

# Illinois At-A-Glance

## FY2017



### Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Accomplishments in Illinois

The information below captures the contracts and agreements Illinois producers have entered into during fiscal year 2017. Different practices and programs make this work possible. Federal funds are allocated and organized in separate funding pools in order to direct funds to specific resource issues or watershed locations. FA = Financial Assistance funds, BF = Beginning Farmer, SD = Socially Disadvantaged.

#### Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

| Funding Pools                                                       | Contracts  | Acres Enrolled | FA Obligated        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------------|---------------------|
| General EQIP                                                        | 78         | 7,778          | \$2,749,188         |
| Confined Livestock-Manure Management                                | 20         | 5,813          | \$4,678,997         |
| Grazing Land Operations                                             | 33         | 2,758          | \$3,163,932         |
| Forest Management Implementation                                    | 4          | 168            | \$69,899            |
| On-Farm Energy                                                      | 1          | 5              | \$63,806            |
| Organic Certified                                                   | 3          | 111            | \$22,581            |
| Organic Transition                                                  | 6          | 798            | \$74,097            |
| Drainage Water Management Implementation                            | 1          | 78             | \$5,682             |
| Specialty Crop                                                      | 33         | 94             | \$279,427           |
| Wildlife Habitat Conservation                                       | 4          | 138            | \$101,019           |
| <b>Illinois Initiatives</b>                                         |            |                |                     |
| Driftless Area Landscape Conservation Initiative                    | 40         | 1,098          | \$498,217           |
| Kinkaid Lake Watershed Restoration                                  | 13         | 594            | \$186,977           |
| Monarch Butterfly Project                                           | 21         | 139            | \$76,124            |
| Urban Ag - Cook County                                              | 4          | 1              | \$54,253            |
| <b>Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative (MRBI)</b> |            |                |                     |
| Clinton Lake Watershed                                              | 4          | 336            | \$163,683           |
| Crow - Clear Creek Watershed                                        | 3          | 525            | \$122,244           |
| Upper Macoupin Creek Watershed                                      | 5          | 1,459          | \$269,079           |
| Vermilion Headwaters Watershed                                      | 11         | 2,927          | \$365,402           |
| <b>National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI)</b>                     |            |                |                     |
| Crooked Creek Watershed                                             | 7          | 392            | \$281,179           |
| <b>Conservation Activity Plans</b>                                  |            |                |                     |
| Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan                              | 12         | 607            | \$86,658            |
| Drainage Water Management Plan                                      | 2          | 155            | \$4,342             |
| Forest Management Plan                                              | 54         | 4,886          | \$83,722            |
| Grazing Management Plan                                             | 2          | 175            | \$3,903             |
| <b>Total</b>                                                        | <b>361</b> | <b>31,035</b>  | <b>\$13,404,411</b> |

#### Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

| Funding Pools                | Contracts  | Acres Enrolled | FA Obligated       |
|------------------------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Statewide Ag Lands           | 163        | 138,801        | \$1,568,416        |
| Statewide Ag Lands - BF      | 30         | 7,389          | \$136,816          |
| Statewide NIPF               | 3          | 160            | \$7,996            |
| Statewide NIPF -BF           | 3          | 66             | \$9,865            |
| MRBI - Clinton Lake Ag Lands | 1          | 3,428          | \$27,730           |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>200</b> | <b>149,844</b> | <b>\$1,750,823</b> |

#### CSP Contract Renewals

| Funding Pools           | Contracts  | Acres Enrolled | FA Obligated       |
|-------------------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Statewide Ag Lands      | 208        | 192,545        | \$2,968,195        |
| Statewide Ag Lands - BF | 9          | 2,839          | \$69,313           |
| Statewide NIPF          | 19         | 5,028          | \$35,907           |
| Statewide NIPF - BF     | 1          | 28             | \$1,500            |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>237</b> | <b>200,440</b> | <b>\$3,074,915</b> |

#### Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

| Funding Pools                                           | Contracts | Acres Enrolled | FA Obligated       |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|--------------------|
| BMP Implementation for Nutrient and Sediment Loss       | 8         | 1,159          | \$115,756          |
| Conservation Cropping Systems For Improving Soil Health | 22        | 2,004          | \$223,064          |
| Improving Oak - Hickory Forest Health in Illinois       | 29        | 2,963          | \$626,552          |
| Precision Conservation Management                       | 5         | 602            | \$60,113           |
| Shorebird Conservation Acreage via Drainage Water       | 2         | 85             | \$4,720            |
| <b>Total</b>                                            | <b>66</b> | <b>6,813</b>   | <b>\$1,030,205</b> |

All contract information has been obtained from ProTracts data pulled October 1, 2017 and certified by the Illinois NRCS State Office.

## Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

| Funding Source                           | Easements | Acres Enrolled | FA Obligated        |
|------------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|---------------------|
| <b>Wetland Reserve Easement (WRE)</b>    |           |                |                     |
| 52 Applications                          | 22        | 2,600          | \$12,000,000        |
| <b>Agricultural Lands Easement (ALE)</b> |           |                |                     |
| 3 - Kane County                          | 3         | 201            | \$301,000           |
| <b>Total</b>                             | <b>25</b> | <b>2,801</b>   | <b>\$12,301,000</b> |

For WRE, NRCS received 52 applications—a great increase from FY 2016. Because interest/need was high and application quality was also high, FA amounts increased by 39% more than the initial Illinois budget allocation.

## Conservation @ Farm Progress Show

NRCS participated in the 2017 Farm Progress Show held August 29-31 in Decatur, Illinois. The *Partners in Conservation Tent* housed 21 organizations that pooled resources to have a powerful presence at the show. The groups held nearly 20 panel discussions on conservation topics and offered a soil health demonstration. A soil pit was created onsite, which the crowd especially enjoyed. NRCS and partners showcased the installation of a Denitrifying Bioreactor, a new conservation practice designed to improve water quality and support the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy. It was a great show!



IL Ag leader panel discussion Aug. 2017.



Denitrifying Bioreactor in Piatt County.

## Areawide Conservation Planning

In FY 2017, NRCS worked with local people, communities, and partners to address natural resource challenges in 61 watersheds across Illinois. Through a voluntary and collaborative locally-led conservation planning process, NRCS helps local people assess their natural resource conditions, needs, and goals. By working together, these local groups identify specific conservation solutions and find financial resources to achieve those goals and put conservation solutions on the land for long-term success.

Illinois' 61 Areawide Conservation Planning projects address water quality, soil erosion and sedimentation, fish and wildlife habitat, and so much more. NRCS provides support with planning and offers science-based, technical expertise. We work with individual decision-makers to design and install conservation practices that fit the watershed needs. Want to be part of an effort? Reach out to NRCS in your community to learn more [www.il.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.il.nrcs.usda.gov).

## Annual Seminars Teach Farmers

NRCS, the Illinois Department of Agriculture, local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and other key conservation partners organized three meetings during January 2017. The Conservation Cropping Seminars are one-day meetings where agency staff and leaders, non-profit organizations, researchers, and farmers gather to talk, learn, and share data and on-farm experiences. Topics center around conservation systems, the use and benefits of cover crops, soil health, and on-farm research. 2017 events were held in Rockford, Jacksonville and Carbondale, IL. 2018 events are scheduled for Kankakee, Olney, and Peoria, IL. Hundreds of Illinois farmers attend these seminars to help them make wise resource decisions. Learn more at [www.ccswd.org](http://www.ccswd.org)



Managing your inputs for healthy soils...



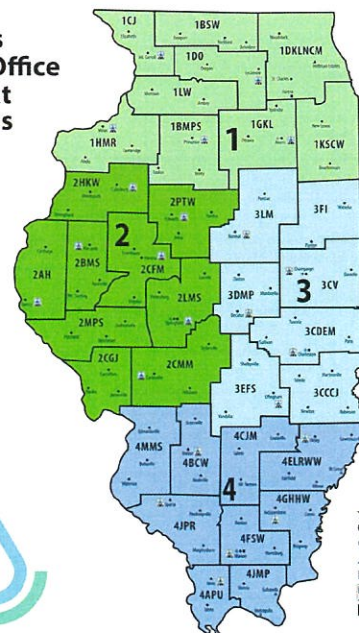
Chicago school children learn about nature at restored FPDC locations.

