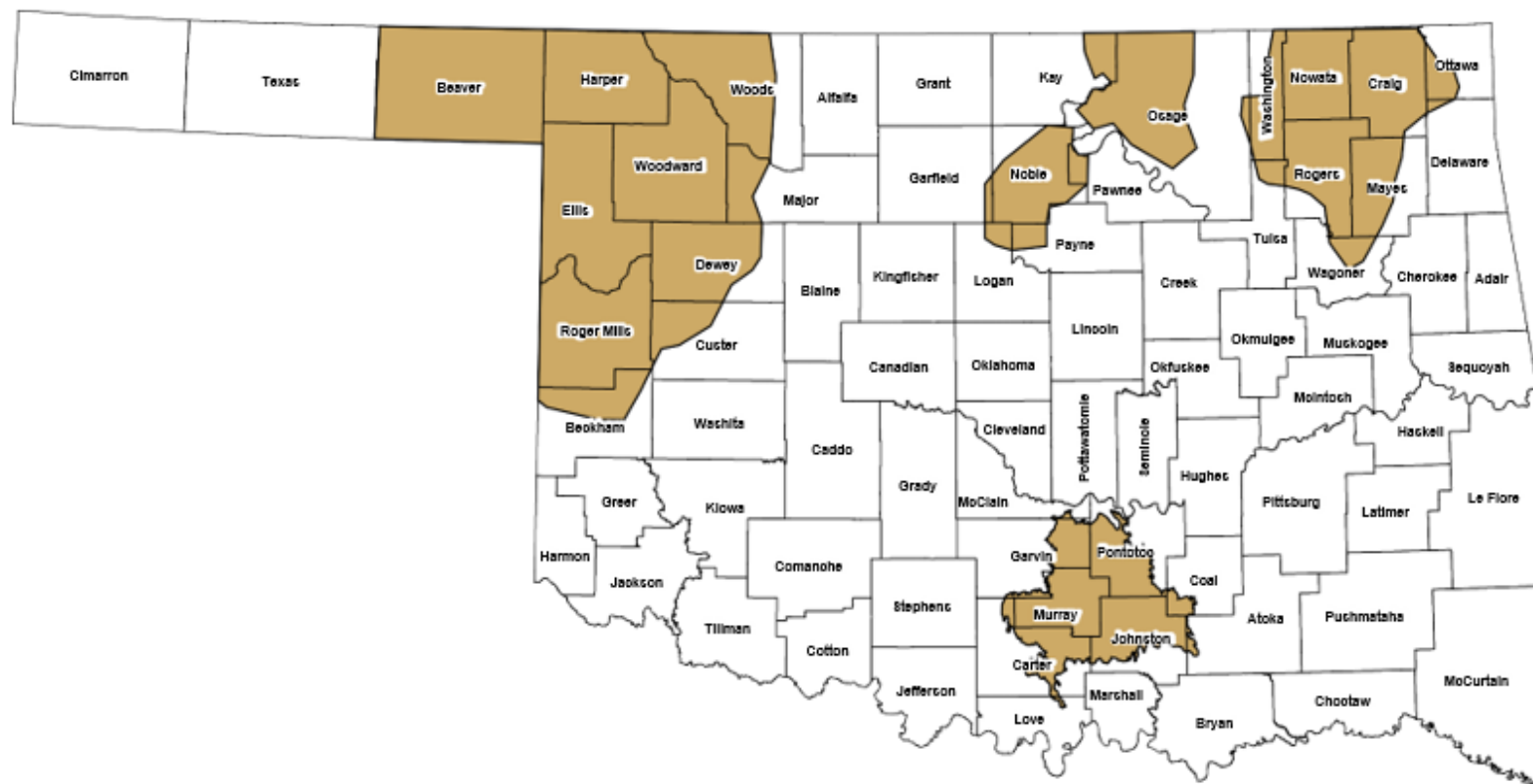
Brush Management 314
Prescribed Burning 338
Wildlife Habitat Planting 420
Prescribed Grazing 528
Range Planting 550
Tree/Shrub Establishment 612
Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities 643
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management 645
Forest Stand Improvement 666

NRCS Forestry Initiative



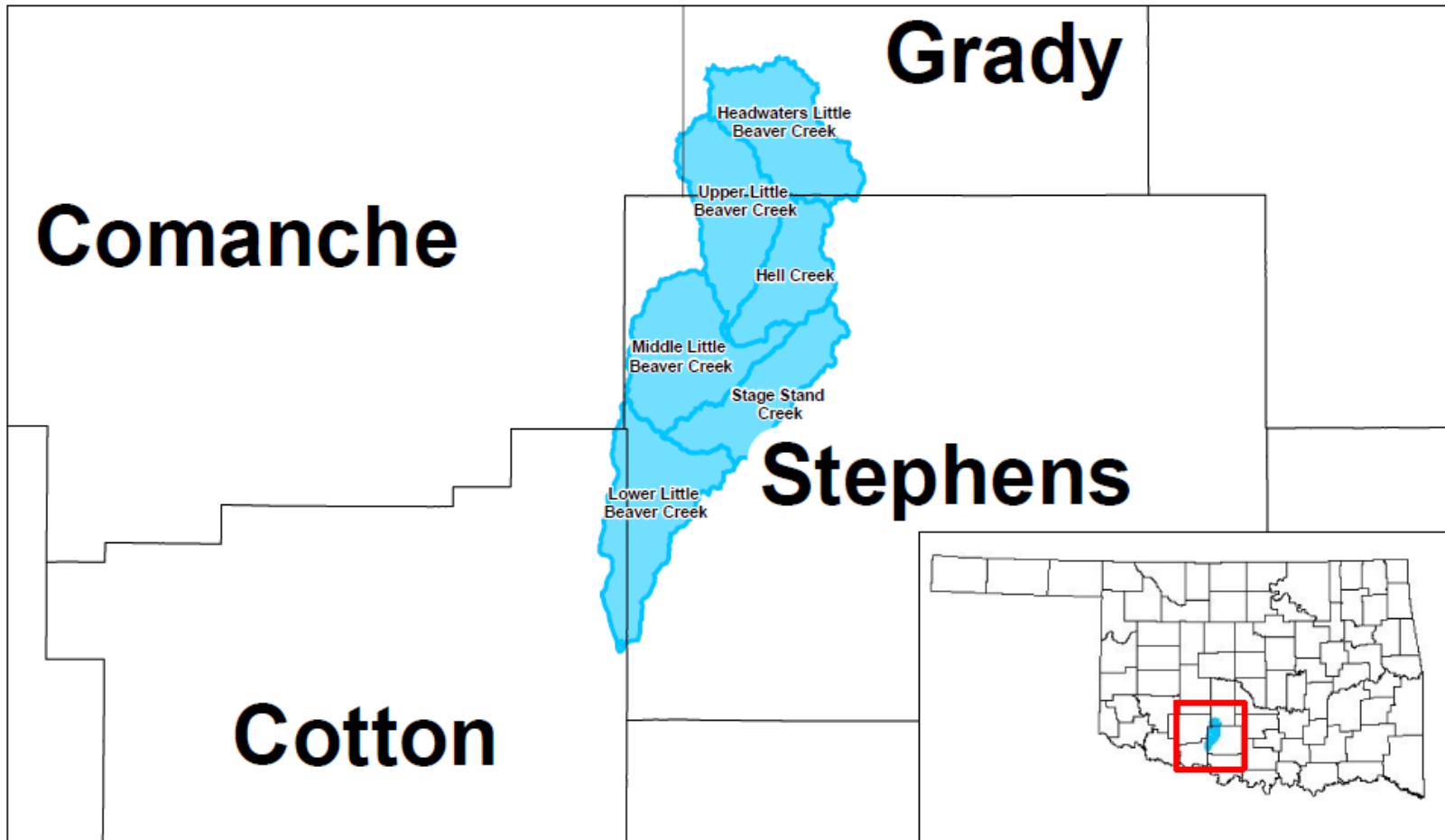
Brush Management 314
Prescribed Burning 338
Fuel Break 383
Riparian Forest Buffer 391
Access Control 472
Range Planting 550
Tree/Shrub Establishment 612
Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities 643
Road/Trail/Landing Closure and Treatment 654
Forest Stand Improvement 666

Oklahoma NRCS Great Plains Grasslands Initiative



Brush Management 314
Prescribed Burning 338
Woody Residue Treatment 384
Prescribed Grazing 528
Pest Management 595

Oklahoma NRCS National Water Quality Initiative



NWQI is designed to help individual agricultural producers take actions to reduce the runoff of sediment, nutrients, and pathogens into waterways where water quality is a critical concern.



Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

General Allocation – 19 million

FY 26 Changes:

- **No renewal contracts**
- **Ability to add newly acquired land into existing contracts**
- **Elimination of complex enhancement requirements**
- **Utilization of existing NRCS conservation practice standards to install or improve upon**
- **Minimum base payment of \$4000**
- **Payment cap raised from \$40,000 per year to \$60,000 for individuals**



Regenerative Pilot Program

Is EQIP or CSP contracts targeting specific conservation practices that have been historically utilized by NRCS.

25% of funds allocated for RPP

- **\$10 million in EQIP for Oklahoma**
- **\$4.5 million in CSP for Oklahoma**



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Agricultural Conservation Easement Program-ACEP

Wetland Restoration Easement - WRE

Agriculture Land Easement - ALE



ACEP-WRE Subcommittee - July 2025

Geographic Area Rate Caps (GARC) for FY 26

- Individual property appraisals will be used to determine Fair Market Value
- Statewide GARC for Oklahoma is \$3,500
 - EXCEPT Northeast Counties – Craig, Ottawa, Delaware \$4,000
- 80% of appraisal not to exceed GARC, EXCEPT OK Panhandle Counties
 - 3 Panhandle counties will be 95% for Playa Wetlands
 - The playa will be determined by NRCS and FWS specialist

Wetland Restoration Criteria and Guidelines (WRCG)

No Changes from 2025

- Reviewed Wetland Types using the Hydrogeomorphic Wetland Classification System
- Especially – Closed Surface Water Depressions, example Playa Lakes

Playa Lakes Joint Venture Area exception

- 5:1 ratio, buffer acres to wetland acres



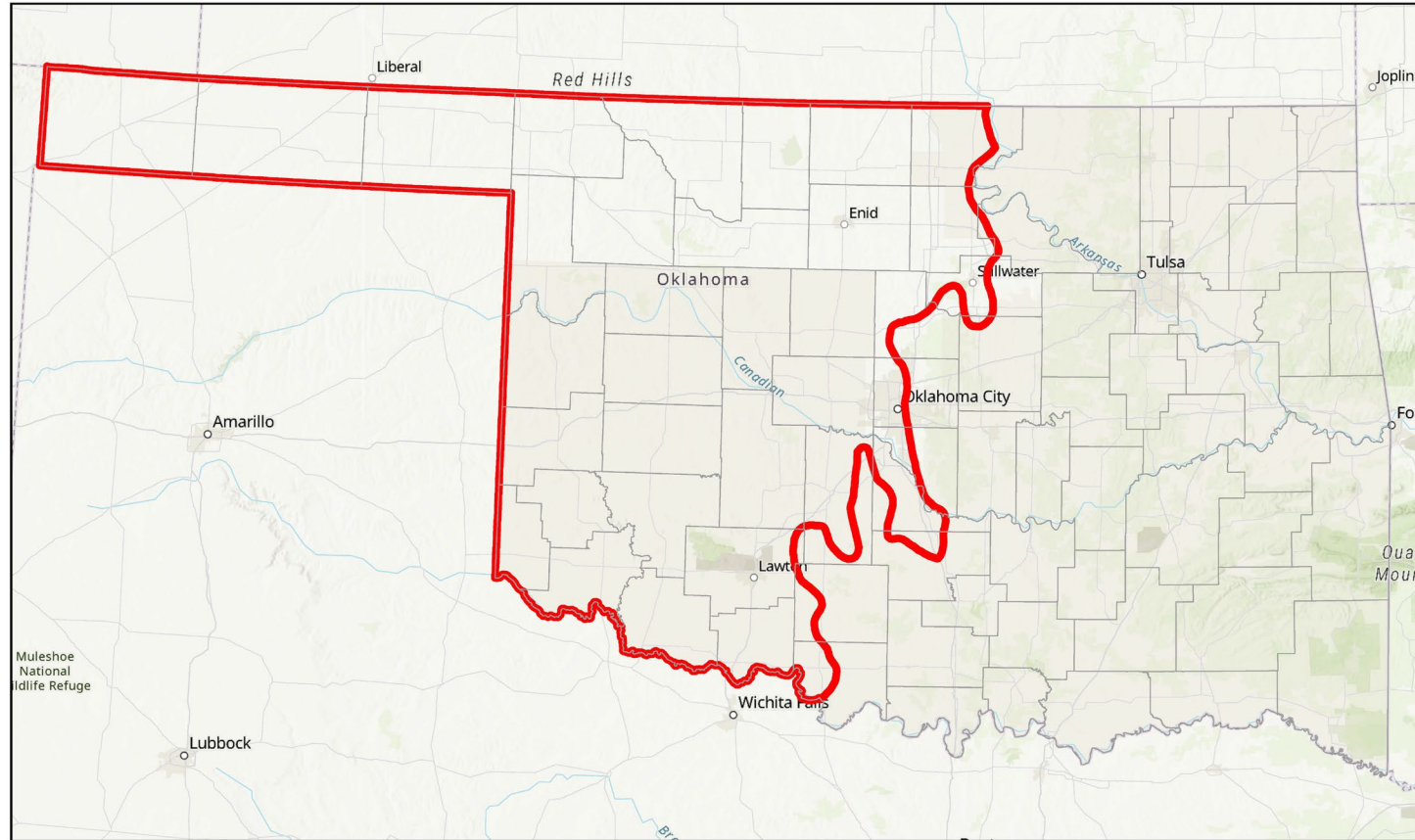
Ranking Priorities for FY26 & 27

- Playa Lakes Joint Venture (see map in WRCG)
- Neosho Bottoms (see map in WRCG)
- Adjacent to existing WRP/WRE
- Adjacent to Wildlife Refuge Area
- Adjacent to State Wildlife Management Area



