



Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative (MRBI)

OVERVIEW

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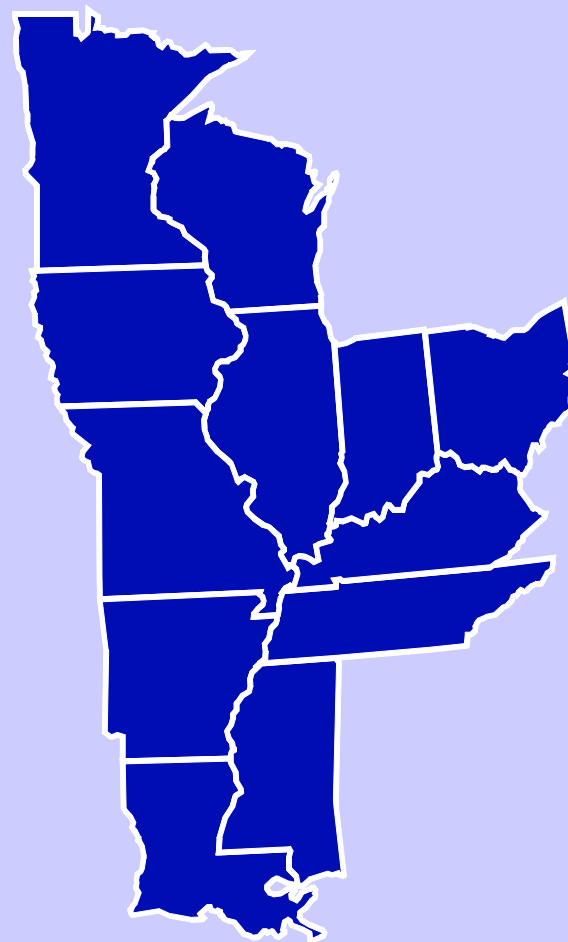
MRBI Goal

- Improve the health of the Mississippi River Basin by:
 - Working with producers to help them voluntarily implement conservation practices which:
 - Avoid, control and trap nutrient runoff
 - Restore/enhance wildlife habitat
 - Maintain agricultural productivity



MRBI Geographic Scope

- Arkansas, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee and Wisconsin.
- Selected priority Watersheds





MRBI Funding

- NRCS will offer this Initiative through the life of the 2008 Farm Bill
- NRCS will dedicate at least \$80 million in each of Fiscal Years 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013.
 - Funding is above regular program funding levels.



MRBI Funding - NRCS

- Dedicated additional funding, by Program
 - \$50 million for Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI)
 - \$25 million for Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Program (WREP)
 - \$5 million for Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)



Watershed Selection

- Each state identifies focus areas.
 - 1 to 3 8-digit HUCs
- Smaller watersheds selected from within focus areas through competitive process.
 - 12-digit HUCs will be ranked by State Conservationist with State Technical Committee



Watershed Selection

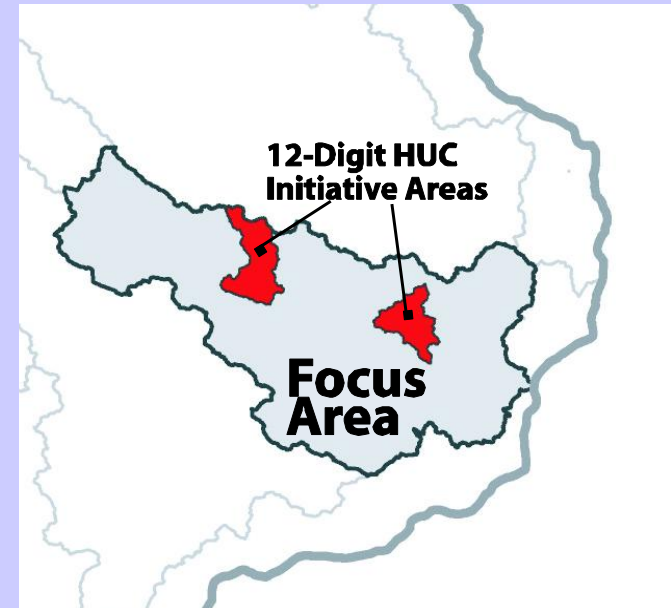
- State Technical Committee input
- Information to consider:
 - CEAP data/results
 - SPARROW data
 - State-level water quality data
 - Nitrogen/Phosphorus monitoring/modeling
 - State-level nutrient strategies/priorities





Watershed Selection

- Requests for Proposals issued for CCPI
- Target 12-digit HUCs within identified Focus Areas
- Leverage non-federal resources
- Conservation applied to improve water quality, wildlife habitat, and other natural resource concerns
- Ability to document results





Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI)

- Under this initiative, \$50 million from EQIP, WHIP, and CSP (acres) will be available annually through CCPI.
- Projects will be selected through a competitive process based on applications submitted by partners.
- Projects will be implemented through existing program authorities and procedures.

Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI)

- Partners can recommend flexibilities needed for EQIP, WHIP, and CSP through project proposals.
- State Conservationists will make decisions for 80 percent of funds/acres. Chief will make decisions for remaining 20 percent of funds/acres in the case of multi-state proposals.
- MRBI CCPI funding is above and beyond regular CCPI funding available nationwide.

