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Natural Resources Conservation Service

Helping People, Help the Land

History of NRCS

- 1933 the Soil Erosion Service was established
- Changed to the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in 1935
- 1994 SCS's name was changed to the NRCS

NRCS GA

- We provide technical and financial assistance on natural resources issues and assist individuals, groups, communities, and counties in implementing soil and water conservation practices to protect the 34 million acres of privately owned land in Georgia.

NRCS is NOT a regulatory agency

- NRCS works with landowners on a voluntary basis

CTA– Conservation Technical Assistance

- Provide technical assistance in...
  - the development of conservation plans designed to address specific resource concerns
  - design & engineering
  - implementation of techniques used to reduce soil erosion, improve water quality, and protect natural resources

NRCS Specialists

- Soil Conservationist
- Agronomist
- Geologist
- Forester
- Biologist
- Grazing Land Specialist
- Engineers
- Soil Scientists

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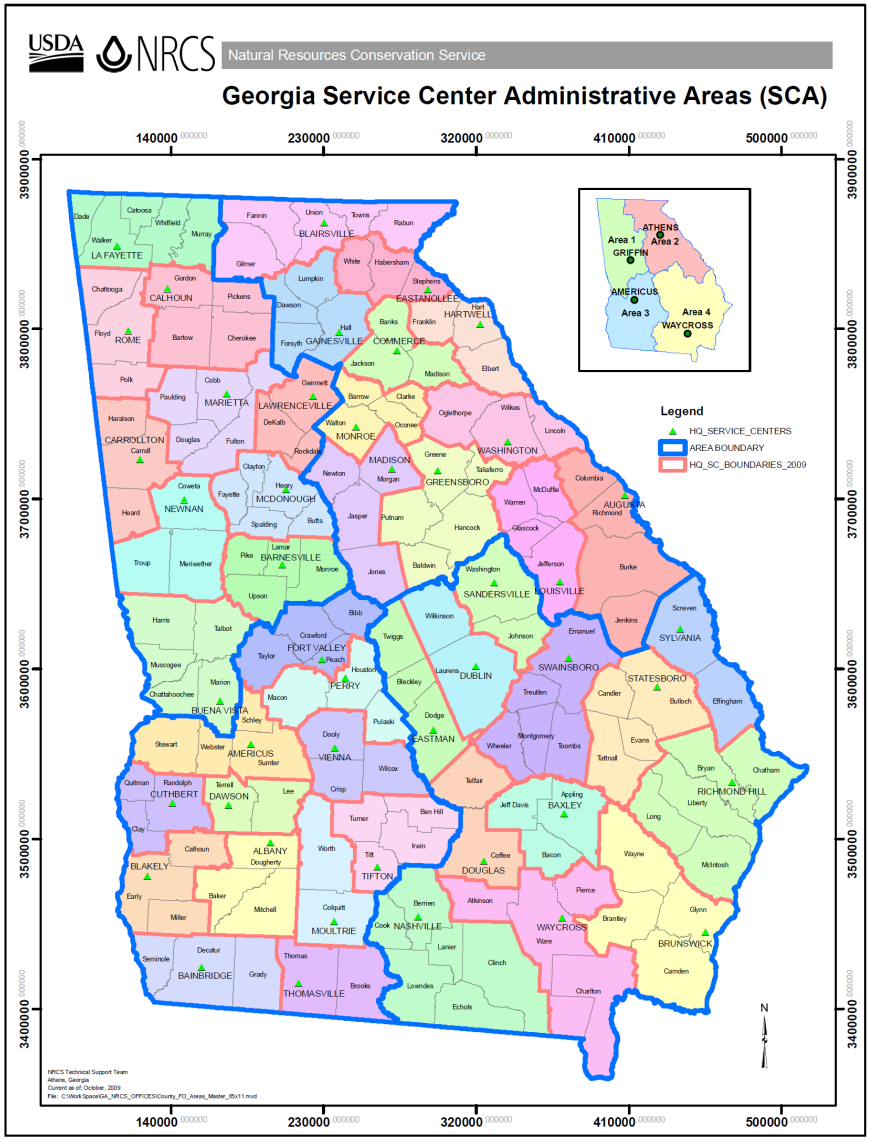
Your Local Field Offices



EQIP: Environmental Quality Incentives Program

- Program objectives are achieved through the implementation of a conservation plan to address resource concerns.
- Financial assistance payments for structural, vegetative, and land management practices may be made to help address the resource concerns and to implement the plan.

