
April 1995

AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION

Status of Programs That Provide Financial Incentives



**Resources, Community, and
Economic Development Division**

B-261147

April 28, 1995

The Honorable Richard G. Lugar
Chairman
The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition, and Forestry
United States Senate

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) administers 17 programs that give agricultural land users financial incentives to apply conservation measures to their farms, ranches, and forests. Under 10 of the programs, USDA shares the cost of implementing conservation practices with agricultural land users through direct payments or low-cost loans. Under the other seven programs, USDA purchases easements or rents land from land users in order to retire the land from agricultural production for conservation purposes. These incentive-based conservation programs are intended to encourage land users' voluntary efforts to reduce soil erosion, lessen water pollution, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, and address other conservation concerns.

In your December 1994 letter and in subsequent discussions with your staff, you asked us to provide information on these incentive-based programs since fiscal year 1992, including information on their budget and level of activity and on the primary purpose of the conservation measures taken under the programs. In addition, you asked us to identify potential options for consolidating these programs.

Results in Brief

From fiscal year 1992, the first full year of implementation for the 1990 farm bill, through fiscal year 1995, the Congress appropriated a total of \$8.6 billion to USDA to carry out its incentive-based conservation programs. Overall, the total annual budget for these programs has been stable for these years. However, when the budget for the Conservation Reserve Program, which accounts for about 77 percent of the appropriations, is excluded, the budgets for the remaining programs declined in fiscal year 1995. Each year, these programs supported conservation measures on about 71 million crop, range, and forest acres under about 565,000 agreements with land users. While most of the programs have multiple conservation purposes, soil erosion control was cited as the primary purpose for spending 90 percent of the programs' funds and implementing

conservation measures on about 80 percent of the agricultural acres in the programs. Further analysis shows that cost-share programs have more diverse purposes than land-retirement programs.

Several conservation and agricultural organizations propose a range of options for consolidating USDA’s incentive-based conservation programs to eliminate overlap and make it easier for agricultural land users to apply for financial assistance. Options include (1) combining application procedures into one form, (2) merging programs with similar incentives, and (3) consolidating all programs under a state block-grant program. Although USDA has no official plans or proposals to consolidate these programs, it is considering some of these options under ongoing government reinvention efforts and in anticipation of the 1995 farm bill.

Background

USDA, through the Consolidated Farm Service Agency (CFSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Forest Service (FS) administers 17 incentive-based conservation programs. Although six of these programs were newly authorized in the 1990 farm bill (Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade (FACT) Act of 1990, P.L. 101-624), most programs are long-standing. Tables 1 and 2 provide more detailed information about each program.

Table 1: USDA’s 10 Cost-Share Programs

Program, responsible agency, and 1992-95 appropriation	Purpose	Authorization and appropriation account	Geographic area covered	Payment limit
Agricultural Conservation Program CFSA \$628.2 million	Prevent soil loss and water pollution and conserve water, forest, and wildlife resources	Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act of 1936, as amended Agricultural Conservation Program (12-3315)	All states and territories	Up to 75% of the total cost of the activity, with a maximum of \$3,500 per person per year
Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program NRCS \$46.9 million	Install conservation practices to reduce salt levels in the Colorado River	Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act of 1974, as amended Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program (12-3318)	7 states	Up to 70% of the total cost of the activity

(continued)

Program, responsible agency, and 1992-95 appropriation	Purpose	Authorization and appropriation account	Geographic area covered	Payment limit
Emergency Conservation Program CFSA	Repair agricultural land damaged by natural disasters and conserve water during severe drought	Agricultural Credit Act of 1978, as amended Emergency Conservation Program (12-3316)	All states and territories	Up to 64% of the first \$62,500, 40% of the second \$62,500, and 20% of the eligible costs above \$125,000; payment limit of \$200,000 per person per disaster
\$134.9 million				
Forestry Incentives Program NRCS	Plant trees and improve timber stands to increase supplies from nonindustrial private forest lands	Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978, as amended Forestry Incentives Program (12-3336)	All states and Puerto Rico	Under USDA regulation, up to 65% of the total cost of the activity, not to exceed \$10,000 per person per year
\$44.4 million				
Great Plains Conservation Program NRCS	Solve soil and water resource problems on farms and ranches in the Great Plains	1956 amendments to the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act of 1936 and Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 Great Plains Conservation Program (12-2268)	556 counties in 10 states	Up to 80% of the total cost of the activity, with a limit of \$35,000 per agreement
\$91.5 million				
Rural Clean Water Program NRCS	Control agricultural nonpoint source water pollution in rural areas	Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 Rural Clean Water Program (12-3337)	22 states	Up to 75% of the total cost of the activity, with a maximum of \$50,000 per person for the life of the program
No appropriation				
Small Watershed Program NRCS	Support activities in watersheds smaller than 250,000 acres to prevent flooding, reduce soil erosion, and improve water quality	Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (1954), as amended Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (12-1072)	37 states and Puerto Rico	Up to 50% of the construction cost, with a maximum of \$100,000 per person for the life of the program
\$547.0 million				

(continued)

Program, responsible agency, and 1992-95 appropriation	Purpose	Authorization and appropriation account	Geographic area covered	Payment limit
Soil and Water Conservation Loan Program CFSA \$1.5 million	Provide loans to develop, conserve, and make proper use of farm and ranch lands	Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act of 1961, as amended Agricultural Credit Insurance Fund Program (12-1140)	All states	\$50,000, to be repaid within 40 years
Stewardship Incentive Program FS \$54.8 million	Enhance management of nonindustrial private forest lands to increase timber supply and improve fish and wildlife habitat and recreation	FACT Act of 1990 State and Private Forestry (12-1105)	All states and territories	Up to 75% of the total cost of the activity, with a maximum of \$10,000 per person per fiscal year
Water Quality Incentives Projects CFSA \$55.3 million	Support farm practices or systems to reduce agricultural water pollutants	FACT Act of 1990 Agricultural Conservation Program (12-3315)	All states and territories	An incentive payment of up to \$25 per acre, with a maximum of \$3,500 per person per year; an additional \$1,500 per person per contract available in cost-share assistance

Table 2: USDA's Seven Land-Retirement Programs

Program, responsible agency, and 1992-95 appropriation	Purpose	Authorization and appropriation account	Geographic area covered	Payment limit
Conservation Reserve Program CFSA \$6,676.4 million	Conserve and improve soil and water resources by renting land to retire from production and to establish 10-year conservation cover	Food Security Act of 1985, as amended Conservation Reserve Program (12-3319)	All states and territories	Up to 50% of the cost to establish cover; annual rental payments—up to \$50,000 per person per fiscal year

(continued)

Program, responsible agency, and 1992-95 appropriation	Purpose	Authorization and appropriation account	Geographic area covered	Payment limit
Emergency Wetland Reserve Program NRCS \$39.2 million	Restore wetland functions on flooded cropland	Emergency supplemental appropriations acts (1993 and 1994) Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (12-1072)	8 states	Between 75% and 100% of cost to restore wetland; fair market value to buy conservation easement
Farm Debt Cancellation—Conservation Easements Program CFSA	Protect marginal and sensitive lands under federal farm loan by buying an easement for conservation, recreation, and wildlife purposes	FACT Act of 1990 Agricultural Credit Insurance Fund Liquidating Account (12-4140)	All states and territories	Debt cancellation on outstanding loan balance, not to exceed 33% of principal for current borrowers; not to exceed fair market value to buy easement for delinquent borrowers
No appropriation				
Forest Legacy Program FS \$28.4 million	Protect environmentally important nonindustrial private forests threatened by conversion to nonforest uses	FACT Act of 1990 State and Private Forestry(12-1105)	18 states and 1 territory	Fair market value to buy conservation easement
Integrated Farm Management Program Option CFSA	Support use of resource-conserving cropping practices	FACT Act of 1990 Commodity Credit Corporation Fund (12-4336)	All states and territories	Eligible for annual farm program price support payment on acres planted to conserving uses
No appropriation				

(continued)

Program, responsible agency, and 1992-95 appropriation	Purpose	Authorization and appropriation account	Geographic area covered	Payment limit
Water Bank Program NRCS	Conserve water and protect and enhance migratory waterfowl habitat	Water Bank Act, 1970, as amended Water Bank Program (12-3320)	13 states	Up to 75% of the total cost of the activity, with a maximum of \$3,500 per participant per year; annual rental payments—no limit
\$45.2 million				
Wetlands Reserve Program NRCS	Restore and protect agricultural wetlands to improve wildlife habitat	FACT Act of 1990 Wetlands Reserve Program (12-1080)	10 states	Fair and reasonable real estate fees and fair market value for easements (up to \$50,000 per person per year for nonpermanent easements). Restoration costs to include not less than 75% for permanent easements and between 50% and 75% for nonpermanent easements.
\$206.3 million				

