

Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

TITLE II - CONSERVATION

The Senate Republican Farm Bill Framework for Title II enhances the voluntary, locally led conservation delivery system trusted by producers to meet their unique conservation, natural resource and wildlife habitat concerns. It does so by reinvesting Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) conservation dollars into farm bill conservation programs and creating new, permanent baseline. This investment allows for new conservation initiatives and provides equity across practices to address drought, water quality, wildlife habitat biodiversity, soil erosion and improved climate resiliency. The climate priorities of the IRA will remain accessible practices through these programs, allowing producers and states that seek cost-share assistance for carbon sequestering or greenhouse gas reducing practices to continue to do so, while allowing the unique and varied resource concerns of all America's producers to benefit from increased conservation funding.

- **Increases funding for conservation programs by more than 25%**, including increased annual funding for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) and the watershed programs.
- Creates two new, broadly supported authorities, the **Forest Conservation Easement Program** and the **State Soil Health Grant Program** and provides permanent baseline to these programs to address emerging conservation and climate goals.
- Provides permanent baseline and increases funding for the **Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program** and the **Feral Swine Eradication Program**.
- Improves the ability for farm bill conservation programs to address **long-term drought** across all programs, including EQIP, RCPP and the Watershed Programs.
- Maintains the 27 million-acre cap, reforms rental rates to better target marginal land and **increases incentives for wildlife conservation and provides drought flexibilities** in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).
- Prioritizes the **stewardship of wetland easements and improves the administration of land easements by increasing the federal cost share**, improving the modifications process, streamlining the certification process and removing adjusted gross income requirements to ensure the most vulnerable land can be protected.
- Creates a **transparent process for the establishment of new, innovative conservation practice standards** and improves the review of existing practices.
- **Streamlines the process for technical service provider certification** to ensure producers have access to qualified individuals to help fill the gaps in needed technical assistance.
- Reforms RCPP to **improve the partnership agreement process**, to allow coverage for administrative expenses and to implement timelines USDA must follow to get conservation on the ground sooner.
- Continues conservation programs on the 5-year reauthorization schedule.