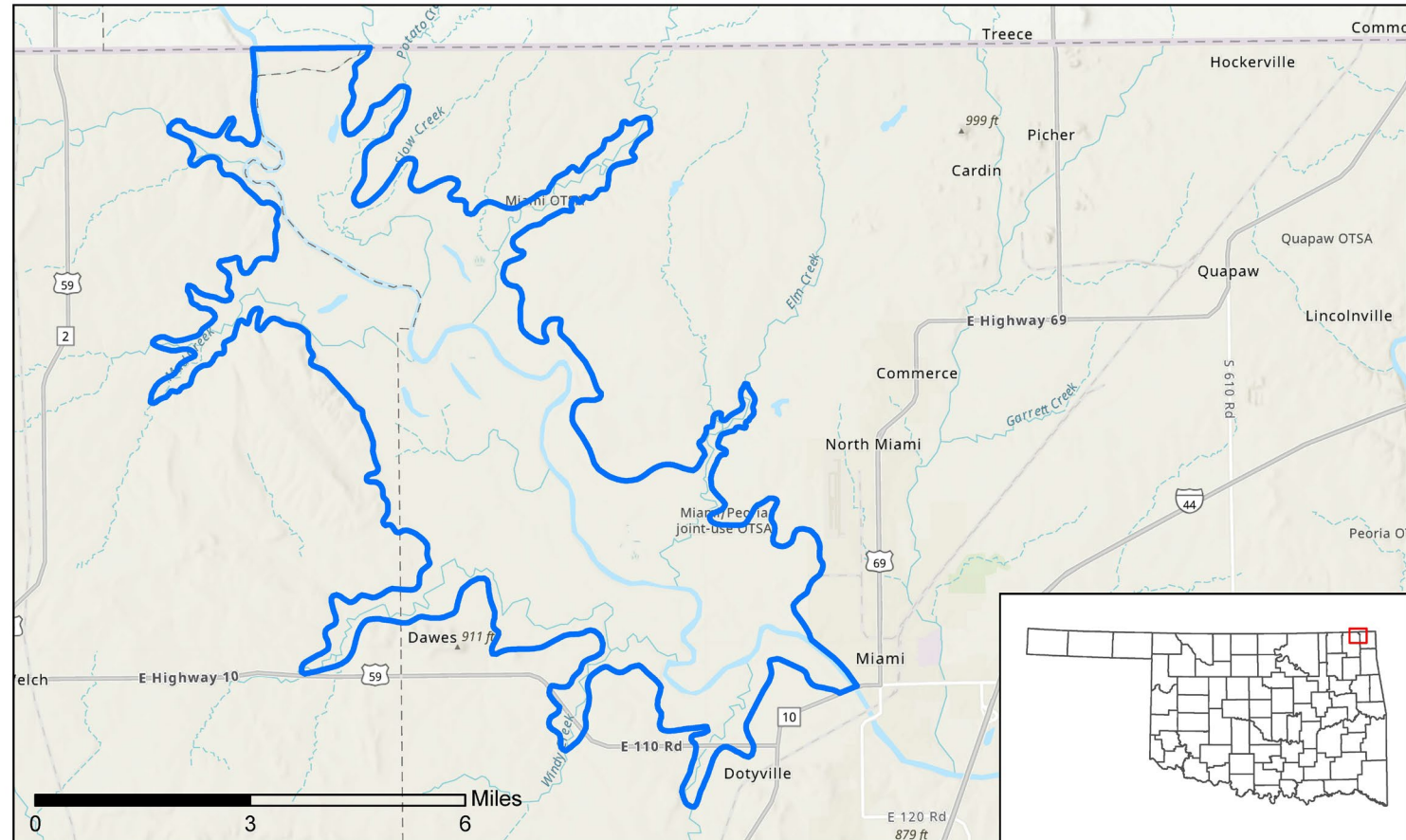


Playa Lakes Joint Venture Oklahoma NRCS





Neosho Bottoms Oklahoma NRCS

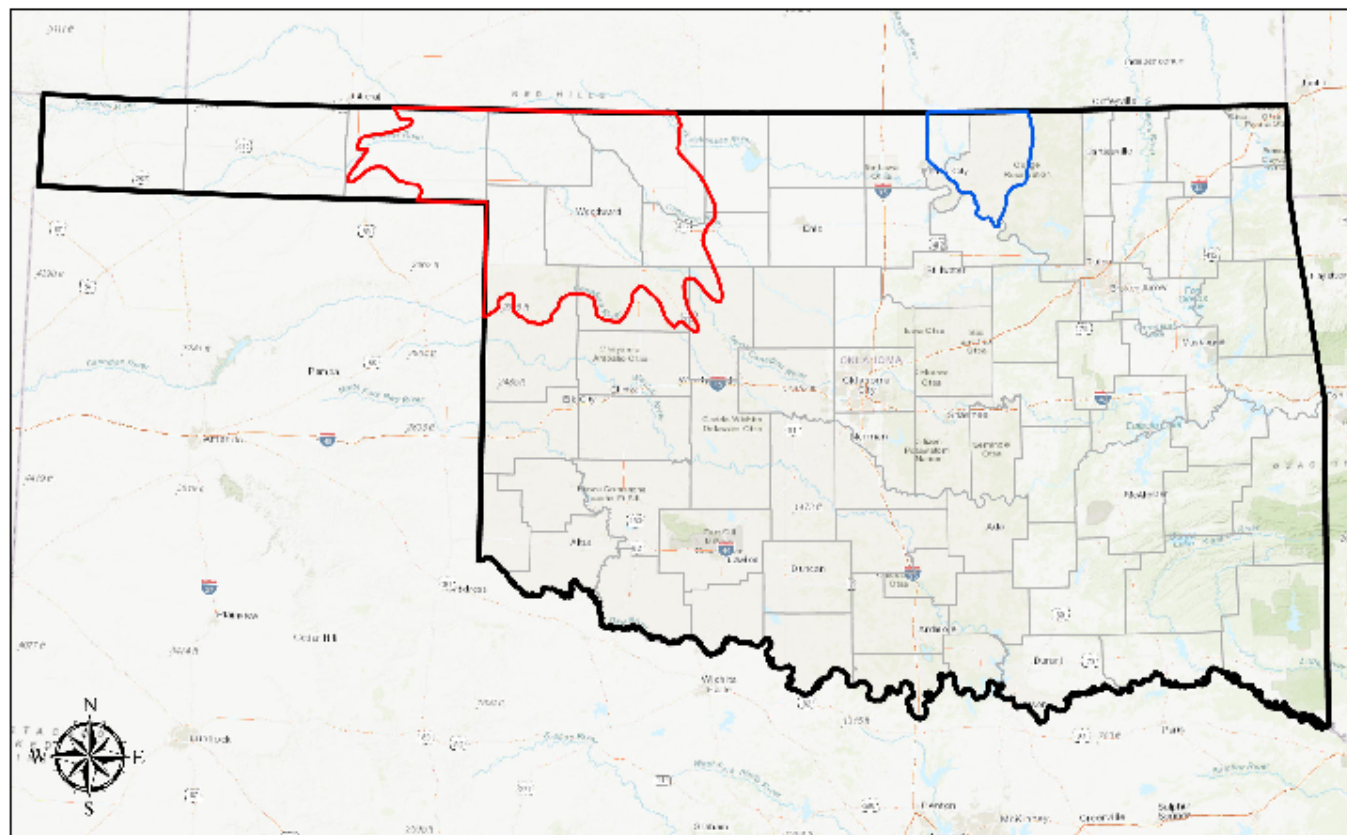


Agriculture Land Easement - ALE

- Prevents conversion of agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses. Examples would be urban sprawl, wind energy, etc.
 - NRCS provides matching funds to eligible entities that are State, Tribal, and local governments, and nongovernmental organizations with farm and ranch land protection programs, to purchase agricultural land easements. Private landowners work with the entity as a “sponsor”.
 - Agricultural land easements are permanent.



Oklahoma NRCS ALE-Grasslands of Special Significance



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Red Hills Project Area



Flint Hills Project Area

Wetland Reserve Enhancement Partnership (WREP) funding opportunity

- NRCS enters into agreements with eligible partners
- WREP projects that will enhance habitats on existing easements or will result in new enrollments under a permanent easement, 30-year easement, or 30-year contract on acreage owned by Indian tribes.

