



United States Department of Agriculture



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Source Water Protection

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Source Water Protection Language in the 2018 Farm Bill

Section 1244(n): Source Water Protection Through Targeting of Agricultural Practices

Provides that the Secretary shall encourage the protection of drinking water sources through the following methods:

- Identify local priority areas for drinking water protection in each state:
 - In collaboration with State Technical Committees and community water systems
 - May address water quality or quantity concerns
- Provide increased incentives for practices that relate to water quality and quantity and protect drinking water sources while also benefitting producers
- Dedicate at least 10% of the total funds available for conservation programs (with the exception of CRP), each year beginning in FY 2019 through FY 2023, to be used for source water protection.



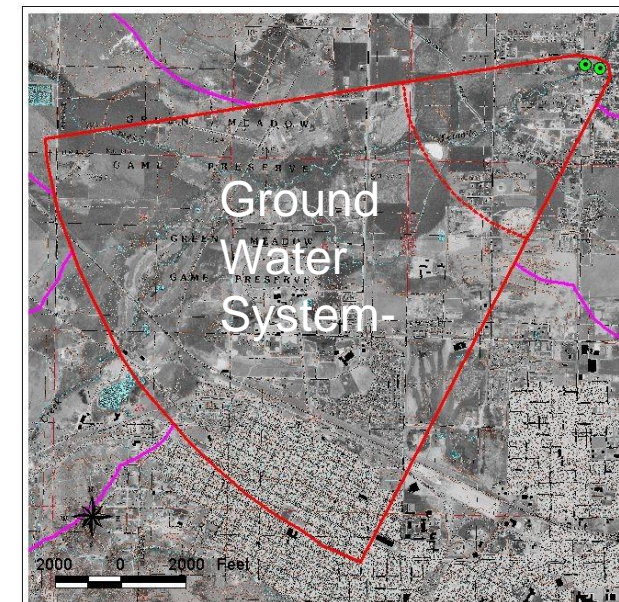
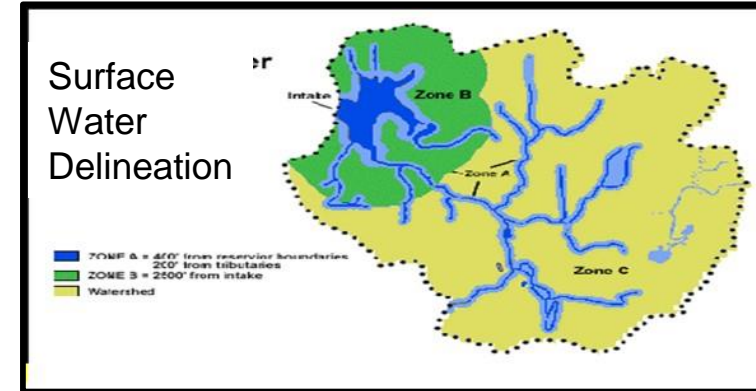
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Recommendations for Compliance with Provision

State Priority Areas

- STCs collaborate with utilities/public water systems in their state to identify priority areas
- Utility/state provides delineations for the source water protection areas (SWPA)
 - Size will vary depending on whether it is a surface water or ground water source, and by the size of the population it serves
- Delineated SWPAs should have a protection plan that characterizes the source water. It should:
 - Identify areas of concern
 - Identify potential threats
 - Describe source water protection goals
 - Have an action plan for implementation



Recommendations for Compliance with Provision

Practice Incentives

- STCs identify practices that are needed to support the objectives of the source water protection plans in priority areas
- Practices can receive increased payment rates, up to 90%
- Practices should address water quality and water quantity, as appropriate



Recommendations for Compliance with Provision

Dedication of 10% Funds

- NRCS will track compliance with the requirement to dedicate 10% of conservation program funds based on agency investments **within identified priority areas**
- Prospective Tracking method:
 - Account for the Financial Assistance funding for all practices and enhancements with a water quality or quantity benefit
 - Account for the associated Technical Assistance funding for the above activities
 - Include and account for ACEP-WRE and ACEP-ALE within priority areas



Farm Bill and Conservation Technical Assistance Programs

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
- Agriculture Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)
 - Agriculture Lands Easement (ALE)
 - Wetland Reserve Easement (WRE)
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)
- Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA)

