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(Original Signature of Member)

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To modernize the conservation title of the Food Security Act of 1985, protect long term taxpayer investment, increase small and midsize farmer's access to programs, and prioritize modern-day conservation needs through management practices, local engagement, and stewardship.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. BLUMENAUER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To modernize the conservation title of the Food Security Act of 1985, protect long term taxpayer investment, increase small and midsize farmer's access to programs, and prioritize modern-day conservation needs through management practices, local engagement, and stewardship.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 101. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

2 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
3 “Balancing Food, Farm, and the Environment Act of
4 2013”.

5 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for
6 this Act is as follows:

Sec. 101. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—CONSERVATION

Subtitle A—Definitions

Sec. 1001. Definitions.

Subtitle B—Highly Erodible Land Conservation

Sec. 1101. Program ineligibility.

Sec. 1102. Exemptions.

Sec. 1103. Development and implementation of highly erodible land conserva-
tion plans and highly erodible land conservation systems.

Sec. 1104. Notice and investigation of possible compliance deficiencies.

Sec. 1105. Enforcement; funding for technical assistance.

Subtitle C—Wetland Conservation

Sec. 1201. Program ineligibility.

Sec. 1202. Delineation of wetlands; exemptions.

Subtitle D—Conservation Reserve

Sec. 1301. Conservation reserve.

Sec. 1302. Contracts.

Sec. 1303. Conservation reserve easement program.

Subtitle E—Conservation Stewardship Program

Sec. 1401. Definitions.

Sec. 1402. Conservation Stewardship Program.

Sec. 1403. Stewardship contracts.

Sec. 1404. Duties of the Secretary.

Subtitle F—Environmental Quality Incentives Program

Sec. 1501. Purposes.

Sec. 1502. Definitions.

Sec. 1503. Establishment and administration.

Sec. 1504. Evaluation of Applications.

Sec. 1505. Environmental quality incentives program plan.

Sec. 1506. Duties of the Secretary.

Sec. 1507. Limitation on payments.

Subtitle G—Conservation Innovation Grant Program

Sec. 1601. Conservation innovation grant program.

Subtitle H—Funding and Administration

Sec. 1701. Commodity Credit Corporation.

Sec. 1702. Conservation loan and loan guarantee program.

Subtitle I—Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

Sec. 1801. Agricultural conservation easement program.

Subtitle J—Regional Conservation Partnership Program

Sec. 1901. Regional conservation partnership program.

TITLE II—CROP INSURANCE AND DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Sec. 2001. Ineligibility for Federal crop insurance, noninsured crop disaster assistance, and certain payments because of crop production on native sod.

TITLE III—REPEALS AND TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS;
TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS; EFFECTIVE DATE

Sec. 3001. Repeals and transitional provisions.

Sec. 3002. Technical and conforming amendments.

Sec. 3003. Effective date.

1 **TITLE I—CONSERVATION**

2 **Subtitle A—Definitions**

3 **SEC. 1001. DEFINITIONS.**

4 (a) CONSERVATION SYSTEM.—Section 1201(a)(4) of
5 the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3801(a)(4)) is
6 amended to read as follows:

7 “(4) CONSERVATION SYSTEM.—The term con-
8 servation system means a combination of conserva-
9 tion measures or practices that are based on local
10 natural resource and environmental conditions and
11 are designed to cost-effectively address one or more
12 priority resource concerns.”

1 (b) HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND.—Section
2 1201(a)(11)(A)(ii) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16
3 U.S.C. 3801(a)(11)(A)(ii)) is amended—

4 (1) by striking “excessive” before “average an-
5 nual rate”;

6 (2) by striking “in relation to” and inserting
7 “exceeding”; and

8 (3) by inserting “revised” before “universal soil
9 loss”.

10 (c) COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION PLAN; CON-
11 SERVATION OUTCOME; HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND CON-
12 SERVATION PLAN; HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND CONSERVA-
13 TION SYSTEM; NUTRIENT-IMPACTED WATERSHED; PRI-
14 ORITY RESOURCE CONCERN.—Section 1201(a) of the
15 Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3801(a)) is amend-
16 ed by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

17 “(28) COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION
18 PLAN.—The term ‘comprehensive conservation plan’
19 means a document that, subject to the unique pur-
20 poses of each conservation program—

21 “(A) identifies priority resource concerns
22 that can be effectively addressed through con-
23 servation activities, practices, systems, and
24 management measures on an agricultural oper-
25 ation;

1 “(B) inventories natural resource and envi-
2 ronmental conditions related to priority re-
3 source concerns and establishes benchmark data
4 and conservation objectives;

5 “(C) determines the most cost-effective
6 conservation activities, practices, systems, and
7 management measures to be implemented, im-
8 proved or maintained to address the designated
9 priority resource concerns;

10 “(D) provides a schedule for planning, im-
11 plementing, improving, or maintaining the iden-
12 tified conservation activities, practices, systems,
13 and management measures; and

14 “(E) contains a description and schedule
15 for on-farm activities to evaluate the extent to
16 which the planned conservation activities, prac-
17 tices, systems, and management measures are
18 effectively improving the condition of priority
19 resource concerns.

20 “(29) CONSERVATION OUTCOME.—The term
21 ‘conservation outcome’ means a natural resource or
22 environmental change that is that is correlated with
23 conservation activities.

1 “(30) HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND CONSERVATION
2 PLAN.—The term ‘highly erodible land conservation
3 plan’ means the document that—

4 “(A) applies to highly erodible land;

5 “(B) describes the highly erodible land
6 conservation system applicable to the highly
7 erodible land and describes the decisions of the
8 person with respect to location, land use, tillage
9 systems, and conservation treatment measures
10 and schedule; and

11 “(C) is approved by the local soil conserva-
12 tion district, in consultation with the local com-
13 mittees established under section 8(b)(5) of the
14 Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act
15 (16 U.S.C. 590h(b)(5)) and the Secretary, or
16 by the Secretary.

17 “(31) HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND CONSERVATION
18 SYSTEM.—The term ‘highly erodible land conserva-
19 tion system ’ means a combination of 1 or more con-
20 servation measures or management practices that—

21 “(A) are based on local resource condi-
22 tions, available conservation technology, and the
23 standards and guidelines contained in the Nat-
24 ural Resources Conservation Service field office
25 technical guides;

1 “(B) are designed to achieve, in a cost ef-
2 fective and technically practicable manner, a
3 substantial reduction in soil erosion or a sub-
4 stantial improvement in soil conditions on a
5 field or group of fields containing highly erod-
6 ible land when compared to the level of erosion
7 or soil conditions that existed before the appli-
8 cation of the conservation measures and man-
9 agement practices;

10 “(C) at a minimum are designed to
11 achieve, within five years of actively applying a
12 highly erodible land conservation plan, a level of
13 erosion not to exceed twice the soil loss toler-
14 ance level; and

15 “(D) effectively treat all ephemeral gullies.

16 “(32) NUTRIENT-IMPACTED WATERSHED.—The
17 term ‘nutrient-impacted watershed’ means a water-
18 shed, including its surface and ground waters, any
19 portion of which the Secretary, in consultation with
20 officials from State water quality agencies, the Envi-
21 ronmental Protection Agency, and the United States
22 Geological Survey, determines to be degraded, or
23 contributing to the degradation of downstream wa-
24 ters, due to the presence of excess agricultural nutri-
25 ents.

1 “(33) PRIORITY RESOURCE CONCERN.—The
2 term ‘priority resource concern’ means a specific im-
3 pairment to soil, soil quality, water quality, water
4 quantity, energy, air quality, biodiversity, or fish,
5 wildlife, or pollinator habitat, that, as determined by
6 the Secretary—

7 “(A) represents a significant environ-
8 mental, human health, or sustainable agricul-
9 tural production concern in a State, region, or
10 watershed;

11 “(B) is likely to be addressed successfully
12 through implementation of conservation sys-
13 tems, practices, or activities by producers on
14 land eligible for enrollment in one or more pro-
15 grams under this title; and

16 “(C) if successfully addressed will substan-
17 tially contribute to the achievement of the pur-
18 poses of the relevant program or programs
19 under this title.”.

20 **Subtitle B—Highly Erodible Land** 21 **Conservation**

22 **SEC. 1101. PROGRAM INELIGIBILITY.**

23 Section 1211(a)(1) of the Food Security Act of 1985
24 (16 U.S.C. 3811(a)(1)) is amended—

25 (1) in subparagraph (A)—

1 (A) by inserting “or revenue” after
2 “price”; and

3 (B) by inserting “the Food, Conservation,
4 and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8701 et
5 seq.),” before “or any other Act”;

6 (2) in subparagraph (C), by striking “; or” and
7 inserting a semicolon;

8 (3) in subparagraph (D)—

9 (A) by striking “Consolidated” before
10 “Farm Service Agency”; and

11 (B) by striking the semicolon and inserting
12 “; or”; and

13 (4) by inserting after subparagraph (D) the fol-
14 lowing new subparagraph:

15 “(E) any portion of the premium paid by
16 the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation for a
17 policy or plan of insurance under the Federal
18 Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.).”.

19 **SEC. 1102. EXEMPTIONS.**

20 Section 1212(a) of the Food Security Act of 1985
21 (16 U.S.C. 3812(a)) is amended—

22 (1) by inserting “highly erodible land” before
23 “conservation plan” each place it appears;

24 (2) in subsection (a)—

25 (A) in paragraph (1)—

1 (i) by striking “Soil Conservation
2 Service” and inserting “Natural Resources
3 Conservation Service”; and

4 (ii) by inserting “, or premium sub-
5 sidies,” after “loans, payments, and bene-
6 fits”;

7 (B) by amending paragraph (2) to read as
8 follows:

9 “(1) ELIGIBILITY BASED ON COMPLIANCE WITH
10 HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND CONSERVATION PLAN.—

11 “(A) IN GENERAL.—If, as of January 1,
12 1990, or 2 years after the Soil Natural Re-
13 sources Conservation Service has completed a
14 soil survey for the farm, whichever is later, a
15 person is actively applying a highly erodible
16 land conservation plan, such person shall have
17 until January 1, 1995, to comply with the plan
18 without being subject to program ineligibility.

19 “(B) MINIMIZATION OF DOCUMENTA-
20 TION.—In carrying out this subsection, the Sec-
21 retary, the Natural Resources Conservation
22 Service, and local soil conservation districts
23 shall minimize the quantity of documentation a
24 person must submit to comply with this para-
25 graph.

1 “(C) CROP INSURANCE.—If a person first
2 becomes subject to section 1211(a) solely due to
3 a premium payment described in paragraph
4 (1)(E) of such section, the person shall have
5 until January 1 of the fifth year beginning
6 after the date on which the person first became
7 subject to such section to develop and comply
8 with an approved highly erodible land conserva-
9 tion plan for the land on which the person pro-
10 duces an agricultural commodity covered by a
11 policy or plan of insurance supported by such
12 premium payment.”; and

13 (C) in paragraph (3)—

14 (i) by striking “only” after “subtitle
15 D shall”; and

16 (ii) by striking “. The person shall not
17 be required to meet a higher conservation
18 standard than” and inserting “consistent
19 with”;

20 (3) in subsection (b), by inserting “, or pre-
21 mium subsidies,” after “and benefits”;

22 (4) in subsection (c)—

23 (A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1),
24 by inserting “, or premium subsidies,” after
25 “and benefits”;

1 (B) in paragraph (1), by inserting “highly
2 erodible land” before “conservation system”
3 each place it appears; and

4 (C) in paragraphs (1), (2), and (3), by
5 striking “Soil Conservation Service” each place
6 it appears and inserting “Natural Resources
7 Conservation Service”;

8 (5) in subsection (f)—

9 (A) in paragraph (1), by inserting “, or
10 premium subsidies,” after “benefits”; and

11 (B) in paragraph (4)(B), by inserting “and
12 premium subsidies” after “benefits”; and

13 (6) in subsection (g) by amending paragraph
14 (2) to read as follows:

15 “(2) concerning conservation technical and fi-
16 nancial assistance options and conservation loan op-
17 tions that may be available to such individual to
18 meet the requirements of this section.”.

19 **SEC. 1103. DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF**
20 **HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND CONSERVATION**
21 **PLANS AND HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND CON-**
22 **SERVATION SYSTEMS.**

23 (a) **HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND.**—Section 1213 of the
24 Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3812a) is amend-
25 ed—

1 (1) in the header, by striking “**CONSERVA-**
2 **TION PLANS AND CONSERVATION SYSTEMS**”
3 and inserting “**HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND CON-**
4 **SERVATION PLANS AND HIGHLY ERODIBLE**
5 **LAND CONSERVATION SYSTEMS**”;

6 (2) by inserting “highly erodible land” before
7 “conservation plan” each place it appears; and

8 (3) by inserting “highly erodible land” before
9 “conservation system” each place it appears.