Status of Incentive-Based Conservation Programs Since Fiscal Year 1992

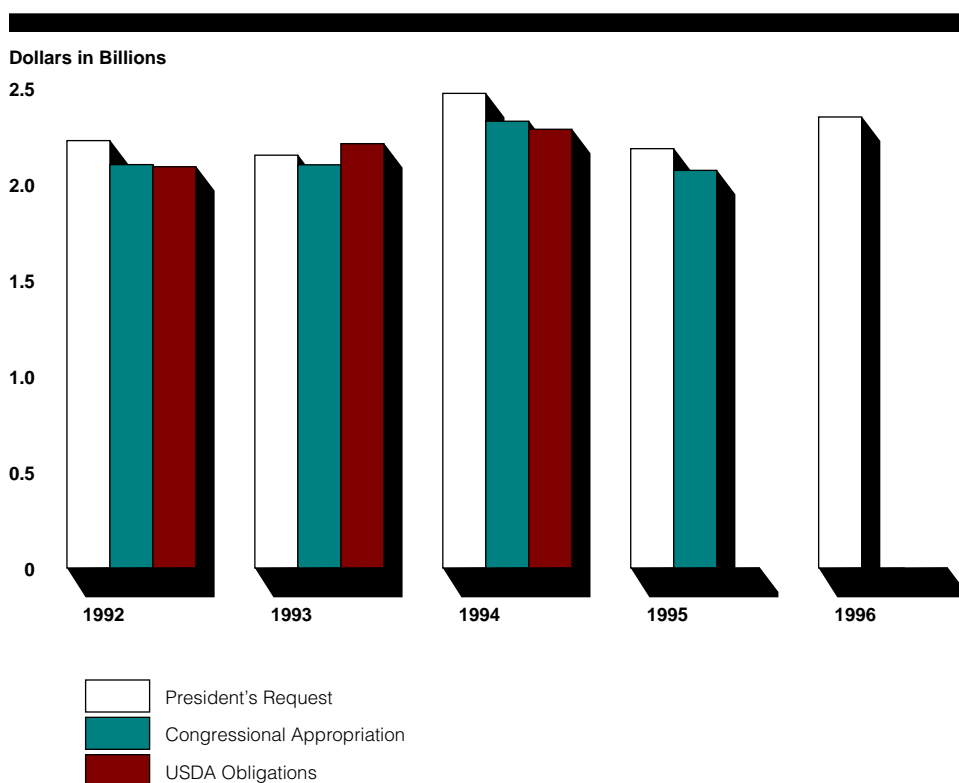
For USDA’s incentive-based conservation programs, the overall budget and level of activity have been stable since fiscal year 1992, largely because of the impact of the Conservation Reserve Program. During this time, the Congress has approved \$8.6 billion in spending, slightly less than requested in the President’s annual budgets. Most of these funds have been obligated for direct payments to agricultural land users under an annual average of about 565,000 agreements.¹ Under these agreements, USDA supports conservation measures on about 71 million acres annually. Most of these conservation measures are designed to control soil erosion.

¹Under each of the programs, USDA enters into individual binding agreements or contracts with agricultural land users that will result in federal budget outlays, immediately or in the future. Each agreement establishes the conditions under which USDA will provide incentive payments to the land user. According to USDA, each agreement generally involves one land user, but multiple parties participate in some cases. Furthermore, an individual land user may sign more than one agreement.

Trends in Budget Requests, Appropriations, and Obligations for Incentive-Based Conservation Programs

According to USDA's data, the overall annual budget for USDA's incentive-based conservation programs has been stable since the 1990 farm bill was implemented. (See fig. 1.) The President requested \$9 billion for these programs for fiscal years 1992 through 1995. In response to these requests, the Congress appropriated \$8.6 billion. For the 3 completed fiscal years—1992 through 1994—USDA obligated \$6.6 billion.

Figure 1: Budget Data for Incentive-Based Conservation Programs, Fiscal Years 1992-96



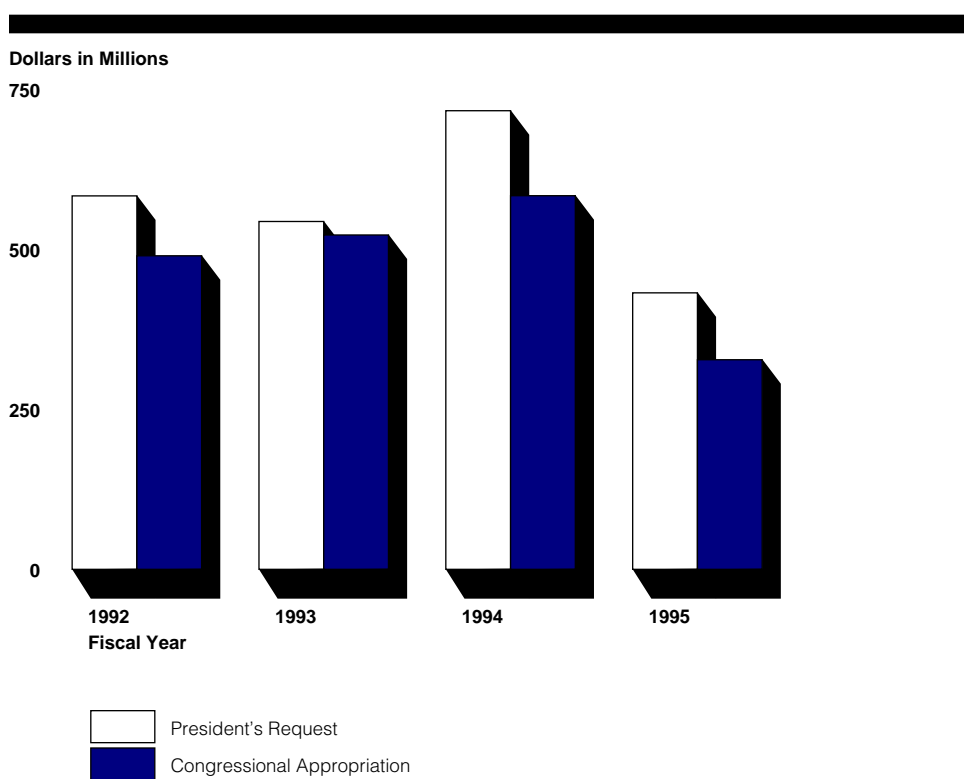
Notes: In 1993, USDA's obligations exceeded appropriations because funds for some multiyear ("no year authority") programs were carried over. Also, data are not available for the Integrated Farm Management Program Option, which is funded through USDA's annual commodity programs and is not tracked separately by USDA.

Source: GAO's analysis of USDA's data.

One incentive-based program—the Conservation Reserve Program—dominates all others, accounting for about 77 percent of the

appropriations for fiscal years 1992 through 1995. If the large appropriations for the Conservation Reserve Program are subtracted from the total appropriations for the programs, the budgets for the remaining programs increased slightly between 1992 and 1994 and declined significantly in 1995. (See fig. 2.)

Figure 2: Budget Trends for Incentive-Based Conservation Programs, Fiscal Years 1992-95, Excluding the Conservation Reserve Program

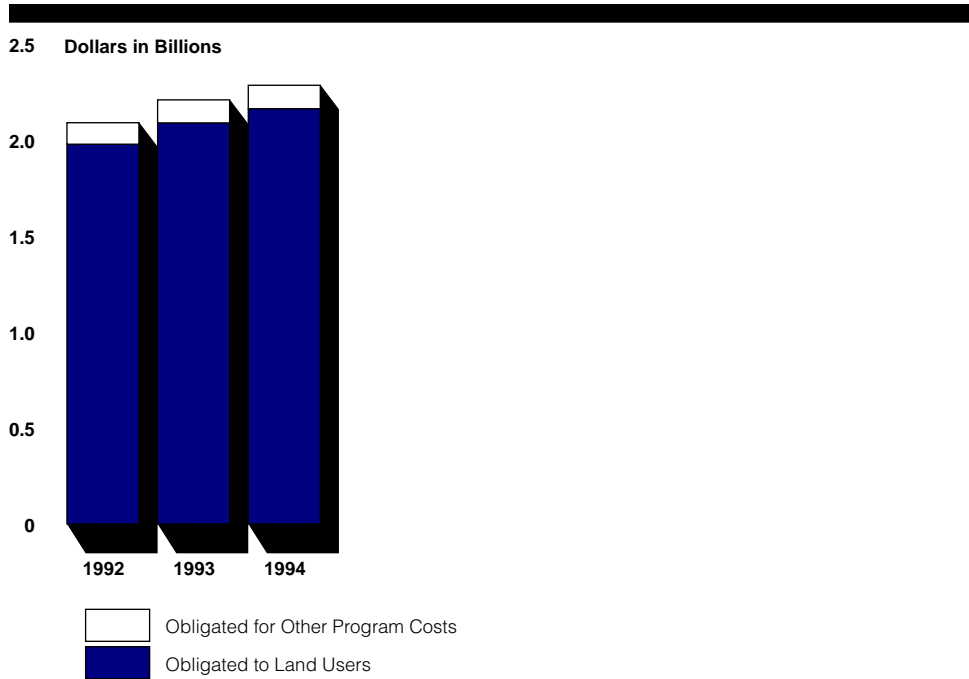


Note: Data are not available for the Integrated Farm Management Program Option, which is funded through USDA's annual commodity programs and is not tracked separately by USDA.

