



Emergency Conservation Program Signup Deadline has Extended 41 California Counties Impacted 2020 Wildfires

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DAVIS, Calif., Jan. 28, 2021 - USDA's California Farm Service Agency (FSA) has extended the signup deadline for the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) to address damages from the 2020 wildfires that affected 41 counties in California. The start-up date was November 30th and the deadline is now **March 1, 2021**.

"Recovering from natural disasters is never easy, but it's important for producers to call our office as soon as possible to notify FSA of damages," said Jacque Johnson, acting state executive director for FSA in California. "I encourage eligible landowners who haven't participated in USDA programs to contact their FSA county office as soon as possible because customer records will have to be created for these individuals. Additionally, due to COVID-19, FSA offices are not currently open to 'walk in' customers; therefore, it is necessary to call the office and make an appointment."

FSA is accepting ECP applications in Alameda, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Contra Costa, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Kern, Lake, Lassen, Los Angeles, Madera, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Monterey, Napa, Nevada, Plumas, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Tehama, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yolo and Yuba counties. Contact your local FSA office for approved ECP practices.

ECP helps with the cost to restore damaged farmland to pre-disaster conditions. Producers may receive up to 75% of the cost of approved restoration activity. Limited resource, socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers and ranchers may receive up to 90% cost-share assistance.

In most cases, producers must apply for assistance prior to beginning reconstructive work. FSA's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and environmental compliance review process must be completed before any actions are taken. Submitting an application after reconstructive work has been started or completed may not qualify for ECP. Conservation concerns that were present on the land prior to the disaster are not eligible for ECP assistance.

FSA County Committees will evaluate applications based on information provided and if applicable, an on-site inspection of the damaged land, taking into consideration the type and extent of the damage. Submission of an application does not guarantee that cost-share funding will be provided.

For more information on disaster recovery, visit farmers.gov/recover, or contact your local USDA Service Center. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-center-locator.

All USDA Service Centers are open for business, including some that are open to visitors to conduct business in person by appointment only. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with the FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, or any other Service Center agency should call ahead and schedule an appointment. Service Centers that are open for appointments will pre-screen visitors based on health concerns or recent travel, and visitors must adhere to social distancing guidelines. Visitors are required to wear a face covering during their appointment. Field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. Our program delivery staff will be in the office, and they will be working with our producers in office, by phone, and using online tools. Our program delivery staff will be working with our producers by phone, using online tools and in offices by appointment only. More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

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