10 (b) **TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS.**—Section
11 1213(a)(4) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
12 3812a(a)(4)) is amended by inserting “, taking into ac-
13 count the assistance described in section 1212(g)(2)”.

14 (c) **CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE.**—Section
15 1213(d)(2) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
16 3812a(d)(2)) is amended by striking “If a person” and
17 inserting “Except as necessary to carry out section 1216,
18 if a person”.

19 **SEC. 1104. NOTICE AND INVESTIGATION OF POSSIBLE COM-**
20 **PLIANCE DEFICIENCIES.**

21 Section 1215 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16
22 U.S.C. 3814) is amended—

23 (1) by inserting “highly erodible land” before
24 “conservation plan” each place it appears;

1 (2) in subsection (a), by inserting “carrying out
2 an inspection under section 1216 or” before “pro-
3 viding on-site technical assistance”; and

4 (3) in subsection (c), by striking “may” and in-
5 serting “shall”.

6 **SEC. 1105. ENFORCEMENT; FUNDING FOR TECHNICAL AS-**
7 **SISTANCE.**

8 Subtitle B of title XII of the Food Security Act of
9 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3811 et seq.) is amended by adding at
10 the end the following new sections:

11 **“SEC. 1216. ENFORCEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH HIGHLY**
12 **ERODIBLE LAND CONSERVATION PLANS.**

13 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, to the ex-
14 tent possible, inspect annually at least five percent of the
15 lands subject to compliance with highly erodible land con-
16 servation plans and for which the owner or operator is
17 receiving a benefit described in section 1211(a), specifi-
18 cally for the purpose of certifying compliance with the
19 highly erodible land conservation plan and eligibility for
20 such benefits.

21 “(b) ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later
22 than March 1 of each year following the year of enactment
23 of this provision, the Secretary shall submit to Congress
24 a report detailing the number of acres inspected for com-
25 pliance with highly erodible land conservation plans, the

1 number and type of infractions found, and the corrective
2 or enforcement actions, including reviews conducted under
3 section 1215(c) and graduated penalties imposed under
4 section 1212(f), associated with each, including the agen-
5 cy's justifications for each action. The report may include
6 other pertinent information regarding compliance and en-
7 forcement, as determined by the Secretary.

8 **“SEC. 1217. FUNDING FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.**

9 “The Secretary shall make available a portion of the
10 administrative and technical assistance funding provided
11 to administer the benefits described in section 1211(a) to
12 be used for technical assistance, monitoring, and enforce-
13 ment associated with highly erodible land conservation.
14 Funds shall be drawn from each program in proportion
15 to the relative funding of each individual program.”.

16 **Subtitle C—Wetland Conservation**

17 **SEC. 1201. PROGRAM INELIGIBILITY.**

18 (a) PRODUCTION ON COVERED WETLAND.—Section
19 1221(a) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
20 3821(a)) is amended—

21 (1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by
22 inserting “after the effective date of the Balancing
23 Food, Farm, and the Environment Act of 2013,” be-
24 fore “any person who”; and

1 (2) in paragraph (2), by striking “an amount
2 determined by the Secretary to be proportionate to
3 the severity of the violation” and inserting “accord-
4 ance with subsection (b)”.

5 (b) INELIGIBILITY FOR CERTAIN LOANS AND PAY-
6 MENTS.—Section 1221(b) of the Food Security Act of
7 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3821(b)) is amended—

8 (1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by
9 striking “the Secretary shall determine which of,
10 and the amount of, the following loans and pay-
11 ments for which the person shall be ineligible” and
12 inserting “the person shall be ineligible for the fol-
13 lowing loans and payments”; and

14 (2) by striking paragraphs (1) and (2) and in-
15 serting the following:

16 “(1) As to any commodity produced during the
17 crop year by such person—

18 “(A) contract payments under a produc-
19 tion flexibility contract, marketing assistance
20 loans, and any type of price or revenue support
21 or payment made available under the Agricul-
22 tural Market Transition Act (7 U.S.C. 7201 et
23 seq.), the Commodity Credit Corporation Char-
24 ter Act (15 U.S.C. 714 et seq.), the Food, Con-

1 servation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C.
2 8701 et seq.), or any other Act;

3 “(B) a farm storage facility loan made
4 under section 4(h) of the Commodity Credit
5 Corporation Charter Act (15 U.S.C. 714b(h));

6 “(C) a loan made, insured, or guaranteed
7 under the Consolidated Farm and Rural Devel-
8 opment Act (7 U.S.C. 1921 et seq.) or any
9 other provision of law administered by the Con-
10 solidated Farm Service Agency, if the Secretary
11 determines that the proceeds of such loan will
12 be used for a purpose that will contribute to ex-
13 cessive erosion of highly erodible land; or

14 “(D) any portion of the premium paid by
15 the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation for a
16 policy or plan of insurance under the Federal
17 Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.).

18 “(2) A payment made under section 4 or 5 of
19 the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (15
20 U.S.C. 714b or 714c) during such crop year for the
21 storage of an agricultural commodity acquired by
22 the Commodity Credit Corporation.”.

23 **SEC. 1202. DELINEATION OF WETLANDS; EXEMPTIONS.**

24 (a) EXEMPTIONS.—Section 1222(b) of the Food Se-
25 curity Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3822(b)) is amended—

1 (1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by
2 inserting “, or premium subsidies,” after “or pay-
3 ments”; and

4 (2) by adding at the end the following new
5 paragraph:

6 “(3) In the case of payments that are subject
7 to section 1221 for the first time due to the amend-
8 ments made by section 1201(b) of the Balancing
9 Food, Farm, and the Environment Act of 2013, a
10 wetland that was converted after April 4, 1996 and
11 before October 1, 2013, on land that is the basis of
12 the payments, provided the person in control of the
13 land is and has been otherwise in compliance with
14 section 1221.”.

15 (b) ON-SITE INSPECTION REQUIREMENT.—Section
16 1222(c) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
17 3822(c)) is amended by striking “, or benefits” and insert-
18 ing “, benefits, or premium subsidies”.

19 (c) GOOD FAITH EXEMPTION.—Section 1222(h)(1)
20 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3822(h))
21 is amended to read as follows:

22 “(1) GRADUATED PENALTIES.—If a person is
23 in violation of section 1221 but has acted in good
24 faith and without an intent to violate such section,
25 as determined by the Secretary, the Secretary may,

1 in lieu of applying the ineligibility provisions of sec-
2 tion 1221(b), reduce program benefits and premium
3 subsidies described in such section that the producer
4 would otherwise be eligible to receive in a crop year
5 by an amount commensurate with the seriousness of
6 the violation, as determined by the Secretary.”.

7 (d) ELIGIBILITY FOR CROP INSURANCE.—Section
8 1222 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3822)
9 is amended by adding at the end the following new sub-
10 section:

11 “(l) ELIGIBILITY FOR CROP INSURANCE.—In the
12 case of payments that are subject to section 1221 for the
13 first time due to the amendments made by section 1201(b)
14 of the Balancing Food, Farm, and the Environment Act
15 of 2013, no person who plants or produces an agricultural
16 commodity on a converted wetland on land that is the
17 basis of the payments shall be ineligible under section
18 1221 for program loans or payments, or premium sub-
19 sidies, unless the person fails to mitigate for the loss of
20 wetland values, acreage, and function in accordance with
21 subparagraphs (A) through (G) of subsection (f)(2) by the
22 end of the 24-month period following the date on which
23 the payments became subject to section 1221.”.

1 **Subtitle D—Conservation Reserve**

2 **SEC. 1301. CONSERVATION RESERVE.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1231(a) of the Food Se-
4 curity Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831(a)) is amended—

5 (1) by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”;

6 and

7 (2) by inserting “or easements” after “con-
8 tracts”.

9 (b) ELIGIBLE LAND.—Section 1231(b) of the Food
10 Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831(b)) is amended—

11 (1) in paragraph (1)(B), by striking “the Food,
12 Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008” and insert-
13 ing “Balancing Food, Farm, and the Environment
14 Act of 2013”;

15 (2) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the
16 following new paragraph:

17 “(3) grassland that—

18 “(A) contains forbs or shrubland (includ-
19 ing improved rangeland and pastureland) for
20 which grazing is the predominant use;

21 “(B) is located in an area historically
22 dominated by grassland; and

23 “(C) could provide habitat for animal or
24 plant populations of significant ecological value,
25 or corridors to facilitate wildlife movement and

1 migration, if the land is retained in its current
2 use or restored to a natural condition;”;

3 (3) in paragraph (4)—

4 (A) in subparagraph (C)—

5 (i) by inserting “, wildlife habitat
6 buffers, shallow water areas for wildlife”
7 after “permanent wildlife habitat”;

8 (ii) by inserting “, wetland buffers, ri-
9 parian buffers” after “shelterbelts”; and

10 (iii) by striking “devoted to trees or
11 shrubs”;

12 (B) by redesignating subparagraphs (D)
13 and (E) as subparagraphs (E) and (F), respec-
14 tively; and

15 (C) by inserting after subparagraph (C)
16 the following new subparagraph:

17 “(D) the land will be devoted to nutrient-
18 trapping conservation practices approved by the
19 Secretary used in association with a newly cre-
20 ated or existing conservation buffer practice;”.

21 (c) PLANTING STATUS OF CERTAIN LAND; MAXIMUM
22 ENROLLMENT.—Subsections (c) and (d) of section 1231
23 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831) are
24 amended to read as follows:

1 “(c) PLANTING STATUS OF CERTAIN LAND.—For
2 purposes of determining the eligibility of land to be placed
3 in the conservation reserve established under this sub-
4 chapter, land shall be considered to be planted to an agri-
5 cultural commodity during a crop year if, during the crop
6 year, the land was devoted to a conserving use.

7 “(d) MAXIMUM ENROLLMENT.—

8 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may main-
9 tain in the conservation reserve at any 1 time dur-
10 ing—

11 “(A) fiscal year 2014, no more than
12 26,000,000 acres;

13 “(B) fiscal year 2015, no more than
14 25,000,000 acres;

15 “(C) fiscal year 2016, no more than
16 24,000,000 acres; and

17 “(D) fiscal years 2017 and 2018, no more
18 than 23,000,000 acres.

19 “(2) RESERVATION.—The Secretary, to the
20 maximum extent feasible, shall manage the conserva-
21 tion reserve to ensure that on an annual basis not
22 less than 600,000 acres are available for new enroll-
23 ments of eligible land—

24 “(A) described in subparagraphs (B)
25 through (F) of subsection (b)(4); and

1 “(B) enrolled under the special conserva-
2 tion reserve enhancement program authority
3 under section 1234(f)(4).

4 “(3) PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall give pri-
5 ority to enrollments under the reservation in para-
6 graph (2) to land located in nutrient-impacted wa-
7 tersheds for which the enrollment would reduce nu-
8 trient loadings, as determined by the Secretary.

9 “(4) CONSIDERATION.—In applying paragraph
10 (3), the Secretary shall take into consideration the
11 effects that may exist of any drainage infrastructure
12 on the potential to reduce nutrient loadings.”.

13 **SEC. 1302. CONTRACTS.**

14 (a) MODIFICATIONS.—Section 1235(c)(1)(B)(iii) of
15 the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
16 3835(c)(1)(B)(iii)) is amended to read as follows:

17 “(iii) to facilitate a transition of land
18 subject to the contract from a retired or
19 retiring owner or operator to a beginning
20 farmer or rancher, socially disadvantaged
21 farmer or rancher, or limited resource
22 farmer or rancher who is or will be actively
23 engaged in farming or ranching with re-
24 spect to the land transferred under this
25 subsection, for the purpose of returning

1 some or all of the land into production
2 using sustainable grazing or crop produc-
3 tion methods that meet or exceed the re-
4 source management system quality criteria
5 for erosion, soil quality, water quality, and
6 fish and wildlife; or”.

