



Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service

News Release

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"Helping People Help the Land"

Conservation Partnership Awarded \$1.7 Million to Improve Pollinator Habitat in California

Award is part of USDA's \$197 million investment in partner-driven, locally-led conservation nationwide

DAVIS, Calif., Aug. 12, 2022 – The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in California announced today that a conservation-partner collaboration, led by the Pollinator Partnership organization, was awarded a \$1.7 million grant to improve pollinator habitat and forage across California's agricultural landscapes. The investment is being made through NRCS' Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP).

The Farmer-to-Farmer Collaboration's goal is to increase capacity of California agricultural lands to provide habitat, forage, and other support to wild and managed pollinators, including bees, butterflies, and other important invertebrate species. A broad partnership including the Almond Board of California, Bayer Crop Science, and the California Farm Bureau plans to use grower connections to secure the participation of producers across a wide swath of the 10-county project area (Fresno, Madera, Merced, Monterey, Napa, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Sonoma counties). Project partners will use a GIS tool to guide practice implementation, including the planting of new pollinator habitat and the expanded use of integrated pest management and prescribed grazing.

"We are extremely excited to partner with leading agricultural groups, conservation organizations, and NRCS to provide valuable resources to farmers, ranchers, and pollinators" said Miles Dakin, Pollinator Partnership's Bee Friendly Farming coordinator. "These funds will be used to plant forage and nesting habitat for all pollinators in the region and to implement best management practices critical to supporting them."

Earlier in the day, USDA announced it is awarding \$197 million for 41 locally-led, conservation projects through RCPP, of which the Farmer-to-Farmer Collaboration is one. RCPP is a partner-driven program that leverages partner resources to advance innovative projects that address climate change, enhance water quality, and address other critical challenges on agricultural land.

"Pollinators provide necessary pollination for thousands of plants and agricultural crops and protecting and improving pollinator habitat is a critical resource concern for our farmers and ranchers across California," said NRCS California State Conservationist Carlos Suarez. "NRCS strives to work with partners to expand conservation efforts on multiple land uses, and this RCPP project demonstrates a further investment to protect pollinators in our State."

Today's award was made through RCPP's Alternative Funding Arrangements (AFA) option. Through RCPP AFA, partners have more flexibility in working directly with agricultural producers to support the development of new conservation structures and approaches.

The nationwide [list of 2022 RCPP projects are here](#) or view the [interactive map here](#).

As part of each project, partners offer value-added contributions to amplify the impact of RCPP funding in an amount equal to or greater than the NRCS investment. Private landowners can apply to participate in an RCPP project in their region through awarded partners or at their local [USDA service center](#).

More Information

First authorized in the 2014 Farm Bill, RCPP has leveraged partner contributions of more than \$1 for every \$1 invested by USDA, resulting in nearly \$3 billion collectively invested in natural resource conservation on private lands. Since inception, RCPP has made 589 awards involving over 3,000 partner organizations. Currently there are 401 active projects, with at least one active project in every state and area. Successful RCPP projects provide innovative conservation solutions, leverage partner contributions and offer impactful and measurable outcomes. For more information about RCPP, visit the [NRCS website](#).

Since its inception in 1935, NRCS has worked in partnership with private landowners and a variety of local, state, and federal conservation partners to deliver conservation based on specific, local needs. Please visit www.ca.nrcs.usda.gov for more information about NRCS.

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