Historically Underserved Groups (90% Financial Assistance)

- Beginning Farmer or Rancher
  - Veteran Farmer or Rancher
- Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher
- Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher

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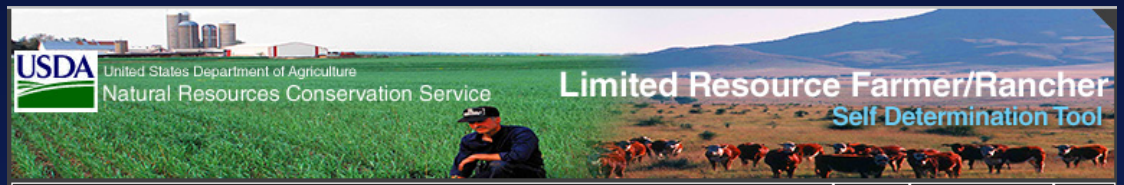
Limited Resource Producer Online Tool



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General Information
- NRCS Limited Resource Farmer Programs
- Purpose

Determination Tools
- FY 2016 Online Tool
- FY 2015 Historic Data
- FY 2014 Historic Data
- FY 2013 Historic Data
- FY 2012 Historic Data

Definitions
- Limited Resource
- Beginning Farmer
- SDA Farmer
- Veteran Farmer

LRFRT Resources
- NASS Prices Paid Data
- National Poverty Level Data
- County Household Median Income
- ERS Analysis

Other Resources
- USDA Offices

Limited Resource Farmer/Rancher
FY 2016 Self-Determination Tool

Step 1: Select your state from the list.

State Information
SELECT STATE

Step 2: Select your county or area from the list.

County/Area Information

Step 3: Determine your Gross Farm and Income Levels.

Limited Resource Determination Information
*Required

Step 4. Print your results.

Print Results

A Few Popular EQIP Practices:

372 – Combustion System Improvement

442 – Irrigation Retrofits and Solid Set Irrigation

441 – Micro Irrigation

382 – Fencing

561 – Heavy Use Area

614 – Watering Facility

512 – Forage and Biomass Planting

314 – Brush Management

612 – Tree/Shrub Establishment

327 – Conservation Cover (Pecans)

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EQIP: Environmental Quality Incentives Program

High Tunnel Initiative

- Over 4,000 implemented nationwide
- Financial Assistance is 75% or 90%
- Maximum square footage is 2178 sq. ft. per farm per year

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EQIP: Environmental Quality Incentives Program

Organic Initiative

- Assists certified organic producers and transitioning organic producers

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EQIP: Environmental Quality Incentives Program
On Farm Energy Initiative

- Assist producers with on-farm energy conservation planning services and implementation of energy conservation practices to improve energy efficiency on the farm.