## Great Lakes "Chicago Style"

As part of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), Illinois NRCS provided \$70,000 in 2017 for technical assistance to the Forest Preserve District of Cook County (FPDCC). Funds addressed natural resource issues associated with invasive species. Using NRCS

guidance, FPDCC staff and volunteers removed invasive plants in strategic locations in preserve areas. Sites were restored as quality, native wildlife habitat. To learn the full story and see specific management practices used, visit [www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/il/newsroom/stories/](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/il/newsroom/stories/).

## Illinois Field Office District Groups



- ★ State Office
- Area Office
- Field Office
- ▲ SWCD Office
- MLRA Soil Survey Office
- ⊞ VTC
- District Groups



ILLINOIS  
Natural  
Resources  
Conservation  
Service



# Illinois At-A-Glance FY2018



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The information below captures the contracts and agreements Illinois producers have entered into during fiscal year (FY) 2018. Different practices and programs make this work possible. Federal funds are allocated and organized in separate funding pools in order to direct funds to specific resource issues or watershed locations. FA = Financial Assistance funds, BF = Beginning Farmer.

### Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

| Funding Pools                                                       | Contracts  | Acres Enrolled | FA Obligated        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------------|---------------------|
| General EQIP                                                        | 110        | 12,757         | \$5,889,476         |
| Confined Livestock-Manure Management                                | 23         | 7,563          | \$4,097,332         |
| Grazing Land Operations                                             | 45         | 3,685          | \$3,416,673         |
| Forest Management Implementation                                    | 12         | 478            | \$125,729           |
| On-Farm Energy                                                      | 7          | 40             | \$349,397           |
| Organic Certified                                                   | 1          | 187            | \$16,965            |
| Organic Transition                                                  | 8          | 1,057          | \$165,632           |
| Specialty Crop                                                      | 27         | 165            | \$235,148           |
| Wildlife Habitat Conservation                                       | 5          | 128            | \$67,141            |
| <b>Illinois Initiatives</b>                                         |            |                |                     |
| Monarch Butterfly Project                                           | 9          | 45             | \$49,681            |
| Urban Ag - Cook County                                              | 4          | 4              | \$35,469            |
| <b>Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative (MRBI)</b> |            |                |                     |
| Clinton Lake Watershed                                              | 5          | 745            | \$94,015            |
| Crow - Clear Creek Watershed                                        | 8          | 1,196          | \$303,637           |
| Upper Macoupin Creek Watershed                                      | 16         | 836            | \$264,084           |
| Vermilion Headwaters Watershed                                      | 12         | 1,138          | \$280,375           |
| <b>National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI)</b>                     |            |                |                     |
| Crooked Creek Watershed                                             | 6          | 403            | \$196,310           |
| Lake Bloomington Watershed                                          | 1          | 42             | \$16,882            |
| Lake Vermillion Watershed                                           | 1          | 62             | \$8,450             |
| <b>Conservation Activity Plans</b>                                  |            |                |                     |
| Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan                              | 21         | 909            | \$155,571           |
| Drainage Water Management Plan                                      | 3          | 401            | \$6,149             |
| Fish and Wildlife Habitat Plan                                      | 2          | 49             | \$5,723             |
| Forest Management Plan                                              | 122        | 8,554          | \$190,333           |
| Grazing Management Plan                                             | 5          | 545            | \$10,160            |
| <b>Total</b>                                                        | <b>453</b> | <b>40,989</b>  | <b>\$15,980,332</b> |

### Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

| Funding Pools                     | Contracts  | Acres Enrolled | FA Obligated       |
|-----------------------------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Statewide Ag Lands                | 217        | 177,781        | \$1,865,189        |
| Statewide Ag Lands - BF           | 34         | 18,149         | \$226,770          |
| Statewide NIPF                    | 42         | 3,923          | \$91,306           |
| Statewide NIPF - BF               | 3          | 163            | \$7,826            |
| MRBI-Upper Macoupin Ag Lands      | 1          | 222            | \$7,399            |
| MRBI-Upper Macoupin Ag Lands - BF | 2          | 217            | \$6,661            |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>299</b> | <b>200,455</b> | <b>\$2,205,151</b> |

### CSP Contract Renewals

| Funding Pools           | Contracts  | Acres Enrolled | FA Obligated       |
|-------------------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Statewide Ag Lands      | 142        | 141,650        | \$1,996,443        |
| Statewide Ag Lands - BF | 8          | 4,257          | \$62,157           |
| Statewide NIPF          | 6          | 736            | \$18,332           |
| Statewide NIPF - BF     | 1          | 55             | \$2,209            |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>157</b> | <b>146,698</b> | <b>\$2,079,141</b> |

### Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

| Funding Pools                                                 | No. of Easements                                                             | Acres Protected         | FA Obligated                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ACEP-WRE                                                      | 2                                                                            | 260                     | \$1,200,000                 |
| ACEP-WRE                                                      | Dollars for restoration and acquisition of existing agreements and easements |                         | \$ 500,000                  |
| <b>Backlog</b>                                                | <b>No. of Potential Easements</b>                                            | <b>Acres to Protect</b> | <b>FA to Fund All Acres</b> |
| ACEP-WRE                                                      | 60                                                                           | 8,000                   | \$35,000,000                |
| ACEP-ALE                                                      | 0                                                                            | 0                       | 0                           |
| Monitoring Completed = 479 easements (70% completed on site.) |                                                                              |                         |                             |

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## Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

| Funding Pools                                            | Contracts | Acres Enrolled | FA Obligated       |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|--------------------|
| <b>BMP Implementation for Nutrient and Sediment Loss</b> |           |                |                    |
| RCPP-EQIP                                                | 3         | 519            | \$130,094          |
| <b>IL's Upper Macoupin Creek Watershed Partnership</b>   |           |                |                    |
| RCPP-EQIP                                                | 3         | 858            | \$77,046           |
| RCPP-CSP                                                 | 11        | 6,599          | \$81,326           |
| <b>Improving Oak - Hickory Forest Health in Illinois</b> |           |                |                    |
| RCPP-EQIP                                                | 57        | 3,333          | \$621,516          |
| <b>Precision Conservation Management</b>                 |           |                |                    |
| RCPP-EQIP                                                | 11        | 2,616          | \$379,688          |
| RCPP-CSP                                                 | 4         | 1,905          | \$23,951           |
| <b>Shorebird Conservation via Drainage Water</b>         |           |                |                    |
| RCPP-EQIP                                                | 1         | 84             | \$1,727            |
| <b>Total</b>                                             | <b>90</b> | <b>15,914</b>  | <b>\$1,315,348</b> |

Programs offered (EQIP, CSP or ACEP) in each RCPP project are chosen by the lead partner submitting the project proposal.

## Conservation Drainage Practices

Ag producers know how water works—there's either too much of it or not enough. They need a way to control water; to fine-tune water delivery on THEIR terms. It might be time to consider adding conservation drainage practices to your operation. Check out NRCS's new website link with options to consider at <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/il/water/resources/a42b2de4-9f56-45fe-87ee-f60f6597a47a/>

**Denitrifying Bioreactor** — An edge of field structure containing a carbon source, such as wood chips, installed to reduce the concentration of nitrate-nitrogen in subsurface agricultural drainage flow via enhanced denitrification.

