

Table 1. Summary of 2018 Farm Bill Provisions that Impact Soil Health

Farm Bill & Section	Program	Provision in 2018 Farm Bill	Soil Health Impacts	Links to USDA Agency Information	Provision Category ¹	Impact on soil health (1-5) ²	Link to United States Code	
II Conservation 2201(a)(2)	Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)	CRP Grasslands Initiative	Creates a minimum CRP grassland enrollment of 2 million acres and reduces CRP land, land at risk of development, and land with ecological significance.	Protects vulnerable grazing land to ensure grassland cover and reduces conservation benefits.	https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/crp-grasslands/index	Land Protection	3	16 USC 3831(a)(2)
II Conservation 2201(c)(3)	Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) - CLEAR	CRP Clean Lakes, Estuaries, and Rivers (CLEAR) Initiative	Reserves a minimum 40% of Continuous CRP acreage for partial field water quality practices such as a grass waterway, riparian buffers, prairie strips, saturated buffers, etc.	Dedicates land to install water quality. Many of the practices/preventative for water quality improvement help improve soil health by increasing ground cover, removing tillage, increasing plants and microbial diversity.	FSA 2018FB Overview: https://www.farmers.gov/sites/default/files/documents/FSA-FarmBill2018_WhatsChangedExpanded19.pdf	Land Protection	3	16 USC 3831(c)(3)
II Conservation 2201(c)(3)	Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)	Continuous CRP	Allows continuous enrollment of conservation contracts and other partial field practices. Offers an auction for CRP land through bidding. Minimum enrollment of 8.6 million acres (out of the 27 million acres under 2201(c)(2) in continuous CRP contracts by 2022).	Farmers can enroll land in CRP continuously rather than waiting for a one-time annual general sign up. Most Continuous CRP practices and initiatives focus on soil erosion, water quality, and wildlife habitat, but many such practices will also benefit soil health by an erosion.	https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/continuous-crp/practice-participants/index	Land Protection	3	16 USC 3831(b)(8)
II Conservation 2202	Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) - CREP	CRP Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)	Authorizes CREP allowing funding and implementation of CRP on lands owned by state government, non-government and the federal government to address high priority conservation concerns. It is part of CRP and enrollment is continuous.	Opens up an opportunity for environmentally sensitive acreage to be covered through partnership with matched funding. States can highlight soil health conservation as a high priority concern through eligible conservation practices to reduce soil erosion.	https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/conservation-reserve-enhancement/index	Land Protection	3	16 USC 3831a
II Conservation 2204	Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) - CLEAR30	CLEAR 30 Pilot Program	Allows existing land under CRP to be re-enrolled in a 30 year contract through CLEAR 30 instead of re-enrolling in CRP or not enrolling at all. Only expiring land under CRP contract is eligible.	30 years of the land under contract for the same items listed under the shorter term CRP CLEAR initiative. Allows continued coverage and minimal disturbance of the soil, with additional conservation practices to improve water quality.	No agency information available yet FSA 2018FB Overview: https://www.farmers.gov/sites/default/files/documents/FSA-FarmBill2018_WhatsChangedExpanded19.pdf	Land Protection	3	16 USC 3831(a)
II Conservation 2204	Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) - SHPP	Soil Health and Income Protection Program (SHPP)	Short term contract (3-5 years). Up to 15% of total eligible land on a given farm, the least productive land, is removed and placed into a CRP contract with an estimated 50% of the normal CRP rate, no cost sharing. Beginning, socially disadvantaged, veteran, or limited resource farmers get 75% CRP rental rate and 50% cost share.	Short immediate fix cover the soil with semi-permanent vegetation. Takes land that is otherwise less productive and most likely in poor soil health. Helps conserve a soil rental rate to increase plant cover, reduce tillage and let the soil recover for at least 3 years.	No agency information available yet FSA 2018FB Overview: https://www.farmers.gov/sites/default/files/documents/FSA-FarmBill2018_WhatsChangedExpanded19.pdf	Land Protection Access	5	16 USC 3831(b)
II Conservation 2206(b)(1)	Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)	No reduction in rental rate in emergency haying, grazing, or other emergency response given certain conditions.	Outlines acceptable conditions for haying, grazing, and other practices on CRP land and wildlife without a reduction in the rental rate.	Sustainable grazing can improve soil health, increase acreage to be covered through a farmer's residence of the soil to natural disasters. Prevents damage to soil during risk of a natural emergency.	https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/conservation-reserve-program/emergency-haying-and-grazing/index	Structure Land Protection	3	16 USC 3833(b)(1)(B)