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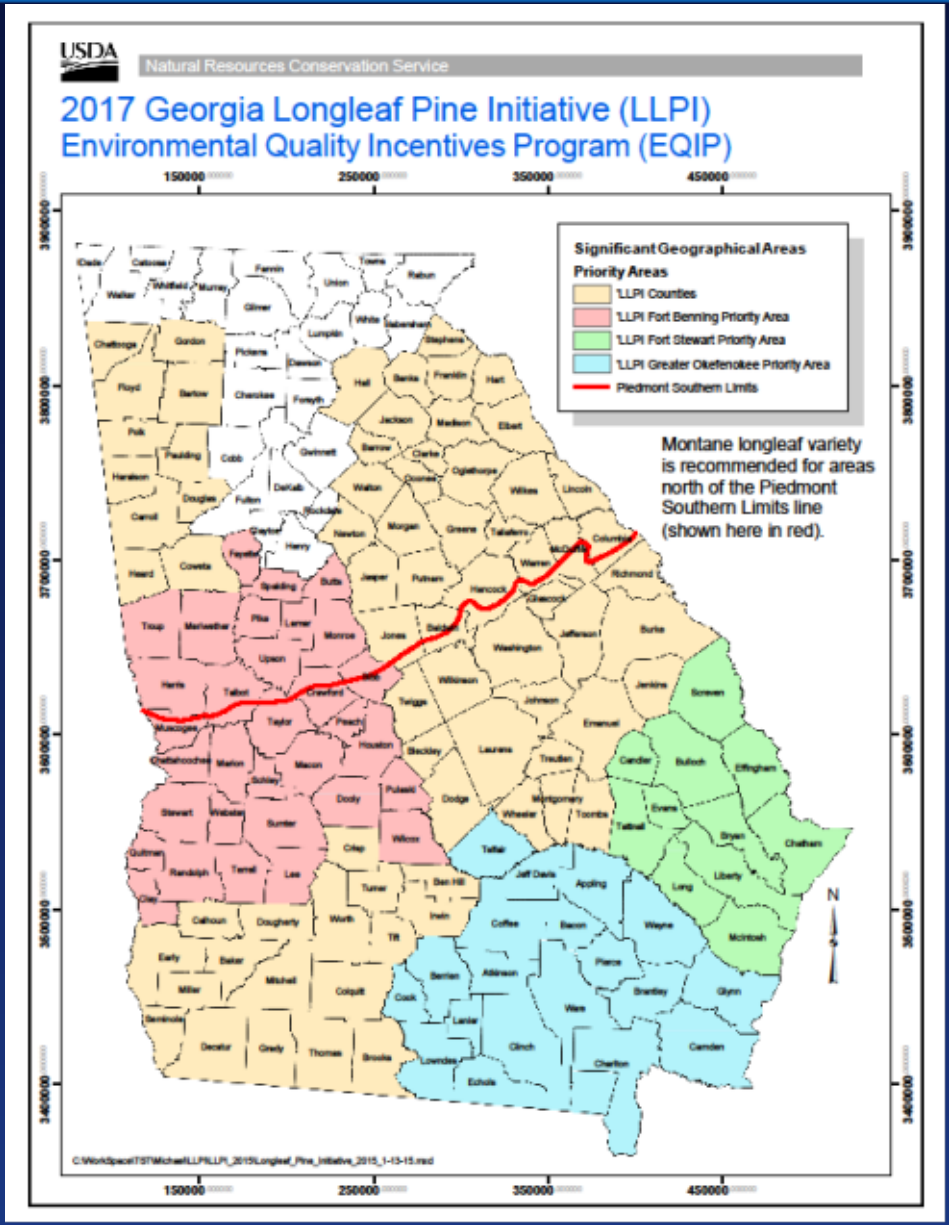
EQIP: Environmental Quality Incentives Program

Longleaf Pine Initiative

- Establishment and management of longleaf ecosystems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2017 Georgia Longleaf Pine Initiative (LLPI)
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
Significant Geographical Areas
Priority Areas
LLPI Counties
LLPI Fort Benning Priority Area
LLPI Fort Stewart Priority Area
LLPI Greater Okefenokee Priority Area
Piedmont Southern Limits
Montane longleaf variety is recommended for areas north of the Piedmont Southern Limits line (shown here in red).
N
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EQIP: Environmental Quality Incentives Program
Working Lands For Wildlife Program

- Works to combat the decline of the Gopher Tortoise in Georgia whose decline can be reversed and will benefit other species with similar habitat needs.

