



***Fast Facts:***

- *Special rice-focused CSP sign-up open in 12 Texas counties.*
- *Special partnership among Texas NRCS, LCRA, Ducks Unlimited, and USA Rice.*
- *Applications must be received by 2 March 2018 to be considered for this funding cycle.*
- *Addresses resource concerns of water quantity, water quality, and waterfowl habitat.*

**New Conservation Stewardship Program sign-up available  
for Texas rice producers**

LCRA, Ducks Unlimited and USA Rice work with NRCS to conserve working ricelands

**Read release online »**

**TEMPLE, Texas – Jan. XX, 2018** - The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is accepting applications for the new Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) as part of the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) efforts supported by the Lower Colorado River Authority and assisted by the [USA Rice – Ducks Unlimited Stewardship Partnership](#).

This special CSP initiative is specifically for Texas rice producers. The program continually accepts applications but will evaluate and rank applications accepted by March 2, 2018. For more general information please view <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/csp>.

NRCS helps private landowners improve their farming business while implementing conservation practices that help ensure the sustainability of their entire operation. NRCS plans to enroll up to 10 million acres in CSP in 2018.

The NRCS CSP special project assists landowners and rice producers who voluntarily implement conservation and management practices that aim to improve irrigation water management, control sediment and nutrient runoff, and provide waterfowl habitat on rice production lands.

This special RCPP CSP project area includes rice production acreage in 12 counties, including Brazoria, Calhoun, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Jackson, Jefferson, Lavaca, Liberty, Matagorda, Waller and Wharton Counties. A special emphasis is placed on Colorado, Wharton and Matagorda counties. All interested rice producers are encouraged to apply.

This project allots 35,000 acres of CSP in 2018 specifically to Texas rice growers. Applications must be received by NRCS Field Offices by March 2, 2018 to be considered for this funding cycle.

“The overall CSP offers agricultural producers and forest landowners payments for actively managing, maintaining, and expanding conservation activities like cover crops, ecologically-based pest management, irrigation water management, and pollinator and beneficial insect habitat – all while maintaining active agriculture production on their land,” said Texas NRCS State Conservationist Salvador Salinas. “CSP also encourages the adoption of cutting-edge technologies and new management techniques such as precision agriculture applications, on-site carbon storage and planting for high carbon sequestration rate, and new soil amendments to improve water quality.”

John Hofmann, executive vice president of Water at LCRA, said: “We are excited to be working closely with Texas NRCS, Ducks Unlimited and rice producers to increase water supplies for the future. It’s important to not just develop new supplies, but also to implement strong on-farm water conservation practices as we move forward.”

“NRCS has updated the program to help producers better evaluate their conservation options and the benefits to their operations and natural resources,” said Texas Rice Stewardship Coordinator Kirby Brown. “Partnership staff can help producers see up front why they are or are not meeting stewardship thresholds, and allow them to pick practices and enhancements that work for their conservation objectives. These tools also enable producers to see potential payment scenarios for conservation early in the process.”

Producers interested in CSP are recommended to contact their [local USDA service center](#) or visit [www.nrcs.usda.gov/GetStarted](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/GetStarted). For more help contact Texas Rice Stewardship staff Kirby Brown at (210) 213-2805 or [kbrown2@ducks.org](mailto:kbrown2@ducks.org), and Dennis Neuman at (512) 373-5736 or [dneuman@ducks.org](mailto:dneuman@ducks.org).

**Ducks Unlimited Inc. is the world's largest nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving North America's continually disappearing waterfowl habitats. Established in 1937, Ducks Unlimited has conserved more than 14 million acres thanks to contributions from more than a million supporters across the continent. Guided by science and dedicated to program efficiency, DU works toward the vision of wetlands sufficient to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow and forever. For more information on our work, visit [www.ducks.org](http://www.ducks.org).**

**Media Contact:**

Andi Cooper

601-956-1936

[acooper@ducks.org](mailto:acooper@ducks.org)

@DUSouthernNews