Source: GAO's analysis of USDA's data.

Of the funds obligated, \$6.2 billion (95 percent) was obligated for direct payments to land users. The remaining \$0.4 billion (5 percent) was obligated for technical assistance and other program costs. (See fig. 3.)

Figure 3: Obligations for Incentive-Based Conservation Programs, Fiscal Years 1992-94

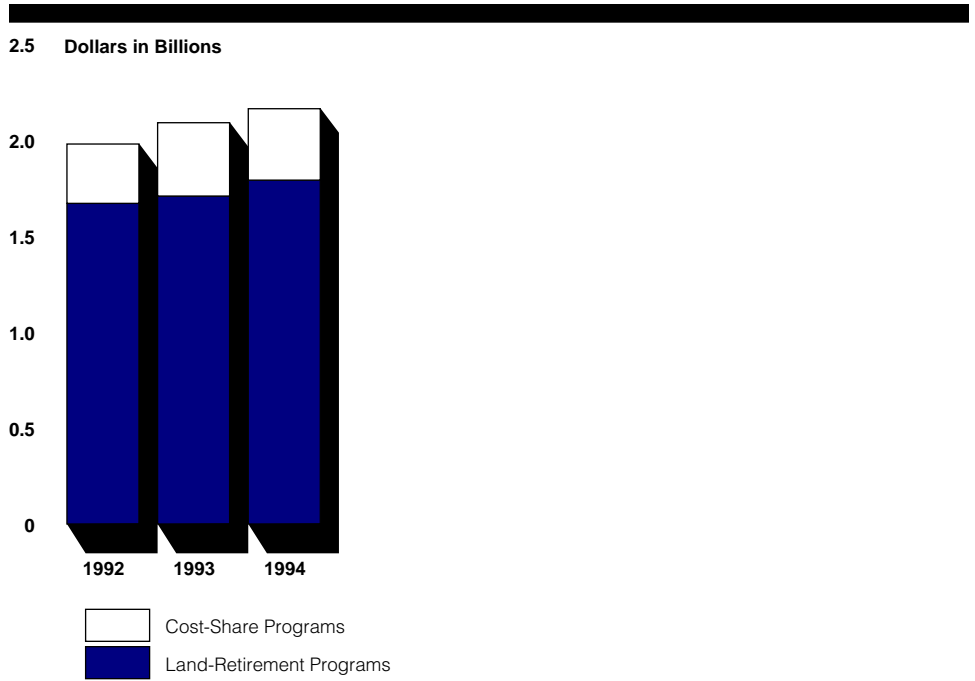


Note: Data are not available for the Integrated Farm Management Program Option, which is funded through USDA's annual commodity programs and is not tracked separately by USDA.

Source: GAO's analysis of USDA's data.

Of the \$6.2 billion in incentive payments obligated to agricultural land users, \$5.2 billion (83 percent) was used to retire land from production, while the remaining \$1 billion (17 percent) was spent to share the cost of conservation measures on active farms, ranches, and private forests. (See fig. 4.)

Figure 4: Incentive Payments to Agricultural Land Users Under Cost-Share and Land-Retirement Programs, Fiscal Years 1992-94



Note: Data are not available for the Integrated Farm Management Program Option, which is funded through USDA's annual commodity programs and is not tracked separately by USDA.

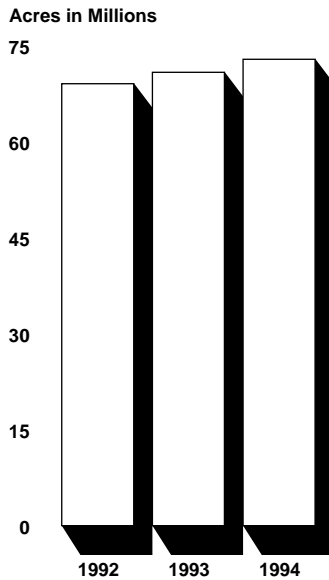
Source: GAO's analysis of USDA's data.

Appendix I contains more detailed information on each program's budget.

USDA Has Supported Conservation Measures on About 71 Million Acres Annually

Data from USDA's program offices show that for fiscal years 1992 through 1994, USDA supported conservation measures on an average of 71 million acres annually under the programs. The acreage receiving conservation assistance increased slightly over these years. (See fig. 5.)

Figure 5: Acres With Conservation Measures Financed Under Incentive-Based Conservation Programs, Fiscal Years 1992-94

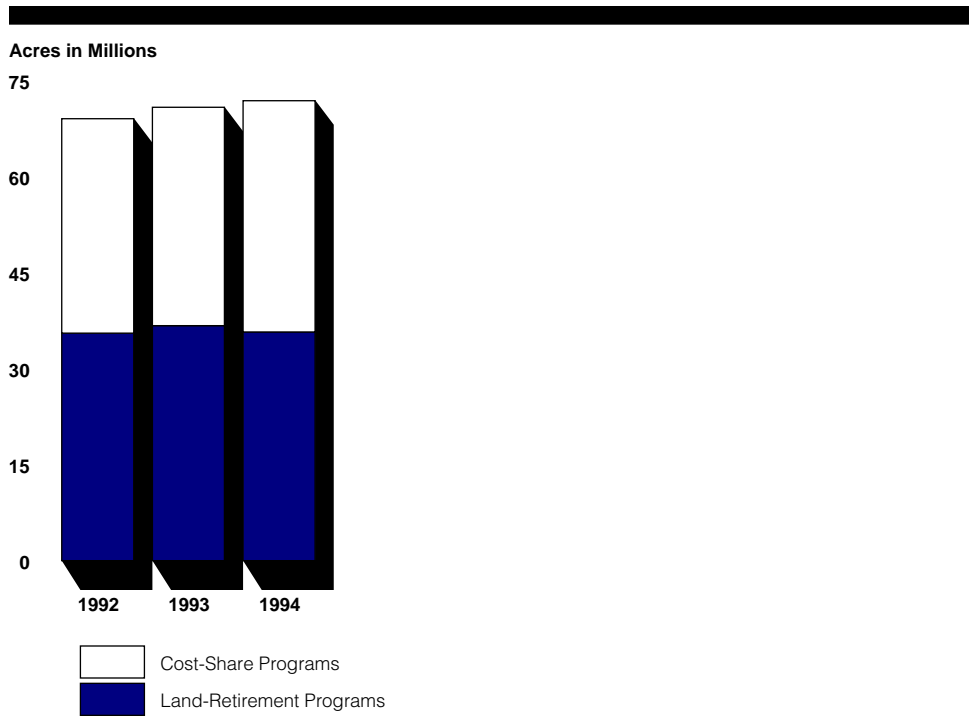


Note: Acreage data are not available for measures financed under the Soil and Water Conservation Loan Program.

Source: GAO's analysis of USDA's data.

About half of this acreage has been retired from active agricultural use under long-term rental contracts or easements purchased under USDA's seven land-retirement programs. The Conservation Reserve Program supports the largest number of retired acres—about 36 million annually. For the remaining acres, USDA has shared the cost of applying conservation measures with the agricultural land user through 10 cost-share programs. (See fig. 6.) The largest of these programs, the Great Plains Conservation Program, affects about 20 million acres annually.

Figure 6: Acres Under Incentive-Based Conservation Programs, Cost-Share and Land-Retirement, Fiscal Years 1992-94

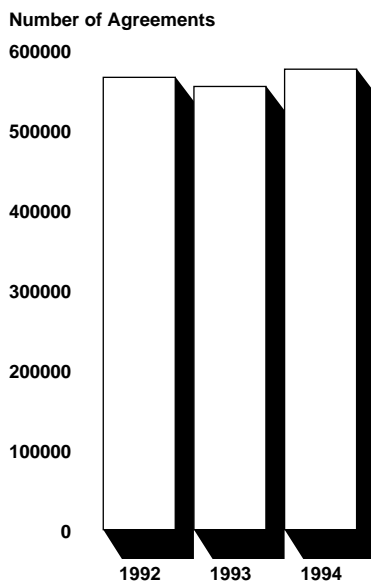


Note: Acreage data are not available for measures financed under the Soil and Water Conservation Loan Program.