7 (b) TRANSITION OPTION FOR CERTAIN FARMERS OR
8 RANCHERS.—Section 1235(f)(1) of the Food Security Act
9 of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3835(f)(1)) is amended—

10 (1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A),
11 by striking “or socially disadvantaged farmer or
12 rancher” and inserting “socially disadvantaged
13 farmer or rancher, or limited resource farmer or
14 rancher who is or will be actively engaged in farming
15 or ranching with respect to the land transferred
16 under this subsection”;

17 (2) in subparagraph (A)—

18 (A) in clause (i), by striking “; and” and
19 inserting a semicolon;

20 (B) in clause (ii), by striking the semicolon
21 and inserting “; and”; and

22 (C) by adding at the end the following new
23 clauses:

24 “(iv) provide to the covered farmer or
25 rancher an opportunity to enroll in the

1 conservation stewardship program or the
2 environmental quality incentives program
3 at any time beginning on the date that is
4 1 year before the date of termination of
5 the contract, including technical and finan-
6 cial assistance in the development of a
7 comprehensive conservation plan; and

8 “(v) if the land transferred under this
9 subsection remains in grass cover, provide
10 to the covered farmer or rancher an oppor-
11 tunity to enroll in a long term or perma-
12 nent easement under the agricultural con-
13 servation easement program;”;

14 (3) in subparagraph (B), by inserting “com-
15 prehensive” before “conservation plan”;

16 (4) by striking subparagraph (D) and redesign-
17 ating subparagraph (E) as subparagraph (D); and

18 (5) in subparagraph (D) (as so redesignated),
19 by striking “, if the retired or retiring owner or op-
20 erator is not a family member (as defined in section
21 1001A(b)(3)(B) of this Act) of the covered farmer
22 or rancher” and inserting “except that, in the case
23 of a retired or retiring owner or operator who is a
24 family member (as defined in section 1001) of the
25 covered farmer or rancher, the additional payments

1 shall be made only if title to the land is sold or oth-
2 erwise transferred to the covered farmer or rancher
3 on termination of the contract”.

4 **SEC. 1303. CONSERVATION RESERVE EASEMENT PROGRAM.**

5 Subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII
6 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831 et seq.)
7 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

8 **“SEC. 1236. CONSERVATION RESERVE EASEMENT PRO-**
9 **GRAM.**

10 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall formu-
11 late and carry out a conservation reserve easement pro-
12 gram (hereafter in this section referred to as the ‘ease-
13 ment program’) in accordance with this section, through
14 the acquisition of permanent easements or easements for
15 the maximum term permitted under applicable State law
16 from willing owners of eligible farms or ranches in order
17 to ensure the continued long-term protection of environ-
18 mentally sensitive lands, reduction in the degradation of
19 water quality, and enhancement of wildlife habitat on such
20 farms or ranches through the continued conservation and
21 improvement of soil and water resources.

22 “(b) ELIGIBILITY; TERMINATION.—

23 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
24 graph (2), the Secretary may acquire easements

1 under this section on eligible land placed in the con-
2 servation reserve under this subchapter that—

3 “(A) is determined by the Secretary to be
4 unsuitable for long-term commodity production;

5 “(B) is an area of critical habitat for wild-
6 life, especially threatened or endangered species;

7 or

8 “(C) contains other environmentally sen-
9 sitive areas, as determined by the Secretary,
10 that would prevent a producer from complying
11 with other Federal, State, or local environ-
12 mental goals if commodities were to be pro-
13 duced on such land.

14 “(2) INELIGIBLE LAND.—The Secretary may
15 not acquire easements on—

16 “(A) land that contains timber stands es-
17 tablished under this subchapter; or

18 “(B) pasture land established to trees
19 under this subchapter.

20 “(3) TERMINATION OF EXISTING CONTRACT.—

21 The Secretary may terminate or modify any existing
22 contract entered into under section 1231(a) if eligi-
23 ble land that is subject to such contract is trans-
24 ferred into the easement program.

25 “(c) DUTIES OF OWNERS.—

1 “(1) PLAN.—

2 “(A) IN GENERAL.—In conjunction with
3 the creation of an easement on any lands under
4 this section, the owner of the farm or ranch
5 wherein such lands are located must agree to
6 implement a natural resource conservation man-
7 agement plan in accordance with subparagraph
8 (B) and approved by the Secretary.

9 “(B) COMPONENTS.—A natural resource
10 conservation management plan shall—

11 “(i) set forth the conservation meas-
12 ures and practices to be carried out by the
13 owner of the land subject to the easement;

14 “(ii) set forth the commercial use, if
15 any, to be permitted on such land during
16 the term of the easement; and

17 “(iii) provide for the permanent re-
18 tirement of any existing cropland base and
19 allotment history for such land under any
20 program administered by the Secretary.

21 “(2) AGREEMENT.—In return for the creation
22 of an easement on any lands under this section, the
23 owner of the farm or ranch wherein such lands are
24 located must agree to the following:

1 “(A) To the creation and recordation of an
2 appropriate deed restriction, in accordance with
3 applicable State law, to reflect the easement
4 agreed to under this section with respect to
5 such lands.

6 “(B) To provide a written statement of
7 consent to such easement signed by those hold-
8 ing a security interest in the land.

9 “(C) To comply with such additional provi-
10 sions as the Secretary determines are desirable
11 and are included in the easement to carry out
12 this section or to facilitate the practical admin-
13 istration thereof.

14 “(D) To limit the production of any agri-
15 cultural commodity on such lands only to pro-
16 duction for the benefit of wildlife.

17 “(E) Not to conduct any harvesting or
18 grazing, nor otherwise make commercial use of
19 the forage, on land that is subject to the ease-
20 ment, unless specifically provided for in the
21 easement or related agreement.

22 “(F) Not to adopt any other practice that
23 would tend to defeat the purposes of this chap-
24 ter, as determined by the Secretary.

1 “(3) VIOLATION.—On the violation of the terms
2 or conditions of the easement or related agreement
3 entered into under this section, the easement shall
4 remain in force and the Secretary may require the
5 owner to refund all or part of any payments received
6 by the owner under this section, together with inter-
7 est thereon as determined appropriate by the Sec-
8 retary.

9 “(d) DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY.—In return for the
10 granting of an easement by an owner under this section,
11 the Secretary shall—

12 “(1) share the cost of carrying out the estab-
13 lishment of conservation measures and practices set
14 forth in the plan described in section 1232(a)(1) for
15 which the Secretary determines that cost sharing is
16 appropriate and in the public interest;

17 “(2) pay for a period not to exceed 10 years an-
18 nual easement payments in the aggregate not to ex-
19 ceed the lesser of—

20 “(A) \$250,000; or

21 “(B) the difference in the value of the land
22 with and without the easement;

23 “(3) provide necessary technical assistance to
24 assist owners in complying with the terms and con-

1 conditions of the easement and the comprehensive con-
2 servation plan; and

3 “(4) permit the land to be used for wildlife ac-
4 tivities, including hunting and fishing, if such use is
5 permitted by the owner.

6 “(e) TIME OF PAYMENT.—The Secretary shall pro-
7 vide payment for obligations incurred by the Secretary
8 under this section—

9 “(1) with respect to any cost sharing obligation,
10 as soon as possible after the obligation is incurred;
11 and

12 “(2) with respect to any annual easement pay-
13 ment obligation, as soon as possible after October 1
14 of each year.

15 “(f) COST SHARING PAYMENTS.—In making cost
16 sharing payments to owners under this section, the Sec-
17 retary may pay up to 100 percent of the cost of estab-
18 lishing conservation measures and practices pursuant to
19 this section.

20 “(g) EASEMENT PAYMENTS.—

21 “(1) DETERMINATION OF AMOUNT.—The Sec-
22 retary shall determine the amount payable to owners
23 in the form of easement payments under this sec-
24 tion, and in making such determination may con-
25 sider, among other things, the amount necessary to

1 encourage owners to participate in the easement pro-
2 gram.

3 “(2) ACCEPTABILITY OF OFFERS.—In deter-
4 mining the acceptability of easement offers, the Sec-
5 retary may take into consideration—

6 “(A) the extent to which the purposes of
7 the easement program would be achieved on the
8 land;

9 “(B) the productivity of the land; and

10 “(C) the on-farm and off-farm environ-
11 mental threats if the land is used for the pro-
12 duction of agricultural commodities.

13 “(3) PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall prioritize
14 offers that maximize the environmental goals of the
15 easement program, particularly regarding improve-
16 ments to water quality, wildlife habitat and cor-
17 ridors, and water conservation. Priority may also be
18 given to easements that are part of a cooperative
19 conservation effort to address priority resource con-
20 cerns on a regional or watershed scale, or that are
21 adjacent to existing conservation lands.

22 “(h) PAYMENTS TO OTHERS.—If an owner who is en-
23 titled to a payment under this section dies, becomes in-
24 competent, is otherwise unable to receive such payment,
25 or is succeeded by another person who renders or com-

1 pletes the required performance, the Secretary shall make
2 such payment, in accordance with regulations prescribed
3 by the Secretary and without regard to any other provision
4 of law, in such manner as the Secretary determines is fair
5 and reasonable in light of all of the circumstances.

6 “(i) MODIFICATION.—The Secretary may modify an
7 easement acquired from, or a related agreement with, an
8 owner under this section if—

9 “(1) the current owner of the land agrees to
10 such modification; and

11 “(2) the Secretary determines that such modi-
12 fication is desirable—

13 “(A) to carry out this section;

14 “(B) to facilitate the practical administra-
15 tion of this section; or

16 “(C) to achieve such other goals as the
17 Secretary determines are appropriate and con-
18 sistent with this section.

19 “(j) TERMINATION.—The Secretary may terminate
20 an easement created with an owner under this section if—

21 “(1) the current owner of the land agrees to
22 such termination; and

23 “(2) the Secretary determines that such termi-
24 nation would be in the public interest.”.

1 **Subtitle E—Conservation**
2 **Stewardship Program**

3 **SEC. 1401. DEFINITIONS.**

4 (a) CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1238D(1)(A) of the
6 Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838d(1)(A))
7 is amended by striking “a resource concern” and in-
8 serting “one or more resource concerns”.

9 (2) INCLUSIONS.—Section 1238D(1)(B) of the
10 Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838d(1)(B))
11 is amended to read as follows:

12 “(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term ‘conserva-
13 tion activities’ includes—

14 “(i) vegetative measures and land
15 management measures, including inte-
16 grated pest, nutrient, crop residue, and
17 managed rotational grazing management
18 measures, as determined by the Secretary;

19 “(ii) structural measures that are in-
20 tegrated with and essential to the success-
21 ful implementation of such vegetative and
22 land management measures;

23 “(iii) planning needed to address a re-
24 source concern; and

1 “(iv) development of a comprehensive
2 conservation plan.”.

3 (b) CONSERVATION MEASUREMENT TOOLS.—Section
4 1238D(2) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
5 3838d(2)) is amended by inserting “natural resource and”
6 before “environmental benefit”.

7 (c) PRIORITY RESOURCE CONCERN.—Section 1238D
8 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838d) is
9 amended by striking paragraphs (4) and (6) and redesi-
10 gnating paragraphs (5) and (7) as paragraphs (4) and (5),
11 respectively.

12 (d) STEWARDSHIP THRESHOLD.—Section 1238D(5)
13 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (as so redesignated) is
14 amended to read as follows:

15 “(5) STEWARDSHIP THRESHOLD.—The term
16 ‘stewardship threshold’ means the level of natural
17 resource conservation and environmental manage-
18 ment required to address and improve upon a pri-
19 ority resource concern, as determined by the Sec-
20 retary using—

21 “(A) conservation measurement tools;

22 “(B) the resource management system
23 quality criteria for the particular priority re-
24 source concerns;

1 “(C) data from past and current program
2 enrollments; and

3 “(D) other similar means to measure im-
4 provement and conservation of the priority re-
5 source concern.”.

6 **SEC. 1402. CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM.**

7 (a) ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE.—Section
8 1238E(a) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
9 3838e(a)) is amended in the matter preceding paragraph
10 (1)—

11 (1) by striking “2009 through 2014” and in-
12 serting “2013 through 2018”; and

13 (2) by striking “resource concerns” and insert-
14 ing “priority resource concerns and improve and
15 conserve the quality and condition of natural re-
16 sources”.

17 (b) ELIGIBLE LAND.—Section 1238E(b) of the Food
18 Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838e(b)) is amended—

19 (1) in paragraph (1)—

20 (A) in subparagraph (D), by inserting
21 “priority” before “resource concerns”; and

22 (B) by adding at the end the following new
23 subparagraph:

24 “(E) Nonindustrial private forest land.”;

25 and

1 (2) by striking paragraph (2) and redesignating
2 paragraph (3) as paragraph (2).

3 (c) EXCLUSIONS.—

4 (1) LAND ENROLLED IN OTHER CONSERVATION
5 PROGRAMS.—Section 1238E(c)(1) of the Food Secu-
6 rity Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838e(c)(1)) is amend-
7 ed—

8 (A) in the matter preceding subparagraph
9 (A), by striking “be eligible for enrollment in
10 the program” and inserting “eligible for enroll-
11 ment in the program and shall not be consid-
12 ered part of the agricultural operation of the
13 producer for purposes of the program”; and

14 (B) by amending subparagraph (A) to read
15 as follows:

16 “(A) Land enrolled in the conservation re-
17 serve program, unless—

18 “(i) the applicant’s conservation re-
19 serve program contract will expire at the
20 end of the fiscal year in which the appli-
21 cant applies for enrollment in the program;
22 and

23 “(ii) conservation reserve program
24 payments for land enrolled in the program
25 cease before the first conservation steward-

1 ship program payment is made to the ap-
2 plicant.”.