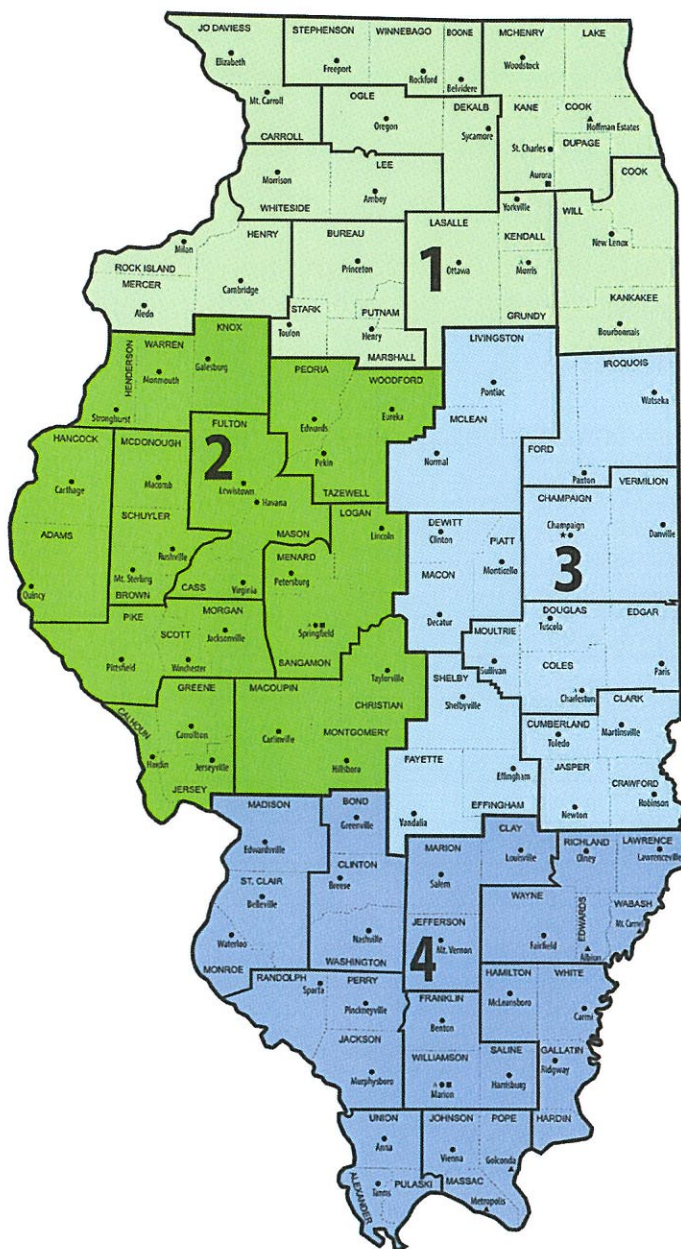
**Drainage Water Management** — Drainage Water Management (DWM) allows you to hold water in the root zone when crops need it and drain the field when there's too much. This practice works best on relatively flat crop fields but can be made to work on more sloping ground if the tile laterals are laid across the slope instead of straight up and down.

**Saturated Buffer** — The Saturated Buffer treats tile water by running some of the water to a lateral distribution pipe placed along the length of a ditch or streambank. Bacteria in the soil work to remove nitrates and the plants in the buffer take up nutrients as well. The saturated buffer works in places where the soil has plenty of organic matter, and where it's possible to maintain a high water table.

**Constructed Wetland** — Another treatment option for the end of a tile line is the Constructed Wetland—sometimes nicknamed "Nature's Kidneys." The wetland is sized to remove nitrates from tile water through plant uptake and denitrifying bacteria. The wetland can also remove phosphorus and provide wildlife habitat—added benefits! The wetland surface area should be at least 1% of the acres drained by the tile system.



## Illinois NRCS Organizational Structure



### For more information, contact:

|                                                        |                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Ivan Dozier, Illinois State Conservationist            | 217.353.6600          |
| Jeremy Bowers, Assistant State Conservationist Area 1  | 815.318.2177          |
| Annette Holmes, Assistant State Conservationist Area 2 | 217.331.7109          |
| Stewart Smith, Assistant State Conservationist Area 3  | 217.345.3901 ext. 118 |
| Ron Ziehm, Assistant State Conservationist Area 4      | 618.993.5396 ext. 116 |