



Natural Resources Conservation Service

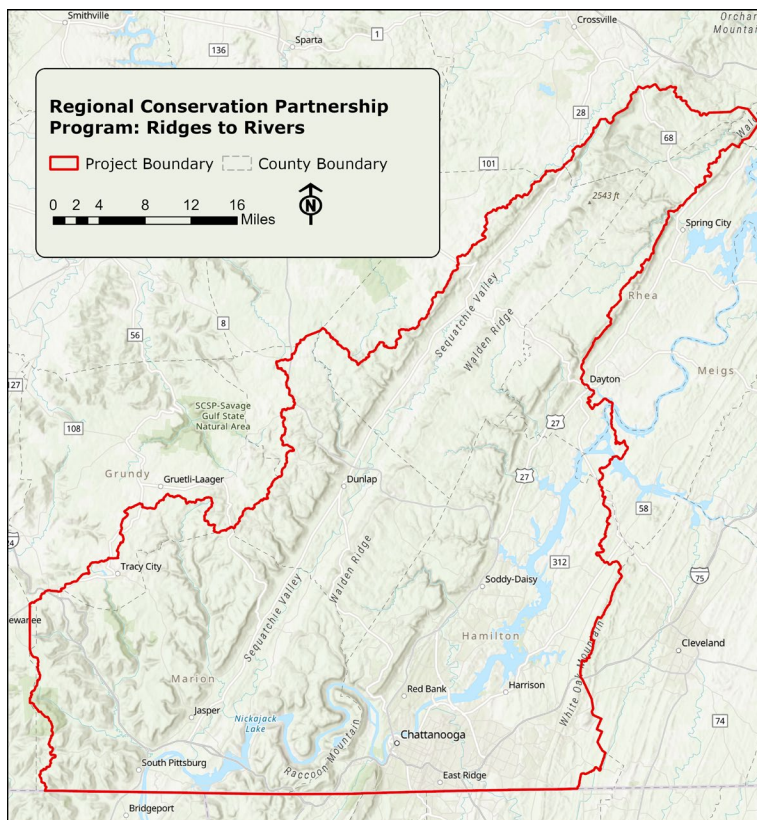
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NEWS RELEASE

Funding available for partner-driven projects aimed at improving water quality, wildlife habitat, and reduce soil erosion

Application Batching Deadline is February 16



NASHVILLE, January 4, 2024 – NRCS is offering funding for partner-driven projects to improve water, quality, wildlife habitat, and reduce soil erosion in the Cumberland Plateau and Sequatchie Valley regions of Tennessee through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP).

To be considered for program funding, applicants must operate land within the focus area of the respective RCPP project. **The deadline to submit applications for FY 2024 funding is February 16, 2024.**

Funding is available through the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program, and the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program-Wetland Reserve Easement, under the RCPP Farm

Bill program.

Funded FY2024 RCPP projects include:

Ridges to Rivers: Protecting the Cumberland Plateau and the Sequatchie Valley for Aquatic Resources Management

The Ridges to Rivers partnership, with more than 15 contributing partners, plans to work with producers and landowners in a seven-county area in the Tennessee River Basin to improve water quality and aid the recovery

of imperiled aquatic species. The project area is home to five threatened or endangered species, including the Laurel Dace, known only from headwater streams in the project area. A mix of land management practices and conservation easements will be used to restore degraded habitats and protect parcels critical to stream health.

The Ridges to Rivers partnership will be utilizing an ACT NOW approach. ACT NOW allows applications with a score greater than a pre-determined threshold of 10 to be preapproved once assessed and ranked until funds have been expended.

Applications can be taken at all NRCS Tennessee county offices and USDA service centers. To locate an office near you, please visit the [NRCS Tennessee](#) website. Applications MUST be received in your local service center by 4 p.m. on Friday, February 16.

Applicants can submit a signed and dated Form NRCS-CPA-1200 in the office, hand delivered, mailed, scanned, emailed, or through an agency-approved business tool (Farmers.gov). If NRCS receives a program application request by other means, such as by telephone, a NRCS representative must manually prepare Form NRCS-CPA-1200, using the date NRCS received the request in order to establish the application cut-off deadline has been met. NRCS will follow up to obtain the participant's signature to ensure the application was properly completed prior to ranking.

Online services are available to customers with an eAuth account, which provides access to the farmers.gov portal where producers can view USDA farm loan information and payments and view and track certain USDA program applications and payments. Customers who do not already have an eAuth account can enroll at farmers.gov/sign-in. For questions about NRCS programs, producers should contact their local USDA Service Center. To learn more, visit usda.gov.

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