



E-News

March 14, 2011

Welcome to the March issue of E-news. [Click here to view a version of E-news on the web](#). Can't wait until next month's E-news to hear more about farms, food, and the environment? Check out our [Farmland Report](#) blog where we post regular updates about our work across the country and in the nation's capital.

Working Toward 21st Century Solutions at National Agricultural Landscape Forum

How much land and water do we need to meet present and future demands for food, energy and environmental services? Recognizing tight budgets and multiple resource demands, 21st century solutions will require greater cooperation between farmers and ranchers, federal, state and local governments and private partners to focus on conservation outcomes.



Toward this end, USDA has partnered with us and Farm Foundation NFP to host a [National Agricultural Landscape Forum](#) in Washington D.C. on **April 7-8, 2011**. The forum is guided by a [Blue Ribbon Panel](#) of leaders in agriculture and conservation and is part of the public input process required by the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act (RCA) to improve the effectiveness of federal conservation and rural development programs. Come make your voice heard! [Register now for the opportunity to take part in this critically important dialogue](#).

Charting New Waters Coalition: A Pledge to Protect Our Water

As the single largest user of land and water resources in America, farmers and ranchers can be a major part of the solution to the environmental challenge of water quality. That is why we have joined the [Charting New Waters coalition](#), committing to help preserve our freshwater resources. You, too, can pledge to protect America's waterways by taking our [Clean Water Challenge: Match a Farmer's Commitment](#).



Strong Economic Future Needs Conservation Programs

What's on the horizon for the agriculture economy in 2011? [Our president Jon Scholl offers his reflection from the USDA's annual Ag Outlook Forum](#). The message was clear: the loss of farmland and increased demand for sustainably produced food and fuel puts even more pressure on our working lands. Yet right now, federal funds for conservation are in jeopardy. Help us protect programs that farmers need to provide a healthy future—[ask the Senate to stop cuts to hard-won conservation programs!](#)



Around the Country

At a meeting in Cayuga County, **New York**, [farmers in the Owasco Lake watershed came together to address challenges to water quality regulation](#) in the area.

Anita Zurbrugg, our Midwest Director, Center for Agriculture in the Environment, will speak at the annual meeting of the [Boone County, IL Farmland Protection Project](#) on March 26. The group, one of only three organizations in **Illinois** that focuses on protecting farmland, is located in one of the most development-threatened counties in the Chicago metro area.

The **Wisconsin** Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection released a [Land and Water Conservation Directory](#), providing a listing of valuable resources and agencies working on environmental issues in the state.

[The Congress for New Urbanism](#) will address the close relationship between Madison, **Wisconsin**, and the city's agricultural neighbors in their annual conference.

Help develop real-world projects to address local and regional food issues at the [Making Good Food Work](#) meeting, April 19-21 in Detroit, **Michigan**.

A group of **Pacific Northwest** organizations has outlined six key tenets they pledge to follow as they work toward the 2012 Farm Bill. [The Seattle Farm Bill Principles](#) include a focus on conservation practices, equitable access to healthy foods, and a commitment to strengthening local communities.

[Whole Foods Markets in Florida](#) are helping to get local food moving from farm-to-table more easily. The specialty grocer will now serve as a drop-off point for Community Supported Agriculture programs in the state.

Green Mountain College in **Vermont** will continue its for-credit summer program in sustainable agriculture. In its third year, [the Farm and Food Intensive](#) covers both traditional and more innovative management techniques that incorporate conservation practices.

A researcher out of **Washington** state was recently awarded [the 2011 Wolf Foundation Prize in recognition for his contributions to agriculture research](#). Among the accolades James Cook received involved his work related to the positive impacts of no-till crops.

In **North Carolina**, the conservation coalition, Land for Tomorrow, has released [a report demonstrating the positive impact that land and water conservation have on the economy](#). Among impacted areas are job creation, taxes and tourism.

The **White House** recently released the [America's Great Outdoors Report](#). Among issues addressed were the protection of public and private lands, historic sites and the importance of land trusts to achieve preservation goals.

Beginning April 1, a series of meetings in **Iowa** will [address opportunities to connect women who manage farmland with beginning farmers](#). Women own or co-own nearly half the farmland in the state.

Mark your calendars! On March 14, [general sign-up for the Conservation Reserve Program \(CRP\)](#) will begin, continuing through April 15.