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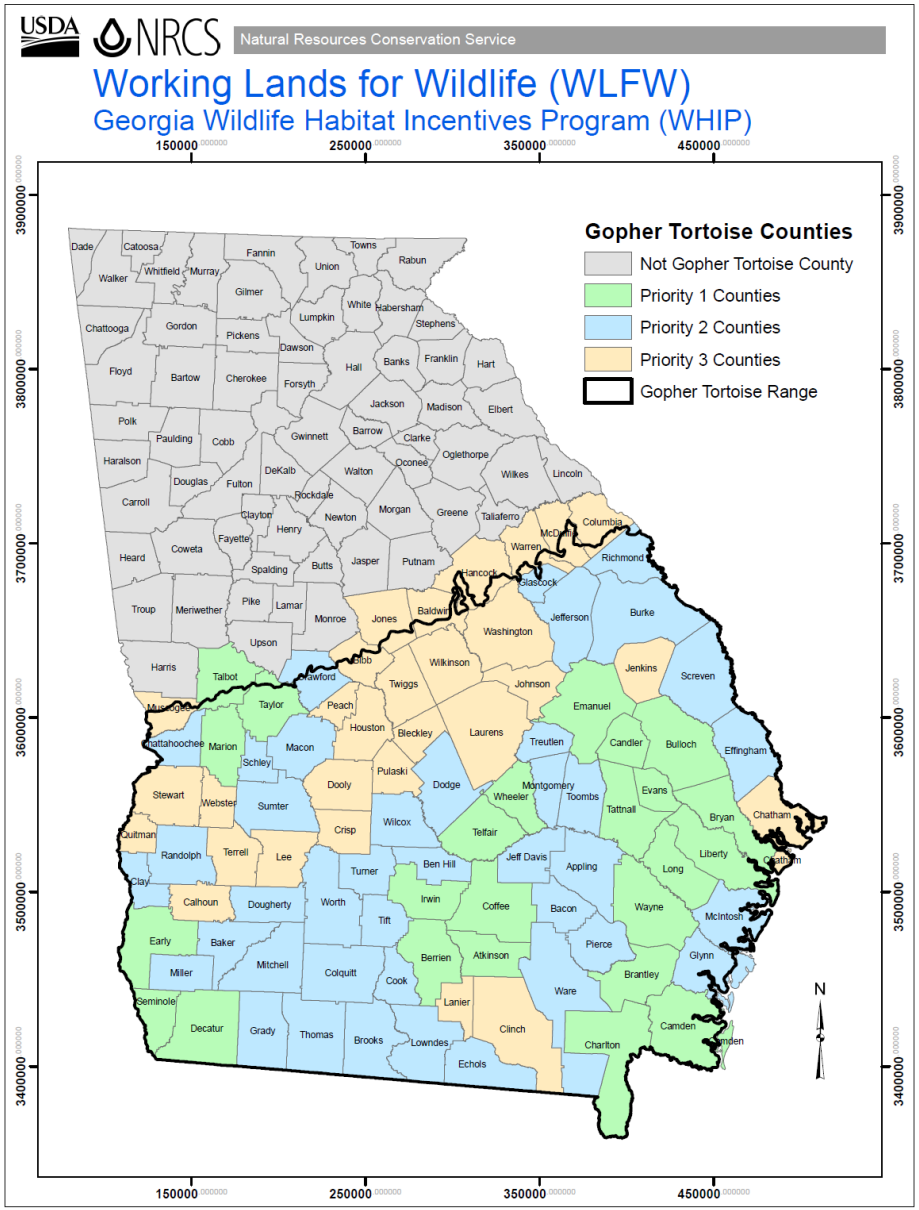