WREP Notice for Funding Opportunity is at National Headquarters for review.



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Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)



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What is RCPP?



The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) was created within the 2014 farm Bill and leverages partnerships to multiply investments to reach common conservation goals.

RCPP became a stand-alone program in the 2018 Farm Bill.



RCPP Vision: Why apply?



RCPP offers new opportunities for NRCS to work with partners to:

- Target NRCS funding and expertise on specific resource concerns within a specific area.
- Creating an innovative approach to conservation delivery and technical assistance
- Create high-performing solutions with measurable results
- Demonstrate the value of voluntary, private lands conservation
- Accelerate the impact of your funding by amplifying with Federal funding.



Urban Agriculture: Taqwa Community Farm – Bronx, New York
(USDA flickr)

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Familiar Processes



RCPP is implemented through current NRCS program authorities.

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)
 - Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE)
 - Agricultural Land Easements (ALE)
- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
- Conservation Reserve Program
- Healthy Forests Reserve Programs (HRFP)
- PL-566 Public Utilities (Water Management or Drainage Entities)



Eligibility: Who can submit a proposal?

Eligible Partners

1. An agricultural or silvicultural producer association or other group of producers;
2. A State or unit of local government, including a conservation district;
3. An Indian Tribe;
4. A farmer cooperative;
5. An institution of higher education;
6. A water district, irrigation district, acequia, rural water district or association, or other organization with specific water delivery authority to producers on agricultural land;
7. A municipal water or wastewater treatment entity;
8. An organization or entity with an established history of working cooperatively with producers on agricultural land, as determined by the Secretary, to address -
 - i. Local conservation priorities related to agricultural production, wildlife habitat development, and NIPF management; or
 - ii. Critical watershed-scale soil erosion, water quality, sediment reduction, or other natural resource concerns; or
9. An eligible entity as identified by NRCS pursuant to [7 CFR part 1468](#).



RCPP Project Types



Classic

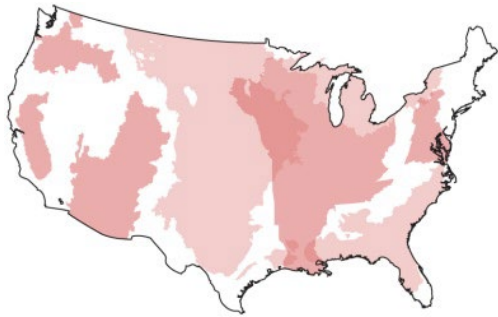
- Partner defined project
- NRCS responsible for FA and majority of TA
- Some TA may be delegated to partner, if beneficial to RCPP Project
- Partner's primary role is to provide outreach, measure impact, and deliver partner contributions to amplify NRCS funding

Alternative Funding Arrangement

- Partner defined AND led project
- Partner delivers ALL TA and other roles listed for Classic
- NRCS support is limited to non-delegable tasks such as confirming eligibility of NEPA, HEL, and Wetland compliance

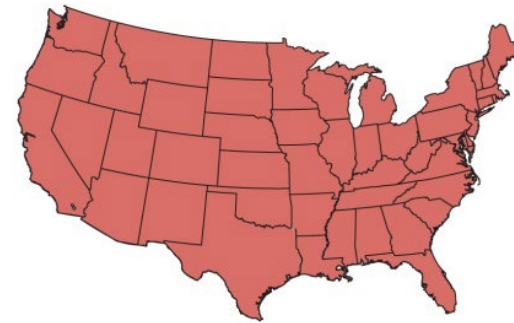


Funding Pools



CRITICAL CONSERVATION AREAS

For projects in geographic areas chosen by the Secretary of Agriculture. These are expected to receive 50 % of funding.

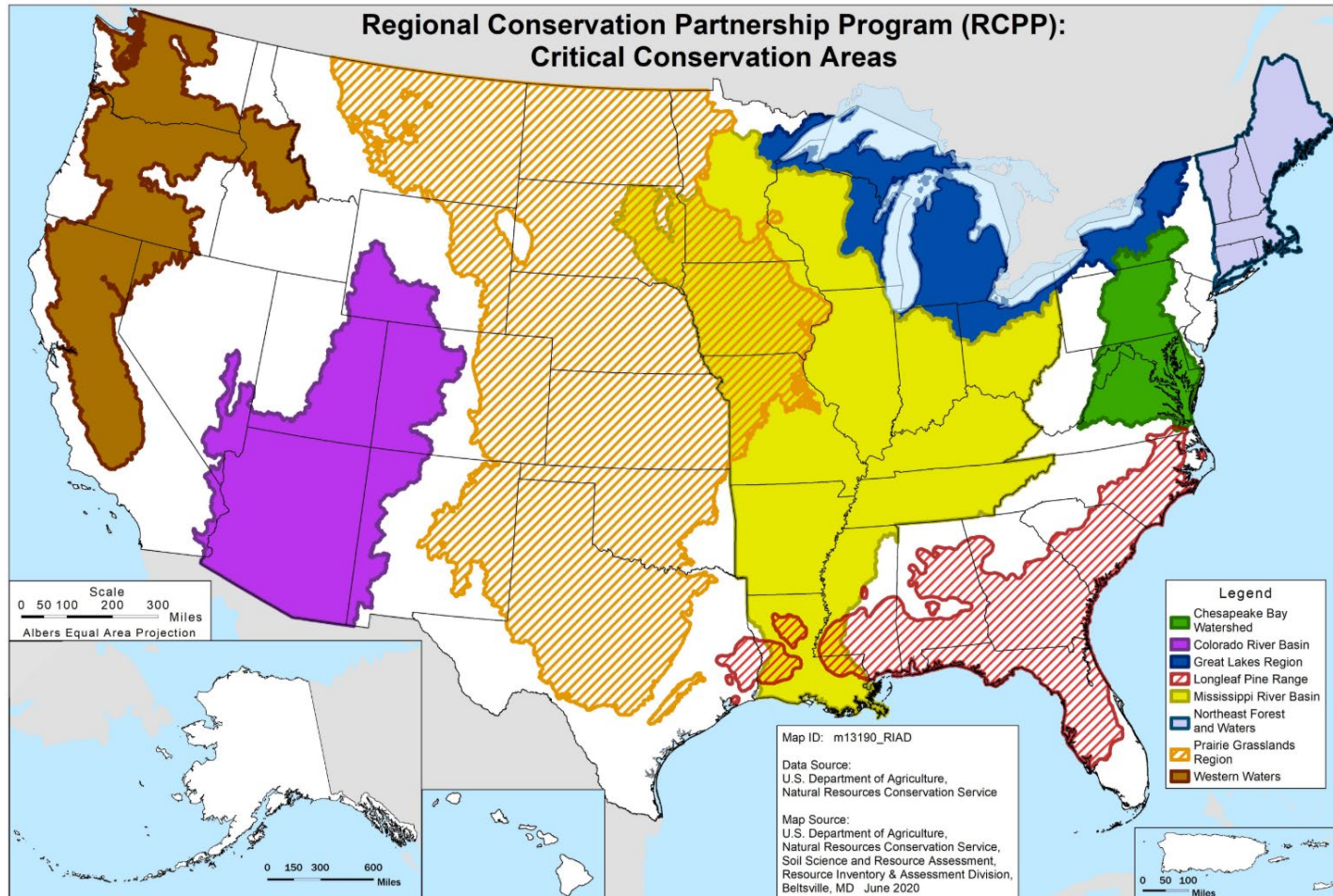


STATE MULTISTATE

For projects in a single state or across several states. These are expected to receive 50 % of funding.