Source: GAO's analysis of USDA's data.

For fiscal years 1992 through 1994, USDA supported conservation measures through an average of about 565,000 agreements per year with agricultural land users. (See fig. 7.)

Figure 7: Agreements With Agricultural Land Users Under Incentive-Based Conservation Programs, Fiscal Years 1992-94



Source: GAO's analysis of USDA's data.

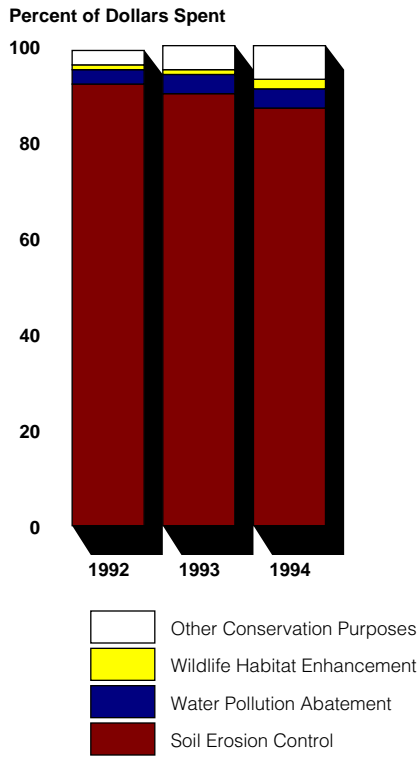
Appendix II contains more information about the number of acres affected and agreements signed under each of USDA's programs.

Soil Erosion Control Is the Focus of Incentive-Based Conservation Programs

Most of USDA's incentive-based conservation programs address multiple resource conservation objectives. However, an analysis of USDA's data for these programs reveals that about 90 percent of their funds for fiscal years 1992 through 1994 was spent on conservation measures primarily intended to control soil erosion.² Likewise, conservation measures taken on approximately 80 percent of the acres covered under the programs have as their primary purpose controlling soil erosion. (See figs. 8 and 9.)

²USDA program offices generally classify only a primary conservation purpose in their program data bases (e.g., soil erosion control, water pollution abatement, fish and wildlife habitat enhancement, or other), although many conservation measures may have secondary conservation purposes and result in multiple environmental benefits.

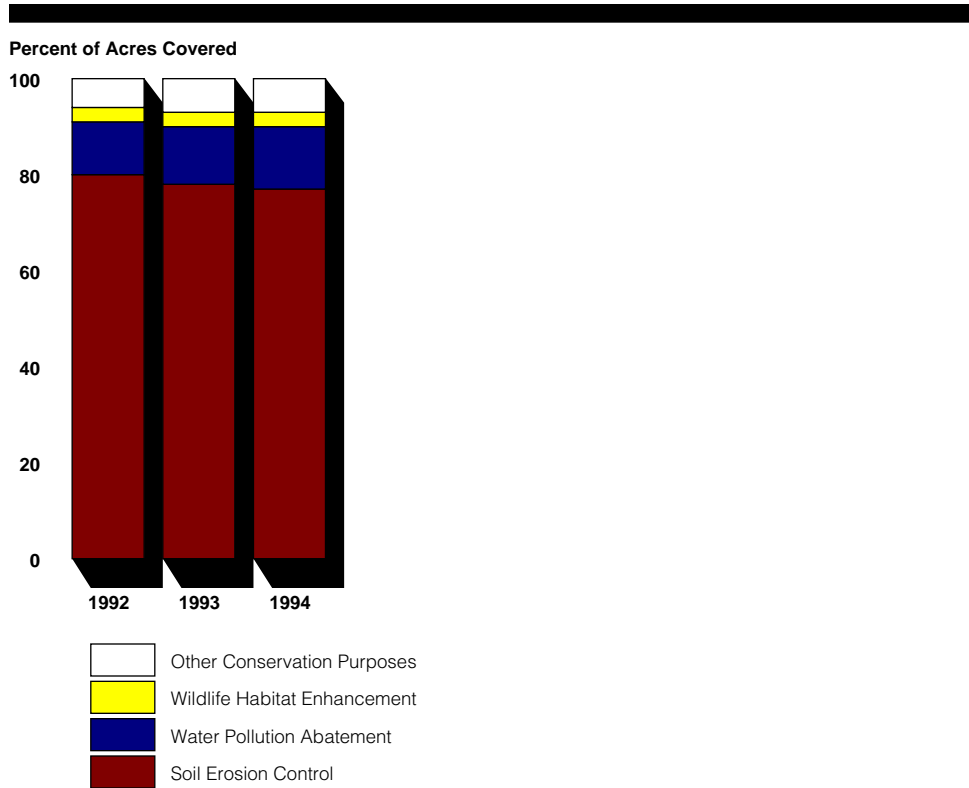
Figure 8: Percent of Dollars Spent Under Incentive-Based Conservation Programs, by Conservation Purpose, Fiscal Years 1992-94



Note: Data are not available on the Soil and Water Conservation Loan Program or the Integrated Farm Management Program Option.

Source: GAO's analysis of USDA's data.

Figure 9: Percent of Acres Covered Under Incentive-Based Conservation Programs, by Conservation Purpose, Fiscal Years 1992-94



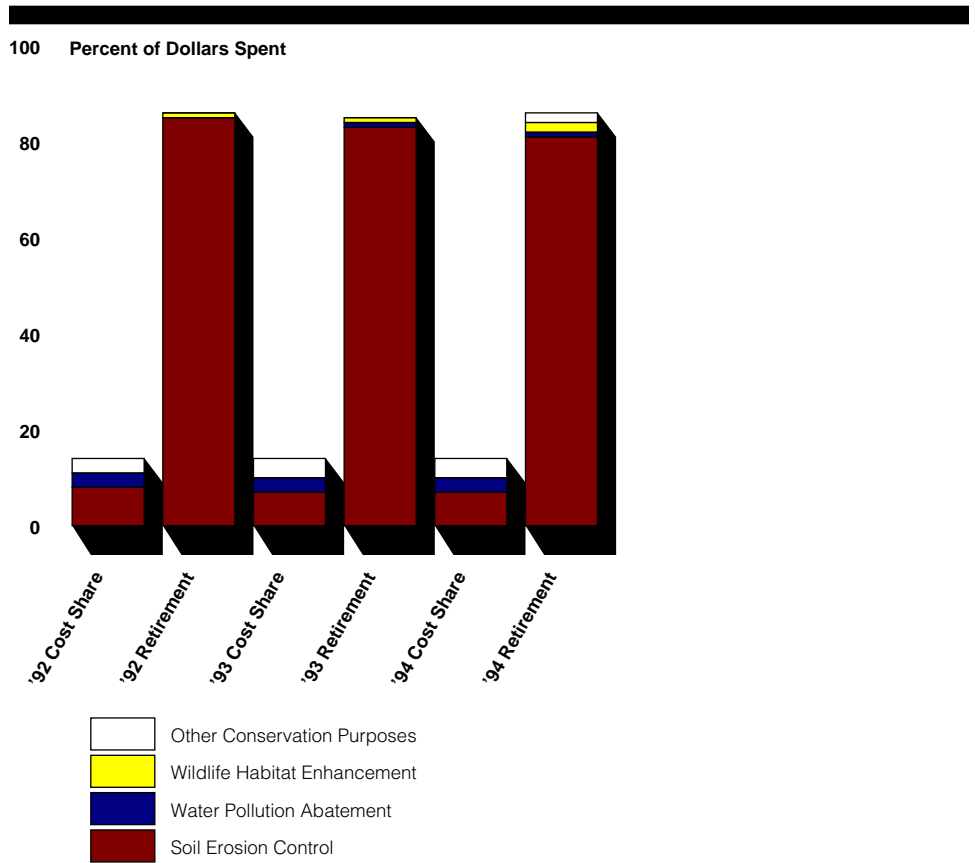
Note: Data are not available on the Soil and Water Conservation Loan Program or the Integrated Farm Management Program Option.

Source: GAO's analysis of USDA's data.