3 (2) TRANSITION.—Section 1238E(c) of the
4 Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838e(c)) is
5 amended by redesignating paragraph (2) as para-
6 graph (3) and inserting after paragraph (1) the fol-
7 lowing new paragraph:

8 “(2) TRANSITION.—The Secretary may permit
9 land described in paragraph (1)(A) to be prepared
10 for production as a grazing operation prior to the
11 expiration of the conservation reserve program con-
12 tract when a conservation stewardship contract has
13 been approved, if no production takes place until
14 after the expiration of the conservation reserve pro-
15 gram contract.”.

16 (3) CONVERSION TO CROPLAND.—Section
17 1238E(c)(2) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16
18 U.S.C. 3838e(c)(2)) is amended by striking “the
19 date of enactment of the Food, Conservation, and
20 Energy Act of 2008” and inserting “October 1,
21 2013”.

22 **SEC. 1403. STEWARDSHIP CONTRACTS.**

23 (a) SUBMISSION OF CONTRACT OFFERS.—Section
24 1238F(a) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
25 3838f(a)) is amended—

1 (1) in paragraph (1)—

2 (A) by inserting “or exceeding” before
3 “the stewardship threshold”; and

4 (B) by striking “one resource concern”
5 and inserting “2 priority resource concerns”;
6 and

7 (2) by amending paragraph (2) to read as fol-
8 lows:

9 “(2) would, at a minimum, meet or exceed the
10 stewardship threshold for at least 1 additional pri-
11 ority resource concern by the end of the stewardship
12 contract by—

13 “(A) installing and adopting additional
14 conservation activities; and

15 “(B) improving, maintaining, and man-
16 aging conservation activities on the agricultural
17 operation of the producer in a manner that in-
18 creases or extends the conservation benefits in
19 place at the time the contract offer is accepted
20 by the Secretary; and

21 “(C) if applicable, describing the resource-
22 conserving crop rotation, managed intensive ro-
23 tation grazing system, or transition to organic
24 crop or livestock systems the producer agrees to
25 improve, maintain, and manage, or install and

1 adopt, during the term of the conservation
2 stewardship contract.”.

3 (b) EVALUATION OF CONTRACT OFFERS.—Section
4 1238F(b)(1) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
5 3838f(b)(1)) is amended to read as follows:

6 “(1) RANKING OF APPLICATIONS.—In evalu-
7 ating contract offers made by producers to enter
8 into contracts under the program, the Secretary
9 shall rank applications based on—

10 “(A) the level of conservation and environ-
11 mental benefits resulting from all conservation
12 activities to be covered by the contract, includ-
13 ing conservation activities proposed to be com-
14 menced as a result of the contract, on all appli-
15 cable priority resource concerns, based to the
16 maximum extent practicable on conservation
17 measurement tools; and

18 “(B) in the event of a tie in ranking scores
19 between two or more applications, the extent to
20 which the actual and anticipated environmental
21 benefits from the contract are provided at the
22 least cost.”.

23 (c) ENTERING INTO CONTRACTS.—Section 1238F(c)
24 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838f(c))
25 is amended to read as follows:

1 “(c) ENTERING INTO CONTRACTS.—

2 “(1) IN GENERAL.—After a determination that
3 a producer is eligible for the program under sub-
4 section (a), and a determination that the contract
5 offer ranks sufficiently high under the evaluation
6 criteria under subsection (b), the Secretary shall
7 enter into a conservation stewardship contract with
8 the producer to enroll the land to be covered by the
9 contract.

10 “(2) FINANCIAL OBLIGATION.—Consistent with
11 section 1238G(e)(4), a contract entered into under
12 paragraph (1) shall not create an obligation for fi-
13 nancial assistance until the first October 1 after the
14 contract is entered into.”.

15 (d) CONTRACT RENEWAL.—Section 1238F(e) of the
16 Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838f(e)) is amend-
17 ed to read as follows:

18 “(e) CONTRACT RENEWAL.—At the end of a con-
19 servation stewardship contract of a producer, the Sec-
20 retary may allow the producer to renew the contract for
21 an additional five-year period if the producer—

22 “(1) demonstrates compliance with the terms of
23 the existing contract;

24 “(2) agrees to adopt new or improved conserva-
25 tion activities, as determined by the Secretary; and

1 “(3) has met or exceeded, or agrees to meet or
2 exceed, the stewardship threshold for all priority re-
3 source concerns identified for the region or area in
4 which the land that is subject to the contract is lo-
5 cated.”.

6 (e) MODIFICATION.—Section 1238F(f) of the Food
7 Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838f(f)) is amended to
8 read as follows:

9 “(f) MODIFICATION.—

10 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may allow a
11 producer to modify a stewardship contract if the
12 Secretary determines that the modification is con-
13 sistent with achieving the purposes of the program.

14 “(2) CHANGES IN CONTROL OF LAND.—The
15 Secretary shall allow a producer to add or subtract
16 from the contract land over which the producer loses
17 or gains control, respectively, during the contract pe-
18 riod if such modification is consistent with achieving
19 the purposes of the program and if the Secretary de-
20 termines that the resulting natural resource and en-
21 vironmental benefits would equal or exceed the origi-
22 nal contract.”.

23 (f) COORDINATION WITH ORGANIC CERTIFI-
24 CATION.—Section 1238F(h) of the Food Security Act of

1 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838f(h)) is amended by inserting “or
2 maintain” after “may initiate”.

3 (g) ON-FARM RESEARCH AND DEMONSTRATION OR
4 PILOT TESTING.—Section 1238F of the Food Security
5 Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838f) is amended by striking
6 subsection (i).

7 **SEC. 1404. DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1238G(a) of the Food Se-
9 curity Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838g(a)) is amended to
10 read as follows:

11 “(a) IN GENERAL.—To achieve the conservation
12 goals of a contract under the conservation stewardship
13 program, the Secretary shall—

14 “(1) make the program available to eligible pro-
15 ducers on a continuous enrollment basis with 1 or
16 more ranking periods, one of which shall occur in
17 the first third of each fiscal year;

18 “(2) identify priority resource concerns in a
19 particular watershed or other appropriate region or
20 area within a State;

21 “(3) for any region or area that includes any
22 part of a nutrient-impacted watershed (as deter-
23 mined by the Secretary), ensure that one of the pri-
24 ority resource concerns identified under paragraph

1 (2) is water pollution caused by excess nutrient
2 loads;

3 “(4) develop reliable conservation measurement
4 tools for purposes of carrying out the program; and

5 “(5) ensure that conservation measurement
6 tools are transparent and available to producers
7 by—

8 “(A) making interactive, user-friendly con-
9 servation measurement tools publically available
10 online;

11 “(B) making conservation activity natural
12 resource and environmental benefit scores avail-
13 able in an easy to understand format for study
14 both before and during application; and

15 “(C) taking other similar steps, as deter-
16 mined by the Secretary.”.

17 (b) ALLOCATION TO STATES.—Section 1238G(b) of
18 the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838g(b)) is
19 amended—

20 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “primarily”;
21 and

22 (2) in paragraph (2), in the matter preceding
23 subparagraph (A), by striking “also”.

1 (c) ACREAGE ENROLLMENT LIMITATION.—Section
2 1238G(d) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
3 3838g(d)) is amended—

4 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “12,769,000”
5 and inserting “10,000,000”; and

6 (2) in paragraph (2), by striking “\$18” and in-
7 serting “\$23”.

8 (d) CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PAYMENTS.—

9 (1) AVAILABILITY OF PAYMENTS.—Section
10 1238G(e)(1)(B) of the Food Security Act of 1985
11 (16 U.S.C. 3838g(e)(1)(B)) is amended by striking
12 “at the operation of the producer” and inserting “on
13 the agricultural operation of the producer”.

14 (2) PAYMENT AMOUNT.—Section 1238G(e)(2)
15 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
16 3838g(e)(2)) is amended to read as follows:

17 “(2) PAYMENT AMOUNT.—

18 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The amount of the
19 conservation stewardship payment shall be de-
20 termined by the Secretary and based, to the
21 maximum extent practicable, on the following
22 factors:

23 “(i) Costs incurred by the producer
24 associated with planning, design, materials,

1 installation, labor, management, mainte-
2 nance, or training.

3 “(ii) Income forgone by the producer.

4 “(iii) Expected natural resource and
5 environmental benefits resulting from ex-
6 isting and proposed conservation treat-
7 ment, based to the maximum extent pos-
8 sible on conservation measurement tools.

9 “(B) PAYMENT DIFFERENTIAL.—In apply-
10 ing subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall,
11 where applicable, differentiate between—

12 “(i) improving, maintaining, and man-
13 aging conservation activities in place on
14 the agricultural operation at the time the
15 contract offer is accepted by the Secretary;
16 and

17 “(ii) installing and adopting addi-
18 tional conservation activities on the agri-
19 cultural operation.”.

20 (3) MINIMUM PAYMENT.—Section 1238G(e) of
21 the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838g(e))
22 is amended by adding at the end the following new
23 paragraph:

24 “(5) MINIMUM PAYMENT.—

1 “(A) IN GENERAL.—A payment to a pro-
2 ducer under this subsection shall be not less
3 than \$1,500 per year.

4 “(B) COMPREHENSIVE CONTRACT.—If a
5 contract requires a comprehensive conservation
6 plan the implementation of which will, by the
7 end of the contract term, meet or exceed the
8 stewardship threshold for all priority resource
9 concerns, the minimum payment shall be not
10 less than \$3,000.”.

11 (e) SUPPLEMENTAL PAYMENTS FOR RESOURCE-CON-
12 SERVING CROP ROTATIONS.—Section 1238G(f) of the
13 Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838g(f)) is amend-
14 ed to read as follows:

15 “(f) SUPPLEMENTAL PAYMENTS FOR RESOURCE-
16 CONSERVING CROP ROTATIONS, MANAGED INTENSIVE
17 ROTATIONAL GRAZING, AND TRANSITION TO ORGANIC
18 CROP OR LIVESTOCK SYSTEMS.—

19 “(1) AVAILABILITY OF PAYMENTS.—The Sec-
20 retary shall provide additional payments to pro-
21 ducers that, in participating in the program, agree
22 to—

23 “(A) improve, maintain, and manage, or
24 adopt and maintain—

1 “(i) resource-conserving crop rota-
2 tions; or

3 “(ii) managed intensive rotational
4 grazing; or

5 “(B) transition to organic crop or livestock
6 systems.

7 “(2) RESOURCE-CONSERVING CROP ROTA-
8 TION.—In this subsection, the term ‘resource-con-
9 serving crop rotation’ means a crop rotation that—

10 “(A) includes at least 1 resource con-
11 serving crop (as defined by the Secretary);

12 “(B) reduces erosion;

13 “(C) improves water quality;

14 “(D) improves soil fertility and tith; and

15 “(E) interrupts pest cycles; and

16 “(F) in applicable areas, reduces depletion
17 of soil moisture or otherwise reduces the need
18 for irrigation.

19 “(3) MANAGED INTENSIVE ROTATIONAL GRAZ-
20 ING.—In this subsection, the term ‘managed inten-
21 sive rotational grazing’ means a system in which
22 animals are regularly and systematically moved to
23 fresh pasture in such a way as to—

24 “(A) maximize the quantity and quality of
25 forage growth;

1 “(B) improve manure distribution and nu-
2 trient cycling;

3 “(C) increase carbon sequestration from
4 greater forage harvest;

5 “(D) improve the quantity and quality of
6 cover for wildlife;

7 “(E) provide permanent cover to protect
8 the soil from erosion; and

9 “(F) improve water quality.

10 “(4) TRANSITION TO ORGANIC CROP OR LIVE-
11 STOCK SYSTEMS.—In this subsection, the term ‘tran-
12 sition to organic crop or livestock systems’ means
13 adoption of conservation activities for certified or-
14 ganic production on land or for herds not previously
15 certified organic that meet all the requirements of
16 the program and that are consistent with the regula-
17 tions promulgated under the Organic Foods Produc-
18 tion Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.).”.

19 (f) PAYMENT LIMITATIONS.—Section 1238G(g) of
20 the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838g(g)) is
21 amended to read as follows:

22 “(g) PAYMENT LIMITATIONS.—

23 “(1) IN GENERAL.—A person or legal entity
24 may not receive, directly or indirectly, payments
25 under this subchapter that, in the aggregate, exceed

1 \$200,000 for all contracts entered into during any
2 5-year period, excluding funding arrangements with
3 federally recognized Indian tribes or Alaska Native
4 corporations, regardless of the number of contracts
5 entered into under the program by the person or en-
6 tity.

7 “(2) ACREAGE.—Any acres enrolled in the pro-
8 gram that will not receive payments due to the limi-
9 tation in paragraph (1) shall not be counted toward
10 the acreage limitation in subsection (d)(1).”.