RCPP Critical Conservation Areas



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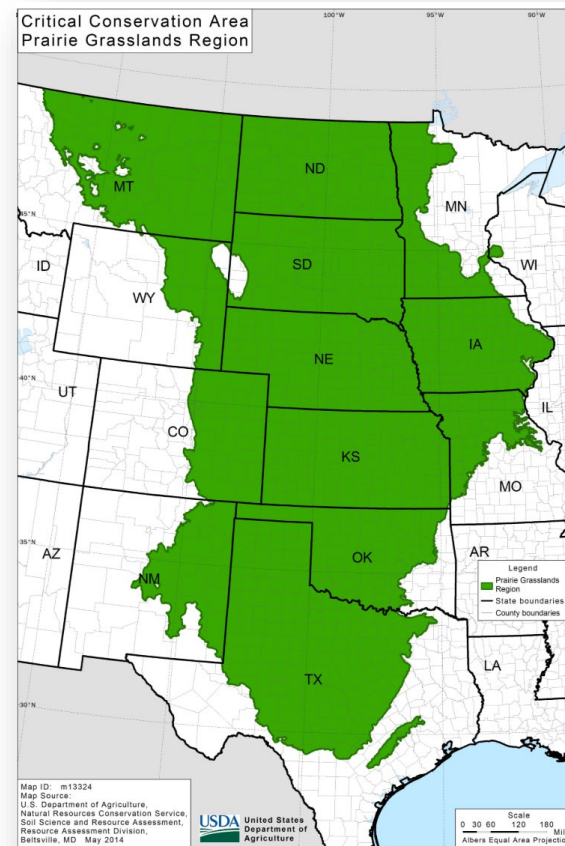
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RCPP CCA: Prairie Grasslands Region

Resource Concerns

- Degraded Plant Condition
- Excess Water/Flooding
- Inadequate Wildlife Habitat
- Insufficient Water/Drought



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Funding Overview

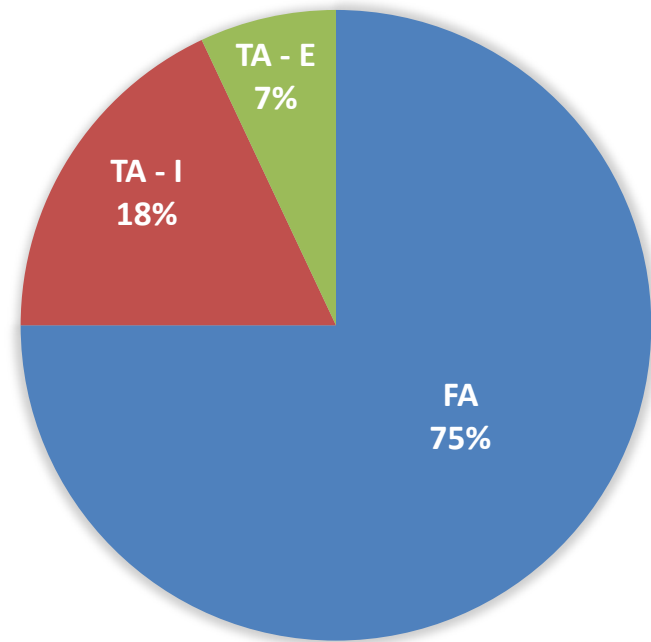
75% Financial Assistance (FA):

- Funds are available to eligible producers/partners to implement RCPP activities.

25% Technical Assistance (TA):

- Used to support implementation or for project wide support.

TYPICAL RCPP PROJECT BUDGET



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Funding Overview: Technical Assistance

Enhancement TA: Project wide activities

- Outreach
- Project management
- Measuring & Evaluating Project Outcomes

Implementation TA: Support for FA Contracts

- Planning
- Design
- Installation
- Checkout

NRCS TA: Classic projects will require some funds used by NRCS in support of producer contracts and easements.



RCPP Project Agreement: Overview



Programmatic Partnership Agreements (PPA)

- Outlines NRCS & Partner responsibilities for project
- Establishes the budget
- Details reporting requirements for partner contributions and outcomes

Supplemental Agreements (SA)

- How we obligate funds for specific financial and technical deliverables



Considerations: Are You A Good Fit?



Items that help determine compatibility.

- Similar conservation-focused missions, “Helping People, Help the Land”.
- Do you have qualified staff in place?
- Do you have an existing relationship with producers?
- Do you have a partnership history that you have utilized to help leverage funding to assist with conservation planning, implementation, outreach, monitoring, etc.



Considerations: Strong proposals will...

- clearly state the goals and objectives.
- include documentation of identified resource concern(s) supported by local/impacted communities/industries.
- outline significant contributions that will be made by the partner(s) (financial, in-kind etc.).
- have a well-defined target area and include a map.
- demonstrate an understanding of the science involved in the project.
- understand and integrate NRCS programs to meet the objectives of the proposal.
- be able to show leveraging of financial and technical resources and demonstrate how administrative costs will be covered by partner(s) (a clear budget).



Notice of Funding Opportunity (NFO)

- NRCS publishes an annual NFO to look for projects each fiscal year.
 - NFO will list the requirements for the new fiscal year, eligibility requirements, any major changes to policy, and how to apply.
- 2026 NFO proposals are due: **TBD**
- There are several helpful webinar's specific for partners to help explain the proposal process and how to apply

[How to Apply to RCPP | Natural Resources Conservation Service](#)
[\(usda.gov\)](#)





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Contact Information

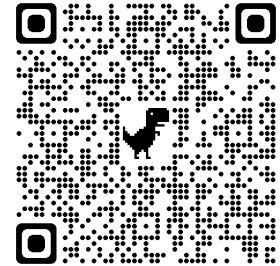


Oklahoma RCPP Point of Contact

Tiffany Nelson

Tiffany.nelson1@usda.gov

918-886-2130



[Regional Conservation Partnership Program | Natural Resources Conservation Service \(usda.gov\)](#)

[How to Apply to RCPP | Natural Resources Conservation Service \(usda.gov\)](#)



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Regenerative Ag Pilot Project

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

Regenerative Ag Pilot Program - Required

- **Conservation Plan must span a minimum of 5 years**
- **A minimum of one primary Regen Practice**
 - Existing
 - Planned
- **CEMA 216 Soil Health Testing planned beginning and end of plan**
- **Soil and Water Resource Concerns planned condition must meet or exceeded threshold**



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

Regenerative Ag Pilot Program – 1^o Practices

- Conservation Crop Rotation (328)
- Contour Farming (330)
- Contour Orchard and Other Perennial Crop (331)
- Cover Crop (340)
- Drainage Water Management (554)
- Forage Harvest Management (511)
- Forest Stand Improvement (666)
- Irrigation Water Management (449)
- Mulching (484)
- Nutrient Management (590)
- Pest Management Conservation System (595)
- Grazing Management (528)
- Residue and Tillage Management, No Till (329)
- Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced Till (345)
- Stripcropping (585)

CEMA 216 Soil Health Assessment – Qualified Ind.

A QI for Soil Health Testing CEMA 216 meets one of the following:

- 1) Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) or Certified Professional Agronomist (CPAg) through the American Society of Agronomy or a Certified Professional Soil Scientist (CPSS) or Associate Professional Soil Scientist (APSS) through the Soil Science Society of America.
- 2) Technical Service Providers (TSP) certified for Soil Health Management Plan Conservation Practice Activity (116) or Soil Health Management Design and Implementation Activity (162).
- 3) An associate degree or higher in an agricultural or soil science field with at least 2 years of experience collecting soil for laboratory analysis.
- 4) Individuals working under the guidance or management of a QI are allowed to collect soil samples for this CEMA.

