

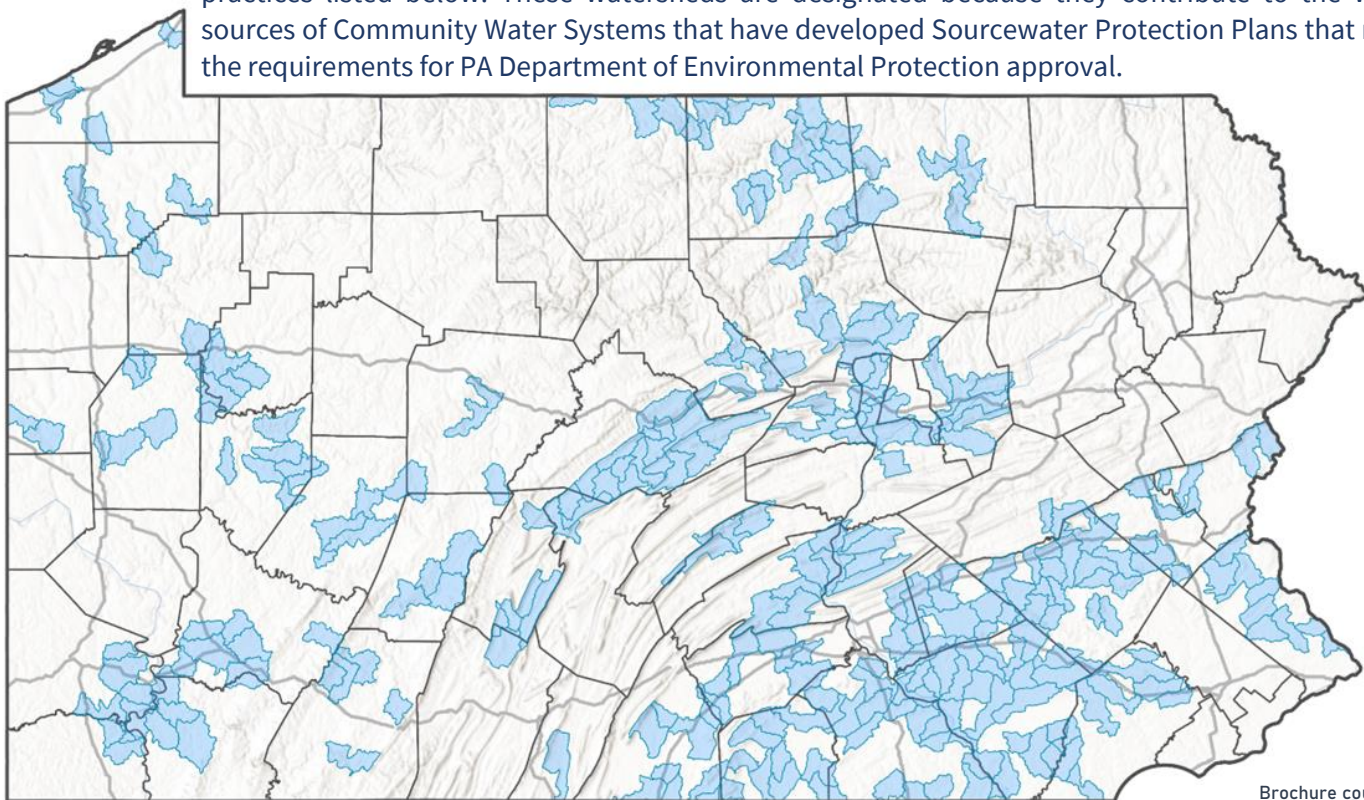
Grassroots Sourcewater Protection



2018 Farm Bill & USDA [Sourcewater Protection Incentives](#)

The 2018 Farm Bill mandated that 10% of funds authorized for conservation programs be used to protect sources of drinking water in up to 20% of the watersheds in each state. It also increases payment incentives for agricultural producers to implement specific conservation practices within state approved Sourcewater Protection watersheds. This is an exciting opportunity for USDA to strengthen and form partnerships with farmers and other landowners across Pennsylvania to improve drinking water quality through conservation practices.

