



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service



# PL-566 Overview Webinar

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Presented by  
Oregon Natural Resources Conservation Service  
and Farmers Conservation Alliance  
March 7, 2023



# Agenda

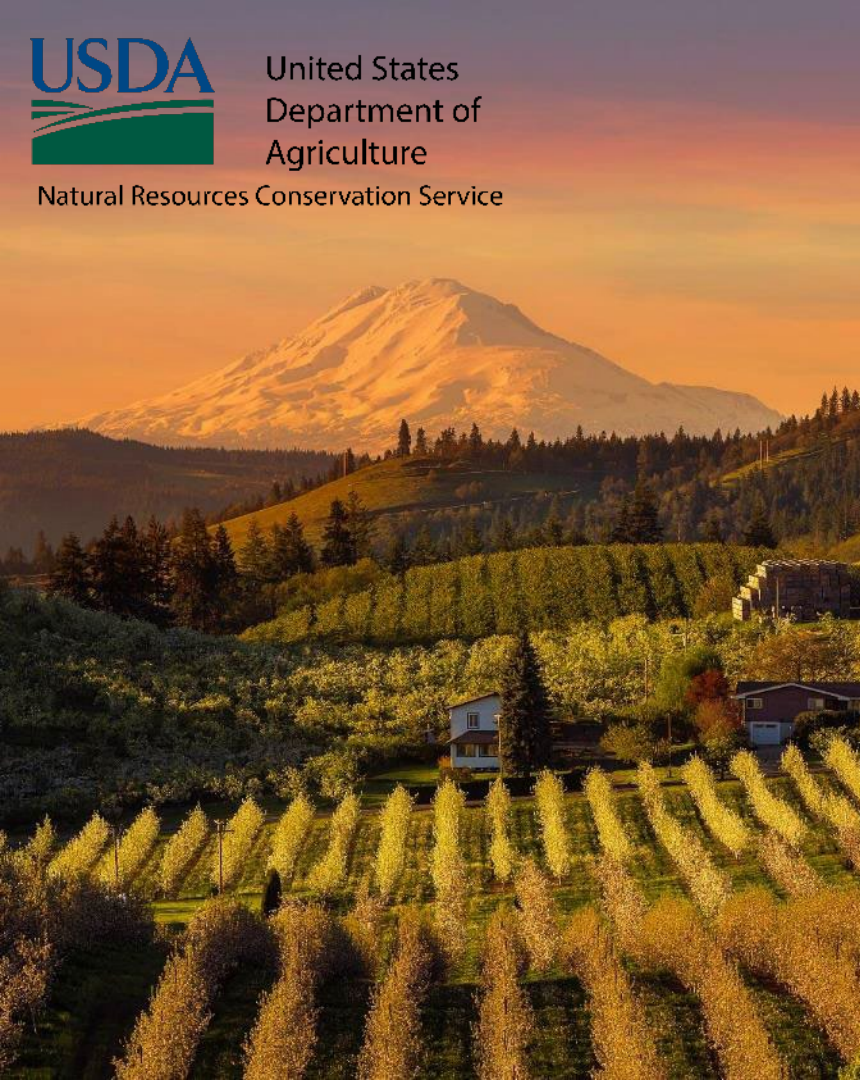
1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Presentation of PL-566 Information
3. Question and Answer Session

**Objective:** An introduction to what the PL-566 program is, how to use it, and how to learn more.



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## United States Dept. of Agriculture's **Natural Resources Conservation Service**

**Our Mission:** We deliver conservation solutions so agricultural producers can protect natural resources and feed a growing world.

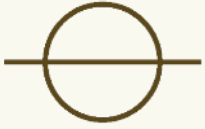
**Our Vision:** A world of clean and abundant water, healthy soils, resilient landscapes, and thriving agricultural communities through voluntary conservation.

**Landscape Conservation Initiatives:** NRCS uses Landscape Conservation Initiatives to accelerate the benefits of voluntary conservation programs, such as cleaner water and air, healthier soil and enhanced wildlife habitat.

# Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (PL-566) Program Overview

- Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act of 1956 (Public Law 83-566)
- Managed and funded by NRCS
  - Financial and Technical Assistance for Watershed Plans
  - Construction and Design Assistance for Watershed Projects





## **Farmers Conservation Alliance**

Farmers Conservation Alliance (FCA) is a nonprofit organization that is dedicated to the modernization of irrigation systems for the benefit of agriculture, the environment, and community.



# Success Stories



## COMMUNITY



**600**

Landowners  
Benefited

**60**

Canal miles converted  
to pressurized pipe



## PROJECT COSTS

**\$92M**

Implemented  
construction funding



## ENERGY

**4,877 MWh**

Annual energy  
conserved



## WATER RESOURCES

**62 cfs**

(Cubic ft/second)  
water saved



## PL-566 Program Overview

- 250,000 acre Watershed
- Funding Eligibility
  - \$25M with an Environmental Assessment
  - >\$25M with an Environmental Impact Statement and Congressional Approval
- Authorized EA or EIS necessary for funding

# Who is Eligible: “Sponsoring Local Organization”

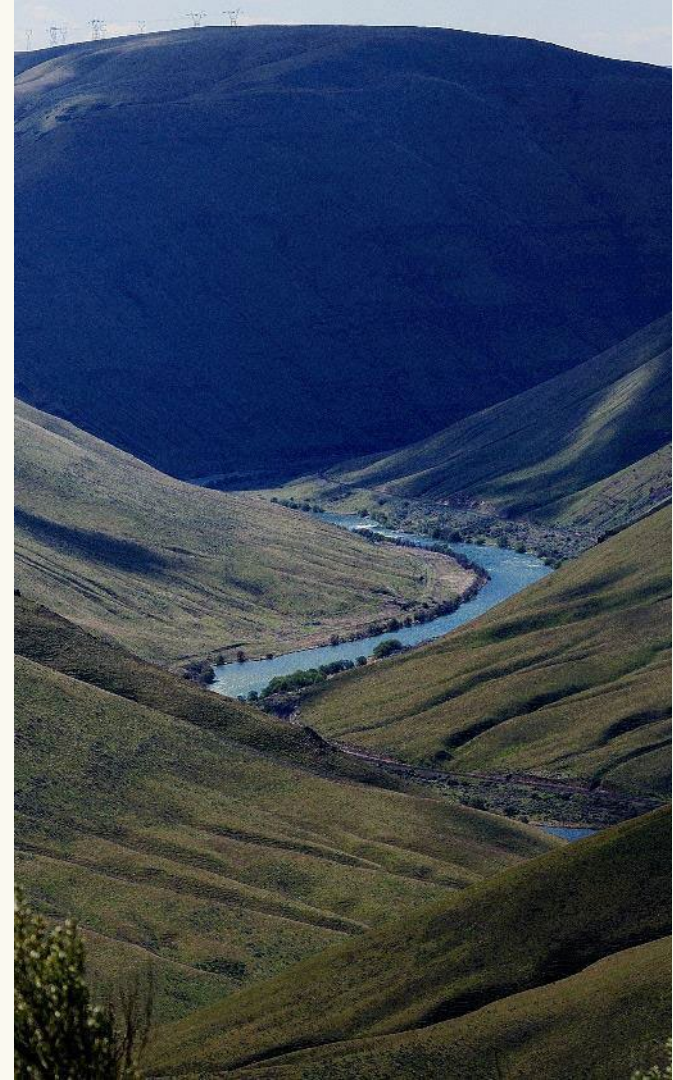
- Indian or Tribal Organizations
- Soil or Water Conservation Districts
- Flood Prevention and Control Districts
- Irrigation Companies or Water User Associations (not being operated for profit)
- Entity with legal authority to carry out, maintain, and operate works of improvement





## **Responsibilities:** Sponsoring Local Organization

- Participate in the watershed project planning process
- Arrange and encourage public participation
- Obtain all land, real property, water, and other rights
- Obtain all required permits
- Carry out the construction and installation of project measures as well as long term operation and maintenance
- Finance match funding + operation and maintenance expenses



## Types of Projects: “Eligible Purposes”

- Flood Prevention Flood Damage Reduction
- Watershed Protection
- Public Recreation
- Public Fish and Wildlife
- Agricultural Water Management
- Municipal and Industrial Water Supply
- Water Quality Management
- Watershed Structure Rehabilitation





## **Considerations:** Before Beginning the Process

- Do we qualify as a sponsoring local organization?
- Do we have a clear idea of projects we would like to pursue?
- Would our projects fit under an eligible purpose?
- What alternatives are available to address the resource issue?
- What are the projects' benefits? Environmental benefits?
- Are there any barriers that may inhibit constructing the project?
- Who needs to be involved?

