U.S. Department of Agriculture Regenerative Pilot Program: Natural Resources Conservation Service Announces Establishment

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The United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service ("NRCS") announced he Regenerative Pilot Program ("RPP").

NRCS states that the RPP will provide $700 million to help American farmers:

… adopt practices that improve soil health, enhance water quality, and boost long-term productivity, all while strengthening America's food and fiber supply.

NRCS states that the RPP is intended to cut administrative burdens for producers, expanding access to new and beginning farmers, and boosting yields and long-term soil health and regenerative agriculture practices. It is described as providing a:

… streamlined, outcome-based conservation model—empowering producers to plan and implement whole-farm regenerative practices through a single application

The focus is stated to be on "whole-farm planning that addresses every major resource concern—soil, water, and natural vitality—under a single conservation framework."

The funds will be allocated as follows:

- $400 million through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program; and
- $300 million through the Conservation Stewardship Program.

The funds will be provided for the first year of regenerative agriculture projects.

Friends of the Earth states that the RPP is "a step in the right direction and we applaud the intent." However, the organization expresses concern stating that:

… it will only be effective if USDA reverses the past year of massive cuts to on-the-ground conservation staff. Regenerative agriculture requires whole-farm, science-based planning, and right now the agency lacks the army of specialists needed to help farmers design and implement those plans.

A link to the NRCS press release can be found here.