

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Forest Health Assistance on Private Lands

UCCE Rx Workshop— Sutter Creek, CA

October 10, 2019



Jenny Johnson

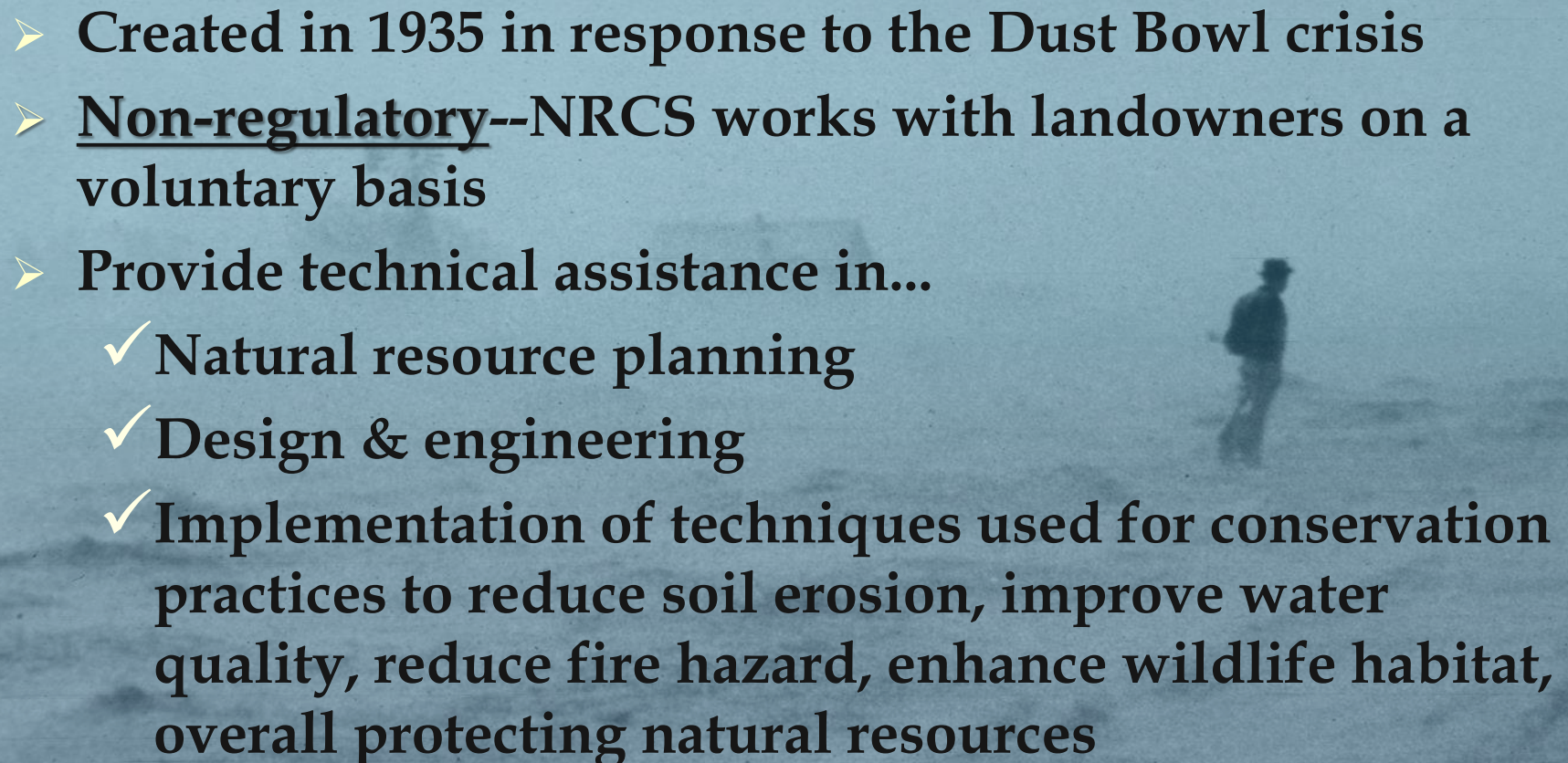
USDA- NRCS

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US Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service