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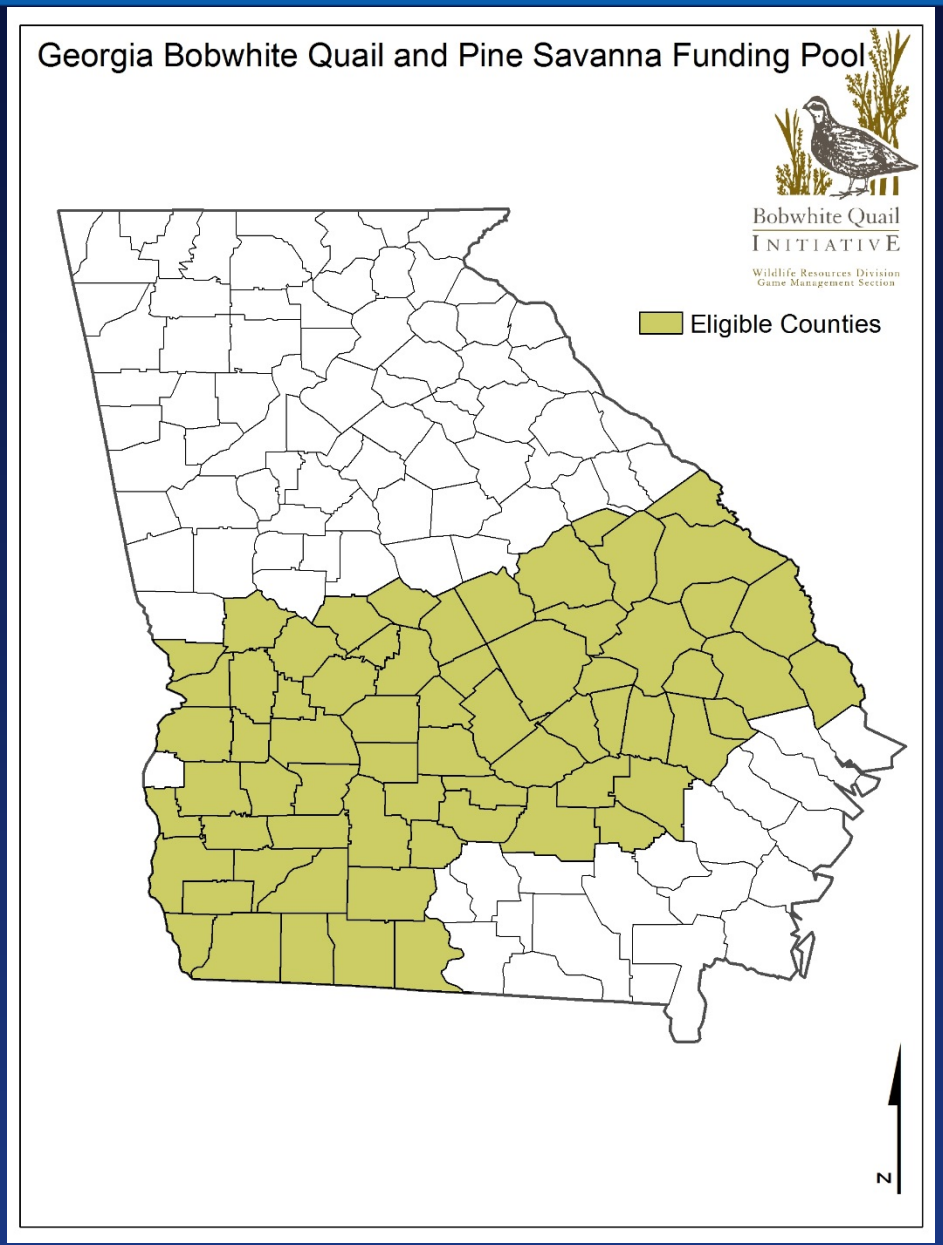
Bobwhite Quail Southern Pine Savanna Restoration Pilot Project

- The Bobwhite Quail Southern Pine Savanna pilot project is a partnership between the NRCS and the Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division (WRD) to help provide quality early successional pine savanna habitat.


Georgia Bobwhite Quail and Pine Savanna Funding Pool
Bobwhite Quail
INITIATIVE
Wildlife Resources Division
Game Management Section
Eligible Counties
N

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CSP: Conservation Stewardship Program

- Annual payments
- Participants are paid for conservation performance

Conservation Stewardship Program – CSP

- Types of Contracts
  - Agriculture (Ag)
  - Non-Industrial Private Forest (NIPF)
- Five Year Contracts
- Maximum Payment $40,000 per year and $200,000 for life of the contract