II Conservation 2207(c)	Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)	Reduces annual rental payments	Annual rental payments are reduced to some percentage less than the surveyed and USDA determined county copland and pastured rental rates. Payments are limited to 85% of the estimated rental rate for general enrollment, and continuous enrollment is capped at 90% of the rental rate. Adds an incentive to sign up for continuous CRP through a 30-year enrollment contract equal to 32.5% of the first annual rental payment.	The intention of the change is to reduce cost, reduce impact on land market, and enroll the most sensitive acres vulnerable to soil erosion. May also reduce interest in the program. The goal of the additional incentives to sign up for continuous CRP is to enroll more land to implement water quality conservation practices.	No agency information available yet FSA 2018FB Overview: https://www.farmers.gov/sites/default/files/documents/FSA-FarmBill2018_WhatsChangedExpanded19.pdf	Structure Land Protection	2	16 USC 3834(d)
II Conservation 2208(a)	Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) - TIP	Enhancements to CRP Transition Incentives Program (TIP)	Opens the program to any expiring contract holder whereas previously it was only open to retired or retiring farmers or ranchers. Increases the time allowed for the beginning, socially disadvantaged, or veteran farmer or rancher to begin conservation and land improvements or to begin organic certification on the contracted land from 1 year before the date of termination of the contract to 2 years. Adds a provision that allows flexibility in the length of the sale or lease to accommodate long-term leases and leases with the option to purchase. Adds that the contracts need to be priority for enrollment in CRP or ACEP. Increases the annual funding for this program from \$33 million to \$50 million.	Provides incentives for expiring land to go back into production under sustainable practices, which would help conserve the soil and promote soil health while producing food, fuel, or fiber. Assists beginning, socially disadvantaged, and veteran farmers or ranchers acquire land.	Page not yet updated post-2018 Farm Bill: https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/transition-incentives/index	Access Funding	4	16 USC 3835(f)
II Conservation 2208(b)	Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)	CRP end of contract considerations	Landowners of expiring CRP land can enroll and start implementation of practices in EOP or CSP within 1 year of end of contract. May also begin production practices during 1 year of expiring contract.	Makes it easier to transition from CRP to sustainable farming practices with overlapping financial support. Reduces soil erosion during production. Helps conserve the soil ecosystem generated under CRP.	Page not yet updated post-2018 Farm Bill: https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/transition-incentives/index	Structure Incentives	4	16 USC 3835(a)
II Conservation 2302	Environmental Quality Incentive Program	Climate adaptation added as EOP purpose	EOP may be used to help producers implement practices or make changes to their production systems for "addressing, and mitigating against, increasing weather associated production risks or weather, or other practices" on working lands.	Implementing changes in production that protect against extreme changes in climate include many that help conserve the soil and improve soil health. No till and cover cropping help to reduce soil erosion. Covering stability which helps with water holding capacity and decreases soil erosion.	https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/technical/eop/	Incentives Structure	4	16 USC 3839a
II Conservation 2303	Environmental Quality Incentive Program	Soil health planning and resource conserving on crop rotation planning in EOP	EOP assistance for planning conservation activities now covers soil health planning. Specifically includes planning of comprehensive nutrient management, resource-conserving crop rotations plans, soil health planning, etc.	More incentive for producers to implement soil health improving practices when the planning, which may be a barrier to entry, is also covered under EOP funding and technical assistance.	https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/technical/csp/	Incentives Structure	5	16 USC 3839a-1(b)
II Conservation 2303	Environmental Quality Incentive Program	Soil tests and remediation eligible practices under EOP	Outlines the addition of soil testing and soil remediation as practices approved under EOP.	Soil testing and remediation, as carried out by the producer, are eligible for funding assistance. Potential for increased soil testing and remediation may lead to use of additional funds on the farm. This provision will significantly help urban farmers remediate contaminated soil.	No agency information available yet	Incentives Structure	4	16 USC 3839a-1(b)