11 (g) REGULATIONS.—Section 1238G(h) of the Food
12 Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838g(h)) is amended
13 by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as paragraphs
14 (2) and (3), respectively, and by inserting before para-
15 graph (2) (as so redesignated) the following new para-
16 graph:

17 “(1) require participants in the program to be
18 actively engaged in farming or ranching;”.

19 (h) DATA.—Section 1238G(i) of the Food Security
20 Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838g(i)) is amended to read as
21 follows:

22 “(i) DATA.—The Secretary shall maintain detailed
23 and segmented data on contracts and payments under the
24 program to allow, at a minimum, with respect to each con-
25 tract—

1 “(1) quantification of the type and extent of
2 conservation activities for which payments were
3 made;

4 “(2) quantification of the amount of payments
5 made for—

6 “(A) the installation and adoption of addi-
7 tional conservation activities and improvements
8 to conservation activities in place on the oper-
9 ation of a producer at the time the conservation
10 stewardship offer is accepted by the Secretary;
11 and

12 “(B) the maintenance of existing conserva-
13 tion activities; and

14 “(3) identification of the watershed and county
15 in which the agricultural operation receiving pay-
16 ments is located.”.

17 (i) PAYMENTS FOR CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES RE-
18 LATED TO ORGANIC PRODUCTION.—Section 1238G of the
19 Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838g) is amended
20 by adding at the end the following new subsection:

21 “(g) PAYMENTS FOR CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES RE-
22 LATED TO ORGANIC PRODUCTION.—

23 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide
24 payments for conservation activities related to or-
25 ganic production.

1 “(2) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.—As a condi-
2 tion for receiving payments under the program, a
3 producer shall agree to develop and implement con-
4 servation activities for certified organic production
5 that are consistent with the regulations promulgated
6 under the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7
7 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.) and the purposes of the pro-
8 gram.

9 “(3) COORDINATION WITH ORGANIC CERTIFI-
10 CATION.—The Secretary shall establish a trans-
11 parent means by which producers may initiate or
12 maintain organic certification under the Organic
13 Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501 et.
14 seq.) while participating in a contract under the pro-
15 gram.

16 “(4) PLANNING.—

17 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
18 provide planning assistance to producers
19 transitioning to certified organic production
20 consistent with the requirements of the Organic
21 Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501
22 et seq.) and the purposes of this subchapter.

23 “(B) AVOIDANCE OF DUPLICATION.—The
24 Secretary shall, to the maximum extent prac-
25 ticable, eliminate duplication of planning activi-

1 ties for a producer participating in a contract
2 under this subchapter and initiating or main-
3 taining organic certification consistent with the
4 Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7
5 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.).”.

6 (j) COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION PLANNING.—
7 Section 1238G of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16
8 U.S.C. 3838g), as amended by subsection (i), is further
9 amended by adding at the end the following new sub-
10 section:

11 “(h) COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION PLANNING.—
12 The Secretary shall provide technical and financial assist-
13 ance to producers under the program to develop a com-
14 prehensive conservation plan for the agricultural operation
15 of the producer.”.

16 **Subtitle F—Environmental Quality** 17 **Incentives Program**

18 **SEC. 1501. PURPOSES.**

19 Section 1240 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16
20 U.S.C. 3839aa) is amended to read as follows:

21 **“SEC. 1240. PURPOSES.**

22 “The purpose of the environmental quality incentives
23 program established by this chapter is to assist producers
24 in implementing conservation systems, practices, and ac-
25 tivities on their operations in order to—

1 “(1) improve water quality, with special empha-
2 sis on reducing nutrient pollution and protecting
3 sources of drinking water;

4 “(2) avoid, to the maximum extent practicable,
5 the need for resource and regulatory programs by
6 assisting producers in protecting soil, water, air, and
7 related natural resources and meeting environmental
8 quality criteria established by Federal, State, tribal,
9 and local agencies;

10 “(3) conserve ground and surface water to sus-
11 tain or improve in-stream flows;

12 “(4) enhance soil quality;

13 “(5) control invasive species;

14 “(6) enhance critical aquatic and terrestrial
15 wildlife habitat for at-risk species;

16 “(7) reduce the amount and toxicity of pes-
17 ticides and other agricultural chemicals found on
18 food and in water or the air;

19 “(8) reduce the nontherapeutic use of medically
20 important antibiotics in food-producing animals in
21 order to preserve the effectiveness of antibiotics used
22 in the treatment of human and animal disease;

23 “(9) help producers adapt to a changing and
24 unpredictable climate and increase resiliency to cli-
25 mate change impacts, including rising temperatures

1 and extreme weather events, while reducing green-
2 house gas emissions; and

3 “(10) address additional priority resource con-
4 cerns, as determined by the Secretary.”.

5 **SEC. 1502. DEFINITIONS.**

6 (a) **ORGANIC SYSTEM PLAN.**—Section 1240A of the
7 Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–1) is
8 amended by striking paragraph (3) and redesignating
9 paragraphs (4) through (6) as paragraphs (3) through
10 (5), respectively.

11 (b) **PRACTICE.**—Section 1240A of the Food Security
12 Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–1) is further amended in
13 paragraph (4)(B) (as redesignated by subsection (a))—

14 (1) in clause (i), by striking “; and” and insert-
15 ing a semicolon;

16 (2) by redesignating clause (ii) as clause (iii);
17 and

18 (3) by inserting after clause (i) the following
19 new clause:

20 “(ii) comprehensive conservation plan-
21 ning; and”.

22 **SEC. 1503. ESTABLISHMENT AND ADMINISTRATION.**

23 (a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—Section 1240B(a) of the
24 Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–2(a)) is

1 amended by striking “2002 through 2014” and inserting
2 “2013 through 2018”.

3 (b) TERM.—Section 1240B(b)(2)(B) of the Food Se-
4 curity Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–2(b)(2)(B)) is
5 amended by striking “10 years” and inserting “5 years”.

6 (c) PRIORITY.—Section 1240B(c) of the Food Secu-
7 rity Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–2(c)) is amended to
8 read as follows:

9 “(c) PRIORITY.—If the Secretary determines that the
10 environmental values of two or more applications for pay-
11 ments are comparable, the Secretary shall assign a higher
12 priority to a program application which will achieve the
13 environment and conservation values using practices and
14 systems the assessed cost of which is lower.”.

15 (d) PAYMENTS.—

16 (1) INCREASED PAYMENTS FOR CERTAIN PRAC-
17 TICES.—Section 1240B(d)(3) of the Food Security
18 Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–2(d)(3)) is amended
19 to read as follows:

20 “(3) INCREASED PAYMENTS FOR CERTAIN
21 PRACTICES.—The Secretary shall provide supple-
22 mental payments and enhanced technical assistance
23 to producers implementing land management and
24 vegetative practices at a level that, as determined by

1 the Secretary, results in highly cost-effective treat-
2 ment of priority resource concerns, including—
3 “(A) residue and tillage management;
4 “(B) contour farming;
5 “(C) cover cropping;
6 “(D) integrated pest management;
7 “(E) nutrient management;
8 “(F) stream corridor improvement;
9 “(G) invasive plant species control;
10 “(H) contour buffer strips;
11 “(I) riparian herbaceous and forest buff-
12 ers;
13 “(J) filterstrips;
14 “(K) stream habitat improvement and
15 management;
16 “(L) grassed waterways;
17 “(M) wetland restoration and enhance-
18 ment;
19 “(N) pollinator habitat; or
20 “(O) conservation crop rotation.”.

21 (2) INCREASED PAYMENTS FOR CERTAIN PRO-
22 DUCERS.—Section 1240B(d)(4)(B) of the Food Se-
23 curity Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–2(d)(4)(B))
24 is amended by striking “30 percent” and inserting
25 “50 percent”.

1 (3) LIMITATION ON PAYMENTS FOR CERTAIN
2 PRACTICES.—Section 1240B(d) of the Food Security
3 Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–2(d)) is amended by
4 adding at the end the following new paragraph:

5 “(7) LIMITATION ON PAYMENTS FOR CERTAIN
6 PRACTICES.—A producer who owns or operates a
7 large confined animal feeding operation (as defined
8 by the Secretary) shall not be eligible for payments
9 under this chapter to construct an animal waste
10 management facility or any associated waste trans-
11 port or transfer device.”.

12 (e) ALLOCATION OF FUNDING.—Section 1240B(f) of
13 the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–2(f))
14 is amended to read as follows:

15 “(f) ALLOCATION OF FUNDING.—Of the funds made
16 available for payments for each of fiscal years 2014
17 through 2018—

18 “(1) 50 percent shall be targeted at practices
19 relating to livestock production; and

20 “(2) not less than 10 percent shall be targeted
21 at practices relating to improvement of fish and
22 wildlife habitat.”.

23 (f) WATER CONSERVATION OR IRRIGATION EFFI-
24 CIENCY PRACTICE.—

1 (1) AVAILABILITY OF PAYMENTS.—Section
2 1240B(h)(1) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16
3 U.S.C. 3839aa–2(h)(1)) is amended to read as fol-
4 lows:

5 “(1) AVAILABILITY OF PAYMENTS.—The Sec-
6 retary may provide payments under this subsection
7 to a producer for a water conservation or irrigation
8 practice that promotes ground and surface water
9 conservation on the agricultural operation of the
10 producer by—

11 “(A) improvements to irrigation systems;

12 “(B) enhancement of irrigation efficiencies;

13 “(C) conversion of the agricultural oper-
14 ation to—

15 “(i) the production of less water-in-
16 tensive agricultural commodities; or

17 “(ii) dryland farming;

18 “(D) improvement of the storage of water
19 through measures such as water banking and
20 groundwater recharge;

21 “(E) enhancement of fish and wildlife
22 habitat associated with irrigation systems in-
23 cluding pivot corners and areas with irregular
24 boundaries; or

1 “(F) establishment of other measures, as
2 determined by the Secretary, that improve
3 groundwater and surface water conservation in
4 agricultural operations.”.

5 (2) PRIORITY.—Section 1240B(h)(2) of the
6 Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–
7 2(h)(2)) is amended—

8 (A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “;
9 or” and inserting “; and”; and

10 (B) by amending subparagraph (B) to read
11 as follows:

12 “(B) any associated water savings remain
13 in the original source of such water for the use-
14 ful life of the practice.”.

15 (3) DUTY OF PRODUCERS.—Section 1240B(h)
16 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
17 3839aa–2(h)) is amended by adding at the end the
18 following new paragraph:

19 “(3) DUTY OF PRODUCERS.—The Secretary
20 may not provide payments to a producer for a water
21 conservation or irrigation practice under this chapter
22 unless the producer agrees not to use any associated
23 water savings to bring new land, other than inci-
24 dental land needed for efficient operations, under ir-
25 rigated production, unless the producer is partici-

1 pating in a watershed-wide project that will effec-
2 tively conserve water, as determined by the Sec-
3 retary.”.

4 (g) PAYMENTS FOR CONSERVATION PRACTICES RE-
5 LATED TO ORGANIC PRODUCTION.—

6 (1) PAYMENTS AUTHORIZED.—Section
7 1240B(i)(1) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16
8 U.S.C. 3839aa–2(i)(1)) is amended by striking
9 “subsection” and inserting “chapter”.

10 (2) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.—Section
11 1240B(i)(2) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16
12 U.S.C. 3839aa–2(i)(2)) is amended to read as fol-
13 lows:

14 “(2) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.—As a condi-
15 tion for receiving payments under this chapter, a
16 producer shall agree to develop and implement con-
17 servation practices for certified organic production
18 that are consistent with the regulations promulgated
19 under the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7
20 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.) and the purposes of this chap-
21 ter.”.

22 (3) PAYMENT LIMITATIONS; COORDINATION
23 WITH ORGANIC CERTIFICATION; PLANNING.—Section
24 1240B(i) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16
25 U.S.C. 3839aa–2(i)) is amended—

1 (A) by striking paragraph (3) and redesignig-
2 nating paragraphs (4) and (5) as paragraphs
3 (5) and (6), respectively; and

4 (B) by inserting after paragraph (2) the
5 following new paragraphs:

6 “(3) COORDINATION WITH ORGANIC CERTIFI-
7 CATION.—The Secretary shall establish a trans-
8 parent means by which producers may initiate or-
9 ganic certification under the Organic Foods Produc-
10 tion Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.) while par-
11 ticipating in a contract under this chapter.

12 “(4) PLANNING.—

13 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
14 provide planning assistance to producers
15 transitioning to certified organic production
16 consistent with the requirements of the Organic
17 Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501
18 et seq.) and the purposes of this chapter.

19 “(B) AVOIDANCE OF DUPLICATION.—The
20 Secretary shall, to the maximum extent prac-
21 ticable, eliminate duplication of planning activi-
22 ties for a producer participating in a contract
23 under this chapter and initiating or maintaining
24 organic certification consistent with the Organic

1 Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501
2 et seq.).”.