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2026-01/FY26-CEMA-216-Soil-Health-Test-01-26.pdf>

CEMA 216 Soil Health Assessment - Tests

- Soil aggregation – Wet Aggregate Stability
- Carbon Cycling – Soil Organic C (SOC)
- Microbial Activity – Soil Respiration
- Carbon Food Source for Microorganisms (liable C)
- Food Source for Organisms – Bioavailable N
- Soil Texture
- Soil pH
- Microbial Diversity/Functional Diversity



CEMA 216 Soil Health Assessment - Sampling

1 Field = 1 CEMA

1 CEMA = 3 Composite Samples

1 Comp. Sample = 5 Sub samples



<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2026-01/FY26-CEMA-216-Soil-Health-Test-01-26.pdf>

CEMA 216 Soil Health Assessment - Deliverables

- **Pework Conference**
- **Collection protocols**
- **Deliverables**
 - **Cover page**
 - **Maps & Diagrams**
 - **Results**
 - **Report to the producer and local NRCS office**

Regenerative Ag Pilot Program

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

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/eqip-environmental-quality-incentives/cpas-dias-and-cemas>

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2026-01/FY26-CEMA-216-Soil-Health-Test-01-26.pdf>



Standards and Specifications

Recently Finalized

- **Grazing Management (528)**
- **Hedgerow Planting (422)**
- **Seasonal Water Management for Wildlife (646)**
- **Wetland Restoration (657)**





Questions?



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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Farm Service Agency

Agency Reports

State Technical
Committee

2/11/2026



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Administrative Section

We are in the process of offering internal promotion opportunities to better support field offices with leadership at the state and county level following multiple retirement and resignations in 2025.

- Temporary employees are supporting permanent staff to continue quality service to farmers and ranchers at the local level.
- County Committee elections were extended through February 2nd, and new members will be in place on March 2, 2026. No lapses in normal business practices should occur.
- The newly appointed State Committee will meet for their first meeting in late February.

The State Committee members appointed by Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins:

- Gaye Pfeiffer
- Terry Jurgensmeyer
- Matt Muller
- Ron Justice
- Ian Chapman

Outreach Section

Partnership emphasis for FY 2026 will prioritize increasing stakeholder engagement focusing on veteran, beginning farmer and rancher outreach, along with continued partnership with:

- sister agencies
- state agencies
- ag commodity
- youth engagement

State Outreach Plans were approved in late November.

- Each County Committee will meet with their County Executive Director (CED) in March 2026 to create a county specific plan emphasizing partnership collaboration and producer engagement through county led meetings.

Production & Payment Eligibility Section

- **ARC/PLC:**
- *The ARC Program is an income support program that provides payments when actual crop revenue declines below a specified guaranteed level. The PLC Program provides payments when the effective price for a covered commodity falls below its effective reference price. The total Oklahoma contract enrollment is 46,915 contracts for 2025.
- **In October 2025, Oklahoma paid \$15,638,628 for 2024 program year ARC/PLC.**
- Due to commodity prices being above the applicable reference price, the 2024 Projected PLC Payment rate was \$0.00 for most all base crops. Peanuts and Seed Cotton did make a PLC Payment though.

Production & Payment Eligibility Section

- **Elections and Enrollment:**
- The OBBBA did bring changes to ARCPLC. Those changes will be implemented as we move through calendar year 2026
- Program Specific Data: Program year and Crop specific data can be found at [ARC/PLC Program Data \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/arcplc)
- **AGI:**
- *The 2018 Farm Bill requires the implementation of an average adjusted gross income (AGI) limitation for payment eligibility for the 2019 through 2025 program years. The AGI limitation provision applies to most programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency

Production & Payment Eligibility Section

NAP

- The Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA), provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops to protect against natural disasters that result in lower yields or crop losses, or prevents crop planting.
- NAP provides basic coverage equivalent to the catastrophic level risk protection plan of insurance coverage, which is based on the amount of loss that exceeds 50 percent of expected production at 55 percent of the average market price for the crop. The 2018 Farm Bill re-authorizes higher levels of coverage ranging from 50 to 65 percent of production, in 5 percent increments, at 100 percent of the average market price. Additional (buy-up) coverage must be elected by a producer by the application closing date. Producers who elect additional coverage must pay a premium in addition to the service fee. Crops intended for grazing are not eligible for additional coverage.
 - **Oklahoma has paid \$31,357,573 in NAP loss payments for program year 2023.**
 - **Oklahoma has paid \$21,279,572 in NAP loss payments for program year 2024.**
 - **Oklahoma has paid \$11,882,988 in NAP loss payments for program year 2025.**

Production & Payment Eligibility Section

SDRP

- Authorized by the American Relief Act, 2025, the Supplemental Disaster Relief Program provides disaster relief payments to eligible producers who suffered revenue, quality, or production losses to crops, trees, bushes, or vines due to qualifying disaster events in calendar years 2023 and 2024.
 - To date, Oklahoma has paid **\$113,766,366** in SDRP Stage 1 payments.
 - To date, Oklahoma has paid **\$2,338,738** in SDRP Stage 2 payments.

Farmer Bridge Assistance

On December 8, 2025, President Trump and Secretary Brooke Rollins announced the Farmer Bridge Assistance (FBA) program. This new program provides \$11 billion through a one-time bridge payment to American farmers with an additional \$1 billion available for additional commodities. This assistance provides producers with a bridge until the benefits of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) are made available.

Production & Payment Eligibility Section

Commodity, Per Acre Payment Rates

- Barley: \$20.51
- Canola: \$23.57
- Chickpeas (Large): \$26.46
- Chickpeas (Small): \$33.36
- Corn: \$44.36
- Cotton: \$117.35
- Flax: \$8.05
- Lentils: \$23.98
- Mustard: \$23.21
- Oats: \$81.75
- Peanuts: \$55.65
- Peas: \$19.60
- Rice: \$132.89
- Safflower: \$24.86
- Sesame: \$13.68
- Sorghum: \$48.11
- Soybeans: \$30.88
- Sunflower: \$17.32
- Wheat: \$39.35

Conservation Section

General CRP-

General signup 64 concluded July 15th. National notice CRP-1056 announced the accepted/rejected list for Oklahoma. There were 38 offers submitted across the state for signup 64. This comes out to roughly 3,924 acres. Counties have gone through the process of contacting producers and letting them know their offers have been either accepted or rejected. All accepted offers where the producer informed us they would like to move forward have been approved. Out of the 3,924 acres that were offered for signup 64 1,490 acres were taken to approval. Final conservation plans were completed by NRCS. These plans included the required maintenance that the producer requested to perform for the life of the contract. There is no signup currently underway for General CRP.

Conservation Section

Continuous CRP

On May 12, 2025, national notice CRP-1046 announced Continuous signup 63. The 2018 farm bill allows no more than 27 million acres to be enrolled in CRP. Nationally there are currently 25.9 million acres enrolled in CRP. To ensure that we do not surpass that 27 million acres continuous signup 63 worked a little differently than it has in the past.

Signup 63 was run in batches with the first batch beginning May 12th, 2025, and running through June 6th, 2025. Offers taken after June 6th, 2025, will be processed through additional batching periods. The final date to submit an offer for Signup 63 was July 31st, 2025.

Oklahoma had 9 offers submitted for signup 63. This comes out to roughly 548.8 acres. Out of the 548.8 acres 223.7 acres were taken to approval. Final conservation plans were completed by NRCS. These plans included the required maintenance that the producer requested to perform for the life of the contract. There is no signup currently underway for Continuous CRP.