II Conservation 2303	Environmental Quality Incentive Program	Definition of soil remediation and soil tests for evaluation of soil health in EOP	Explains what the terms soil testing and soil remediation mean for producers plus the associated measurements and actions.	Soil remediation includes practices that regenerate and sustain the soil. Soil testing allows for the producer to understand how degraded their soil may be so how they can improve it.	No agency information available yet	Structure	2	16 USC 3839a-1(b) and 16 USC 3839a-11(b)
II Conservation 2304(a)(1)	Environmental Quality Incentive Program	Improvement in EOP advance payments	States must automatically offer the option of advanced payments to limited resource, socially disadvantaged, beginning, or veteran farmers and ranchers. States must also allow producers to request advance payments as an option. If elected by a producer, at least 50% of the agreed upon funding may be provided in advanced for all costs related to purchases or contracting (previously capped at 50%). Makes it easier for producers to implement conservation practices and helps incentivize their involvement in conservation practices.	Eases the front loaded water and costs associated with implementing practices related to soil health improvements for socially disadvantaged, beginning and veteran farmers and ranchers.	No agency information available yet	Access	2	16 USC 3839a-2(a)(4)
II Conservation 2304(b)(2)	Environmental Quality Incentive Program	States can select 10 high priority practices that are eligible up to 90% practice cost	The 10 high priority practices selected in a state may receive up to 90% of the costs associated with the implementation of a range of management of soil practices.	States can choose to focus on soil health improving practices and provide more incentive for farmers to participate with 90% cost coverage for implementation.	https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/stemenv/ca/states/	Incentives Structure	4	16 USC 3839a-2(a)(7)
II Conservation 2304(c)	Environmental Quality Incentive Program	Includes grazing management practices with EOP livestock allocation	Grazing management practices can be funded under the EOP livestock allocation. 50% of EOP funds are allocated to practices related to livestock production, down to 10% from 2014 Farm Bill.	Grazing management helps maintain plant cover and minimize wildfires on range and pastures. Grazing can also help to increase plant and wildlife diversity which decreases soil erosion, increases soil microbial communities and increases soil health.	https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/technical/eop/	Incentives Structure	3	16 USC 3839a-2(a)
II Conservation 2304(d)	Environmental Quality Incentive Program	Increases payment cap for organic tillage practice initiative	Increases the payment cap for conservation practices through EOP under the organic tillage practice initiative from \$500 to \$80,000 during any 6 year period to \$143,000 total from 2019 through 2023.	Increased opportunity for organic producers to implement and receive funding for soil health improving practices.	https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/eop/7&cid=ncs143_08224	Funding	3	16 USC 3839a-2(a)(3)
II Conservation 2304(g)	Environmental Quality Incentive Program	Establishes a new Conservation Contract under EOP	Creates a new incentive option under EOP. Three eligible priority resource concerns will be selected by the Federal government/States within the implementation area of the relevant land uses within those areas. In entering the contract producers must agree to address at least 1 eligible priority resource concern throughout implementation and management of an incentive practice throughout the entirety of the contract. Contracts have terms between 5-10 years. This will not be offered until FY2020.	It is possible that soil health may be one of the three eligible priority resource concerns addressed by this new Conservation Incentive Contracts in EOP.	No agency information available yet	Incentives Structure	3	16 USC 3839a-2(i)
II Conservation 2304(h)	Conservation Innovation Grants under EOP	Soil health demonstration trial under Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) on-farm innovation	Increases a portion of CIG funds, provides incentives to producers to test and increase soil carbon. Funds will also help to establish measurement protocols in assessing changes in soil health and soil carbon after implementation of soil health conservation practices. USDA mandated to initiate a study on changes in soil health due to conservation practices, and then report on the results annually to Congress.	Direct mandated funding for implementing, monitoring, and studying practices that increase soil health and soil carbon.	https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/csp/7&cid=ncs143_045903	Structure Data & Incentives	5	16 USC 3839a-8(a)(7)
II Conservation 2307(b)	Conservation Innovation Grants under EOP	Air Quality Concerns from Agricultural Operations within Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)	Increases funding from \$25 million to \$37.5 million annually through 2023 to grant producers with cost effective and innovative technologies to address a State's air quality concerns.	Could use soil health promoting technologies to address air quality concerns, such as greenhouse gas mitigation and carbon sequestration.	https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/quality/7&cid=ncs143_07866	Funding	3	16 USC 3839a-8(b)