# Request For Assistance and PIFR

## Submit a Request For Assistance Letter to NRCS

- Information about the organization
- Overview of proposed project
- Interest / need for funding

## Site Visit

## Complete a Preliminary Investigative Feasibility Report (PIFR)

- Purpose
  - Confirm eligibility for program and any barriers
  - Initial project and action identification
- Timing



# Planning Process

## Multi-year process

## NEPA and PL-566 Requirements

- Co-operating agency involvement

## Initial engineering and costing necessary

## Multiple review periods

- Public
- NRCS State Office Review
- NRCS National Watershed Management Center
- NRCS National Headquarter Review



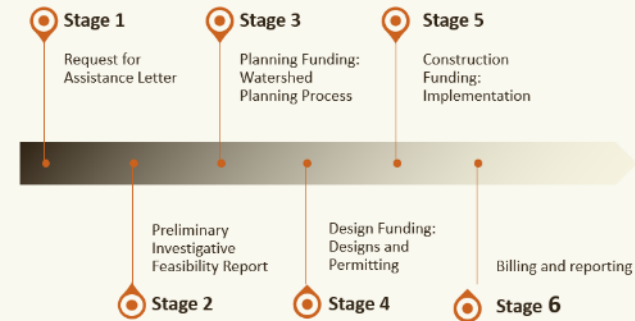
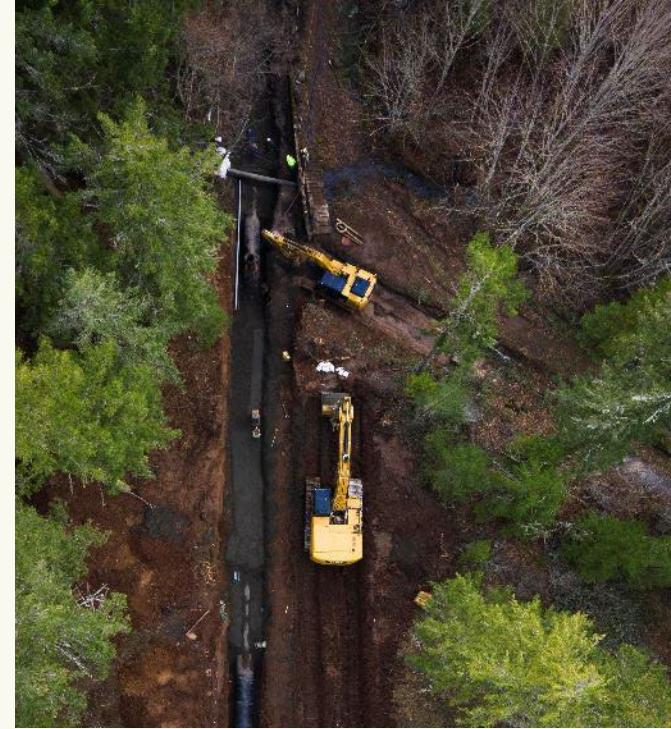
# Design and Construction

## Design

- 100% design funding available
- Designs must...
  - Meet NRCS engineering specifications
  - Estimate project and annual operation costs
  - Include operation and maintenance and a quality assurance plan
  - Require NRCS review and approval

## Construction

- Phased construction possible
- Engineering and permits complete prior to funding
- Match requirements





