

IMPROVING AND PROTECTING WATER QUALITY THROUGH VOLUNTARY INCENTIVE BASED PROGRAMS



Presented to a Joint Meeting of the Senate
and House Committees on Agriculture,
Forestry, and Economic Development

March 29, 2016

J. Randy Young, P.E.
Executive Director



Arkansas Natural Resources Commission

- Lead State Agency responsible for Non-point Source Pollution Management
- Charged with Implementing the Arkansas Soil Nutrient and Poultry Litter Utilization Act
- Primarily Voluntary, Incentive Based Programs



Programs to be Covered

- Arkansas Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Program (NPS)
- Nutrient Management Program
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (NRCS)

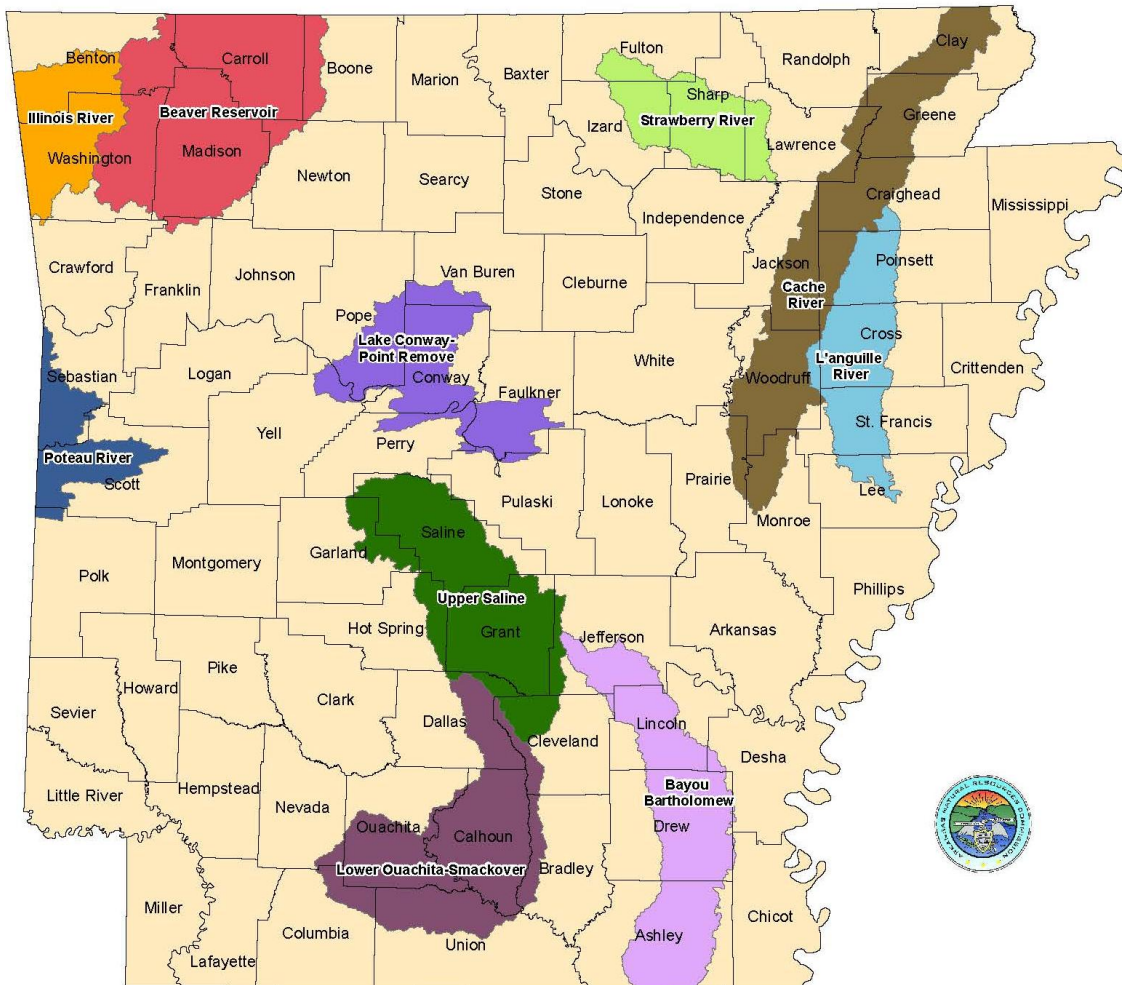


Arkansas Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Program(NPS)