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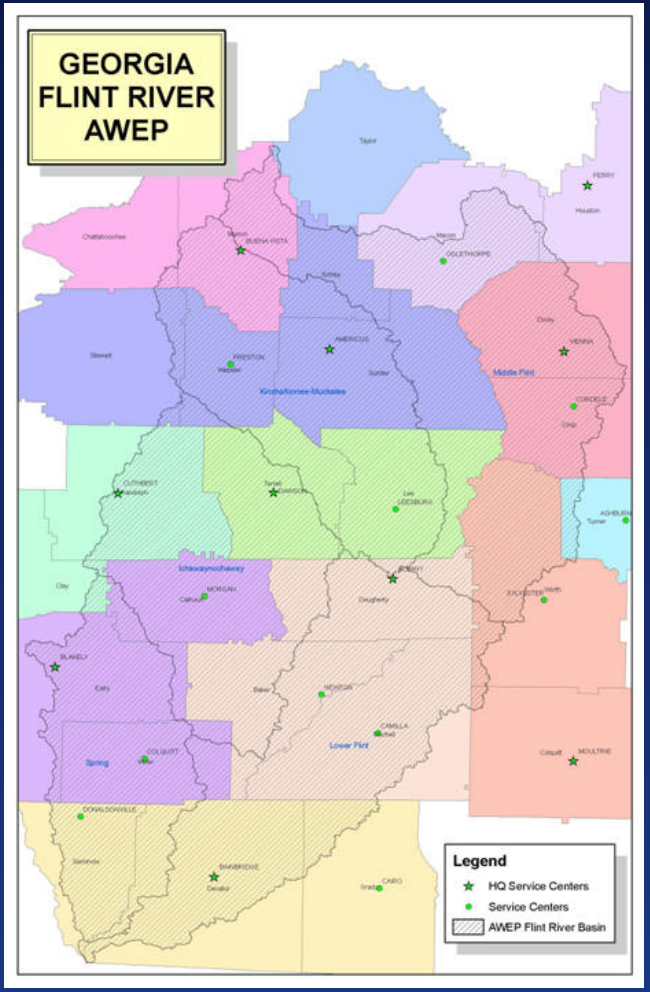
RCPP: Regional Conservation Partnership Program

- RCPP promotes coordination between NRCS and its partners to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners. NRCS provides assistance to producers through partnership agreements and through program contracts or easement agreements.



ACEP: Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

- ACEP provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands and their related benefits.
  - Agricultural Land Easements
  - Wetland Reserve Easements

ACEP: Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

- **Agricultural Land Easements** – NRCS helps Indian tribes, state and local governments, and non-governmental organizations protect working agricultural lands and limit non-agricultural uses of the land.
  - Permanent Easements only

ACEP: Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

- **Wetland Reserve Easements** – NRCS helps to restore, protect, and enhance enrolled wetlands.
  - Permanent Easements
  - 30-year Easements

HFRP: Healthy Forests Reserve Program

- Helps landowners restore, enhance, and protect forestland resources on private lands through easements and financial assistance.

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HFRP: Healthy Forests Reserve Program

- HFRP provides landowners with 10-year restoration agreements and 30-year or permanent easements for specific conservation actions.

Program Applications

- Continuous sign up process
- Land and Participant must be eligible
- Ranked to measure resource needs & environmental benefits gained
- Not all applications are funded
- Can always re-submit an application

General Program Eligibility

- USDA Records Established?
  - Farm Number
  - Tract Number
  - Crops Reported (important for CRP)
- **Filed/Update AD-1026 (Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation Certification)**
- Filed/Update CCC-931 (Payment Eligibility Average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Certification)
- Filed/Updated CCC-902 (Farm Operating Plan for Payment Eligibility Review)

Land Eligibility
(Program Specific)

Land Eligibility:

- Cropping history (FSA records, tax records)
- Record keeping (nutrient/pest applied, crops planted etc.)
- Irrigation history (2 out 5 years)
- Animals present (cows, goats, etc.)

Goal is to address a resource concern(s):

soil, water, air, animal, plants

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5 Steps to Assistance

- Planning – Visit local NRCS office and work with staff on a conservation plan
- Application – With the help of NRCS, complete an application
- Eligibility – Find out you're eligibility for NRCS financial assistance
- Ranking – NRCS ranks applications according to local resource concerns
- Implementing – Put conservation to work, sign a contract and implement the conservation practices