# Potential Sources for Non-Federal Matching Funds

## **Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB)**

- OWRD water project grant

## **Department of Environment Quality (DEQ)**

- Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund

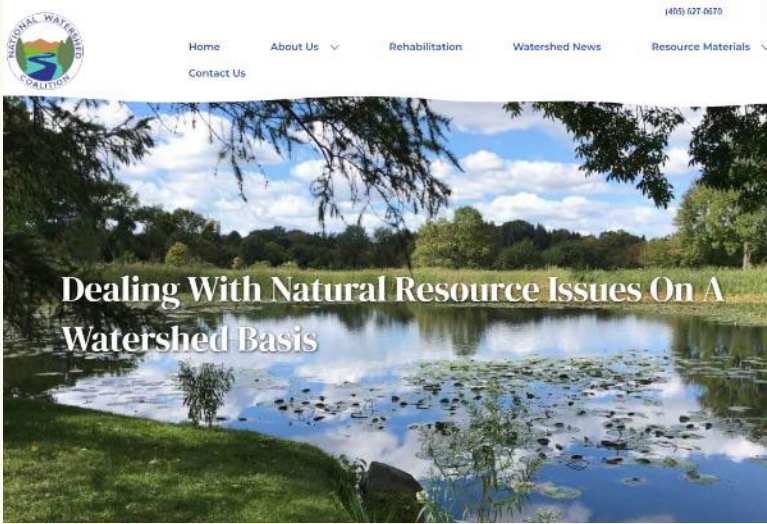
## **State Legislature**

- Appropriations process

# Keys to Success

- 1.** Clear idea of priorities
- 2.** Board support
- 3.** Early stakeholder engagement
- 4.** Capacity to support the process
- 5.** Primary point of contact
- 6.** Match
- 7.** Commitment to long-term O&M






# How to Learn More


## Internet Resources

- National Watershed Coalition  
[Home](#) | [National Watershed Coalition](#)
- NRCS OR Webpage  
[Home](#) | [NRCS Oregon \(usda.gov\)](#)
- Watershed Program Webpage  
[Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations Program](#) | [NRCS \(usda.gov\)](#)



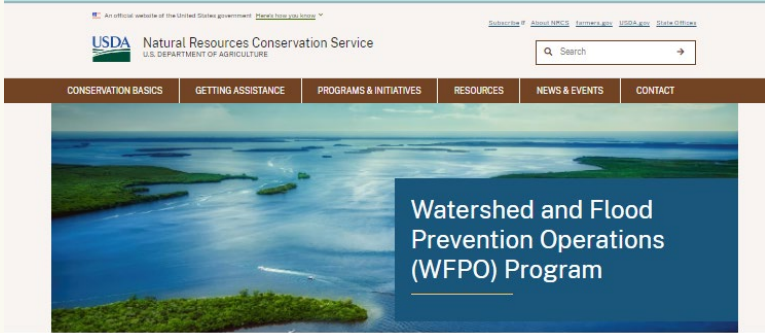
## National Watershed Coalition Assistance to Watershed Project Sponsors

The National Watershed Coalition (NWC) maintains a tradition of providing assistance to watershed project sponsors. Assistance may be provided in person or by telephone and email. Other opportunities for assistance are found in information and education materials posted on the NWC website. The NWC also provides a number of regional and national workshops and training sessions.



The NWC membership is comprised of national, regional and local organizations and individuals that are involved in watershed projects. Our membership gives the coalition a wealth of expertise and project knowledge that can be shared. This network of staff and members can be mobilized to provide guidance, consultation and

The NWC conducts a variety of workshops and training sessions on subjects such as operation and maintenance, securing funding for O&M, rehabilitation, and other watershed topics. The NWC also sponsors a biennial National Watershed Conference.



Home > Programs & Initiatives > Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (WFPO) Program

### WATERSHED PROGRAMS - WFPO

The Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention (WFPO) Program helps units of federal, state, local and federally recognized tribal governments (project sponsors) protect and restore watersheds.

### On This Page

- [CONTACT INFORMATION](#)
- [RELATED NEWS AND EVENTS](#)



# Is PL-566 A Good Fit?

## NRCS Locally Led Process

- Are you prepared to pursue a Watershed project?
- Are there other NRCS programs that would be a better fit?
- Are other partners interested?

### Before Beginning the Process

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6. Match
7. Commitment to long-term O&M

# Question and Answer Session





**Thank You for Your Participation**

The USDA-NRCS is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.