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- The background of the slide is a faded, blue-tinted photograph of a person standing in a field, possibly a farmer or a conservationist, looking towards the horizon. The person is wearing a hat and a long-sleeved shirt. The field appears to be a large, open area, possibly a farm or a natural preserve.
- Created in 1935 in response to the Dust Bowl crisis
 - Non-regulatory--NRCS works with landowners on a voluntary basis
 - Provide technical assistance in...
 - ✓ Natural resource planning
 - ✓ Design & engineering
 - ✓ Implementation of techniques used for conservation practices to reduce soil erosion, improve water quality, reduce fire hazard, enhance wildlife habitat, overall protecting natural resources

NRCS Technical Assistance

- Soil Conservationists – Conservation Planning
- Soil Scientists
- Biologists--Wetlands and Wildlife
- Rangeland Specialists
- Foresters
- Engineers--Civil/ Agricultural/Hydraulic
- Geographic Information Specialists
- Agronomy & Water Quality Specialists
- Plant Materials Specialists – PMC, Lockeford

Conservation Planning

Upon invitation, NRCS staff will conduct field visits with the landowner or manager to develop a conservation plan based on the landowner's goals and objectives:

- ✓ Analyze resources - forest health, fire hazard, forage capacity
- ✓ Identify Problems - soil erosion, inadequate wildlife habitat
- ✓ Formulate and evaluate alternatives
- ✓ Utilize Farm Bill Programs to aid in conservation practices

FARM BILL PROGRAMS

EQIP – Environmental Quality Incentives Program

Provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers in order to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits such as:

- ✓ Improved water and air quality,
- ✓ conserved ground and surface water,
- ✓ reduced soil erosion and sedimentation
- ✓ improved or created wildlife habitat.

