

Walker Basin RCPP Summary August 8, 2016

RCPP Basics

- The 2014 Farm Bill RCPP program is designed to provide targeted conservation assistance to willing producers to address high-priority resource concerns. In RCPP, Congress set aside funding to be received through voluntary incentive-based programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, Wetland Reserve Easements (ACEP-WRE) to achieve these targeted purposes. Funds provided to a RCPP partnership are set aside for the partnership and made available to spend out over the course of 5 years.
- Recipients of USDA program funding (RCPP, EQIP, CSP, ACEP-WRE, etc.) are subject to a \$450k, 5-year payment cap. This is the only monetary limitation/interaction between RCPP and other USDA programs. Should the Walker Basin partnership receive RCPP funding, this funding allocation will not diminish the total amount of funding received by NV NRCS for conservation programs. That is, should RCPP funding be received, that funding will be over and above the funding usually received in state.
- Partnerships join together to apply for RCPP funding through a pre-proposal and full proposal process. NRCS evaluates those proposals based on the importance of the conservation objectives the partnership hopes to achieve, funding match provided, and producer interest. A partnership comprised of the Walker Basin Conservancy, WRID, NFWF, Walker River Paiute Tribe, State of Nevada, DRI and USGS submitted a Walker Basin RCPP pre-proposal for funding in May. **On July 22, the partnership was invited to submit a full proposal for funding.**
- Following the pre-proposal stage, a RCPP partnership will submit a full proposal identifying willing partners, resource concerns, methods of addressing those concerns, proposed conservation practices, financial match and requested NRCS funding up to a maximum of \$10 million. Partners will submit letters of commitment with a firm estimate of contribution (financial or in-kind). **Joining as a partner gives that entity the ability to have input into the RCPP's direction, and the ability to achieve conservation by leveraging resources. Partners, however, may withdraw their support for the project at any time.**

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- The Walker Basin RCPP proposal would **offer willing producers economic incentives to plan and adopt conservation practices that will help conserve water on farm, protect agricultural lands, improve habitat, and assist Tribal water right conveyance.** Future funding may be available for near and off-farm improvements.
- **Producers can receive assistance to plan water conservation practices, cost-share to adopt those practices, and resources to measure the impact of their work.** Such practices could include, for example, deficit irrigation, field rotation, and/or less consumptive crop/organic conversions.
- **Partners**
 - Walker Basin Conservancy, Walker River Irrigation District, Nevada Department of Water Resources, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, US Geological Survey, Walker River Paiute Tribes, Desert Research Institute
- **Timeline**
 - **September 19th, 2016:** full proposal with partner commitment letters due
 - **December 31, 2016:** full proposal awards announced
 - **June 2017:** on-the-ground activity planning and negotiations to release funds due