



Press Release

For Immediate Release
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FDCE Awarded USDA Funding Through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

Springfield, OH (National Headquarters) – August 29, 2022 – The USDA [recently announced](#) a \$197 million investment in local conservation projects through the partner-driven Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). FDCE is proud to announce it is one of the recipients of this award and are excited to start the RCPP project.

With the goal of advancing new, innovative conservation projects including efforts to mitigate climate change and improve water quality, RCPP leverages partner resources to achieve its aims. Its purpose is to focus on challenges faced by agricultural producers in the conservation field.

The RCPP is designed to work with conservation experts in their local areas to resolve these agricultural issues. By collaborating with partners equipped with extensive knowledge and resources in their specific region, the program can make a greater impact on local conservation efforts across the country.

There are two different opportunities for funding through the program: the RCPP Classic and the RCPP Alternative Funding Arrangements (AFA). While the RCPP Classic uses traditional contracts and easements to partner with landowners, the RCPP AFA allows for more flexible, dynamic approaches to conservation strategies.

The Iowa Climate Smart Switchgrass Cropping System Transition Project

FDCE has been selected to receive funding through the AFA for *The Iowa Climate Smart Switchgrass Cropping System Transition* project. “We’re excited to use this partnership to further our progress on climate-friendly solutions for private landowners across the state” stated Tom Schwartz, FDCE Vice President of Marketing and Project Lead.

As one of three projects in the state of Iowa to receive funding through RCPP, FDCE’s goal is to improve [soil health](#), [carbon sequestration](#), and [nutrient runoff](#). At the same time, FDCE aims to increase profits for southern Iowan farmers through a Climate Smart Switchgrass Cropping System (CSSGCS).

To reach these goals, the project includes four main objectives. Schwartz identified, “First, we will transition 5,000 acres of vulnerable cropland and pastureland into conservation [switchgrass](#), to enhance water quality and reduce soil erosion. Second, we aim to sequester 1.79 tons of carbon in the soil on each acre of land

every year. Third, we plan to increase the net income of participating farmers enrolled in the project by 15% per acre. Our final objective is to establish CSSGCS as a sustainable, long-term market strategy by validating its effectiveness through this project.”

This project is designated as an RCPP AFA award recipient, meaning FDCE has more flexibility to partner directly with local agricultural producers. With extensive experience in the conservation field, FDCE and team members (NRCS, ANTARES, IDALS, Prairie Lands Bio-Products, Inc. and Restoration Bioproducts, LLC.) look forward to sharing knowledge, expertise, and techniques with private landowners and farmers to achieve collaborative goals.

Participate in the Iowa Climate Smart Switchgrass Cropping System Transition Project

To fulfill the objectives of the RCPP project, FDCE is looking to recruit landowners and farmers to participate. By working alongside local producers in Iowa, FDCE intends to boost participant earnings, improve the health of sensitive land, and reduce the amount of harmful carbon in the atmosphere. This will benefit local landowners in Iowa, as well as contribute to national and global climate mitigation efforts.

Since 2003, FDCE has been collaborating with industry leaders and landowners to complete a wealth of conservation projects through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and other initiatives. We have decades of experience working with local farmers to improve their land and benefit the environment at the same time.

Want to learn more about how you can get involved with our exciting new RCPP project? Reach out to us at FDCE today!

For more information about FDCE visit www.fdcenterprises.com



United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service