



2011 Annual Report

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative

This report contains fiscal year activity for the state of Colorado from the time period of October 2010 to September 2011.

Who We Are

NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to help agricultural producers and others care for the land. NRCS has six mission goals that include high quality, productive soils; clean and abundant water; healthy plant and animal communities; clean air; an adequate energy supply; and working farms and ranchlands.

Vision

Productive Lands -
Healthy Environment

Mission

Helping People Help the Land

“The Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative allowed NRCS to work on conservation plans to restore eleven privately-owned miles of the Upper Arkansas River damaged by mining activity.”

Resource Conservationist for Programs

Fiscal Year 2011 Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative Statewide Activities

Number of Contracts Approved	16
Dollar Amount Approved.....	\$223,020
Acres Treated	2,456

The Program

As allowed by the 2008 Farm Bill, NRCS may make Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) program resources available to owners and operators of agricultural and nonindustrial private forest lands who are located in an approved Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI) project area.

As authorized by Congress, this is **not** a grant program to partners. This is a program whereby partners with approved projects will enter into multi-year agreements with NRCS to help enhance conservation outcomes on agricultural lands and private nonindustrial private forest lands.

One purpose of CCPI is to leverage resources of certain Federal government programs along with services and resources of non-Federal partners to implement natural resource conservation practices.

Proposals submitted by eligible partners are evaluated and competitively ranked for consideration of NRCS programs to support the project.

The Request For Proposal (RFP) published to the Federal Register outlines the process and requirements partners must use to submit proposals and CCPI requirements.

The RFP also provides details regarding which programs are offered and funding availability each fiscal year.

The Benefits

The voluntary CCPI Initiative provides financial and technical assistance to landowners that work together to address regional conservation concerns.

Eligible Partners

Federally recognized Indian Tribes, State and local units of government, producer associations, farmer cooperatives, institutions of higher education, and nongovernmental organizations (NGO) with a history of working cooperatively with producers. Individual producers are not eligible to submit a partnership proposal.

Producers

Owners and operators of agricultural and nonindustrial private forest lands are eligible to apply for program benefits offered through CCPI.

In order for a producer to be considered for financial assistance through a CCPI partner agreement, the land associated with a program application must be located within an approved CCPI project area.

Only producers who are eligible for EQIP, WHIP, or CSP may receive financial assistance through these programs.

For More Information

Visit our web site at www.co.nrcs.usda.gov.



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NRCS CONSERVATION PROGRAM SUCCESS STORY

CCPI: NRCS Participates in the Upper Arkansas River Restoration Project

Over many decades, the mining operations in the California Gulch area of Lake County near Leadville, Colorado, leaked mine tailings of zinc, copper, lead, and other metals into the headwaters of the Arkansas River. The mine tailings in the river polluted the private and public lands through which the river flowed.

The Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI) allowed the NRCS the opportunity to assist on the private lands.

NRCS worked on conservation plans to restore eleven privately-owned miles of the Upper Arkansas River damaged by the mining activity.



J-hooks on Doc Smith's property provide a place for fish to shelter, allow water to be re-directed, and prevent bank erosion.

After designating the California Gulch area as a Superfund Site, a number of federal agencies, including NRCS, the EPA, DOI's Fish & Wildlife Division, Bureau of Forestry and Bureau of Reclamation, as well as the Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Geological Survey, cooperated to clean up the area using funds deposited by the polluting mining companies.

To date, the cooperating agencies have plugged up the leaks from the old mines, removed the pollutants from the river, and exchanged many hundreds of tons of contaminated soil with healthy soil on private lands.

The last phase of the restoration project is planned over the next five years. The focus will be on restoration plans for private landowners. CCPI funds have been utilized to write Fish and Wildlife Management plans on approximately 1,400 acres.

NRCS role with the project made it feasible for private landowners to acquire conservation plans that not only addressed the pollution problem, but also improved the acres for wildlife habitat.

The plans address the loss of soil through erosion, prevent more pollution, and restore a healthy environment in the river for irrigation of pasture lands and for fishing.