

# Regional Conservation Partnership Program

Investing in Michigan



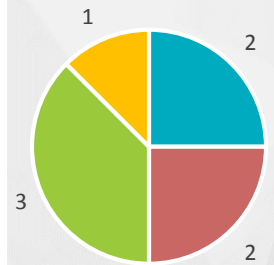
## Regional Conservation Partnership Program

Created by the 2014 Farm Bill, the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is a partner-driven, locally-led approach to conservation. It offers new opportunities for USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to harness innovation, welcome new partners to the conservation mission, and demonstrates the value and efficacy of voluntary, private lands conservation.

In 2017, NRCS is investing up to \$225 million in 88 projects that impact every state in the nation, including two in Michigan. Since 2014, NRCS has invested more than \$825 million in 286 high-impact projects, bringing together more than 2,000 conservation partners who have invested an additional \$1.4 billion. By 2018, NRCS and partners will have invested at least \$2.4 billion. These projects are leading to cleaner and more abundant water, better soil and air quality, enhance wildlife habitat, more resilient and productive agricultural lands and stronger rural economies.

### Michigan Projects to Date

#### Projects by Resource Concern



- Soil Health
- Water Quality
- Wildlife Habitat
- Water Quantity/Drought

**8**

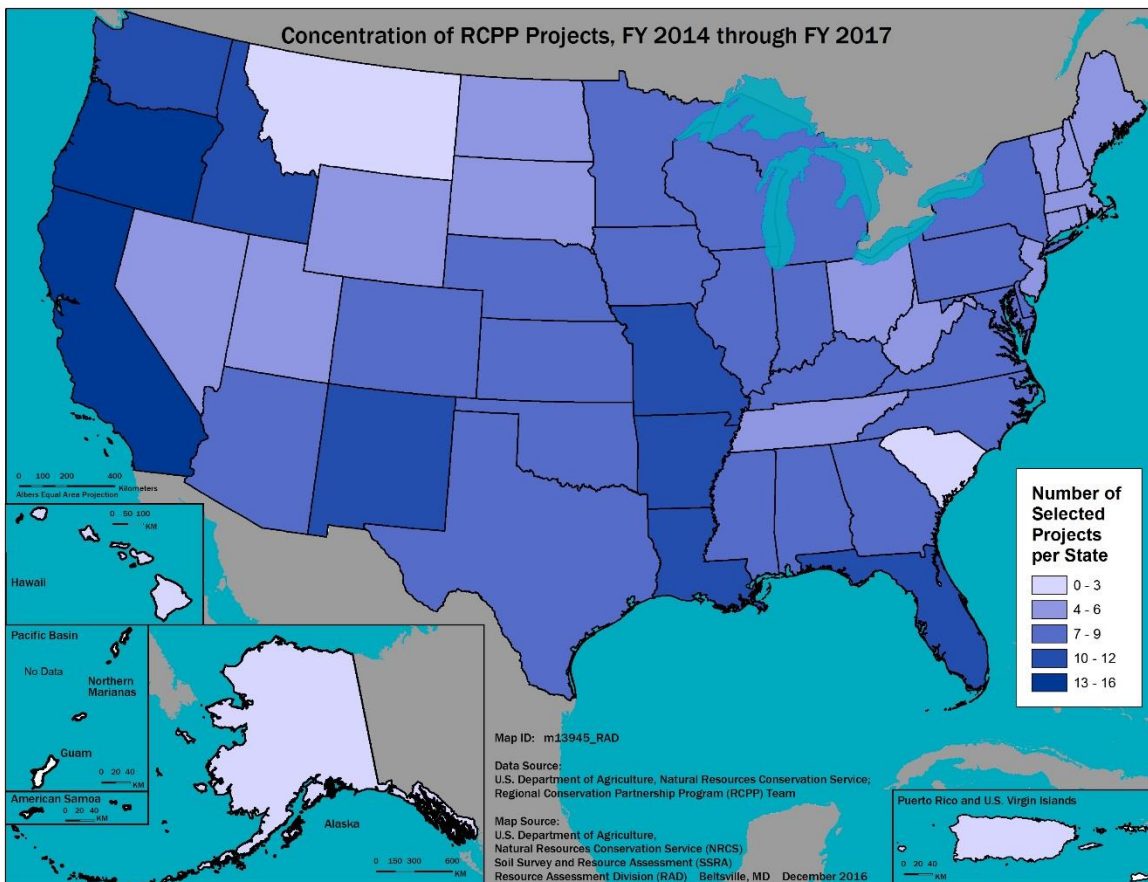
Projects

**\$58 million**

NRCS Investment

**192**

Partners



## Existing RCPP Projects

Year	Title	Funding Pool	Lead Partner	Number of Partners	NRCS Investment
2016	Tribal Stream and Michigan Fruitbelt Collaborative	CCA	Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians	21	\$7.9 million
2014/2015	Saginaw Bay Watershed Conservation Partnership	CCA	The Nature Conservancy	35	\$10 million
2014/2015	Tri-State Western Lake Erie Basin Phosphorus Reduction Initiative	CCA	Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	46	\$17.5 million
2014/2015	Training Foresters to Enhance the Sustainable Management of Private Forest Land	State	Michigan Department of Natural Resources – Forest Resources Division	5	\$1 million
2014/2015	ABC: Improving Forest Health for Wildlife Resources in MN, WI, MI	National	American Bird Conservancy	25	\$5 million
2014/2015	Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership	National	Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	32	\$6.8 million

## 2017 RCPP Projects

### Low Grand River Watershed Habitat Restoration - Farmland Conservation Project

Proposed NRCS Investment: \$8,000,000 (Critical Conservation Area – Great Lakes Region)

Lead Partner: Grand Valley Metro Council

Number of Initial Partners: 22

Participating States: Michigan (Lead State)

