



**Natural Resources  
Conservation Service**

3381 Skyway Drive  
Auburn, Alabama 36830  
Voice: 334-887-4581  
Email: [Amelia.hines@al.usda.gov](mailto:Amelia.hines@al.usda.gov)  
Web: <http://www.al.nrcs.usda.gov>

# News Release

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Contact:  
Amelia Hines Dortch, (334) 887-4581  
[Amelia.Hines@al.usda.gov](mailto:Amelia.Hines@al.usda.gov)

## **NRCS Alabama and Alabama Farmers Federation Announce Sign-Up for Irrigation Reservoirs through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program**

**AUBURN, Ala., May 18, 2015**– In collaboration with the Alabama Farmers Federation, the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Alabama, today announced it will be accepting applications for a statewide Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) project that will address water quantity in Alabama. Eligible producers are encouraged to apply May 18-29, 2015.

“The Partnership to Address Irrigation Water Quantity Concerns in Alabama” project focuses on capturing and storing rainfall runoff to be used in agricultural crop production during droughts.

“RCPP puts our partners like the Alabama Farmers Federation in the driver’s seat,” said Dr. William E. Puckett, USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service State Conservationist in Alabama. “The Federation’s project is a phenomenal example of this partnership approach for conservation that will leave an impact on the entire state.”

The \$1.4 million Federation project will focus on irrigation needs across the state. The Federation will lead an effort to partner with NRCS and other organizations to implement a statewide strategy that will allow partners to more effectively manage the growth of irrigation in productive cropland. According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture, Alabama has more than 2.7 million acres of cropland but only 112,000 acres of irrigated land.

Eligible producers will be able to apply for the RCPP project to build irrigation reservoirs and pumping plants on their land. The pumping plant is designed to pump from nearby streams into the newly constructed reservoir during periods of high stream flow.

“The ability to harness and better utilize Alabama’s abundant water resources will be pivotal in the agricultural and economic development of our state,” said Federation President Jimmy Parnell. “Doing so in a sustainable manner will ensure this resource for future generations. This program will help farmers overcome financial barriers.”

**-More-**

This current RCPP project replaces the 2008 Farm Bill's Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP), a voluntary conservation that provided financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to implement agricultural water enhancement activities on agricultural land for the purposes of conserving surface and ground water and improving water quality. For more information on the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, visit <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/farbill/rcpp/>.

All interested producers should visit their [local USDA Service Center](#) to apply for funding for this project by May 29, 2015. For more on technical and financial assistance available through conservation programs, visit [www.al.nrcs.usda.gov/GetStarted](http://www.al.nrcs.usda.gov/GetStarted).

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