These data also show that USDA's cost-share programs have more diversified purposes than do the land-retirement programs. For the cost-share programs, during fiscal years 1992 through 1994, soil erosion control measures accounted for about 50 percent of all the dollars spent and about 56 percent of all the acres covered. Water pollution abatement measures accounted for 22 and 24 percent of the dollars and acres, respectively; other conservation measures accounted for 27 and 14 percent of the dollars and acres, respectively. Conservation measures to enhance fish and wildlife habitat accounted for the smallest proportion of the dollars spent (1 percent) and the acres covered (6 percent). For the land-retirement programs, however, during fiscal years 1992 through 1994,

soil erosion control measures accounted for over 96 percent of all the dollars spent and 99 percent of all the acres covered. (See figs. 10 and 11.)

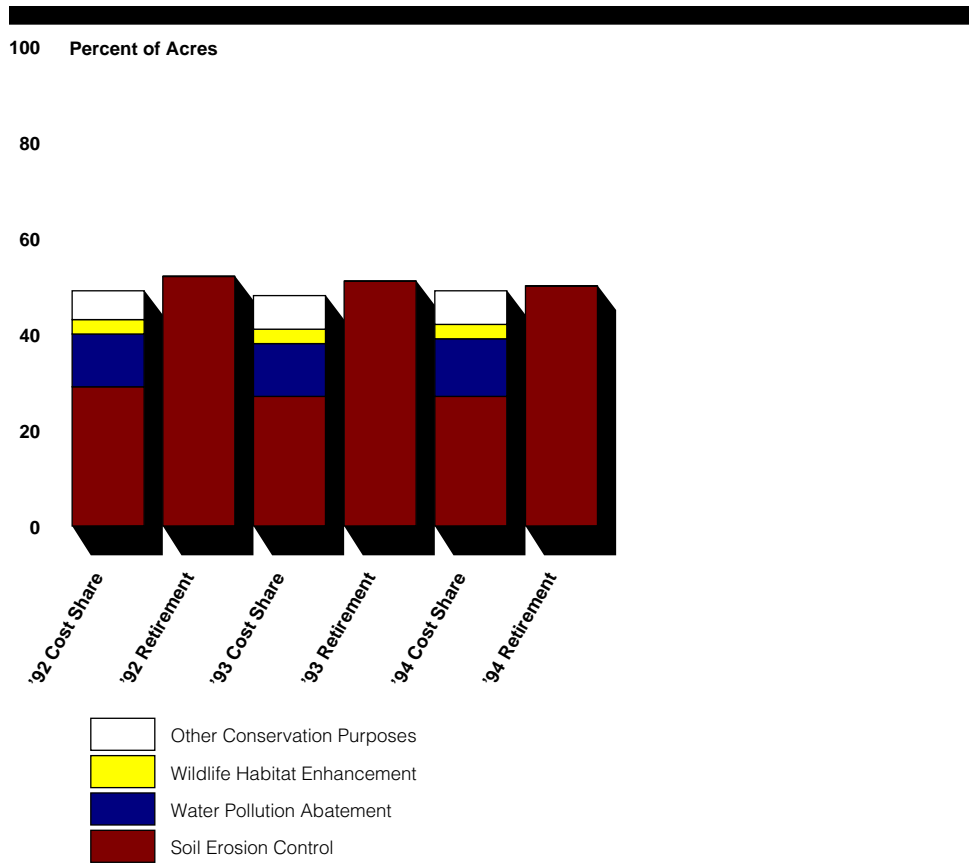
Figure 10: Percent of Dollars Spent on Cost-Share and Land-Retirement Programs, by Conservation Purpose, Fiscal Years 1992-94



Note: Data are not available on the Soil and Water Conservation Loan program or the Integrated Farm Management Program Option.

Source: GAO's analysis of USDA's data.

Figure 11: Percent of Acres Covered Under Cost-Share and Land-Retirement Programs, by Conservation Purpose, Fiscal Years 1992-94



Note: Data are not available on the Soil and Water Conservation Loan program.

Source: GAO's analysis of USDA's data.

Appendix III contains more information on the percentage of the dollars spent and the acres covered for each program, by conservation purpose.

Options to Consolidate Programs Have Been Identified

According to USDA officials and our review of the programs' activities, the 17 incentive-based conservation programs overlap considerably. They frequently promote identical resource conservation purposes, use similar financial incentives, serve the same population, and finance the application of the same set of technical practices. Anticipating the reauthorization of federal agricultural programs in 1995, representatives of

several organizations and some USDA officials have identified options for consolidating USDA's incentive-based conservation programs. These options are aimed at eliminating overlap and making it easier for agricultural land users to obtain assistance. USDA is considering some of these options but has not yet developed any formal proposals.

Programs Serve the Same Population and Use Similar Approaches

USDA's incentive-based conservation programs generally serve the same population—farmers, ranchers, and private forest operators. Although seven of the incentive-based programs are available only in certain regions of the country, most are national in scope. Furthermore, the programs use similar approaches. Most programs require the development of a site-specific plan between USDA and the agricultural land user that details the financed conservation measures to be implemented and maintained. In developing these plans, USDA officials use a standardized set of technical practices to help agricultural land users address specific conservation needs, such as reducing soil erosion caused by wind or rain or controlling agricultural runoff to reduce water pollution.³ While not every practice is allowable under every program, the programs overlap considerably. For example, 73 technical practices are allowable under 4 or more of the 11 programs for which detailed data are available. (See app. IV for a list of the technical practices shared among 4 or more of these 11 incentive-based conservation programs.)

Several Organizations Propose Changes to Simplify Programs' Structure

Representatives of several interest groups and some USDA officials agree that the current structure of incentive-based conservation programs needs to be simplified. For example, many noted that having multiple programs makes it more difficult for agricultural land users to identify and apply for financial and technical assistance. USDA agencies also grapple with cumbersome requirements for administration, technical assistance and planning, and recordkeeping for each program. Finally, some representatives and USDA officials expressed concern that as federal funds decline, individual conservation programs will be competing for fewer funds.

In response to these concerns, several groups have proposed a range of options to streamline USDA's incentive-based conservation programs. Although USDA has not presented its farm bill proposals for congressional consideration, agency officials are considering some of these options

³Most of these technical practices are documented in NRCS' National Handbook of Conservation Practices for soil and water conservation programs.

under ongoing initiatives to reorganize and reinvent government. (See table 3.)

Table 3: Options for Streamlining and Consolidating USDA's Incentive-Based Conservation Programs

Option	Description	Affected programs
Consolidate application process	Maintain separate programs but allow agricultural land users to use a single USDA application process and form	All
Consolidate farm management plans	Maintain separate programs but integrate site-specific plans into a single farm management plan	All
Consolidate cost-share programs	Eliminate separate authorities and merge programs into one cost-share program. The program could integrate all conservation and environmental purposes on a site-specific, whole-farm basis. Merge loan program with farm operating loan program	Agricultural Conservation Program, Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program, Emergency Conservation Program, Forestry Incentives Program, Great Plains Conservation Program, Rural Clean Water Program, Small Watershed Program, Soil and Water Conservation Loan Program, Stewardship Incentive Program, Water Quality Incentives Projects
Consolidate land-retirement programs	Eliminate separate authorities and merge all land-retirement programs. Alternatively, maintain a separate Conservation Reserve Program but merge remaining programs	Conservation Reserve Program, Emergency Wetland Reserve Program, Water Bank Program, Wetlands Reserve Program
Provide incentive payments on watershed basis	Maintain separate programs or consolidate programs but target payments to impaired watershed areas	All
Consolidate under a block-grant program	Eliminate USDA-administered programs and replace with a consolidated agricultural conservation block-grant program run by state agencies	All

Agency Comments

As your offices requested, we did not obtain written agency comments on a draft of this report. However, in April 1995, we met with USDA officials responsible for administering the incentive-based conservation programs and discussed the information contained in this report. These officials included the Assistant Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs and the Acting Director, Conservation and Environmental Protection Division, CFSA; the Assistant Director for Cooperative Forestry, FS; and the Deputy Chief for Programs and the Acting Director, Conservation and Ecosystem Assistance Division, NRCS. We incorporated their comments into this report where appropriate.

Scope and Methodology

To provide information on the status of these programs since fiscal year 1992, we interviewed officials with USDA's CFSA, NRCS, and FS in Washington, D.C. In addition, we obtained and analyzed data on each program's budget and activities from fiscal year 1992 through the most recent year for which complete information was available (ranging between fiscal years 1994 and 1996). All monetary figures in this report are expressed in nominal dollars. Because the rate of inflation was low between 1992 and 1994, we did not adjust the data to current dollars. To determine each program's primary conservation purpose by incentives paid to agricultural land users and by acres affected, we obtained and analyzed data on each program's activities from USDA program offices. These data are classified by four primary conservation purposes (soil erosion control, water pollution abatement, fish and wildlife habitat enhancement, and other). We did not verify the accuracy of USDA's budget and program data.