[This map](#) highlights Pennsylvania's designated source water protection watersheds in blue. Participants in these areas are eligible for increased cost share when using the priority conservation practices listed below. These watersheds are designated because they contribute to the water sources of Community Water Systems that have developed Sourcewater Protection Plans that meet the requirements for PA Department of Environmental Protection approval.



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Brochure courtesy of
pa rural water
Association



[Source Water Protection](#) is a planning process conducted by local water utilities, landowners, and government agencies to protect drinking water sources from overuse and contamination. Sourcewater areas can be acres to many square miles in size, so the effort is not just for a few people, but many individuals who own and work the land within these watersheds. Grassroots Sourcewater Protection is the community wide effort of individuals and partners to conserve and protect sources of drinking water that come from our lands. There are many conservation partners available to help with technical and financial assistance through agencies like [USDA Farm Service Agency](#), [USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service](#), [Conservation Districts](#), [DCNR](#), and [Penn State Extension](#).

Contact a [USDA Service Center](#) near you for more information. [Join the Effort.](#)

NRCS & FSA Conservation Programs

USDA [FSA](#) & [NRCS](#) conservation programs help people reduce soil erosion, enhance water supplies, improve water quality, increase wildlife habitat, and reduce damages caused by floods and other natural disasters. NRCS provides funding and assistance for producers and landowners through various programs like EQIP & CSP. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) also provides CRP and CREP programs.

Examples of Practices



Nutrient Management Planning



Riparian Buffers



Cover Cropping



Nutrient Storage Facilities

EQIP & CSP Programs

The [Conservation Stewardship Program](#) helps agricultural producers and forestland owners maintain and improve existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority concerns.

[Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) offers technical and financial assistance for working lands that will remain in production while conserving the natural resources on working landscapes.

- **EQIP eligible participants** include tenants, landowners, lease holders, and joint operators with gross income under \$900k.
- **EQIP qualifying land uses** include field crops, specialty crops, organic crops, confined or grazing livestock, and private forest lands.

CRP & CREP Programs

The [Conservation Reserve Program](#) and [Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program](#) provide technical and financial assistance to eligible farmers and landowners to address soil, water, wildlife, and related natural resource concerns on their lands in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner.

Common Conservation Practices

Whether farmland, pastures, or forest, regardless of where you live, the popular practices below could be the land management solution for you. If not, don't let that stop you from contacting USDA NRCS or FSA to consider whether they have additional practices that can help you achieve your goals.

- [Animal Trail and Walkway](#) Practice Code 575
- [Nutrient Management Plan](#) Practice Code 590
- [Cover Crops](#) Practice Code 340
- [Heavy Use Area Protection](#) Practice Code 561
- [Prescribed Grazing](#) Practice Code 528
- [Watering Facility](#) Practice Code 614

[Additional NRCS Practices](#)

Forest Management, Hedgerows, Soil Health, Agricultural Energy & Efficiency, Organic Transition, Fish & Wildlife Habitat, Tree/Shrub Establishment, Sinkhole Treatment, Forest Stand Improvement, Pond Sealing or Lining, Stream Crossing, Waste Storage, Roof Runoff, Composting; Contour Farming, Buffer Strips, Cover Crops, Stream Habitat Improvement, Riparian Forest Buffers, Grassed Waterways, Riparian Herbaceous Buffers, prescribed grazing, & more!

Increased Cost Share Practices

These practices are eligible for a higher cost share on lands within any source water protection watershed in designated in blue on the map on the previous page.

- [Well Decommissioning](#) Practice Code 351
- [Karst Sinkhole Treatment](#) Practice Code 527
- [Streambank & Shoreline Protection](#) Practice Code 580
- [Denitrifying Bioreactor](#) Practice Code 605
- [Phosphorous Removal System](#) Practice Code 782

National Water Quality Initiative: Measuring Success

The goal of NWQI is to focus conservation efforts and water quality monitoring and analyses where our efforts can have the most impact for clean water. This success is pursued through partnership among the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), state water quality agencies (PA DEP), and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to identify and address impaired water bodies through voluntary conservation.

Pennsylvania currently has five NWQI watersheds with varying degrees of progress. Visit the [Pennsylvania NWQI website](#) (or search "PA NWQI") to learn more about these initiatives along with examples of success.

View this fact sheet
via smart phone.



Contact a USDA [Service Center](#) near you for more information. **Join the Effort.**