3 (h) PAYMENTS FOR CONSERVATION PRACTICES RE-
4 LATED TO ANTIBIOTIC USE.—Section 1240B of the Food
5 Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–2) is amended
6 by adding at the end the following new subsection:

7 “(j) PAYMENTS FOR CONSERVATION PRACTICES RE-
8 LATED TO ANTIBIOTIC USE.—

9 “(1) PAYMENTS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary
10 shall provide payments under this chapter to live-
11 stock producers for three years, to assist in a transi-
12 tion to modified animal management and production
13 systems, for practices leading to the reduction in the
14 need for antibiotics, including modification of sys-
15 tems and spaces to—

16 “(A) improve sanitation;

17 “(B) improve ventilation; or

18 “(C) support the implementation of im-
19 proved animal management techniques at the
20 operation.

21 “(2) DUTY OF PRODUCER.—The Secretary shall
22 not make payments under this chapter for practices
23 related to antibiotic use unless the producer agrees
24 to provide information to the Secretary documenting

1 the resulting reduction in antibiotic use in the oper-
2 ation of the producer.”.

3 (i) COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION PLANNING.—

4 Section 1240B of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16
5 U.S.C. 3839aa–2), as amended by subsection (g), is fur-
6 ther amended by adding at the end the following new sub-
7 section:

8 “(k) COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION PLANNING.—

9 The Secretary shall provide technical and financial assist-
10 ance to producers under the program to develop a com-
11 prehensive conservation plan for the agricultural operation
12 of the producer.”.

13 **SEC. 1504. EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS.**

14 (a) EVALUATION CRITERIA.—Section 1240C(a) of
15 the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–3(a))
16 is amended by striking “, national, State, and local con-
17 servation priorities” and inserting “priority resource con-
18 cerns identified under subsection (d)”.

19 (b) PRIORITIZATION OF APPLICATIONS.—Section
20 1240C(b) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
21 3839aa–3(b)) is amended—

22 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “achieving the
23 anticipated environmental benefits of the project”
24 and inserting “priority resource concerns identified
25 under subsection (d)”;

1 (2) in paragraph (2), by striking “designated
2 resource concern or resource concerns” and inserting
3 “priority resource concerns identified under sub-
4 section (d), including, in the case of applications
5 from nutrient-impacted watersheds, the degree to
6 which nutrient loadings would be reduced as a result
7 of the proposed project”.

8 (c) GROUPING OF APPLICATIONS.—Section 1240C(e)
9 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–3(e))
10 is amended by striking “for evaluation purposes or other-
11 wise evaluate applications relative to other applications for
12 similar farming operations” and inserting “proposing to
13 address the same priority resource concerns for evaluation
14 purposes”.

15 (d) PRIORITY RESOURCE CONCERNS.—Section
16 1240C of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
17 3839aa–3) is amended by adding at the end the following
18 new subsection:

19 “(d) PRIORITY RESOURCE CONCERNS.—For the pur-
20 poses of this section, the Secretary shall identify priority
21 resource concerns in a particular watershed or other ap-
22 propriate region or area within a State.”.

1 **SEC. 1505. ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PRO-**
2 **GRAM PLAN.**

3 (a) PLAN OF OPERATIONS.—Section 1240E(a) of the
4 Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–5(a)) is
5 amended to read as follows:

6 “(a) PLAN OF OPERATIONS.—To be eligible to re-
7 ceive payments under the program, a producer shall sub-
8 mit to the Secretary for approval a plan of operations
9 that—

10 “(1) specifies the priority resource concerns to
11 be addressed;

12 “(2) specifies the type, number, and sequencing
13 of conservation systems, practices, or activities to be
14 implemented to address the priority resource con-
15 cerns;

16 “(3) includes such terms and conditions as the
17 Secretary considers necessary to carry out the pro-
18 gram, including a description of the purposes to be
19 met by the implementation of the plan and a state-
20 ment of how the plan will achieve or take significant
21 steps toward achieving the relevant resource man-
22 agement system quality criteria;

23 “(4) in the case of a confined livestock feeding
24 operation, provides for development and implementa-
25 tion of a comprehensive nutrient management plan,
26 if applicable;

1 “(5) in the case of a producer located within a
2 nutrient-impacted watershed, identifies methods by
3 which the producer will limit nutrient loss; and

4 “(6) in the case of forest land, is consistent
5 with the provisions of a forest management plan
6 that is approved by the Secretary, which may in-
7 clude—

8 “(A) a forest stewardship plan described in
9 section 5 of the Cooperative Forestry Assist-
10 ance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2103a);

11 “(B) another practice plan approved by the
12 State forester; or

13 “(C) another plan determined appropriate
14 by the Secretary.”.

15 (b) AVOIDANCE OF DUPLICATION.—Section
16 1240E(b)(1) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
17 3839aa–5(b)(1))) is amended by striking “plan of oper-
18 ations” and inserting “resource management system
19 plan”.

20 **SEC. 1506. DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY.**

21 Section 1240F(2) of the Food Security Act of 1985
22 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–6(2)) is amended by striking “infor-
23 mation” and inserting “technical assistance, informa-
24 tion,”.

1 **SEC. 1507. LIMITATION ON PAYMENTS.**

2 Section 1240G of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16
3 U.S.C. 3839aa–7) is amended to read as follows:

4 **“SEC. 1240G. LIMITATION ON PAYMENTS.**

5 “(a) **LIMITATION ON TOTAL PAYMENTS.**—Subject to
6 subsection (b), a person or legal entity may not receive,
7 directly or indirectly, cost-share or incentive payments
8 under this chapter, in the aggregate, for all contracts en-
9 tered into under this chapter by the person or entity (ex-
10 cluding funding arrangements with federally recognized
11 Native American Indian Tribes or Alaska Native Corpora-
12 tions under section 1240B(h)), regardless of the number
13 of contracts entered into under this chapter by the person
14 or entity, that—

15 “(1) during any fiscal year exceed \$30,000; and

16 “(2) during any five-year period exceed
17 \$150,000.

18 “(b) **WAIVER AUTHORITY.**—In the case of contracts
19 under this chapter for projects of special environmental
20 significance, as determined by the Secretary, the Secretary
21 may waive the limitation otherwise applicable under sub-
22 section (a)(1).

23 “(c) **PREVENTION OF DUPLICATION.**—The Secretary
24 shall not approve a contract or provide payments to any
25 individual for a practice that has already been paid for

1 as part of a previously approved and completed contract
2 for any particular parcel of land.”.

3 **Subtitle G—Conservation**
4 **Innovation Grant Program**

5 **SEC. 1601. CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM.**

6 Chapter 5 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Secu-
7 rity Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb et seq.) is amended
8 by adding at the end the following new section:

9 **“SEC. 1240S. CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANT PRO-**
10 **GRAM.**

11 “(a) **COMPETITIVE GRANTS FOR INNOVATIVE CON-**
12 **SERVATION APPROACHES.**—The Secretary shall, for each
13 of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, carry out a conserva-
14 tion innovation grant program to encourage innovation in
15 conservation on private farmland, rangeland, wetlands,
16 grasslands, and forest lands.

17 “(b) **USE.**—The Secretary shall provide grants under
18 this section to governmental and non-governmental orga-
19 nizations and persons, on a competitive basis, to carry out
20 projects that—

21 “(1) develop and test innovative and cost-effec-
22 tive technologies and practices and methods of con-
23 servation delivery to address priority resource con-
24 cerns;

1 “(2) involve producers who are eligible for pay-
2 ments or technical assistance under this title;

3 “(3) leverage Federal funds made available to
4 carry out this section with matching funds provided
5 by State and local governments and private organi-
6 zations to promote environmental enhancement and
7 protection in conjunction with agricultural produc-
8 tion;

9 “(4) ensure efficient and effective transfer of
10 innovative technologies and approaches dem-
11 onstrated through projects that receive funding
12 under this subsection, such as market systems for
13 pollution reduction and practices for the storage of
14 carbon in soil;

15 “(5) provide environmental and resource con-
16 servation benefits through increased participation by
17 producers of specialty crops;

18 “(6) provide payments to producers to imple-
19 ment cost-effective and innovative technologies to
20 address priority resource concerns related to air
21 quality from agricultural operations; or

22 “(7) provide environmental and resource con-
23 servation benefits through increased participation by
24 beginning farmers and ranchers and socially dis-
25 advantaged farmers and ranchers.

1 “(c) EVALUATION CRITERIA.—The Secretary shall
2 develop criteria for evaluating applications for competitive
3 grants under this section that will ensure that priority re-
4 source concerns are effectively addressed.”.

5 **Subtitle H—Funding and**
6 **Administration**

7 **SEC. 1701. COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1241(a) of the Food Se-
9 curity Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3841(a)) is amended to
10 read as follows:

11 “(a) IN GENERAL.—For each of fiscal years 2014
12 through 2018, the Secretary shall use the funds, facilities,
13 and authorities of the Commodity Credit Corporation to
14 carry out the following programs under this title (includ-
15 ing the provision of technical assistance):

16 “(1) The conservation reserve program under
17 subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D, including,
18 to the maximum extent practicable, \$50,000,000 for
19 the period of fiscal years 2014 through 2018 to
20 carry out section 1235(f) to facilitate the transfer of
21 land subject to contracts from retired or retiring
22 owners and operators to beginning farmers or ranch-
23 ers and socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers.

24 “(2) The conservation security program under
25 subchapter A of chapter 2 of subtitle D, using such

1 sums as are necessary to administer contracts en-
2 tered into before September 30, 2008.

3 “(3) The conservation stewardship program
4 under subchapter B of chapter 2 of subtitle D.

5 “(4) The environmental quality incentives pro-
6 gram under chapter 4 of subtitle D, using, to the
7 maximum extent practicable, \$1,542,500,000 for
8 each fiscal year.

9 “(5) The conservation innovation grant pro-
10 program under section 1240S, using, to the maximum
11 extent practicable, \$100,000,000 for each fiscal
12 year.

13 “(6) The agricultural conservation easement
14 program under subtitle H, using, to the maximum
15 extent practicable, \$704,000,000 for each fiscal
16 year, of which not less than 70 percent shall be used
17 to carry out section 1265C.

18 “(7) The conservation loan and loan guarantee
19 program under section 1246, using, to the maximum
20 extent practicable, for each fiscal year—

21 “(A) \$200,000,000 for direct loans; and

22 “(B) \$150,000,000 for loan guarantees.”.

23 (b) GUARANTEED AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Sec-
24 tion 1241 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
25 3841) is amended—

1 (1) by redesignating subsections (b) through (h)
2 as subsections (c) through (i), respectively; and

3 (2) by inserting after subsection (a) the fol-
4 lowing:

5 “(b) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—

6 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
7 graph (2), amounts made available by subsection (a)
8 shall be used by the Secretary to carry out the pro-
9 grams specified in such subsection for fiscal years
10 2014 through 2018 and shall remain available until
11 expended. Amounts made available for the programs
12 specified in such subsection during a fiscal year
13 through modifications, cancellations, terminations,
14 and other related administrative actions and not ob-
15 ligated in that fiscal year shall remain available for
16 obligation during subsequent fiscal years, but shall
17 reduce the amount of additional funds made avail-
18 able in the subsequent fiscal year by an amount
19 equal to the amount remaining unobligated.

20 “(2) CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANT PRO-
21 GRAM.—Amounts made available by subsection
22 (a)(5) for a fiscal year and not obligated in that fis-
23 cal year shall be made available for the environ-
24 mental quality incentives program under chapter 4

1 of subtitle D, and shall remain available until ex-
2 pended.”.

3 (c) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—Section 1241(c) of the
4 Food Security Act of 1985 (as redesignated by subsection
5 (b)) is amended to read as follows:

6 “(c) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—

7 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Commodity Credit Cor-
8 poration funds made available for a fiscal year for
9 each of the programs specified in subsection (a)—

10 “(A) shall be available for the provision of
11 technical assistance for the programs for which
12 funds are made available; and

13 “(B) shall not be available for the provi-
14 sion of technical assistance for conservation
15 programs specified in subsection (a) other than
16 the program for which the funds were made
17 available.

18 “(2) AMOUNT.—The amount of funds made
19 available under paragraph (1) shall in no case equal
20 less than 10 percent nor more than 30 percent of
21 the amounts made available by subsection (a).”.