To identify areas of overlap and opportunities for consolidation, we reviewed information on program activities and interviewed USDA officials. In addition, we obtained similar information from national conservation and agricultural organizations. We did not independently assess the costs and benefits associated with any of the options being proposed to consolidate or reorganize USDA's incentive-based conservation programs.

We conducted our review from December 1994 through April 1995 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

We are sending copies of this report to the appropriate Senate and House Committees; interested Members of Congress; the Secretary of Agriculture; the Director, Office of Management and Budget; and other

interested parties. We will also make copies available to others upon request.

Please contact me at (202) 512-5138 if you or your staff have any questions. Major contributors to this report are listed in appendix V.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John W. Harman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "H".

John W. Harman
Director, Food and
Agriculture Issues

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Abbreviations

ACP	Agricultural Conservation Program
CFSA	Consolidated Farm Service Agency
CRBSCP	Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program
CRP	Conservation Reserve Program
ECP	Emergency Conservation Program
FIP	Forestry Incentives Program
FS	Forest Service
GAO	General Accounting Office
GPCP	Great Plains Conservation Program
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
RCWP	Rural Clean Water Program
SIP	Stewardship Incentive Program
SWP	Small Watershed Program
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
WBP	Water Bank Program
WQIP	Water Quality Incentives Projects
WRP	Wetlands Reserve Program

Funds Requested, Appropriated, and Obligated for USDA's Incentive-Based Conservation Programs, Fiscal Years 1992-96

This appendix presents USDA's data on the funds requested, appropriated, and obligated for fiscal years 1992 through 1996 for each program. (Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred thousand.) Obligated funds include both moneys provided to agricultural land users and other program costs, such as expenditures for technical assistance and administration. For the Integrated Farm Management Program Option, there are no direct budgetary costs. According to USDA officials, this program is funded through annual farm price and income support programs. USDA does not track expenditures for the program separately from annual price and income support payments to participants in commodity programs.

Table I.1: Budgetary Information for the Agricultural Conservation Program

Dollars in thousands				
Year	Requested	Appropriated	Obligated to land users	Obligated for other costs
1992	\$176,200	\$187,600	\$173,700	\$10,500
1993	110,000	179,400	172,200	10,500
1994	131,900	176,200	181,000	10,900
1995	85,000	85,000	a	a
1996	42,500	a	a	a

^aInformation not available.

Table I.2: Budgetary Information for the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program

Dollars in thousands				
Year	Requested	Appropriated	Obligated to land users	Obligated for other costs
1992	\$14,800	\$14,800	\$9,800	\$5,900
1993	14,800	13,800	8,900	5,600
1994	8,500	13,800	8,600	5,600
1995	8,400	4,500	a	a
1996	2,700	a	a	a

^aInformation not available.

**Appendix I
Funds Requested, Appropriated, and
Obligated for USDA's Incentive-Based
Conservation Programs, Fiscal Years
1992-96**

**Table I.3: Budgetary Information for
the Conservation Reserve Program**

Dollars in thousands				
Year	Requested	Appropriated	Obligated to land users	Obligated for other costs
1992	\$1,643,000	\$1,611,300	\$1,651,800	\$8,500
1993	1,607,000	1,578,500	1,683,300	5,100
1994	1,756,000	1,743,300	1,735,600	0
1995	1,752,000	1,743,300	a	a
1996	1,926,400	a	a	a

^aInformation not available.

**Table I.4: Budgetary Information for
the Emergency Conservation Program**

Dollars in thousands				
Year	Requested	Appropriated	Obligated to land users	Obligated for other costs
1992	\$ 0	\$22,500	\$10,300	\$ 800
1993	0	64,400	57,800	1,900
1994	2,800	25,000	28,200	1,700
1995	3,000	23,000	a	a
1996	3,000	a	a	a

^aInformation not available.

**Table I.5: Budgetary Information for
the Emergency Wetland Reserve
Program**

Dollars in thousands				
Year	Requested	Appropriated	Obligated to land users	Obligated for other costs
1992	a	a	a	a
1993	a	a	a	a
1994	\$0	\$39,200	\$15,200	\$2,700
1995	0	0	b	b
1996	0	b	b	b

^aNo program existed.

^bInformation not available.

**Appendix I
Funds Requested, Appropriated, and
Obligated for USDA's Incentive-Based
Conservation Programs, Fiscal Years
1992-96**

**Table I.6: Budgetary Information for
the Farm Debt
Cancellation—Conservation
Easements Program**

Dollars in thousands				
Year	Requested	Appropriated	Obligated to land users	Obligated for other costs
1992	\$0	\$0	\$1,100	\$0
1993	0	0	1,500	0
1994	0	0	2,500	0
1995	0	0	a	a
1996	0	a	a	a

^aInformation not available.

**Table I.7: Budgetary Information for
the Forest Legacy Program**

Dollars in thousands				
Year	Requested	Appropriated	Obligated to land users	Obligated for other costs
1992	\$0	\$4,900	\$0	\$4,900
1993	0	9,900	300	9,600
1994	8,400	6,900	1,300	5,600
1995	6,700	6,700	a	a
1996	10,000	a	a	a

^aInformation not available.

**Table I.8: Budgetary Information for
the Forestry Incentives Program**

Dollars in thousands				
Year	Requested	Appropriated	Obligated to land users	Obligated for other costs
1992	\$12,500	\$12,500	\$11,500	\$1,200
1993	12,500	12,500	11,100	1,200
1994	11,500	12,800	11,700	1,300
1995	6,600	6,600	a	a
1996	6,600	a	a	a

^aInformation not available.

**Appendix I
Funds Requested, Appropriated, and
Obligated for USDA's Incentive-Based
Conservation Programs, Fiscal Years
1992-96**

**Table I.9: Budgetary Information for
the Great Plains Conservation
Program**

Dollars in thousands				
Year	Requested	Appropriated	Obligated to land users	Obligated for other costs
1992	\$25,300	\$25,300	\$17,500	\$9,100
1993	25,300	25,300	16,400	9,000
1994	16,300	25,700	16,200	9,500
1995	10,900	15,200	a	a
1996	11,000	a	a	a

^aInformation not available.

**Table I.10: Budgetary Information for
the Rural Clean Water Program**

Dollars in thousands				
Year	Requested	Appropriated	Obligated to land users	Obligated for other costs
1992	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,000
1993	0	0	200	200
1994	0	0	0	200
1995	0	0	a	a
1996	0	a	a	a

^aInformation not available.

**Table I.11: Budgetary Information for
the Small Watershed Program**

Dollars in thousands				
Year	Requested	Appropriated	Obligated to land users	Obligated for other costs
1992	\$122,600	\$149,200	\$80,200	\$ 64,600
1993	\$122,600	\$165,200	90,800	68,000
1994	\$104,900	\$172,600	107,800	72,200
1995	\$25,000	\$60,000	a	a
1996	\$100,000	a	a	a

^aInformation not available.

**Appendix I
Funds Requested, Appropriated, and
Obligated for USDA's Incentive-Based
Conservation Programs, Fiscal Years
1992-96**

**Table I.12: Budgetary Information for
the Soil and Water Conservation Loan
Program**

Dollars in thousands				
Year	Requested	Appropriated	Obligated to land users	Obligated for other costs
1992	\$0	\$500	\$200	\$0
1993	0	500	400	0
1994	500	500	400	0
1995	1,000	0	a	a
1996	1,000	a	a	a

^aInformation not available.

**Table I.13: Budgetary Information for
the Stewardship Incentive Program**

Dollars in thousands				
Year	Requested	Appropriated	Obligated to land users	Obligated for other costs
1992	\$90,000	\$800	\$0	\$800
1993	71,000	17,800	13,500	4,300
1994	25,900	17,900	13,300	4,600
1995	22,400	18,300	a	a
1996	28,000	a	a	a

^aInformation not available.

**Table I.14: Budgetary Information for
the Water Bank Program**

Dollars in thousands				
Year	Requested	Appropriated	Obligated to land users	Obligated for other costs
1992	\$10,900	\$18,600	\$17,000	\$1,000
1993	11,400	18,600	18,000	1,100
1994	17,100	8,000	9,500	600
1995	8,000	0	a	a
1996	0	a	a	a

^aInformation not available.

**Appendix I
Funds Requested, Appropriated, and
Obligated for USDA's Incentive-Based
Conservation Programs, Fiscal Years
1992-96**

**Table I.15: Budgetary Information for
the Water Quality Incentives Projects**

Dollars in thousands				
Year	Requested	Appropriated	Obligated to land users	Obligated for other costs
1992	\$ 6,800	\$ 6,800	\$ 5,400	\$300
1993	15,000	15,000	10,200	800
1994	18,500	18,500	4,700	800
1995	15,000	15,000	a	a
1996	7,500	a	a	a

^aInformation not available.

