

## **NRCS Update & Farm Bill Programs for 2021**

Since 1935 the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has been “helping people help the land.” The NRCS has a proud history of supporting America’s farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners. As the USDA’s primary, private lands conservation agency we use objective, reliable science to assist our partners, and communities to make decisions about their natural resources.

The NRCS staff also administer personal conservation and financial assistance programs to private landowners of Manistee and Benzie Counties. These programs help landowners to offset some of the cost involved in implementing conservation practices. In 2019 the Bear Lake NRCS office funded 14 applications, equating to \$211,970.00 of Farm Bill assistance to landowners.

This year the Bear Lake NRCS office is processing 27 applications for Farm Bill Conservation Programs. Twenty-two of those are for Manistee County and five are for Benzie County. Given the implications of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and implementation of new software systems, approvals for some of these applications are still pending. If you have submitted an application and would like to discuss the status of your personal application at this time, please contact Scott Hughey or Tyler Dula at the Bear Lake NRCS Service Center any time during normal business hours.

If you are interested in applying for 2021 Farm Bill Conservation Programs do not hesitate to contact our office and set up a free site evaluation as the list of 2021 applications are already coming through. Here are some of the common practices being installed with Farm Bill assistance in your area: Invasive Species Removal, Native Grass and Wildflower Establishment, Sustainable Grazing Practices, Forest Stand Improvement, Written Forest Management Plans, Abandoned Orchard Removal and many more.

Bear Lake NRCS Office (covers Benzie County!)

231-889-9666 ext 3

[Scott.hughey@usda.org](mailto:Scott.hughey@usda.org)

[Tyler.dula@usda.org](mailto:Tyler.dula@usda.org)