



USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Resources and Programs for Producers

Who is NRCS?



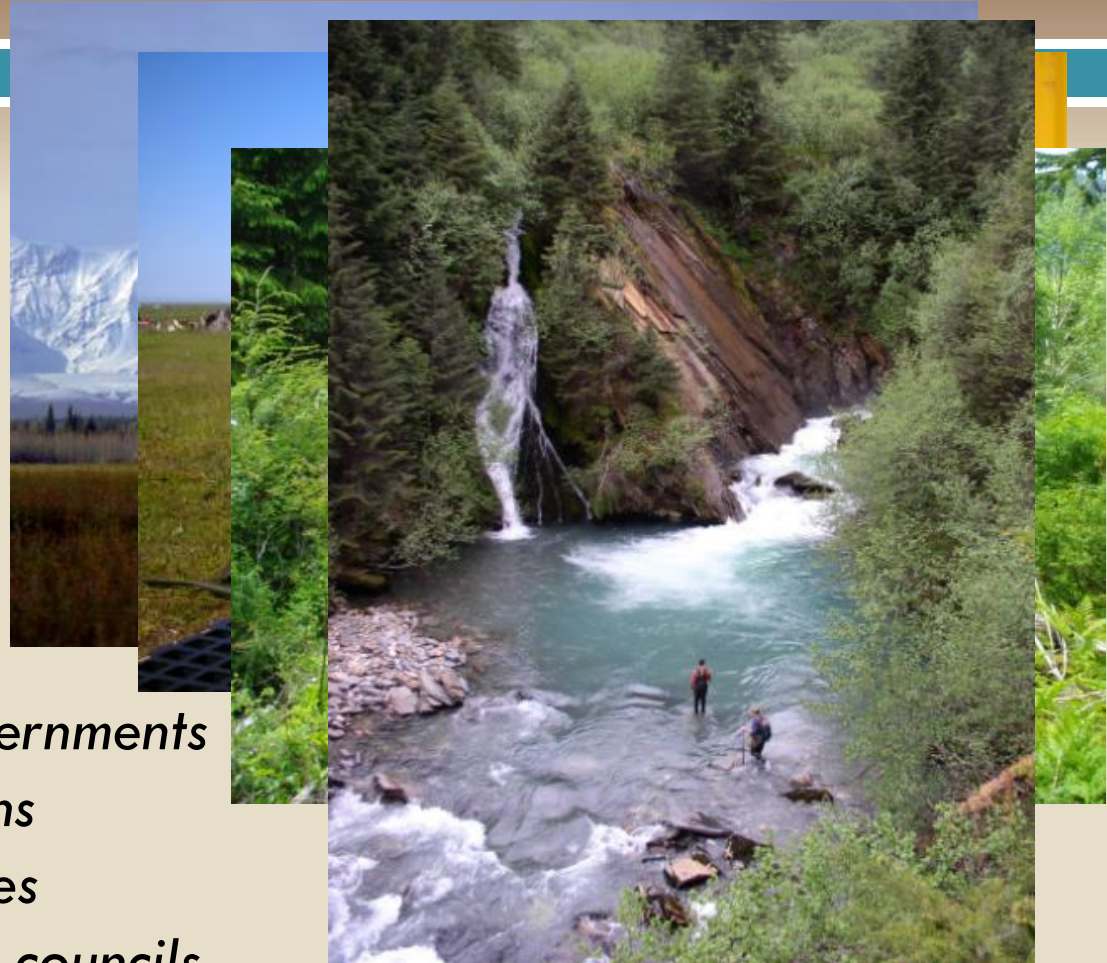
- Formerly known as SCS
 - *Established in the Dust Bowl to help farmers and ranchers conserve soil*
 - *Expanded its mission in mid-90s*
 - Work with nonfederal landowners on a voluntary basis
 - Funded and administered under the Farm Bill