**Table I.16: Budgetary Information for
the Wetlands Reserve Program**

Dollars in thousands				
Year	Requested	Appropriated	Obligated to land users	Obligated for other costs
1992	\$124,400	\$46,400	\$0	\$3,100
1993	160,900	0	4,500	3,100
1994	370,300	66,700	27,300	5,800
1995	240,000	93,200	a	a
1996	210,000	a	a	a

^aInformation not available.

Agreements Signed and Acres Covered Under USDA's Incentive-Based Conservation Programs, Fiscal Years 1992-94

This appendix presents USDA's data on the number of agreements signed, the number of acres covered, and the number of geographic areas (states and territories) participating in each program for fiscal years 1992 through 1994.

Table II.1: Program Activity Information for the Agricultural Conservation Program

Year	Agreements	Acres	Active areas
1992	168,185	9,455,122	51
1993	147,558	8,524,916	51
1994	152,729	8,791,475	51

Table II.2: Program Activity Information for the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program

Year	Agreements	Acres	Active areas
1992	672	29,108	3
1993	1,079	112,708	3
1994	1,092	59,716	3

Table II.3: Program Activity Information for the Conservation Reserve Program

Year	Agreements	Acres	Active areas
1992	375,205	35,395,328	52
1993	375,205	36,422,772	52
1994	375,205	36,422,772	52

Table II.4: Program Activity Information for the Emergency Conservation Program

Year	Agreements	Acres	Active areas
1992	5,813	1,046,275	39
1993	6,667	1,370,973	40
1994	15,862	930,088	39

Table II.5: Program Activity Information for the Emergency Wetland Reserve Program

Year	Agreements	Acres	Active areas
1992	a	a	a
1993	0	0	0
1994	618	57,124	6

^aNo program existed.

Table II.6: Program Activity Information for the Farm Debt Cancellation—Conservation Easements Program

Year	Agreements	Acres	Active areas
1992	2	177	2
1993	5	303	3
1994	16	1,571	7

Appendix II
Agreements Signed and Acres Covered
Under USDA's Incentive-Based
Conservation Programs, Fiscal Years
1992-94

Table II.7: Program Activity Information for the Forest Legacy Program

Year	Agreements	Acres	Active areas
1992	6	0	4
1993	14	1,660	5
1994	37	3,694	6

Table II.8: Program Activity Information for the Forestry Incentives Program

Year	Agreements	Acres	Active areas
1992	5,436	208,370	47
1993	5,548	214,002	45
1994	5,544	226,998	44

Table II.9: Program Activity Information for the Great Plains Conservation Program

Year	Agreements	Acres	Active areas
1992	6,336	19,384,149	10
1993	6,761	19,884,202	10
1994	7,419	21,805,455	10

Table II.10: Program Activity Information for the Integrated Farm Management Program Option

Year	Agreements	Acres	Active areas
1992	a	40,273	24
1993	a	119,207	24
1994	a	106,227	23

^aInformation not available.

Table II.11: Program Activity Information for the Rural Clean Water Program

Year	Agreements	Acres	Active areas
1992	275	16,458	15
1993	140	5,798	14
1994	73	2,420	8

Table II.12: Program Activity Information for the Small Watershed Program

Year	Agreements	Acres	Active areas
1992	341	3,192,090	42
1993	341	3,192,090	42
1994	341	3,192,090	42

Appendix II
Agreements Signed and Acres Covered
Under USDA's Incentive-Based
Conservation Programs, Fiscal Years
1992-94

Table II.13: Program Activity Information for the Soil and Water Conservation Loan Program

Year	Agreements	Acres	Active areas
1992	138	a	a
1993	123	a	a
1994	157	a	a

^aInformation not available.

Table II.14: Program Activity Information for the Stewardship Incentive Program

Year	Agreements	Acres	Active areas
1992	1,741	123,652	44
1993	6,693	563,498	50
1994	8,929	574,270	50

Table II.15: Program Activity Information for the Water Bank Program

Year	Agreements	Acres	Active areas
1992	1,045	114,300	12
1993	1,071	126,301	13
1994	630	68,956	12

Table II.16: Program Activity Information for the Water Quality Incentives Projects

Year	Agreements	Acres	Active areas
1992	334	48,066	26
1993	2,657	250,987	41
1994	6,418	551,726	46

Table II.17: Program Activity Information for the Wetlands Reserve Program

Year	Agreements	Acres	Active areas
1992	a	a	a
1993	265	49,888	9
1994	673	75,000	20

^aNo program existed.

Percent of Dollars Spent and Acres Covered, by Conservation Purpose, Under USDA's Incentive-Based Programs, 1992-94

This appendix analyzes data on each program's conservation purpose, as classified by USDA under one of four categories: soil erosion control, water pollution abatement, fish and wildlife habitat enhancement, and other (such as flood control, water conservation, and forestry). Data are presented as a percentage of the total acres affected and the total dollars provided to land users by the program for each fiscal year. (Figures may not total 100 percent because of rounding.) According to program officials, no data are available on the purpose of individual soil and water conservation loans.

Table III.1: Agricultural Conservation Program Activity, by Conservation Purpose

Figures in percent

Year	Measure	Erosion Control	Other	Water pollution abatement	Fish and wildlife
1992	Acres	78	12	10	0
	Dollars	59	21	20	0
1993	Acres	74	14	11	0
	Dollars	56	21	22	1
1994	Acres	74	13	12	0
	Dollars	57	21	21	1

Table III.2: Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program Activity, by Conservation Purpose

Figures in percent

Year	Measure	Erosion control	Other	Water pollution abatement	Fish and wildlife
1992	Acres	0	2	98	0
	Dollars	0	2	98	0
1993	Acres	0	0	99	1
	Dollars	0	1	95	4
1994	Acres	0	0	98	2
	Dollars	0	1	96	3

**Appendix III
Percent of Dollars Spent and Acres Covered,
by Conservation Purpose, Under USDA's
Incentive-Based Programs, 1992-94**

Table III.3: Conservation Reserve Program Activity, by Conservation Purpose

Figures in percent

Year	Measure	Erosion control	Other	Water pollution abatement	Fish and wildlife
1992	Acres	100	0	0	0
	Dollars	99	0	1	0
1993	Acres	99	0	1	0
	Dollars	99	0	1	0
1994	Acres	99	0	1	0
	Dollars	99	0	1	0

Table III.4: Emergency Conservation Program Activity, by Conservation Purpose

Figures in percent

Year	Measure	Erosion control	Other	Water pollution abatement	Fish and wildlife
1992	Acres	30	69	0	0
	Dollars	18	82	1	0
1993	Acres	27	73	1	0
	Dollars	8	92	1	0
1994	Acres	8	92	0	0
	Dollars	5	94	0	0

Table III.5: Emergency Wetland Reserve Program Activity, by Conservation Purpose

Figures in percent

Year	Measure	Erosion control	Other	Water pollution abatement	Fish and wildlife
1992	Acres	a	a	a	a
	Dollars	a	a	a	a
1993	Acres	0	0	0	0
	Dollars	0	0	0	0
1994	Acres	0	100	0	0
	Dollars	0	100	0	0

^aNo program existed.