- Goal is to address Nonpoint Source Pollution through voluntary, incentive based projects in Priority Watersheds
- The program is evaluated based in its ability to target streams on the 303d List in priority watersheds and restore the streams to meeting all uses
- Watershed Management Plans must be completed and approved by EPA for Projects to qualify for federal funding (new change)
- Stakeholder Driven – Over 70 Different Groups have participated in the development of the program



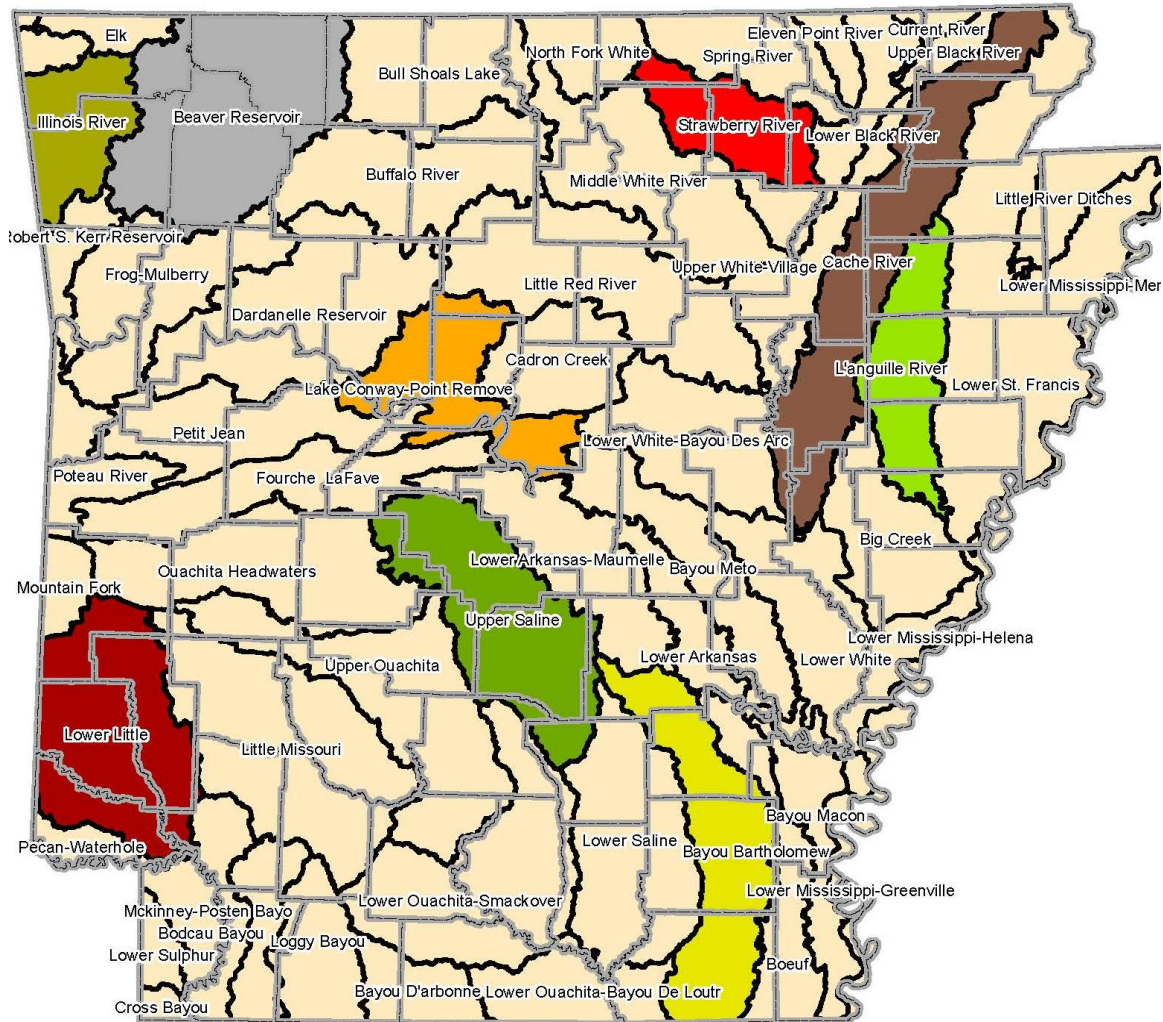
Arkansas Priority Watersheds



- Illinois River
- Upper White River
- Lake Conway - Point Remove
- Bayou Bartholomew
- L'Anguille River
- Upper Saline
- Poteau River
- Lower Ouachita - Smackover
- Strawberry River
- Cache Rive