II Conservation 2307(c)	Conservation Innovation Grants under EOP	Conservation reporting and practice database, includes soil health within CIG	USDA must compile, maintain, and make publicly available a database of conservation practices, their impacts, and a list of recommended new and effective practices. USDA must also report back to Congress every 5 years on the results of CIG and economic outcomes. There is emphasis and specific mention of the soil health demonstration trial and soil health practices.	Holds the government accountable for making and maintaining information available to the public for ease of assessing and implementing conservation efforts. There is a focus on soil health promoting practices. This will potentially make incorporation of soil health conservation practices for producers an easier choice.	Page not yet updated post-2018 Farm Bill: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp/	Data	4	16 USC 3839a-8(d)
II Conservation 2308(a)	Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	Adds eligible activities to CSP including soil health planning and climate adaptation activities	Explicitly mentions the eligibility of soil health planning as a conservation activity under CSP. Also covers the possibility that may assist in mitigating impacts of severe climate events.	Financial assistance available under CSP for soil health planning may increase incentives for farmers to participate with practices that promote soil health. Also, covers the planning of activities to help mitigate extreme climate events which also increase soil health.	Page not yet updated post-2018 Farm Bill: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp/	Incentives Structure	5	16 USC 3839a-21(e)
II Conservation 2308(a)(2)	Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	Strengthens targeting stewardship threshold in CSP	Raises the 7% annual reserve of the stewardship threshold in CSP to 10%. How it will be determined and set by USDA.	Producers may have an increased understanding of what practices they should need to meet in order to participate in CSP, as well as the necessary actions to get to that threshold. May encourage more enrollment in CSP and increase efforts towards soil health.	Page not yet updated post-2018 Farm Bill: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp/	Structure	3	16 USC 3839a-21(f)
II Conservation 2308(c)(1)	Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	Simplifies the ranking of CSP application ranking criteria	Simplifies the ranking of CSP applications to focus on two criteria only - active management of conservation treatment at the time of enrollment, and additional treatment during the contract period.	Applications with higher expected results and outcomes for conservation will get priority for funding. More likely that there will be positive impacts on soil health.	Page not yet updated post-2018 Farm Bill: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp/	Structure	3	16 USC 3839a-23(b)(1)
II Conservation 2308(c)(4)	Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	Modifies and strengthens CSP contract renewal	Allows a producer to elect to renew for another 5 year contract within the first half of the 5 year of the existing contract. Makes the contract renewal agreement criteria easier to understand. No limit on number of contract renewal periods previously only allowed one 5 year contract renewal. No longer eligible for automatic renewal, but the conservation benefits achieved during the initial contract create a bonus for the renewal. Supports and incentivizes more advanced conservation practices.	More advanced conservation will likely implement soil health promoting practices or may indirectly improve soil health.	Page not yet updated post-2018 Farm Bill: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp/	Structure	3	16 USC 3839a-23(a)
II Conservation 2308(d)	Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	Removes acreage enrollment limitation and replaces with funding limitation	Amends the previous acreage enrollment limitation which allowed USDA to enroll 10 million additional CSP acres every year with a goal of a national average payment rate of \$18/acre. The 2018 Farm Bill removes that language and inserts a program funding limit instead (see funding comparison in Table 2).	Intention is to help USDA more functionally administer and support the CSP program, but may not reach as many acres and producers as before. Unsure of impact on soil health.	Page not yet updated post-2018 Farm Bill: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp/	Funding Structure	2	16 USC 3839a-24
II Conservation 2308(e)(4)	Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	CSP payments for cover crop activities to be at least 125% of payment rate	Producers are paid at a minimum 125% of the determined annual payment amount for all activities pertaining to cover crops.	Financial incentive to use cover crops, direct impact on soil health improvement.	Page not yet updated post-2018 Farm Bill: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp/	Incentives	5	16 USC 3839a-24(c)(5)
