



Natural Resources Conservation Service
May 2002

RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM Fact Sheet

Legislative Authority:

The RC&D program, first authorized by the Food and Agriculture Act of 1962, P. L. 87-703, received permanent authorization as part of the 2002 Farm Bill. The Natural Resources Conservation Service administers the program.

Program Purpose:

The purpose of the RC&D program is to encourage and improve the capability of volunteer local elected and civic leaders in designated RC&D areas to plan and carry out projects for resource conservation and community development.

Program Operations:

Projects relate to the following four areas:

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| (1) Land Conservation | (3) Land Management |
| (2) Community Development | (4) Water Management |

The RC&D program helps people care for natural resources and improve the quality of life in their communities. The program pulls together people, communities, Indian tribes, and grassroots groups that unite in shared purpose and pool resources to get work done. RC&D priorities are set by area residents to meet their needs.

More than 20,000 volunteers are serving on and with RC&D councils. They are committed to revitalizing and sustaining their communities through the RC&D program. On average, RC&D volunteers donate 78,000 days per year. To date, 368 areas across the Nation including Guam, American Samoa, Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands have been designated by the Secretary of Agriculture as RC&D areas. They serve more than 85 percent (2,614) of U.S. counties and over 77 percent of the U.S. population.

In Fiscal Year 2001, RC&D's completed more than 3,000 projects. These resulted in 500 new businesses created and 1,800 businesses expanded; 7,500 new jobs created; 5,000 miles of streams and 880,000 acres of wildlife habitat improved; and, 283,000 people learned new job skills, and nearly 780,000 economically and socially disadvantaged people were served.

Program Funding:

FY 2002 RC&D appropriation is \$48,048,000. Proposed funding for FY2003 is \$52,031,000.

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