22 (d) ASSISTANCE TO CERTAIN FARMERS OR RANCH-
23 ERS FOR CONSERVATION ACCESS.—Section 1241(h) of
24 the Food Security Act of 1985 (as redesignated by sub-
25 section (b)) is amended—

1 (1) in paragraph (1)—

2 (A) in the matter preceding subparagraph
3 (A), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”;
4 and

5 (B) in subparagraph (A), by striking “5”
6 and inserting “10”;

7 (2) in paragraph (2), by inserting “(but not
8 earlier than 120 days after the date that funding for
9 the fiscal year is allocated to the States)” after “the
10 Secretary”;

11 (3) in paragraph (3), by inserting “(but not
12 earlier than 120 days after the date that funding for
13 the fiscal year is allocated to the States)” after “the
14 Secretary”; and

15 (4) by adding at the end the following new
16 paragraphs:

17 “(4) PARTICIPATION BY BEGINNING AND SO-
18 CIALY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS AND RANCH-
19 ERS.—Nothing in this subsection prohibits beginning
20 or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers from
21 participating in programs and receiving funding
22 available under this title that is not reserved under
23 paragraph (1).

24 “(5) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—Of the funds
25 reserved under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall al-

1 locate to the Natural Resources Conservation Service
2 funding for technical assistance at a rate that is not
3 more than 10 percent higher than the rate that
4 would otherwise apply under the environmental qual-
5 ity incentives program and the conservation steward-
6 ship program to allow the Service to provide addi-
7 tional technical assistance to beginning farmers or
8 ranchers and socially disadvantaged farmers or
9 ranchers to establish comprehensive conservation
10 plans.”.

11 **SEC. 1702. CONSERVATION LOAN AND LOAN GUARANTEE**
12 **PROGRAM.**

13 Subtitle E of title XII of the Food Security Act of
14 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3841 et seq.) is amended by adding at
15 the end the following new section:

16 **“SEC. 1246. CONSERVATION LOAN AND LOAN GUARANTEE**
17 **PROGRAM.**

18 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make or
19 guarantee qualified conservation loans to eligible bor-
20 rowers under this section.

21 “(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

22 “(1) QUALIFIED CONSERVATION LOAN.—The
23 term ‘qualified conservation loan’ means a loan, the
24 proceeds of which are used to cover the costs to the

1 borrower of carrying out a qualified conservation
2 project.

3 “(2) QUALIFIED CONSERVATION PROJECT.—

4 The term ‘qualified conservation project’ means con-
5 servation measures that address provisions of a com-
6 prehensive conservation plan of the eligible borrower.

7 “(3) CONSERVATION LOAN PLAN.—The term
8 ‘conservation loan plan’ means a plan, approved by
9 the Secretary, that, for a farming or ranching oper-
10 ation, identifies—

11 “(A) the conservation activities that will be
12 addressed with loan funds provided under this
13 section, including—

14 “(i) the installation of conservation
15 structures to address soil, water, and re-
16 lated resources;

17 “(ii) the establishment of forest cover
18 for sustained yield timber management,
19 erosion control, or shelterbelt purposes;

20 “(iii) the installation of water con-
21 servation measures;

22 “(iv) the installation of waste manage-
23 ment systems;

24 “(v) the establishment or improve-
25 ment of permanent pasture; or

1 “(vi) other purposes consistent with
2 the plan, including the adoption of any
3 other emerging or existing conservation
4 practices, techniques, or technologies ap-
5 proved by the Secretary; and

6 “(B) how and to what extent the conserva-
7 tion project will support the implementation of
8 a comprehensive conservation plan and improve
9 the conditions of identified priority resource
10 concerns.

11 “(c) ELIGIBLE BORROWERS.—

12 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make
13 or guarantee qualified conservation loans under this
14 section to—

15 “(A) farmers or ranchers engaged pri-
16 marily and directly in agricultural production in
17 the United States; or

18 “(B) farm cooperatives, private domestic
19 corporations, partnerships, joint operations,
20 trusts, or limited liability companies that are—

21 “(i) controlled by farmers or ranchers;
22 and

23 “(ii) engaged primarily and directly in
24 agricultural production in the United
25 States.

1 “(2) CONSERVATION LOAN PLAN.—In order to
2 be eligible to receive a loan or loan guarantee under
3 this section, an entity described in paragraph (1)
4 shall have a conservation loan plan.

5 “(d) PRIORITY.—In making or guaranteeing qualified
6 conservation loans under this section, the Secretary shall
7 give priority to—

8 “(1) qualified beginning farmers or ranchers
9 and socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers;

10 “(2) owners or tenants who use the loans to
11 convert to sustainable or organic agricultural pro-
12 duction systems;

13 “(3) producers who use the loans to build con-
14 servation structures or establish conservation prac-
15 tices to implement a comprehensive conservation
16 plan;

17 “(4) projects that will do the most to address
18 priority resource concerns, as specified in a con-
19 servation loan plan; and

20 “(5) projects that are designed to help pro-
21 ducers comply with, or avoid the need for, local,
22 State, or Federal regulation.

23 “(e) LIMITATIONS APPLICABLE TO LOAN GUARAN-
24 TEES.—The portion of a qualified conservation loan that
25 the Secretary may guarantee under this section shall be

1 not more than 90 percent of the principal amount of the
2 loan.

3 “(f) ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.—

4 “(1) GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.—The Sec-
5 retary shall ensure, to the maximum extent prac-
6 ticable, that qualified conservation loans made or
7 guaranteed under this section are distributed across
8 diverse geographic regions, while still prioritizing
9 qualified conservation projects with the greatest con-
10 servation or environmental benefit.

11 “(2) AGENCY COOPERATION.—The Secretary
12 shall ensure proper cooperation between the Natural
13 Resources Conservation Service, which shall review
14 and approve comprehensive loan plans and provide
15 technical assistance for qualified conservation
16 projects, and the Farm Service Agency, which will
17 approve and issue loans and loan guarantees under
18 this section.

19 “(3) INTEREST RATES.—The Secretary shall
20 ensure that a loan made under this section is made
21 at or below market rate.”.

1 **Subtitle I—Agricultural**
2 **Conservation Easement Program**

3 **SEC. 1801. AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT**
4 **PROGRAM.**

5 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Title XII of the Food Secu-
6 rity Act of 1985 is amended by adding at the end the fol-
7 lowing:

8 **“Subtitle H—Agricultural**
9 **Conservation Easement Program**

10 **“SEC. 1265. ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSES.**

11 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall estab-
12 lish an agricultural conservation easement program for the
13 conservation of eligible land and natural resources through
14 easements or other interests in land.

15 “(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the program are
16 to—

17 “(1) combine the purposes and coordinate the
18 functions of the wetlands reserve program estab-
19 lished under section 1237, the grassland reserve pro-
20 gram established under section 1238N, and the
21 farmland protection program established under sec-
22 tion 1238I, as such sections were in effect on Sep-
23 tember 30, 2013;

24 “(2) restore, protect, and enhance wetland on
25 eligible land;

1 “(3) protect and enhance the agricultural use,
2 viability, and related conservation values of eligible
3 land by limiting nonagricultural uses of that land;
4 and

5 “(4) protect grazing uses and related conserva-
6 tion values by restoring and conserving eligible land.

7 **“SEC. 1265A. DEFINITIONS.**

8 “In this subtitle:

9 “(1) AGRICULTURAL LAND EASEMENT.—The
10 term ‘agricultural land easement’ means an ease-
11 ment or other interest in eligible land that—

12 “(A) is conveyed for the purposes of pro-
13 tecting natural resources and the agricultural
14 nature of the land, and of promoting agricul-
15 tural viability for future generations; and

16 “(B) permits the landowner the right to
17 continue agricultural production and related
18 uses subject to an agricultural land easement
19 plan.

20 “(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible en-
21 tity’ means—

22 “(A) an agency of State or local govern-
23 ment or an Indian tribe (including a farmland
24 protection board or land resource council estab-
25 lished under State law); or

1 “(B) an organization that is—

2 “(i) organized for, and at all times
3 since the formation of the organization has
4 been operated principally for, 1 or more of
5 the conservation purposes specified in
6 clause (i), (ii), (iii), or (iv) of section
7 170(h)(4)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code
8 of 1986;

9 “(ii) an organization described in sec-
10 tion 501(c)(3) of that Code that is exempt
11 from taxation under section 501(a) of that
12 Code; or

13 “(iii) described in—

14 “(I) paragraph (1) or (2) of sec-
15 tion 509(a) of that Code; or

16 “(II) section 509(a)(3) of that
17 Code and is controlled by an organiza-
18 tion described in section 509(a)(2) of
19 that Code.

20 “(3) ELIGIBLE LAND.—The term ‘eligible land’
21 means private or tribal land that is—

22 “(A) in the case of an agricultural land
23 easement, agricultural land, including land on a
24 farm or ranch—

1 “(i) that is subject to a pending offer
2 for purchase from an eligible entity;

3 “(ii) that—

4 “(I) has prime, unique, or other
5 productive soil;

6 “(II) contains historical or ar-
7 chaeological resources; or

8 “(III) the protection of which will
9 further a State or local policy con-
10 sistent with the purposes of the pro-
11 gram; and

12 “(iii) that is—

13 “(I) cropland;

14 “(II) rangeland;

15 “(III) grassland or land that con-
16 tains forbs, or shrubland for which
17 grazing is the predominant use;

18 “(IV) pastureland; or

19 “(V) nonindustrial private forest
20 land that contributes to the economic
21 viability of an offered parcel or serves
22 as a buffer to protect such land from
23 development;

24 “(B) in the case of a wetland easement, a
25 wetland or related area, including—

1 “(i) farmed or converted wetland, to-
2 gether with the adjacent land that is func-
3 tionally dependent on that land, if the Sec-
4 retary determines it—

5 “(I) is likely to be successfully
6 restored in a cost effective manner;
7 and

8 “(II) will maximize the wildlife
9 benefits and wetland functions and
10 values as determined by the Secretary
11 in consultation with the Secretary of
12 the Interior at the local level;

13 “(ii) cropland or grassland that was
14 used for agricultural production prior to
15 flooding from the natural overflow of a
16 closed basin lake or pothole, as determined
17 by the Secretary, together (where prac-
18 ticable) with the adjacent land that is
19 functionally dependent on the cropland or
20 grassland;

21 “(iii) farmed wetland and adjoining
22 land that—

23 “(I) is enrolled in the conserva-
24 tion reserve program;

1 “(II) has the highest wetland
2 functions and values; and

3 “(III) is likely to return to pro-
4 duction after the land leaves the con-
5 servation reserve program;

6 “(iv) riparian areas that link wetland
7 that is protected by easements or some
8 other device that achieves the same pur-
9 pose as an easement; or

10 “(v) other wetland of an owner that
11 would not otherwise be eligible, if the Sec-
12 retary determines that the inclusion of
13 such wetland in such easement would sig-
14 nificantly add to the functional value of the
15 easement; or

16 “(C) in the case of both an agricultural
17 land easement or wetland easement, other land
18 that is incidental to eligible land if the Sec-
19 retary determines that it is necessary for the ef-
20 ficient administration of the easements under
21 this program.

22 “(4) PROGRAM.—The term ‘program’ means
23 the agricultural conservation easement program es-
24 tablished by this subtitle.

1 “(5) WETLAND EASEMENT.—The term ‘wetland
2 easement’ means a reserved interest in eligible land
3 that—

4 “(A) is defined and delineated in a deed;
5 and

6 “(B) stipulates—

7 “(i) the rights, title, and interests in
8 land conveyed to the Secretary; and

9 “(ii) the rights, title, and interests in
10 land that are reserved to the landowner.

11 **“SEC. 1265B. AGRICULTURAL LAND EASEMENTS.**

12 “(a) AVAILABILITY OF ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary
13 shall facilitate and provide funding for—

14 “(1) the purchase by eligible entities of agricul-
15 tural land easements and other interests in eligible
16 land; and

17 “(2) technical assistance to provide for the con-
18 servation of natural resources pursuant to an agri-
19 cultural land easement plan.

20 “(b) COST-SHARE ASSISTANCE.—

21 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide
22 cost-share assistance to eligible entities for pur-
23 chasing agricultural land easements to protect the
24 agricultural use, including grazing, and related con-
25 servation values of eligible land.

1 “(2) SCOPE OF ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE.—

2 “(A) FEDERAL SHARE.—Subject to sub-
3 paragraph (C), an agreement described in para-
4 graph (4) shall provide for a Federal share de-
5 termined by the Secretary of an amount not to
6 exceed 50 percent of the fair market value of
7 the agricultural land easement or other interest
8 in land, as determined by the Secretary using—

9 “(i) the Uniform Standards of Profes-
10 sional Appraisal Practice;

11 “(ii) an area-wide market analysis or
12 survey; or

13 “(iii) another industry-approved meth-
14 od.

15 “(B) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—

16 “(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to sub-
17 paragraph (C), under the agreement, the
18 eligible entity shall provide a share that is
19 at least equivalent to that provided by the
20 Secretary.

