Alabama's Conservation Rebates Reconstructed

ALABAMA SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Alabama's Bourbon, Bullets & Bonding: How Our Annual Staff Retreat Increased Productivity







What do you mean by Reconstructed?



The Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Committee tackled its rusty and antiquated Conservation Incentive Program (CIP) to make it more concise and user-friendly. We were tired of funding recycled, unfunded NRCS EQIP applications and decided to target small farmers not being served by NRCS programs. That new focus, coupled with increased state funding and new management tools, breathed new life into the tired program.

KEY WORDS

Feral swine are a hot topic among legislators



The Lt. Governor's Chief of Staff who is a big advocate of ours said “Don’t use Cost Share”

Meet with your Legislators





USING KEY WORDS CHANGED OUR REBATE FUNDING FROM $0 TO $1.34 MILLION

- Increasing funding to $20,000 for all 67 counties is a significant boost for environmental sustainability and conservation.
- Collaborating with the Alabama Association of Conservation Districts and emphasizing key words was crucial in securing this funding. It will enhance soil and water conservation efforts, benefiting the environment and local communities.
- This shows how advocacy, collaboration, and persuasive language can positively impact state-level policy and resource allocation for critical conservation programs.

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX



Environmental Quality Incentive Program









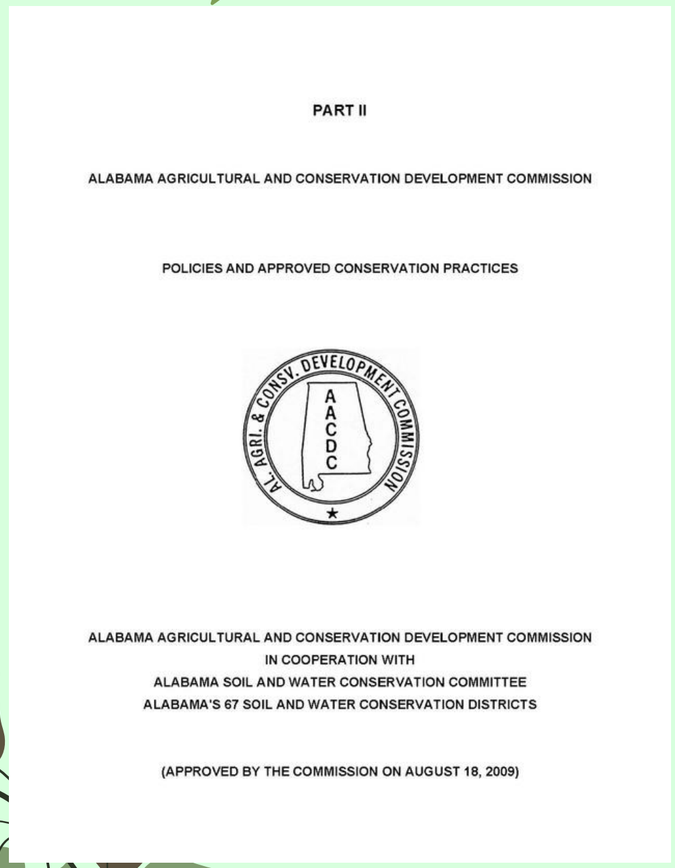