II Conservation 2308(e)(5)	Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	CSP payments for resource-conserving crop rotations to be at least 150% of payment rate	Producers are paid at a minimum 150% of the determined annual payment amount for implementing a resource-conserving crop rotation.	Financial incentive to implement a crop rotation that benefits soil health by reducing erosion, building soil organic matter, etc.	Page not yet updated post-2018 Farm Bill: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp/	Incentives	5	16 USC 3839a-24(d)
II Conservation 2308(e)(5)	Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	CSP payments for advanced grazing management to be at least 150% of payment rate	Producers are paid at a minimum 150% of the determined annual payment amount for implementing advanced grazing management.	Financial incentive to implement advanced grazing management. Focuses on soil health improvements through "managed grazing to promote" improved soil health and carbon sequestration", "drainage resilience", "wildlife habitat", and "water quality improvement".	Page not yet updated post-2018 Farm Bill: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp/	Incentives	5	16 USC 3839a-24(d)(4)
II Conservation 2308(e)(6)	Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	CSP payments authorized for comprehensive conservation plan	Producers are developed a one time payment for the development of a comprehensive conservation plan that includes a number of priority concerns addressed and number of types of land uses. Financial incentive for creating a comprehensive conservation plan. Pays farmers back for their time developing the plan before implementation.	Has potential to increase the number of producers implementing soil health improving practices.	Page not yet updated post-2018 Farm Bill: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp/	Incentives Structure	3	16 USC 3839a-24(e)
II Conservation 2308(e)(9)	Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	Establishes funding for organic allocation within CSP	Better outlines and supports the ability of producers under CSP to transition to organic through direct funding allocations set aside for organic initiatives by the State. No restriction on transitioning to organic under CSP and the financial incentive for producers to transition to organic.	Increased opportunity for organic producers to implement further resource for soil health promoting practices.	https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/organic/	Structure Funding	3	16 USC 3839a-24(h)
II Conservation 2308(e)(9)	Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	Streamlines and coordinates transition between EOP and CSP	Outlines the government's responsibility in streamlining and coordinating easier transition from EOP to CSP.	Supports and helps facilitate transition from EOP to CSP which may increase comprehensive conservation activities on farms and ranches which would also help promote soil health.	Page not yet updated post-2018 Farm Bill: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp/	Structure	2	16 USC 3839a-24(i)
II Conservation 2308(e)(9)	Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	Requires management of CSP to enhance soil health	Mandates that the government manage CSP to enhance soil health, to the greatest extent possible.	Provision emphasizes the improvement of soil health through CSP. Unsure how this will be implemented exactly, but USDA may provide more enhancements and higher financial incentives for conserving soil and advancing soil health.	https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp/	Structure	5	16 USC 3839a-24(k)
II Conservation 2309	Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	Grassland conservation initiative within CSP	Specific to protect grazing lands and conserve the land through addressing one priority resource concern. A financial substitute for farms that had been enrolled in Title I in the 2018 Farm Bill, no price loss coverage and no agricultural risk coverage (payments through 2023). Payment rate of \$18/acre each year. All eligible producers are accepted and applications will not be ranked.	Unsure of the soil health impact, but provision provides an opportunity for producers to keep land in grass, receive payments and enhance the conservation efforts on the grassland. There is the possibility that this initiative will lead to base soil health through enhancements to plant and wildlife diversity, increasing plant ground cover, and grazing management strategies, which will reduce soil erosion and increase soil health. Covers planting of native herbaceous and woody species which provide shade and plant cover, which may help retain soil moisture.	https://directives.eop.usda.gov/viewer/S.aspx?thid=43711	Land Protection Incentives	2	16 USC 3839a-25
II Conservation 2404	Private Grazing Land Conservation Assistance	Conservation of private grazing lands and enhanced	Authorizes appropriations for the conservation of private grazing land through the first 10 years of the 2018 Farm Bill enactment and provides funding for a grant/landowner through a voluntary program that provides technical, educational, and other assistance. Also allows USDA to provide partnerships with land grant schools and non-governmental organizations for education and outreach opportunities.	May promote sustainable grazing systems that could increase soil carbon and minimize soil erosion.	https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/technical/csp/	Structure	3	16 USC 3839(b)
