

# What is a Conservation Plan?

## Conservation Plan



## Conservation Planning Assistance for Your Land

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's principal agency for providing conservation planning assistance in working lands such as farms and private forest. This service is free of charge.

## What is a Conservation Plan?

A conservation plan is a document that describes the schedule of implementation for practices needed to solve identified natural resource concerns associated with soil, water, air, plants, livestock, energy, and wildlife. Management decisions in the plan are made by you, for your land or farming operation, with assistance from NRCS. Your social and economic interests, as well as federal, state, tribal, and local requirements are considered during the planning process. Conservation plans may be updated, as needed.

## Why Would I Need a Conservation Plan?

A conservation plan ...

- Ensures the land's natural resources are managed to maintain sustainability and productivity.
- May help you qualify for financial assistance and easement programs provided by NRCS or other federal, state, or local programs.
- May help you gain or maintain eligibility for USDA farm program benefits.
- May help you comply with environmental regulations.
- May help you adapt to changing farm or ranch operational goals.

- May help you adapt to climate change.
- May help you meet the requirements for specialized certifications such as organic, free-range, or grass fed.



## What Does a Conservation Plan Include?

- Landowner-determined goals
- Aerial photograph or maps of the land
- Soils map and soils descriptions
- Resource inventory data, such as forage or crop production potential
- List of landowner's conservation decisions
- Location and schedule for applying conservation practices and systems
- Maintenance information for installed conservation measures

## How Do I Get a Conservation Plan Developed for My Land?

Your local NRCS office can assist you in developing and implementing a conservation plan. The conservation plan will be for your land; therefore, it is necessary that you are involved in the planning process.

### Contact Your Local NRCS Service Center

#### Hartford/Tolland Counties

Windsor Service Center  
100 Northfield Dr., 4th Floor  
Windsor, CT 06095  
(860) 688-7725

#### Windham County

Danielson Service Center  
71 Westcott Road  
Danielson, CT 06239  
(860) 779-0557

#### Fairfield/New Haven Counties

Hamden Service Center  
51 Mill Pond Road  
Hamden, CT 06514  
(203) 287-8038

#### Litchfield County

Torrington Field Office  
1185 New Litchfield Street  
Torrington, CT 06790  
(860) 626-8258

#### Middlesex/New London Counties

Norwich Field Office  
238 West Town Street  
Norwich, CT 06360  
(860) 887-3604

### Resource Concerns:

Overgrazed pastures result in low forage productivity, eroded and compacted soils, are more susceptible to weed infestations, and contain livestock concentration areas around feeders and waterers.



### Conservation Solutions:

Subdividing pastures into smaller areas and regularly moving livestock from a grazed area to an ungrazed area results in improved forage yields, improved soil condition, and uniform distribution of manure.



Cultivated soils are exposed to weather, mechanical disturbance, and the weight of farming equipment. This often results in erosion, depletion of organic matter, compaction, and reduced yields.



Farming using soil health principles and systems that include no-till, cover cropping, and diverse rotations, reduces erosion, sequesters carbon, increases water infiltration, and often improves yields.



Unmanaged forests are more likely to suffer damage from weather, fire, diseases, and pests. Unmanaged forest may also suffer from improper stand development and lack of wildlife habitat diversity.



Forest management improves the quantity and quality of forest products, reduces susceptibility to damage from pests, helps restore or maintain desired native plant communities, and improves wildlife habitat.



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