Interacting on Social Media to Cultivate Fresh Ideas



Promoting CIP through AL.com

Out with the OLD
In with the NEW



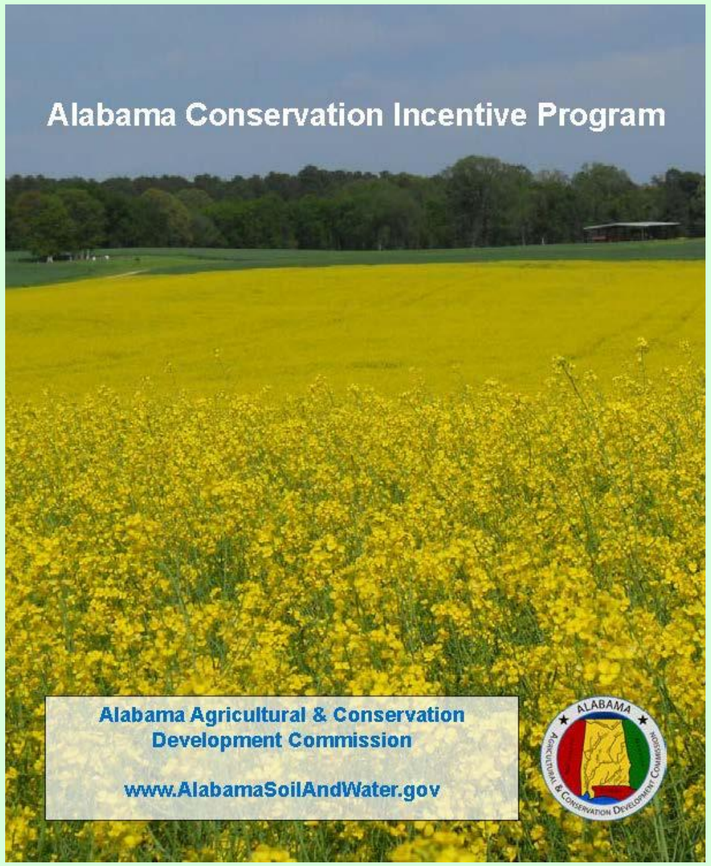
PART II

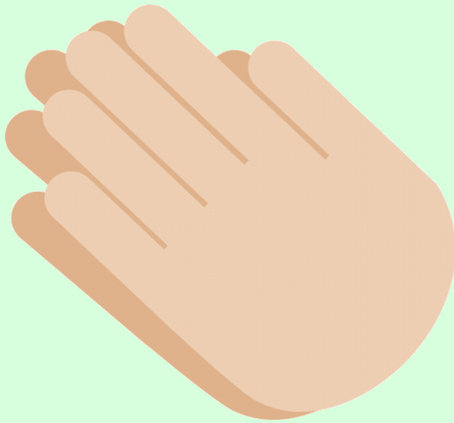
ALABAMA AGRICULTURAL AND CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

POLICIES AND APPROVED CONSERVATION PRACTICES

ALABAMA AGRICULTURAL AND CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
IN COOPERATION WITH
ALABAMA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
ALABAMA'S 67 SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

(APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION ON AUGUST 18, 2009)



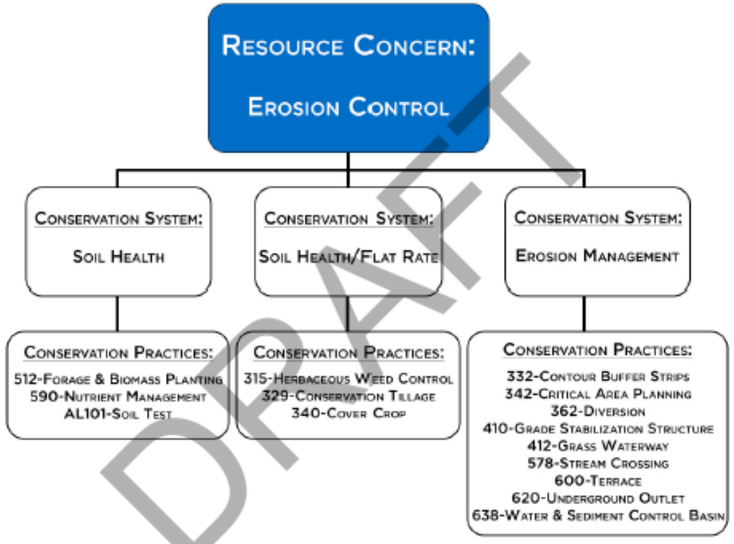


Conservation Incentive Program New Direction

RESOURCE CONCERNS

- EROSION CONTROL
- FORESTRY
- WATER QUALITY
- WILDLIFE

II. Resource Concern: Erosion Control



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Alabama Practice Standard

Conservation System: Soil Health

– To reduce erosion, maximize water infiltration, improve nutrient cycling, save money on inputs, and ultimately improve the resiliency of their working land.

APPLICABLE PRACTICES:

SOIL AMENDMENT (AL101) Develop a plan that will assist producers in improving management and nutrient use by matching needs more efficiently and reducing excess nutrients in runoff.

SOIL TESTING (AL102) Collect and analyze soil parameters based on soil health resource concerns and planning objective.

FORAGE & BIOMASS PLANTING (512) Prevent soil erosion and improve water quality by establishing native or introduced forages in fields or pastures.