Conservation Section

Grassland CRP

Grassland CRP signup 207 has concluded. National notice CRP-1063 announced the accepted and rejected list for signup 207. County offices have gone through the process of contacting producers and letting them know their offers have been either accepted or rejected.

Oklahoma had 138 offers submitted for Signup 207. This comes out to roughly 35,195 acres. Out of the 35,195 acres 30,974 were approved. Interim conservation plans have been approved for signup 206. Final conservation plans were completed by NRCS. There is no signup currently underway for Continuous CRP.

Currently county offices are working with the state office to provide eligible cost share practices for CRP grassland participants. Watering facilities seem to be the most prevalent. These watering facilities must be reviewed by NRCS to determine if they meet a resource concern. If this resource concern is met, then COC's have the authority to approve C/S agreements up to \$8,000. If the watering facilities are above that \$8,000 dollar amount, they move up to the State committee. The national office must be consulted if the C/S agreement are above \$15,000.

Price Support Section

Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP)

Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP).

ELAP provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish. It covers losses due to eligible adverse weather or loss condition, including blizzards, disease (including cattle tick fever), water shortages and wildfires, as determined by the Secretary.

ELAP covers losses that are not covered under other disaster assistance programs such as the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) and the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP).

- **Oklahoma has paid \$873,114 in ELAP payments for program year 2025 as of 02/05/2026. For a list of eligible counties, please see the LFP map below. 2026 is unavailable currently.**

Price Support Section

Livestock Forage Program (LFP)

The Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who have suffered grazing losses for covered livestock and who are also producers of grazed forage crop acreage of native and improved pastureland with permanent vegetative cover or acreage planted specifically for grazing.

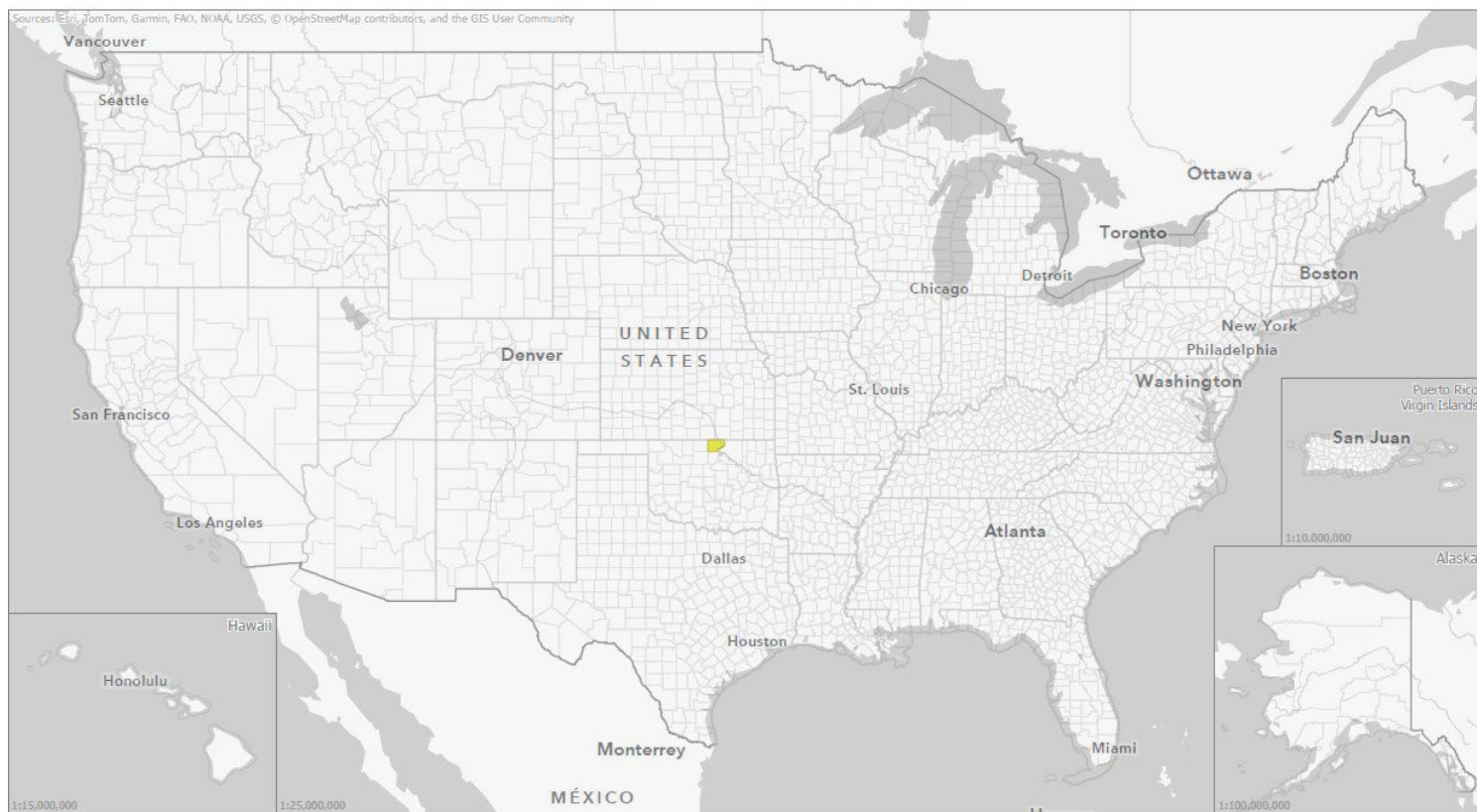
Grazing losses must occur on land physically located in a county experiencing a qualifying drought during the normal grazing period for the county.

An eligible livestock producer who, as a grazed forage crop producer, owns or leases grazing land or pastureland physically located in a county rated by the U.S. Drought Monitor as having a:

- D2 (severe drought) intensity in any area of the county for at least eight consecutive weeks during the normal grazing period is eligible to receive assistance in an amount equal to one monthly payment
- D3 (extreme drought) intensity in any area of the county at any time during the normal grazing period is eligible to receive assistance in an amount equal to three monthly payments
- D3 (extreme drought) intensity in any area of the county for at least four weeks during the normal grazing period or is rated a D4 (exceptional drought) intensity at any time during the normal grazing period is eligible to receive assistance in an amount equal to four monthly payments
- D4 (exceptional drought) in a county for four weeks (not necessarily four consecutive weeks) during the normal grazing period is eligible to receive assistance in an amount equal to five monthly payments.
 - **Oklahoma has paid \$6,807,339 in LFP payments for program year 2025 as of 02/05/2026. 2026 is unavailable currently.**