Watershed Management Plans



- Illinois River
- Upper White River
- Lake Conway - Point Remove
- Bayou Bartholomew
- L'Anguille River
- Upper Saline
- Strawberry River
- Cache River
- Lower Little River



Arkansas Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Program

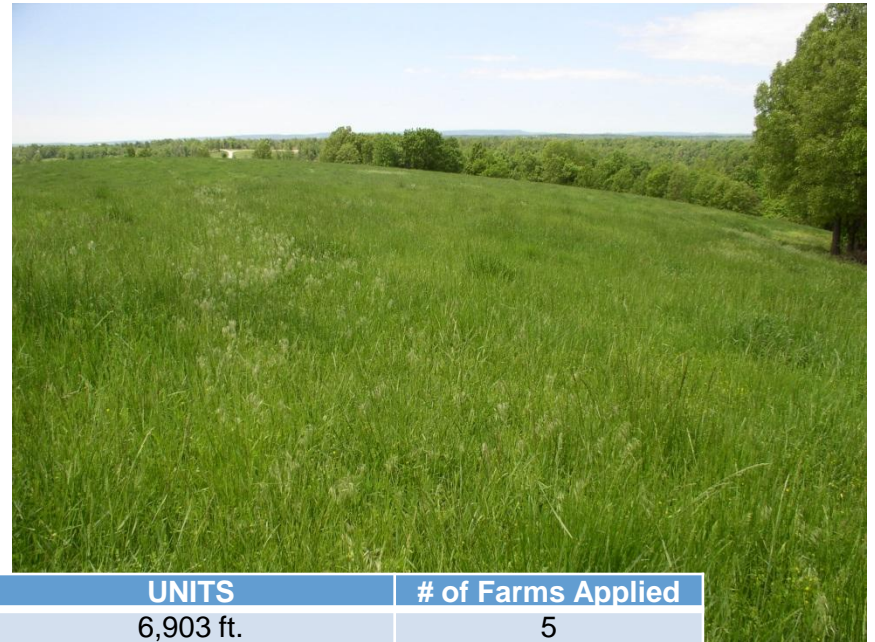
- Clean Water Act – Section 319
- Federal Grant Program
 - Technical and Financial Assistance
 - Education, Training and Technology Transfer
 - Demonstration Projects and Monitoring
- FY 2015 – 2.8 Million in Federal Funds
- Minimum of 43% Match in Non-Federal Funds