II Conservation 2501	Other or N/A	Requires review of annual allocation formulas for conservation programs within 1 year of Farm Bill passage with new requirements to consider in updating allocation formulas.	Ensures allocated funds are assessed and reviewed annually and within one year of passage of the Farm Bill to effectively address priority natural resource concerns.	As soil health is now a priority resource concern and a top priority within CSP, the annual reviews should verify that funds are appropriately being allocated to soil health efforts.	No agency information available yet	Structure	2	16 USC 3841(c)
II Conservation 2502(c)	Other or N/A	Review of all conservation practices standards within 1 year of passage of Farm Bill development of an expedited revision process with continued reporting every 2 years on the process.	Requires USDA to develop a process that expedites the review of conservation practices within 1 year of the Farm Bill enactment. Also requires the USDA to report to Congress on the process every 2 years. Focuses on increasing flexibility in conservation practices that still equally address priority natural resource concerns, including new innovations or technologies in conservation practices.	If and when new research practices on improvements of conservation practices include improved health conservation health, they should be more quickly and easily incorporated as approved conservation practices eligible for financial and technical assistance under various conservation programs.	https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLH-110-913-17/pdf/2019-04280.pdf	Data Structure	2	16 USC 3842(h)
II Conservation 2502(b)	Other or N/A	Requires review and guidance of the cost effectiveness of cost share rates and practices	Within 1 year of the enactment date, and every year after that, USDA will review the costs of conservation practices and payment rates for those practices. This should encourage participation and implementation of the practices and programs. Adds 1-10% to encourage costs. Allows for States to execute the review. Allows States to make annual adjustments to accommodate for the results of the assessment.	Annual assessments may improve the participation rate of producers implementing conservation programs and practices to improve soil health. Allows for adjusting in payment rates given a changing climate and economy.	No agency information available yet	Structure Incentives	2	16 USC 3844(i)
II Conservation 2502(d)	Other or N/A	Funding caveat for high priority agricultural production practices that conserve and protect drinking water quality and quantity.	At least 10% of all funds available for conservation under this act shall be allocated to high priority agricultural production practices for protection of sources for drinking water. Cost share covers up to 90% of the cost associated with the practice.	Most water conserving practices also do other things to improve soil health. These practices include cover cropping, no till, grassed waterways, nutrient management plans, etc.	https://directives.eop.usda.gov/viewer/S.aspx?thid=43499	Funding Incentives	3	16 USC 3844(m)
II Conservation 2502(e)	Other or N/A	Producers are allowed to participate in environmental services markets	Participates in any conservation program that provides a financial incentive for services market, and may receive additional funding or compensation if conservation benefits are progressed further and are consistent with the USDA program.	Opportunity for environmental markets to participate in addition to what the producer is already doing through a USDA conservation program. More flexibility for a producer to participate in various forms of financial assistance to further conservation efforts.	Page not yet updated post-2018 Farm Bill: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/assessments/	Structure	2	16 USC 3844(n)
II Conservation 2602	Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)	Adds definition of buy-protect-sell in ACEP	Buy-protect-sell in ACEP allows a land trust or other similar entity to purchase and hold the easement, provided they then sell the land at an agricultural value within 3 years to a beginning, socially disadvantaged, or veteran farmer or rancher.	Allows for provision of more financial assistance that might improve soil health depending on what the new farmer does with the land. Also increases access of land to beginning, socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers.	Page not yet updated post-2018 Farm Bill: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/assessments/	Structure Access	2	16 USC 3865a
II Conservation 2603(b)(2)	Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)	Allows USDA to prioritize ACEP applications that maintain agricultural viability	Allows USDA to prioritize applications that maintain agricultural viability.	More assessments that aim to maintain agricultural viability might also protect and enhance soil health.	Page not yet updated post-2018 Farm Bill: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/assessments/	Access	2	16 USC 3865(b)(3)(B)