Price Support Section

Livestock Forage Program Cool Season Improved - 2025 Program Year



Eligible County Payment Months



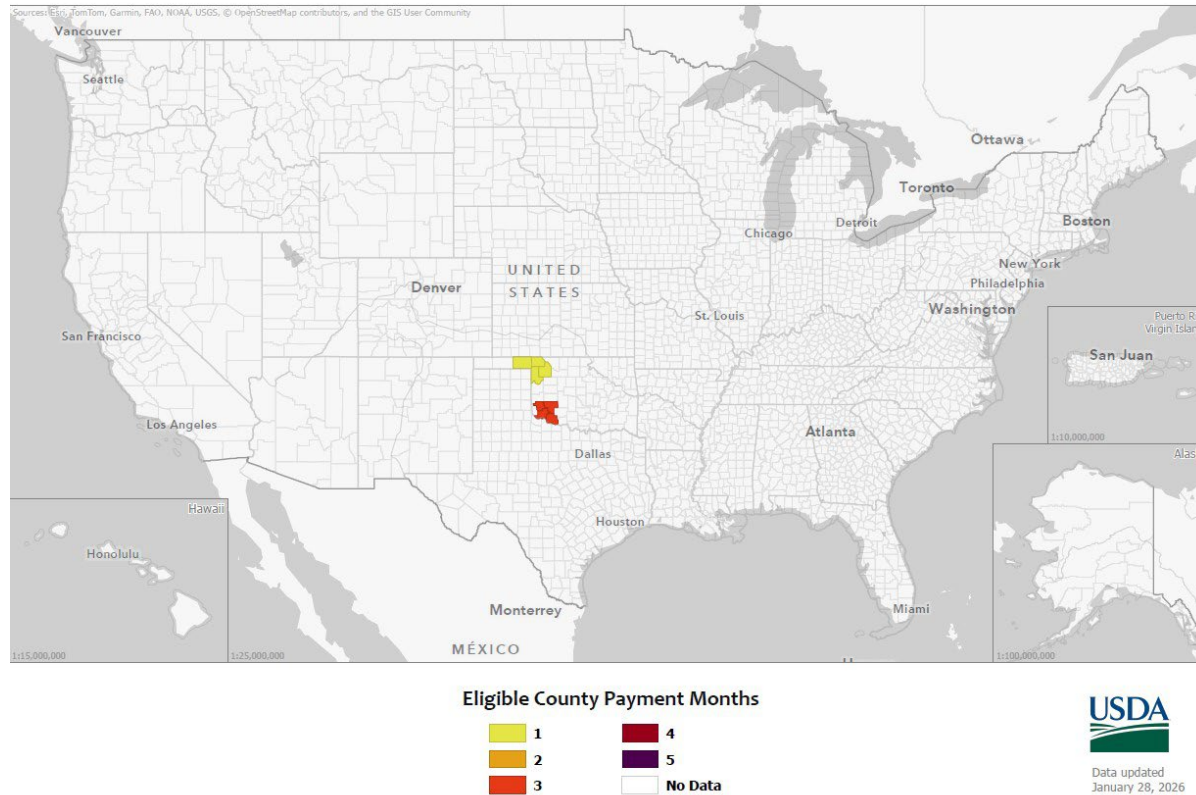
Data updated
January 28, 2026

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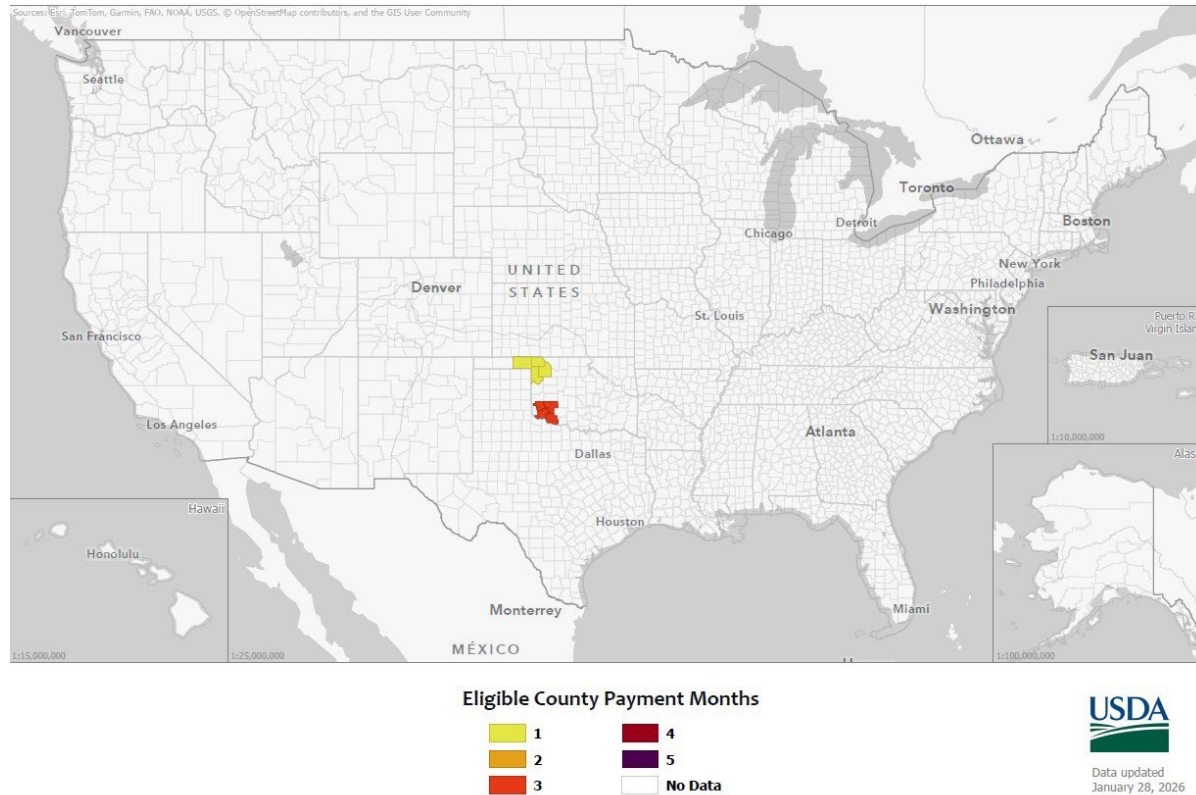
Price Support Section

Livestock Forage Program Warm Season Improved - 2025 Program Year



Price Support Section

Livestock Forage Program Warm Season Improved - 2025 Program Year

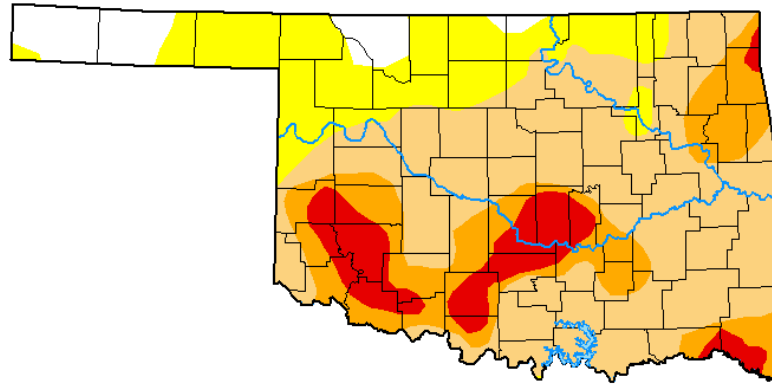


Price Support Section

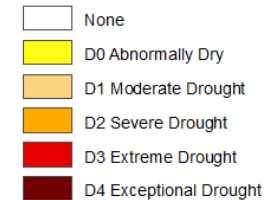
Oklahoma's lack of rainfall has continued & expanded into 2026

U.S. Drought Monitor
Oklahoma

February 3, 2026
(Released Thursday, Feb. 5, 2026)
Valid 7 a.m. EST



Intensity:



The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author:

Lindsay Johnson
National Drought Mitigation Center



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

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Farm Loan Section

As of February 9, 2026, \$77,609,279 total funds have been made available to Oklahoma Farmers and Ranchers for FY26.

Approximately 376 loans have been made across the state. The breakout is as follows:

Loan Category	Loan Total Dollars	Number of Loans
Direct Loans	\$55,798,680.00	340
Guaranteed Loans	\$21,810,599.00	36
Emergency Loans		0