POLICIES:

Applicant may complete one or more practices to improve soil health. Practice will be estimated on a per unit basis and paid on an actual cost basis. Applicant must provide receipts, invoices and canceled checks documenting actual cost incurred. Applicant will be paid 75% of actual cost. Designated technicians must observe and confirm completed practice. Local SWCD will set a cap for practice.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Refer to Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Practice Standard for AL101.
Refer to NRCS Field Office Technical Guide for Conservation Practice Standard for 512, 590.

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AL101 / Soil Amendment Practice Standard

PURPOSE - Soil amendments shall be applied, as needed, to adjust soil pH to the specific range of the crop for optimum availability and utilization of nutrients according to a current soil test.

RESOURCE CONCERN - Improving soil health and reducing erosion through the application of soil amendments is a critical practice in sustainable agriculture and land management. Soil amendments can enhance soil structure, fertility, and water-holding capacity, thereby mitigating erosion and promoting healthier plant growth.

MANAGEMENT - Regularly monitor the soil health, erosion control measures, and plant growth to assess the effectiveness of your amendments. Adjust your practices as needed over time. Application of all nutrients must correspond as closely as practical with plant nutrient uptake. Regular soil testing and ongoing maintenance are crucial for achieving and maintaining healthy soil and erosion control.

REQUIREMENTS - This practice applies to all lands where plant nutrients and soil amendments are applied. Adjust the soil's pH by adding lime (to raise pH) or sulfur (to lower pH) if necessary. Soil test analyses shall be conducted by Auburn University Soil Testing Laboratory or other laboratories that are accredited soil testing laboratories that are accepted in The North American Proficiency Testing Program (Soil Science Society of America) http://www.naptprogram.org/ program and accepted by ACES.

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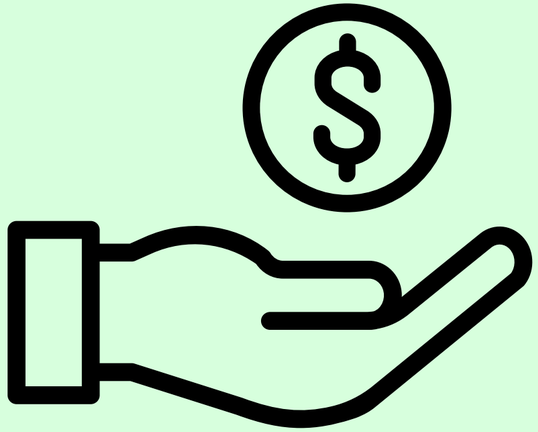
Rebate or Flat Rate

75% Rebate

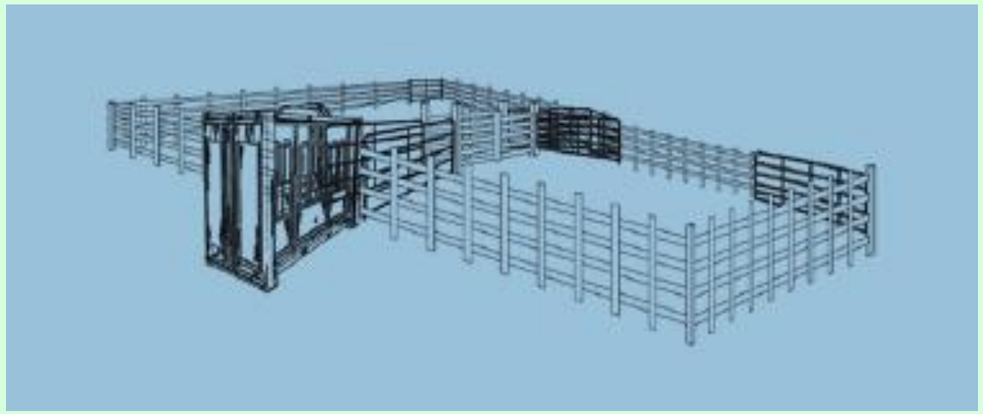
Majority of the conservation practices are paid 75% rebate based on receipts

Flat Rate

Cover Crop
Conservation Tillage
Herbaceous Weed Control



NEW CONSERVATION PRACTICES



Soil Amendment
Soil Test
Corral System
Feed Trough
Trapping Assistance
Advanced Irrigation Management Tools

Growing Together

Growing our Rebate program to make a positive impact to meet our producers needs while growing our partnerships



Partners

Alabama Soil & Water Conservation Committee
Alabama Soil & Water Conservation Committee
Alabama Association of Conservation Districts





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ALABAMA
SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION
COMMITTEE

Thank You