II Conservation 2703	Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)	RCPP requirement for partners to quantify project outcomes	Partners are now required to include more details when defining the scope of the project, such as, the conservation benefits the project will help to project. The partner must also assess the progress of the project in a biennial report to the USDA and submit an outcome through some quantified measure.	Holds partners and producers more accountable in the progress of conservation activities and actions. Also adds some data analysis on the conservation activity and the benefits. May be used to help soil health research. Will also help to quantify implement soil health improving practices.	https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/rcpp/	Data Structure	2	16 USC 3871(b)
II Conservation 2703	Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)	Adds option for longer term partnership agreement in RCPP and allows for a 5 year partnership renewal	Lifts previous 5 year limit agreement if USDA determines the project needs more time to complete the conservation objectives. Also allows for a 5 year renewal and a 1 year extension.	Some soil health improvements can take a long time to assess, so the longer partnership agreements may allow more opportunities for soil health objectives in RCPP.	https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/rcpp/	Structure	2	16 USC 3871(b)
II Conservation 2704(b)(3)	Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)	RCPP grant program	Allows grant agreements and alternate funding arrangements with eligible partners for up to 15 projects annually within the program. USDA grants funding to eligible partner to carry out technical and financial assistance.	Unsure of the impacts on soil health until rulemaking process complete.	https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/rcpp/	Structure Funding	2	16 USC 3871(d)
II Conservation 2705	Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)	RCPP funding structure no longer reserves any funding from covered conservation programs.	Allows RCPP to operate as a standalone program. Increased total mandatory funding from 100 million to 300 million and amended the 7% annual reserve of covered funds. Program no longer pulling funding from the covered programs. However, total RCPP funding has not increased.	Unsure of impact on soil health. More leverage for conservation contracts in all the other conservation programs, since funds are no longer pulled into RCPP, and RCPP is funded as a standalone program. However, funding for RCPP has decreased overall from the 2014 Farm Bill.	https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/rcpp/	Funding	2	16 USC 3871(d)
II Conservation 2707	Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)	Defines critical conservation (CCA) area as "a geographical area that contains a critical conservation condition that can be addressed through conservation practices"	Defines critical conservation (CCA) area as "a geographical area that contains a critical conservation condition that can be addressed through conservation practices". USDA determines 1 or more priority resource concerns within a CCA that, as defined, can be improved through water quality improvement, water quality improvement, wildlife habitat restoration, and other natural resource improvements. Increases RCPP funding dedicated to CCAs and to states to 50% each, and eliminates the national competition.	Addressing priority resource concerns under CCA agreements in RCPP will help improve soil health. Water and habitat related improvements on agricultural land can be directly addressed through practices that can increase soil health such as cover cropping, no till, diverse native vegetation, and riparian buffers.	https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/rcpp/	Structure Funding	4	16 USC 3871(f)
VII Research, Extension, and Related Matters 7210	Organic Agriculture and Related Extension Initiative (OREI)	Increases and makes permanent funding for Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative (OREI); adds soil health as a research priority	Mandatory funding increases from 20 million in 2019 to 50 million in 2023. Soil health is added as a purpose to the research efforts, education efforts, and extension activities funded under OREI.	Efforts to research and educate about soil health in organic production may increase now that there is support under OREI.	https://ifa.usda.gov/funding-opportunity/organic-agriculture-research-and-extension-initiative	Research Structure & Funding	5	7 USC 5929a
VII Research, Extension, and Related Matters 7504	Agriculture and Food Research Initiative	Adds soil health as an environmental research area within AFRI	Soil health has been added as a research area to be addressed under the "biodiversity, natural resources, and environment" priority area for competitive grants.	Continues the emphasis of soil health in the 2018 Farm Bill. Grants for efforts related to the research, extension, and education of soil health can now be awarded under AFRI.				