Conservation Systems Approach

- A conservation systems approach implements multiple practices and management techniques that work together to address water quality nutrient issues at the edge of farm fields.
- Practices
 - Core
 - Supporting

CORE CONSERVATION PRACTICES

AVOIDING

- 328 - Conservation Crop Rotation
- 340 - Cover Crop
- 590 - Nutrient Management

CONTROLLING

- 329 - Residue & Tillage Management - No Till/Strip Till
- 330 - Contouring
- 345 - Residue & Tillage Management - Mulch Till
- 346 - Residue & Tillage Management - Ridge Till
- 412 - Grassed Waterway
- 554 - Drainage Water Management
- 585 - Stripcropping
- 600 - Terrace
- 635 - Wastewater Treatment Strip

TRAPPING

- 332 - Contour Buffer Strips
- 390 - Riparian Herbaceous Cover
- 391 - Riparian Forest Buffer
- 393 - Filter Strip
- 601 - Vegetative Barriers
- 656 - Constructed Wetland
- 657 - Wetland Restoration
- 658 - Wetland Creation
- 659 - Wetland Enhancement
- 747 - Denitrifying Bioreactor



SUPPORTING CONSERVATION PRACTICES

AVOIDING

- 313 - Waste Storage Facility
- 317 - Composting Facility
- 327 - Conservation Cover
- 381 - Silvopasture Establishment
- 382 - Fence
- 472 - Access Control
- 511 - Forage Harvest Management
- 512 - Pasture & Hayland Planting
- 528 - Prescribed Grazing
- 558 - Roof Runoff Structure
- 561 - Heavy Use Area Protection
- 612 - Tree & Shrub Planting
- 632 - Solid/Liquid Waste Separation Facility
- 633 - Waste Utilization
- 634 - Waste Transfer
- 646 - Shallow Water Management

CONTROLLING

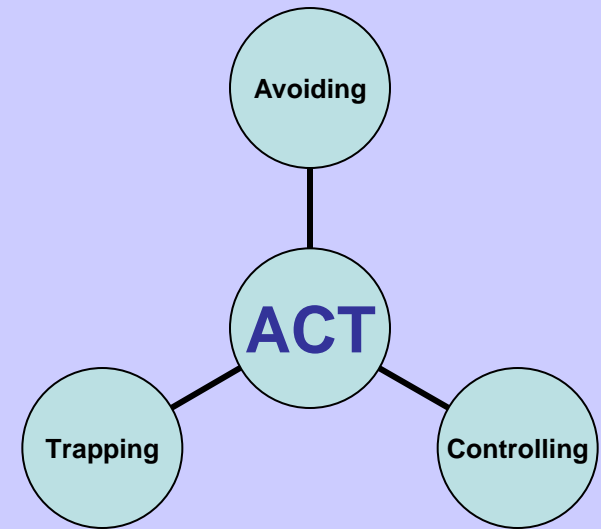
- 324 - Deep Tillage
- 342 - Critical Area Planting
- 362 - Diversion
- 386 - Field Border
- 410 - Grade Stabilization Structure
- 447 - Tailwater Recovery
- 449 - Irrigation Water Management
- 484 - Mulching
- 533 - Pumping Plant
- 587 - Structure for Water Control
- 606 - Subsurface Drainage
- 607 - Surface Drainage
- 620 - Underground Outlet
- 638 - Water & Sediment Control Basin
- 430FF - Irrigation Water Conveyance, Pipeline

TRAPPING

- 342 - Critical Area Planting
- 350 - Sediment Basin
- 356 - Dike
- 410 - Grade Stabilization Structure
- 533 - Pumping Plant
- 587 - Structure for Water Control
- 638 - Water & Sediment Control Basin

Avoiding, Controlling, Trapping (ACT)

- Avoiding
 - Nutrient Management
 - Rate, Timing, Form, Methods
- Controlling
 - Residue & Tillage Management
 - Drainage Water Management
- Trapping
 - Buffers
 - Wetland designed for nutrient removal



Additional Programs

- NRCS Conservation Programs
 - Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)
\$5 million in FY's 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013
 - Wetland Reserve Enhancement Program (WREP)
\$25 million in FY's 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013
- Other Federal Programs
 - Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
 - Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
 - EPA 319
- State and Other Partners' Programs



Monitoring and Evaluation

Measuring benefits/outcomes will be complicated by three factors:

- Establishing a baseline for participating watersheds.
- Lag time between practice application and measurable results. (Range 2-15 years.)
- Density and geographic location of acres treated relative to acres contributing to nutrient loading.



Monitoring and Evaluation

Three-Tiered Approach:

- Field Scale
- Small Watershed Scale
(12-digit HUC)
- Large Watershed Scale
(8-digit HUC)



Monitoring and Evaluation

- CCPI RFP will include:
 - specific monitoring criteria with types of activities to be conducted,
 - number of sites per watershed at each scale,
 - number of monitoring occurrences annually and,
 - needed reports.
- Reporting of nitrogen and phosphorus impacts throughout the watershed will be needed.



Next Steps

- Partners have a crucial role in encouraging and supporting producer participation.
- Partners also may provide input through participation in State Technical Committees.



Partner Participation

- Educating the public
- Conducting outreach activities
- Committing staff to provide technical assistance and educational activities



Partner Participation

- Assisting with monitoring, evaluation, and assessment activities
- Submitting proposals (or partner with groups submitting proposals) for CCPI, CIG, and WREP
- Targeting your organization's programs in MRBI focus areas
- Designating a point of contact for coordination and collaboration



Questions?

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