Conservation Assistance

- Agency's goal: assist agricultural producers address resource concerns
 - ▣ *Conserving soil, water, air, plants, animals*
- Technical assistance upon request
 - ▣ *Information, coordination*
- Program assistance to help producers implement conservation practices
 - ▣ *Often helps with production!*

Cooperators and Partners

- Cooperators
 - ▣ *Agricultural operators*
 - ▣ *Subsistence users*
 - ▣ *Forest producers*
 - ▣ *Native entities*
 - ▣ *Individual landowners*
- Partners
 - ▣ *Local/state/tribal governments*
 - ▣ *Nonprofit organizations*
 - ▣ *Other resource agencies*
 - ▣ *Economic development councils*



Services and Programs

- Soil Survey
- Snow Survey
- Technical Assistance
- Financial programs



Program Funding

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
 - ▣ *Most commonly used in AK. Set payment rates for implementing conservation practices.*
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)
 - ▣ *New as of 2014. “Grant” type program for collaborative conservation projects.*
- Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)

Typical Practices in Southeast AK

- Small-scale agriculture assistance
 - ▣ *High tunnels and “companion practices” such as nutrient, pest, irrigation water management; cover cropping; crop rotation; microirrigation systems, etc.*
- Forestry
 - ▣ *Forest thinning, slash treatment, pruning*



EQIP High Tunnels



- Remember! Agency's mission is to assist agricultural producers address resource concerns.
- ▣ *High tunnels were authorized for EQIP funding because:*
 - Protect water quality by reducing pesticide/nutrient runoff
 - Reduce soil erosion
 - Increase watering efficiency
- ▣ *Associated practices such as nutrient/pest/irrigation management are encouraged*

EQIP - High Tunnels et al.

- EQIP funding based on set rates
 - ▣ *Does not necessarily cover the entire cost – but sometimes it does!*
 - ▣ *Reimbursable—payment is made after the practice is in place and has been certified by NRCS*
 - ▣ *Considered a taxable benefit*
 - ▣ *Both the applicant and the land must be eligible for EQIP*



EQIP Eligibility



□ Applicant

- *May be an individual, partnership, or corporation*
 - Units of government and political subdivisions thereof (including school districts) are not eligible
- *Must qualify as an agricultural producer*
- *Certify control of the land for the life of a contract*
 - Deed, lease, binding agreement

Qualifying for EQIP

- Land Qualifications

- ▣ *Currently cultivated*

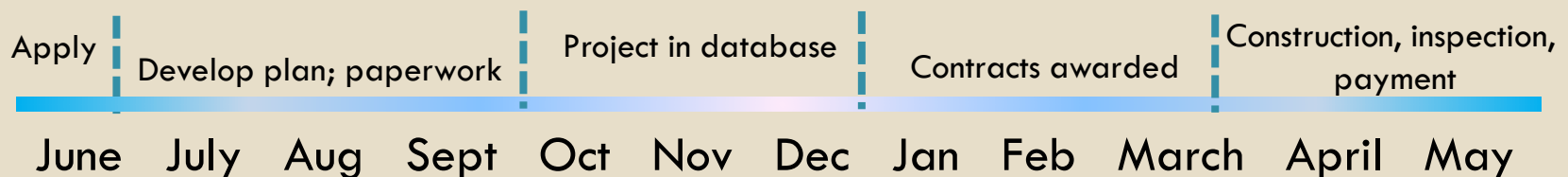
- ▣ *Meets wetland and highly erodible land requirements in accordance with the Food Security Act*