Appendix III
Percent of Dollars Spent and Acres Covered,
by Conservation Purpose, Under USDA's
Incentive-Based Programs, 1992-94

Table III.6: Farm Debt Cancellation—Conservation Easements Program Activity, by Conservation Purpose

Figures in percent

Year	Measure	Erosion control	Other	Water pollution abatement	Fish and wildlife
1992	Acres	90	10	0	0
	Dollars	53	47	0	0
1993	Acres	7	83	0	10
	Dollars	18	44	0	39
1994	Acres	18	71	0	11
	Dollars	13	66	0	21

Table III.7: Forest Legacy Program Activity, by Conservation Purpose

Figures in percent

Year	Measure	Erosion control	Other	Water pollution abatement	Fish and wildlife
1992	Acres	0	100	0	0
	Dollars	0	100	0	0
1993	Acres	0	100	0	0
	Dollars	0	100	0	0
1994	Acres	0	100	0	0
	Dollars	0	100	0	0

Table III.8: Forestry Incentives Program Activity, by Conservation Purpose

Figures in percent

Year	Measure	Erosion control	Other	Water pollution abatement	Fish and wildlife
1992	Acres	0	100	0	0
	Dollars	0	100	0	0
1993	Acres	0	100	0	0
	Dollars	0	100	0	0
1994	Acres	0	100	0	0
	Dollars	0	100	0	0

Appendix III
Percent of Dollars Spent and Acres Covered,
by Conservation Purpose, Under USDA's
Incentive-Based Programs, 1992-94

Table III.9: Great Plains Conservation Program Activity, by Conservation Purpose

Figures in percent

Year	Measure	Erosion control	Other	Water pollution abatement	Fish and wildlife
1992	Acres	50	10	30	10
	Dollars	50	10	30	10
1993	Acres	50	10	30	10
	Dollars	50	10	30	10
1994	Acres	50	10	30	10
	Dollars	50	10	30	10

Table III.10: Integrated Farm Management Program Option Activity, by Conservation Purpose

Figures in percent

Year	Measure	Erosion control	Other	Water pollution abatement	Fish and wildlife
1992	Acres	100	0	0	0
	Dollars	100	0	0	0
1993	Acres	100	0	0	0
	Dollars	100	0	0	0
1994	Acres	100	0	0	0
	Dollars	100	0	0	0

Table III.11: Rural Clean Water Program Activity, by Conservation Purpose

Figures in percent

Year	Measure	Erosion control	Other	Water pollution abatement	Fish and wildlife
1992	Acres	9	0	91	0
	Dollars	19	0	81	0
1993	Acres	2	0	98	0
	Dollars	9	0	91	0
1994	Acres	8	2	90	0
	Dollars	19	2	79	0

Appendix III
Percent of Dollars Spent and Acres Covered,
by Conservation Purpose, Under USDA's
Incentive-Based Programs, 1992-94

Table III.12: Small Watershed Program Activity, by Conservation Purpose

Figures in percent

Year	Measure	Erosion control	Other	Water pollution abatement	Fish and wildlife
1992	Acres	71	3	26	0
	Dollars	71	3	26	0
1993	Acres	71	3	26	0
	Dollars	71	3	26	0
1994	Acres	71	3	26	0
	Dollars	71	3	26	0

Table III.13: Stewardship Incentive Program Activity, by Conservation Purpose

Figures in percent

Year	Measure	Erosion control	Other	Water pollution abatement	Fish and wildlife
1992	Acres	0	100	0	0
	Dollars	0	100	0	0
1993	Acres	0	96	0	4
	Dollars	0	89	0	11
1994	Acres	0	90	0	10
	Dollars	0	87	0	13

Table III.14: Water Bank Program Activity, by Conservation Purpose

Figures in percent

Year	Measure	Erosion control	Other	Water pollution abatement	Fish and wildlife
1992	Acres	0	0	0	100
	Dollars	0	0	0	100
1993	Acres	0	0	0	100
	Dollars	0	0	0	100
1994	Acres	0	0	0	100
	Dollars	0	0	0	100

Appendix III
Percent of Dollars Spent and Acres Covered,
by Conservation Purpose, Under USDA's
Incentive-Based Programs, 1992-94

**Table III.15: Water Quality Incentives
 Projects Program Activity, by
 Conservation Purpose**

Figures in percent

Year	Measure	Erosion control	Other	Water pollution abatement	Fish and wildlife
1992	Acres	0	0	100	0
	Dollars	0	0	100	0
1993	Acres	0	0	100	0
	Dollars	0	0	100	0
1994	Acres	0	0	100	0
	Dollars	0	0	100	0

**Table III.16: Wetlands Reserve
 Program Activity, by Conservation
 Purpose**

Figures in percent

Year	Measure	Erosion control	Other	Water pollution abatement	Fish and wildlife
1992	Acres	a	a	a	a
	Dollars	a	a	a	a
1993	Acres	0	0	0	100
	Dollars	0	0	1	99
1994	Acres	0	0	0	100
	Dollars	1	1	1	97

^aNo program existed.

Technical Practices Shared Among 11 USDA Incentive-Based Conservation Programs

Table IV.1 presents practices financed under four or more of the following programs: Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP), Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program (CRBSCP), Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), Great Plains Conservation Program (GPCP), Rural Clean Water Program (RCWP), Stewardship Incentive Program (SIP), Small Watershed Program (SWP), Water Bank Program (WBP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), Water Quality Incentives Projects (WQIP).

Table IV.1: Technical Practices Financed by Four or More Incentive-Based Conservation Programs

Technical practice	ACP	CRP	CRBSCP	ECP	GPCP	RCWP	SIP	SWP	WBP	WRP	WQIP
Brush management	X				X			X			X
Channel vegetation	X				X	X		X			
Conservation cover		X			X			X		X	X
Conservation cropping sequence	X				X	X					X
Conservation tillage	X				X	X					X
Contour farming	X				X	X		X			X
Cover and green manure crop	X	X			X	X				X	X
Critical area planting	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Crop residue use	X				X	X					X
Dike	X	X			X	X		X		X	
Diversion	X	X		X	X	X		X		X	
Fencing	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Field borders	X				X	X		X		X	
Field windbreaks	X	X			X	X	X	X			
Filter strip	X	X			X	X		X			
Grade stabilization structure	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	
Grasses & legumes in rotation	X				X	X					X
Grassed waterway	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	
Grazing land mechanical treatment	X				X			X			X
Heavy use area protection	X				X	X		X			
Irrigation canal or lateral	X		X	X	X			X			
Irrigation field ditch	X		X	X	X			X			
Irrigation land leveling	X		X	X	X	X		X			
Irrigation pit or regulating reservoir	X		X	X	X			X			
Irrigation system, sprinkler	X		X	X	X	X	X	X			
Irrigation system, surface & subsurface	X		X	X	X	X	X	X			
Irrigation system, tailwater recovery	X		X	X	X	X		X			
Irrigation system, trickle (drip)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			

(continued)

**Appendix IV
 Technical Practices Shared Among 11 USDA
 Incentive-Based Conservation Programs**

Technical practice	ACP	CRP	CRBSCP	ECP	GPCP	RCWP	SIP	SWP	WBP	WRP	WQIP
Irrigation water conveyance, ditch, & canal lining	X		X	X	X	X		X			
Irrigation water conveyance, pipeline	X		X	X	X	X		X			
Irrigation water management	X				X	X					X
Land smoothing	X		X	X	X	X		X			
Lined waterway or outlet	X	X		X	X	X		X			
Livestock exclusion	X				X	X			X		X
Mulching	X			X	X	X	X	X			X
Nutrient management	X				X	X	X				X
Obstruction removal	X			X	X	X		X			
Pasture and hayland management	X	X			X	X			X	X	X
Pasture and hayland planting	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Pest management	X				X	X					X
Pipeline	X			X	X	X		X			
Pond	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
Pond sealing or lining	X			X	X	X		X			
Prescribed burning					X		X	X	X		X
Pumping plant for water control					X	X		X		X	
Range seeding	X	X			X	X		X	X		X
Regulating water in drainage system					X			X		X	X
Roof runoff management	X				X	X		X			
Sediment basin	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	
Spring development	X			X	X	X	X	X			
Streambank and shoreline protection	X				X	X	X	X			
Stripcropping, contour	X	X			X	X		X			X
Stripcropping, field	X				X	X		X			X
Stripcropping, wind	X	X			X	X		X			X
Structure for water control	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
Subsurface drain	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	
Surface drainage, field ditch	X			X	X	X		X			
Surface drainage-main or lateral	X				X	X		X			
Terrace	X	X		X	X	X		X			
Toxic salt reduction	X	X	X		X			X			X
Tree planting	X	X			X	X		X		X	
Trough or tank	X			X	X	X		X			
Underground outlet	X	X		X	X	X		X		X	
Waste management system	X				X	X		X			X
Waste storage pond	X			X	X	X		X			
Waste storage structure	X			X	X	X		X			

(continued)

Appendix IV
Technical Practices Shared Among 11 USDA
Incentive-Based Conservation Programs

Technical practice	ACP	CRP	CRBSCP	ECP	GPCP	RCWP	SIP	SWP	WBP	WRP	WQIP
Waste treatment lagoon	X			X	X	X		X			
Waste utilization	X				X	X		X			X
Water and sediment control basin	X	X		X	X	X		X		X	
Well	X			X	X	X					
Wildlife upland habitat management	X	X	X		X		X		X	X	X
Wildlife wetland habitat management	X	X	X		X		X		X	X	X
Windbreak renovation	X			X	X		X				X

Major Contributors to This Report

Resources,
Community, and
Economic
Development
Division, Washington,
D.C.

Juliann M. Gerkens, Assistant Director
Carolyn R. Kirby, Project Leader
Eileen M. Cortese, Senior Evaluator
Carol Herrnstadt Shulman, Communications Analyst

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