

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) in New Jersey

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) was created through the 2014 Farm Bill. Ann Mills, Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, [announced the award](#) of [two projects that are benefitting New Jersey](#) in January



2015. One regional award for \$13 million went to the *Delaware River Watershed Working Lands Conservation and Protection Partnership*, which included over 27 partners from New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. The proposed *Delaware Bay Soil and Water Quality Protection Initiative* submitted by New Jersey Conservation Foundation was awarded \$700,000 for the implementation of NRCS easement and

conservation programs to address priority resource concerns on farmland in New Jersey's Delaware Bay Watershed.

Cape May Plant Materials Center providing plant solutions to combat coastal degradation for 50 years

In September, nearly 100 people gathered at the Cape May Plant Materials Center (PMC) to celebrate the Center's 50th anniversary. The day included presentations from current and past managers of the Center and the Plant Materials Program and a tour various projects underway at the PMC.



The anticipated release of a new plant material, Hamer Sea Oats, was announced. Retired PMC manager, Don Hamer, for whom the release is named, was present to enjoy the day.

Serving urban communities

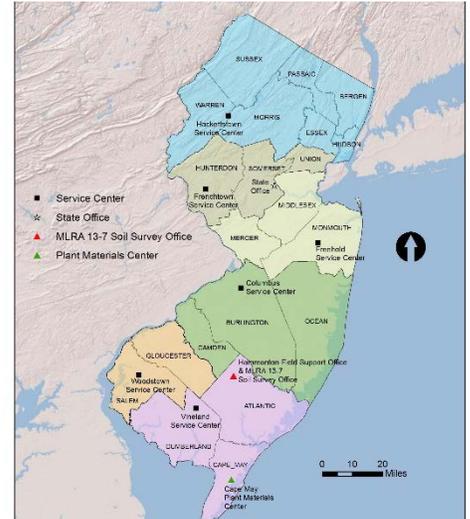
The NRCS soils team conducted over 20 on-site trace metal screenings for community or school gardens at urban ag sites in the region.



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The NRCS State Office is located in Somerset, NJ. NRCS service centers are located in Hackettstown, Frenchtown, Freehold, Columbus, Woodstown and Vineland. The Cape May Plant Materials Center is in Cape May Court House, and the MLRA Soil Survey Office is in Hammonton.

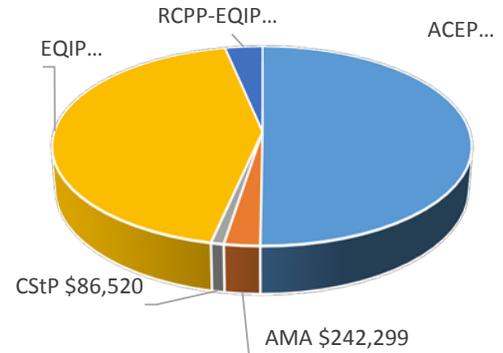
Promoting Soil Health

During the [International Year of Soils](#), NRCS continued to promote wider use of cover crop. By the end of FY2015, over 1300 acres of cover crop have been implemented through the Soil Health Initiative of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). In addition to encouraging the use of multi-species cover crops through the Initiative, NRCS demonstrated the efficiencies of various field cultivations with the help of a rainfall simulator, an outdoor exhibit that made an appearance at field days and fairs around New Jersey in 2015.

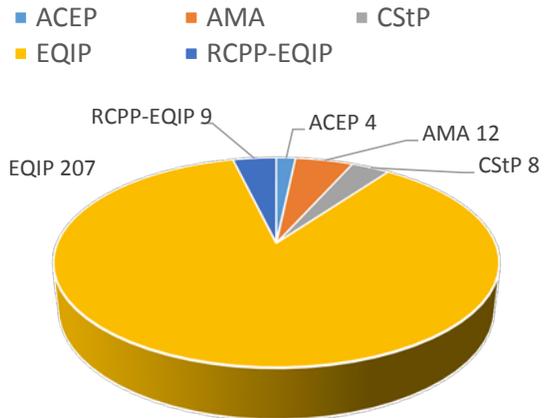


Number of Contracts and Funds Obligated

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)	207	\$4,358,283
Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) – EQIP	9	\$331,104
Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)	12	\$242,299
Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP)	8	\$86,520
Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agricultural Land Easement (ALE) 	1	\$4,459,884
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wetlands Reserve Easement (WRE) 	3	\$587,600
Total FY15 Financial Assistance		\$10,065,690



FY2015 Program Dollar Distribution



Individuals and Entities Served in FY2015



William and Ann Fox are enjoying the beauty of the transformed landscape and the increase of wildlife on their property in Atlantic County. They enrolled nearly 30 acres of their retired cranberry operation in NRCS's Wetlands Restoration Program (WRP) in 2012.



Wetlands were beginning to flourish at restoration site four months after construction was completed in March 2015.

A permanent easement was placed on the enrolled acres, and they received technical and financial assistance from NRCS to restore their land to an Atlantic white cedar wetland forest. With more efficient wetlands function, the land is better able to provide surface and subsurface water storage, nutrient cycling, particulate removal, maintenance of plant and animal communities, water filtration or purification, and groundwater recharge.

The Wetlands Reserve Program has been discontinued, but NRCS continues to offer opportunity for wetland restoration through the [Agricultural Conservation Easement Program \(ACEP\) – Wetland Reserve Easement \(WRE\)](#). The Foxes are so pleased with the results of the work done on their property, they have submitted application to enroll additional acreage in ACEP-WRE.

Top 10 Conservation Practices by Planned Amount

1. Cover Crop
2. Irrigation Water Management
3. Forest Stand Improvement
4. Conservation Cover
5. Brush Management
6. Early Successional Habitat Development and Management
7. Structure for Wildlife
8. Mulching
9. Pasture and Hay Planting
10. Irrigation, Micro-irrigation

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