- ▣ *May not already be enrolled in other USDA conservation programs*

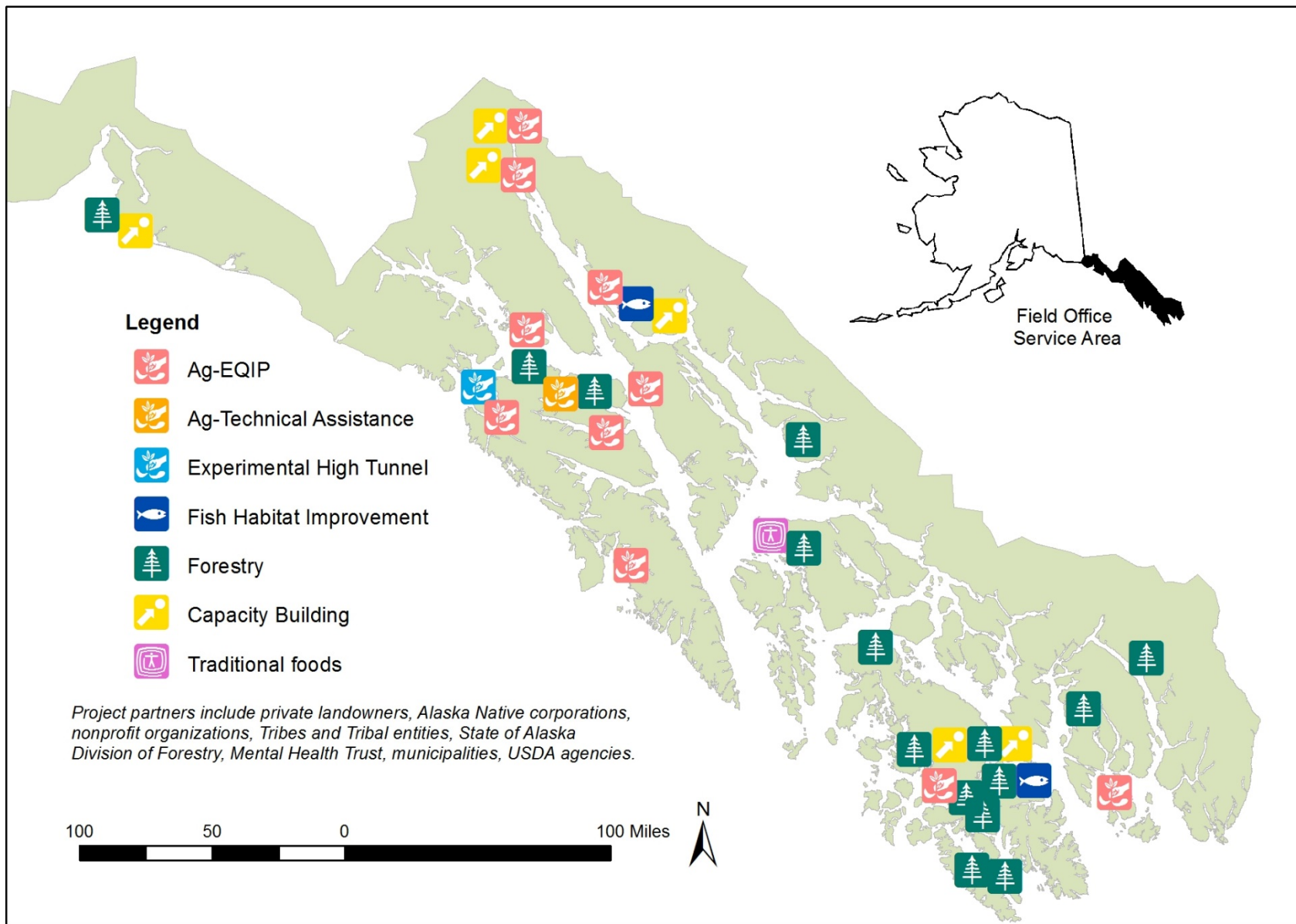


Application Steps

- Applications are accepted continuously
 - ▣ *First “cutoff” date for 2016 funding is June 15, 2015*
- Farm records must be established with FSA
 - ▣ *HELC/wetland certification and AGI*
- Develop conservation plan, document eligibility
- Applications ranked, then reviewed by State Office
- Contracts usually awarded ~March



USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Juneau Field Office Projects



Questions?

NRCS Juneau Field Office

PO Box 21788

709 W. 9th St.

Juneau, AK 99802

Samia Savell

907-586-7220

Samia.Savell@ak.usda.gov

Will Murray

907-586-7208

William.Murray@ak.usda.gov