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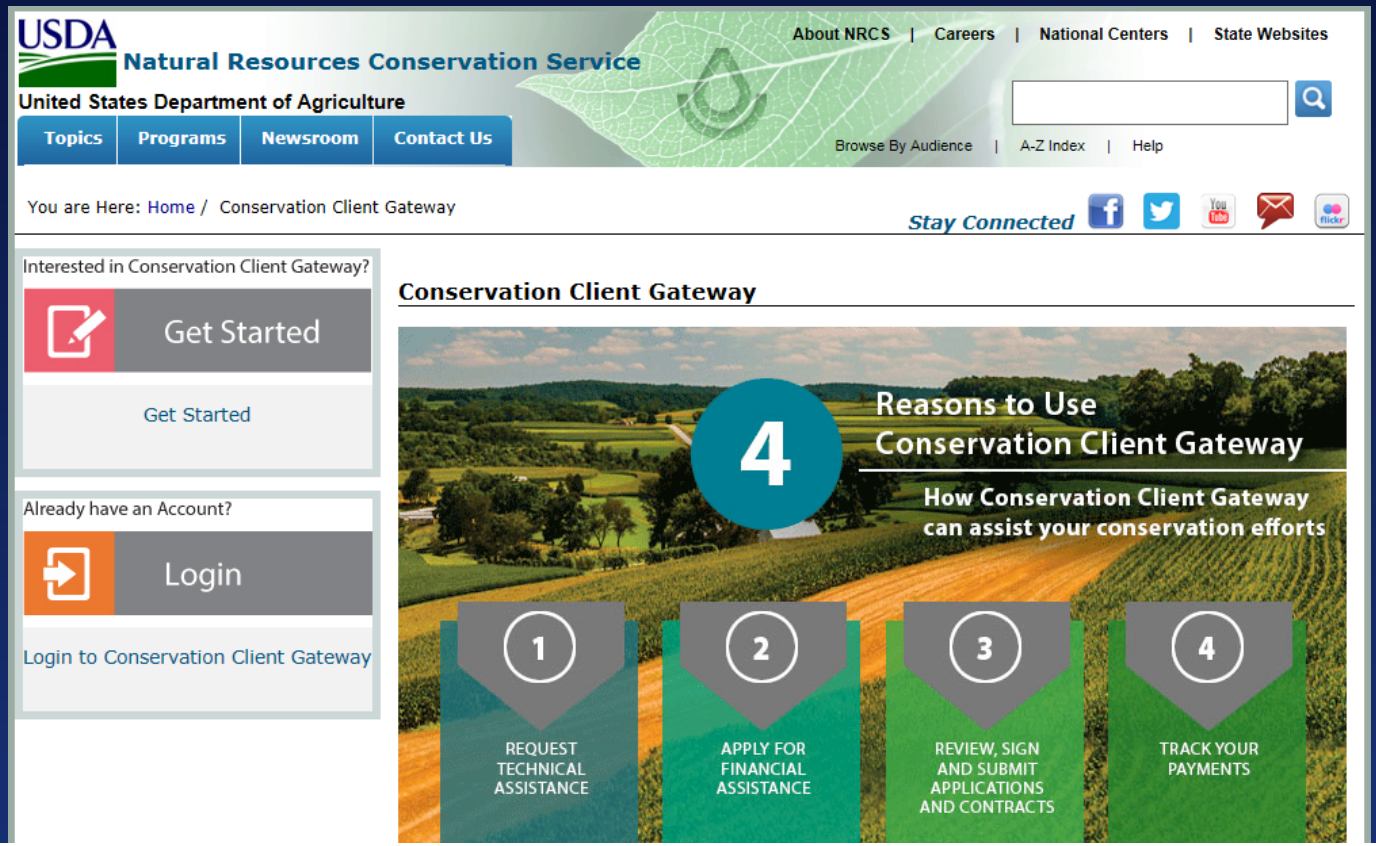
NRCS Conservation Client Gateway



http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/cgate/

What is Conservation Client Gateway?

Conservation Client Gateway is a secure online web application that gives landowners and land managers, operating as individuals, the ability to track their payments, report completed practices, request conservation assistance, and electronically sign documents anytime, anywhere. Conservation Client Gateway provides users the flexibility to determine when they want to engage with NRCS online and when they prefer in-person conservation planning assistance.

