



Watershed Plan Overview

THE WATERSHED PROTECTION AND FLOOD PREVENTION PROGRAM

The U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) manages the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program, authorized by Congress in 1954. The purpose of this program is to provide technical and financial assistance to public entities for planning and implementing authorized projects that:

- 💧 Protect watersheds,
- 💧 Improve agricultural water management,
- 💧 Mitigate Floods,
- 💧 Improve water quality,
- 💧 Reduce soil erosion,
- 💧 Enhance fish and wildlife habitat,
- 💧 Create opportunities for hydroelectric power production.

In 2017, Congress appropriated \$150 million to the NRCS Watershed Program. In order to qualify for funding, irrigation districts must have:

- ① An authorized final Watershed Plan-Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement;
- ② and Non-federal match funding.

THE WATERSHED PLAN

A Watershed Plan is required for any project that applies for federal financial assistance through the NRCS Watershed Program and must meet both the requirements of the NRCS Watershed Program and the National Environmental Policy Act. The purpose of a Watershed Plan is to assess how the proposed project could affect social, cultural and environmental resources and determine any actions that should be taken to minimize those effects.

There are two options available to developing a Watershed Plan:

- ① Environmental Assessment: Authorizes up to \$24.9 M in federal funding for construction;
- ② or Environmental Impact Statement: Required for construction funding greater than \$24.9M or determined necessary due to expected effects of the project.

LEARN MORE

FCA's Irrigation Modernization Program works with irrigation districts to develop and implement modernization strategies.
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