The Watershed Habitat Restoration - Farmland Conservation Project addresses priority resource concerns in the Lower Grand River Watershed of water quality degradation and inadequate habitat for fish, wildlife and invertebrates. The project will use innovative, creative designs to revitalize 2.5 miles of the river flowing through Grand Rapids. Indian Mill Creek and Rogue River are tributaries of the Grand River upstream from the restoration area, with watersheds that are over 40 percent agricultural. The project also will encourage conservation practices, possibly through financial assistance or cost share funds, using new technology in managing large river systems to address resource concerns. The over twenty project partners have committed significant contributions, almost doubling the federal conservation investment, to deliver a targeted outreach campaign; provide public and private financial and technical assistance to landowners applying for Natural Resources Conservation Service programs; and coordinate monitoring efforts to document project outcomes. A participatory conservation approach of working with property owners through workshops, one-on-one interactions and bilingual materials will reach both experienced and underserved producers in critical areas. The inclusion of many private organizations will increase knowledge of conservation practices and build capacity for developing a local workforce focused on improving water quality and providing adequate habitats for fish and wildlife.



## The Huron River Initiative

Proposed NRCS Investment: \$1,825,880 (State)

Lead Partner: Legacy Land Conservancy

Number of Initial Partners: 5

Participating States: Michigan (Lead State)

Through the Huron River Initiative, the Legacy Land Conservancy and partners will work with producers in the upper Huron River watershed to address soil quality degradation and water quality degradation – improving, sustaining and building upon the Emerald Arc of conserved lands in Southeast Michigan. Depression Era state legislators envisioned an arc of conserved lands benefitting the growing population of Detroit, and their efforts in the mid-twentieth century resulted in the state and metro parks systems seen today, stretching from Lake Erie to Waterloo State Recreation Area to Port Huron. The Huron River watershed, the cleanest urban river in Michigan, plays a big and important role in this landscape – as do the agricultural producers within the watershed. The Emerald Arc also consists of prime agricultural soils, expansive farmland, and producers who play critical roles in the health of these lands and adjacent waters. Today, partners can offer new tools and approaches to agricultural land conservation that benefit both individual producers and the broader community, combining permanent land protection with landowner incentives.