West Fork Stream Restoration



Boone County – Bull Shoals Watershed

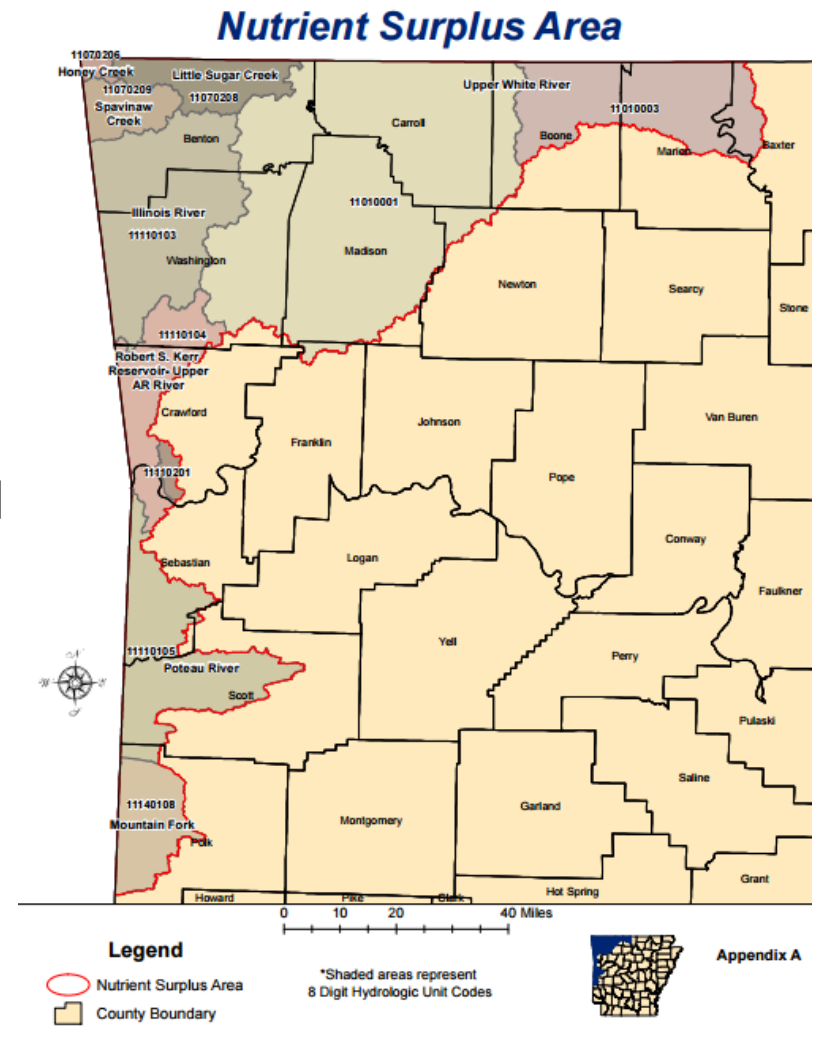


Practice	NRCS Practice Code	UNITS	# of Farms Applied
Fence	382	6,903 ft.	5
Watering Facility	614	13	8
Pipeline	516	16,313 ft.	8
Forage / Biomass Planting	512	356.4 ac	8
Heavy Use Area Protection	561	16	8
Ponds	378	9,482.4 CuYd	7
Brush Management	314	228.10 ac	4
Nutrient Management	590	133.8 ac	1



Arkansas Nutrient Management Program

- Arkansas Soil Nutrient Application and Poultry Litter Utilization Act (2003)
- Program Components
 - Nutrient Management Planning
 - Nutrient Management Planner and Applicator Certification/Training
 - Poultry Feeding Operation Registration Program
- Arkansas Phosphorus Index
- Nutrient Surplus Area



Environmental Quality Incentives Program

- Voluntary Program Through USDA-NRCS
- Agricultural Producers
- Initiatives are focus on Watersheds with Watershed Management Plans developed through the NPS Program and Critical Ground Water Areas
 - Mississippi River Basin Initiative (MRBI)
 - Resource Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)
 - Illinois River Special EQIP



Environmental Quality Incentives Program

- Financial and Technical Assistance
- Structural and Management Conservation Practices
- Program Goals
 - Agricultural Production
 - Environmental Quality



Animal Mortality Facility - EQIP

- Johnson County Poultry Producer
- \$30,000 in EQIP Assistance
- In-vessel Composter
and Associated Facilities
- Dual Benefits
 - Producer has a reliable way to handle routine and catastrophic mortality events
 - Facility will reduce impacts to surface and groundwater resources



Cover Crop Installation - EQIP

- Using grasses and legumes for seasonal cover (winter)
- Arkansas Row Crop Farmers
- \$57 per acre(\$16,000 Max)
- Dual Benefits
 - Producer has less soil loss, better infiltration, increased organic matter, weed suppression, etc.
 - Decreased sediment and nutrient run-off



Conservation Funding

- USDA-NRCS – Arkansas Funding Amounts
 - 2013 – \$183,589,556.65 – 1st
 - 2014 - \$176,894,812.92 – 2nd
 - 2015 - \$177,788,088 – 1st
- Arkansas Conservation Partnership



2014 Arkansas Water Plan Update

- Improving water quality through nonpoint source management
 - A. Water quality is affected by nonpoint sources of pollutants and nonpoint source management projects need state funding in addition to federal funding.
 - B. The Commission will propose legislation to designate funding specifically for financing nonpoint source pollution management programs and implementing nonpoint source management practices.



2014 Arkansas Water Plan Update

- Improving water quality through nonpoint source management (cont.)
 - c. The Commission will collaborate with the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission, the Arkansas Department of Health, the United States Geological Survey, and other state, regional, and local agencies and organizations that engage in or have water quality management interest through:
 1. The biennial Clean Water Act water quality review processes, and
 2. The water quality criteria review to determine the attainment or nonattainment of water quality standards in streams and identify the sources and causes of nonattainment.



2014 Arkansas Water Plan Update

- Improving water quality through nonpoint source management(cont.)
 - D. The Commission **may** encourage the General Assembly to consider the need for nutrient management plans for the application of poultry litter and animal manure in other regions of the state.
 - E. The Commission will leverage funding from multiple sources such as Source Water Protection under the Safe Drinking Water Act, administered through the Arkansas Department of Health, to address nonpoint source pollution in watersheds with drinking water sources.



Questions?