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Web Soil Survey

http://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/

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USDA New Farmer Website

https://newfarmers.usda.gov/

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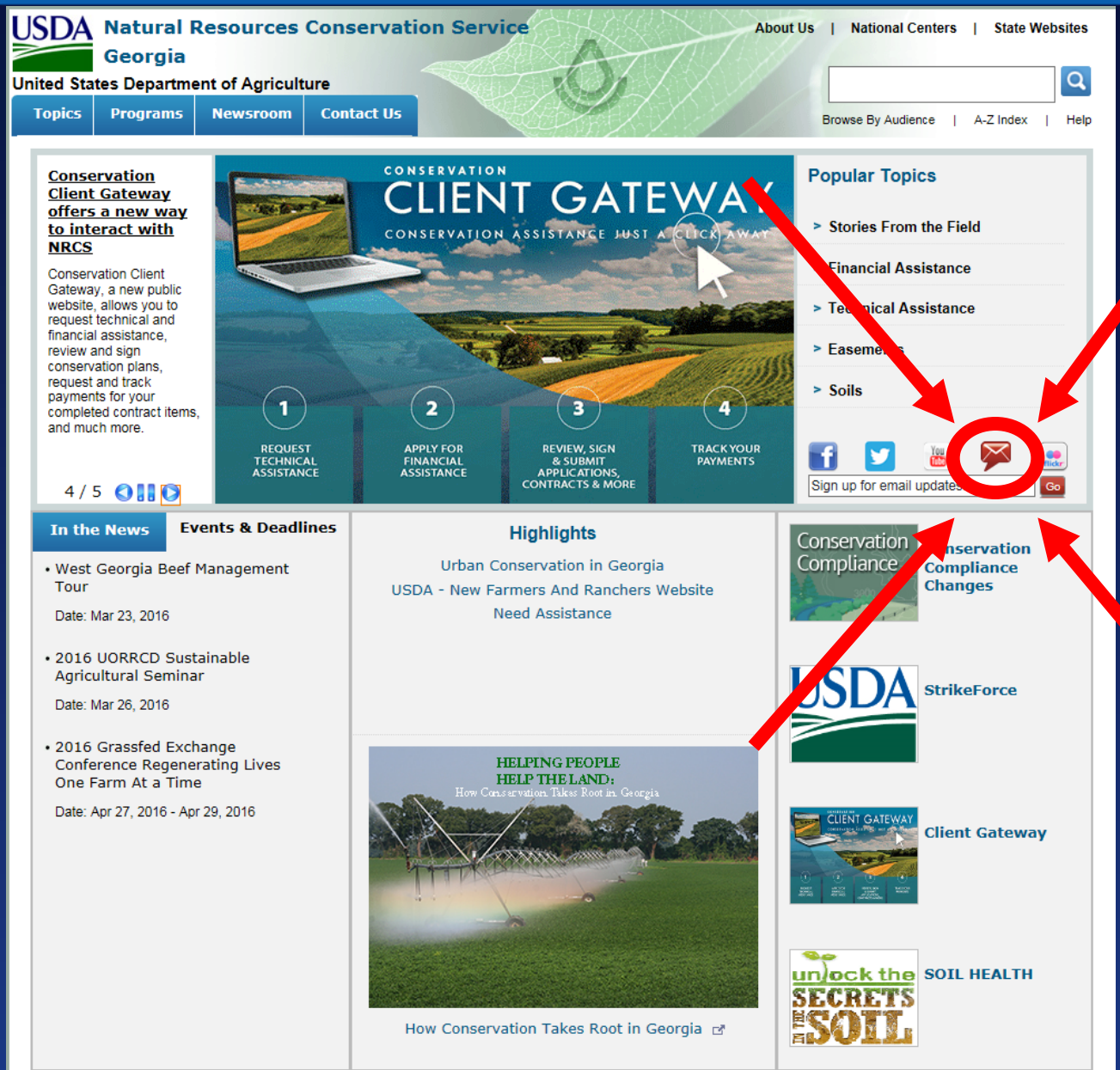

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For additional information

Visit the GA NRCS website:

www.ga.nrcs.usda.gov

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