EQIP – Environmental Quality Incentives Program

- Forestland
- Rangeland
- Cropland
- Air Quality
- Wildlife/Fish Habitat



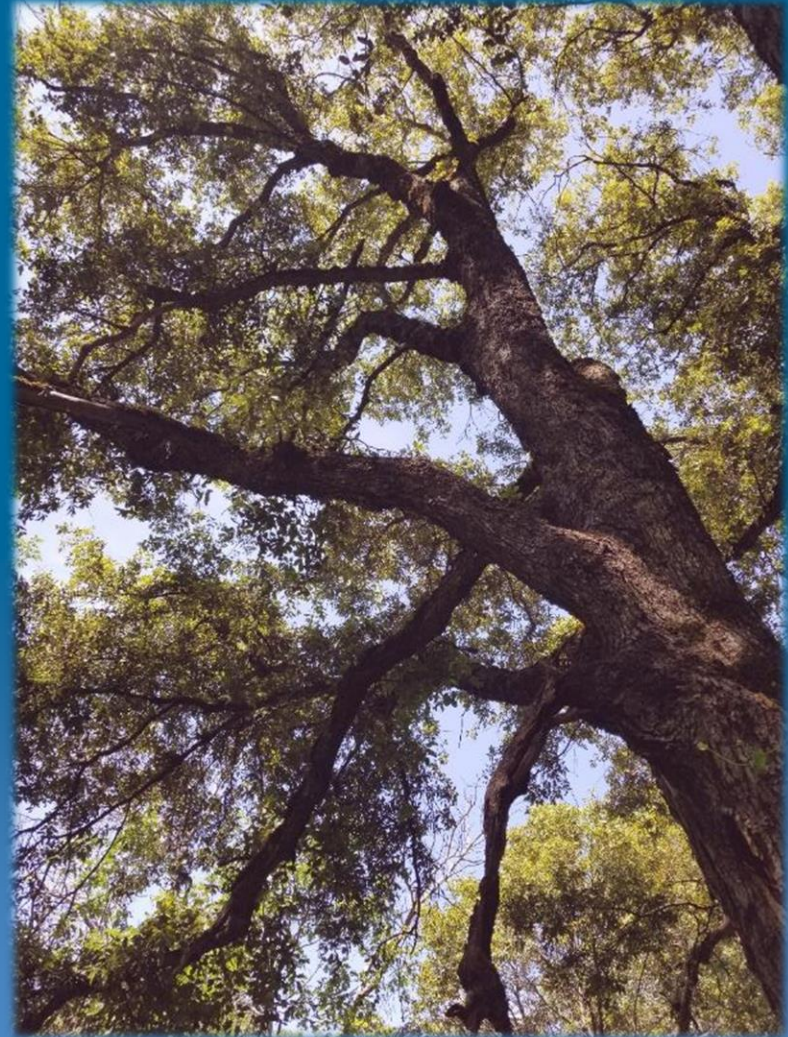
EQIP Rangeland Practices

Promote rangeland health and ecological function while enhancing wildlife habitat values



EQIP Forestry Practices

Promote healthy & productive forestlands, reduce soil erosion, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, improve water quality and reduce wildfire risks on non-industrial private forestlands



NRCS Resource Concerns

Pertaining to Forest Health

- *Wildfire hazard, excessive biomass accumulation*
- *Inadequate structure and composition*
- *Degraded plant condition*
- *Soil erosion & water quality*
- *Undesirable plant productivity and health*
- *Inadequate habitat for fish and wildlife (food, water, cover/shelter, continuity)*

Forest Stand Improvement & Brush Management

Fuel Reduction Practices:

- Mastication
- Hand treatment
- Dozer work
- Tree Pruning
- Slash Disposal
- Follow-up sprout treatment



Practices Applicable to Prescribed Fire

- Fire Break – Dozer Lines
- Vegetative Fuel Break
- Prescribed Burn Plan
 - Funding Assistance
- Prescribed Burning
 - Site Prep
 - Implementation



Prescribed Fire Requirements

The landowner will make the vegetation management decision and work with an agency that has the liability and responsibility to plan and implement a burn

➤ Burn plan

- Calfire
- National Wildfire Coordination Group (NWCG) guidelines
- NRCS Technical Service Provider (TSP)

➤ Obtain permits

- Calfire
- Air Pollution Control District

➤ Considerations must be made for

- Wildlife Habitat & Water Quality
- Threatened & Endangered Species
- Cultural Resources



FARM BILL PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

➤ LAND CONTROL

- Privately owned or leased
- Property size is not a limitation

➤ FINANCIAL

- Adjusted Gross Income < \$900K



PROGRAM TIMELINES

- **Fiscal Year 2020 funding on hold**
 - Waiting for finalization of 2019 Farm Bill Policy and EQIP rules
- **Continuous EQIP application acceptance.**
 - Typically 3 batching periods /year
 - First funding for FY 2020 estimated after Jan 1st

BEGIN YOUR CONSERVATION PLANS

5

Steps to Assistance

How to Get Assistance from NRCS for Farms, Ranches and Forests

1

PLANNING

Visit your local NRCS field office to discuss your goals and work with staff on a conservation plan.

2

APPLICATION

With the help of NRCS, complete an application for financial assistance programs.

3

ELIGIBILITY

As part of applying, we'll file paperwork to ensure you're eligible for assistance.

4

RANKING

NRCS ranks applications according to local resource concerns.

5

IMPLEMENTING

Put conservation to work by signing a contract and implementing conservation practices.

Natural Resources Conservation Service Service Areas and Office Locations



Source of Data:
USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service



Map prepared using ArcGIS
GIS Services Team, NRCS, Davis, CA
Map ID: nrcs_ca 3/1/2018



NRCS Office Locations

www.ca.nrcs.usda.gov

The background of the slide is a photograph of a dense forest. The trees are a mix of evergreen and deciduous species, with many showing bright yellow-green foliage, suggesting a late summer or autumn setting. The forest extends to a ridge in the distance under a clear blue sky. The entire image is framed by a blue gradient overlay.

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