21 “(ii) SOURCE OF CONTRIBUTION.—An
22 eligible entity may include as part of its
23 share a charitable donation or qualified
24 conservation contribution (as defined by
25 section 170(h) of the Internal Revenue

1 Code of 1986) from the private landowner
2 if the eligible entity contributes its own
3 cash resources in an amount that is at
4 least 50 percent of the amount contributed
5 by the Secretary.

6 “(C) WAIVER AUTHORITY.—In the case of
7 grassland of special environmental significance,
8 as determined by the Secretary, the Secretary
9 may provide up to 75 percent of the fair market
10 value of the agricultural land easement.

11 “(3) EVALUATION AND RANKING OF APPLICA-
12 TIONS.—

13 “(A) CRITERIA.—The Secretary shall es-
14 tablish evaluation and ranking criteria to maxi-
15 mize the benefit of Federal investment under
16 the program.

17 “(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In establishing
18 the criteria, the Secretary shall emphasize sup-
19 port for—

20 “(i) protecting agricultural uses and
21 enhancing related conservation values of
22 the land; and

23 “(ii) maximizing the protection of
24 areas devoted to agricultural use and the

1 conservation values that can be derived
2 from the land.

3 “(C) PRIORITY.—If the Secretary deter-
4 mines that the environmental values of two or
5 more applications for cost-share assistance are
6 comparable, the Secretary shall assign a higher
7 priority to a program application which will
8 achieve the environment and conservation val-
9 ues using practices and systems the assessed
10 cost of which is lower.

11 “(4) AGREEMENTS WITH ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

12 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
13 enter into agreements with eligible entities to
14 stipulate the terms and conditions under which
15 the eligible entity is permitted to use cost-share
16 assistance provided under this section.

17 “(B) LENGTH OF AGREEMENTS.—An
18 agreement shall be for a term that is—

19 “(i) in the case of an eligible entity
20 certified under the process described in
21 paragraph (5), a minimum of 5 years; and

22 “(ii) for all other eligible entities, at
23 least 3, but not more than 5 years.

24 “(C) MINIMUM TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—

25 An eligible entity shall be authorized to use its

1 own terms and conditions for agricultural land
2 easements so long as the Secretary determines
3 such terms and conditions—

4 “(i) are consistent with the purposes
5 of the program;

6 “(ii) are permanent or for the max-
7 imum duration allowed under applicable
8 State law;

9 “(iii) permit effective enforcement of
10 the conservation purposes of such ease-
11 ments, including appropriate restrictions
12 depending on the purposes for which the
13 easement is acquired;

14 “(iv) include a right of enforcement
15 for the Secretary that may be used if the
16 terms of the easement are not enforced by
17 the holder of the easement;

18 “(v) subject the land in which such an
19 interest is purchased to an agricultural
20 land easement plan that—

21 “(I) describes the activities which
22 promote the long-term viability of the
23 land to meet the purposes for which
24 the easement was acquired;

1 “(II) requires the management of
2 grassland according to a grassland
3 management plan; and

4 “(III) includes a comprehensive
5 conservation plan, and requires, at the
6 option of the Secretary, the conversion
7 of highly erodible cropland to less in-
8 tensive uses; and

9 “(vi) include a limit on the impervious
10 surfaces to be allowed that is consistent
11 with the purposes of the program under
12 section 1265(b).

13 “(D) SUBSTITUTION OF QUALIFIED
14 PROJECTS.—An agreement shall allow, upon
15 mutual agreement of the parties, substitution of
16 qualified projects that are identified at the time
17 of the proposed substitution.

18 “(E) EFFECT OF VIOLATION.—If a viola-
19 tion occurs of a term or condition of an agree-
20 ment under this subsection—

21 “(i) the Secretary may terminate the
22 agreement; and

23 “(ii) the Secretary may require the el-
24 igible entity to refund all or part of any
25 payments received by the entity under the

1 program, with interest on the payments as
2 determined appropriate by the Secretary.

3 “(5) CERTIFICATION OF ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

4 “(A) CERTIFICATION PROCESS.—The Sec-
5 retary shall establish a process under which the
6 Secretary may—

7 “(i) directly certify eligible entities
8 that meet established criteria;

9 “(ii) enter into long-term agreements
10 with certified eligible entities; and

11 “(iii) accept proposals for cost-share
12 assistance for the purchase of agricultural
13 land easements throughout the duration of
14 such agreements.

15 “(B) CERTIFICATION CRITERIA.—In order
16 to be certified, an eligible entity shall dem-
17 onstrate to the Secretary that the entity will
18 maintain, at a minimum, for the duration of the
19 agreement—

20 “(i) a plan for administering ease-
21 ments that is consistent with the purpose
22 of this subtitle;

23 “(ii) the capacity and resources to
24 monitor and enforce agricultural land ease-
25 ments; and

1 “(iii) policies and procedures to en-
2 sure—

3 “(I) the long-term integrity of
4 agricultural land easements on eligible
5 land;

6 “(II) timely completion of acqui-
7 sitions of easements; and

8 “(III) timely and complete eval-
9 uation and reporting to the Secretary
10 on the use of funds provided under
11 the program.

12 “(C) REVIEW AND REVISION.—

13 “(i) REVIEW.—The Secretary shall
14 conduct a review of eligible entities cer-
15 tified under subparagraph (A) every 3
16 years to ensure that such entities are
17 meeting the criteria established under sub-
18 paragraph (B).

19 “(ii) REVOCATION.—If the Secretary
20 finds that the certified eligible entity no
21 longer meets the criteria established under
22 subparagraph (B), the Secretary may—

23 “(I) allow the certified eligible
24 entity a specified period of time, at a
25 minimum 180 days, in which to take

1 such actions as may be necessary to
2 meet the criteria; and

3 “(II) revoke the certification of
4 the eligible entity, if, after the speci-
5 fied period of time, the certified entity
6 does not meet such criteria.

7 “(c) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.**—The Secretary may
8 provide technical assistance, if requested, to assist in—

9 “(1) compliance with the terms and conditions
10 of easements; and

11 “(2) implementation of an agricultural land
12 easement plan.

13 **“SEC. 1265C. WETLAND EASEMENTS.**

14 “(a) **AVAILABILITY OF ASSISTANCE.**—The Secretary
15 shall provide assistance to owners of eligible land to re-
16 store, protect, and enhance wetland through—

17 “(1) easements and related wetland easement
18 plans; and

19 “(2) technical assistance.

20 “(b) **EASEMENTS.**—

21 “(1) **METHOD OF ENROLLMENT.**—The Sec-
22 retary shall enroll eligible land through the use of—

23 “(A) 30-year easements;

24 “(B) permanent easements;

1 “(C) easements for the maximum duration
2 allowed under applicable State laws; or

3 “(D) as an option for Indian tribes only,
4 30-year contracts (which shall be considered to
5 be 30-year contracts for the purposes of this
6 subtitle).

7 “(2) LIMITATIONS.—

8 “(A) INELIGIBLE LAND.—The Secretary
9 may not acquire wetland easements on—

10 “(i) land established to trees under
11 the conservation reserve program, except in
12 cases where the Secretary determines it
13 would further the purposes of the program;
14 and

15 “(ii) farmed wetland or converted wet-
16 land where the conversion was not com-
17 menced prior to December 23, 1985.

18 “(B) CHANGES IN OWNERSHIP.—No wet-
19 land easement shall be created on land that has
20 changed ownership during the preceding 24-
21 month period unless—

22 “(i) the new ownership was acquired
23 by will or succession as a result of the
24 death of the previous owner;

1 “(ii)(I) the ownership change occurred
2 because of foreclosure on the land; and

3 “(II) immediately before the fore-
4 closure, the owner of the land exer-
5 cises a right of redemption from the
6 mortgage holder in accordance with
7 State law; or

8 “(iii) the Secretary determines that
9 the land was acquired under circumstances
10 that give adequate assurances that such
11 land was not acquired for the purposes of
12 placing it in the program.

13 “(3) EVALUATION AND RANKING OF OFFERS.—

14 “(A) CRITERIA.—The Secretary shall es-
15 tablish evaluation and ranking criteria to maxi-
16 mize the benefit of Federal investment under
17 the program.

18 “(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—When evaluating
19 offers from landowners, the Secretary may con-
20 sider—

21 “(i) the conservation benefits of ob-
22 taining a wetland easement, including the
23 potential environmental benefits if the land
24 was removed from agricultural production;

1 “(ii) the cost-effectiveness of each
2 wetland easement, so as to maximize the
3 environmental benefits per dollar expended;

4 “(iii) whether the landowner or an-
5 other person is offering to contribute fi-
6 nancially to the cost of the wetland ease-
7 ment to leverage Federal funds; and

8 “(iv) such other factors as the Sec-
9 retary determines are necessary to carry
10 out the purposes of the program.

11 “(C) PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall place
12 priority on acquiring wetland easements based
13 on the value of the wetland easement for pro-
14 tecting and enhancing habitat for migratory
15 birds and other wildlife.

16 “(4) AGREEMENT.—To be eligible to place eligi-
17 ble land into the program through a wetland ease-
18 ment, the owner of such land shall enter into an
19 agreement with the Secretary to—

20 “(A) grant an easement on such land to
21 the Secretary;

22 “(B) authorize the implementation of a
23 wetland easement plan;

1 “(C) create and record an appropriate
2 deed restriction in accordance with applicable
3 State law to reflect the easement agreed to;

4 “(D) provide a written statement of con-
5 sent to such easement signed by those holding
6 a security interest in the land;

7 “(E) comply with the terms and conditions
8 of the easement and any related agreements;
9 and

10 “(F) permanently retire any existing crop-
11 land base and allotment history for the land on
12 which the easement has been obtained.

13 “(5) TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EASEMENT.—

14 “(A) IN GENERAL.—A wetland easement
15 shall include terms and conditions that—

16 “(i) permit—

17 “(I) repairs, improvements, and
18 inspections on the land that are nec-
19 essary to maintain existing public
20 drainage systems; and

21 “(II) owners to control public ac-
22 cess on the easement areas while iden-
23 tifying access routes to be used for
24 restoration activities and management
25 and easement monitoring;

1 “(ii) prohibit—

2 “(I) the alteration of wildlife
3 habitat and other natural features of
4 such land, unless specifically author-
5 ized by the Secretary;

6 “(II) the spraying of such land
7 with chemicals or the mowing of such
8 land, except where such spraying or
9 mowing is authorized by the Secretary
10 or is necessary—

11 “(aa) to comply with Fed-
12 eral or State noxious weed con-
13 trol laws;

14 “(bb) to comply with a Fed-
15 eral or State emergency pest
16 treatment program; or

17 “(cc) to meet habitat needs
18 of specific wildlife species;

19 “(III) any activities to be carried
20 out on the owner’s or successor’s land
21 that is immediately adjacent to, and
22 functionally related to, the land that
23 is subject to the easement if such ac-
24 tivities will alter, degrade, or other-

1 wise diminish the functional value of
2 the eligible land; and

3 “(IV) the adoption of any other
4 practice that would tend to defeat the
5 purposes of the program, as deter-
6 mined by the Secretary;

7 “(iii) provide for the efficient and ef-
8 fective establishment of wetland functions
9 and values; and

10 “(iv) include such additional provi-
11 sions as the Secretary determines are de-
12 sirable to carry out the program or facili-
13 tate the practical administration thereof.

14 “(B) VIOLATION.—On the violation of the
15 terms or conditions of the wetland easement,
16 the wetland easement shall remain in force and
17 the Secretary may require the owner to refund
18 all or part of any payments received by the
19 owner under the program, together with inter-
20 est thereon as determined appropriate by the
21 Secretary.

22 “(C) COMPATIBLE USES.—Land subject to
23 a wetland easement may be used for compatible
24 economic uses, including such activities as
25 hunting and fishing, managed timber harvest,

1 or periodic haying or grazing, if such use is spe-
2 cifically permitted by the wetland easement plan
3 and is consistent with the long-term protection
4 and enhancement of the wetland resources for
5 which the easement was established.

6 “(D) RESERVATION OF GRAZING
7 RIGHTS.—The Secretary may include in the
8 terms and conditions of a wetland easement a
9 provision under which the owner reserves graz-
10 ing rights if—

11 “(i) the Secretary determines that the
12 reservation and use of the grazing rights—

13 “(I) is compatible with the land
14 subject to the easement;

15 “(II) is consistent with the his-
16 torical natural uses of the land and
17 long-term protection and enhancement
18 goals for which the easement was es-
19 tablished; and

20 “(III) complies with the wetland
21 easement plan; and

22 “(ii) the agreement provides for a
23 commensurate reduction in the easement
24 payment to account for the grazing value,
25 as determined by the Secretary.

1 “(6) COMPENSATION.—

2 “(A) DETERMINATION.—

3 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary
4 shall pay as compensation for a permanent
5 wetland easement acquired under the pro-
6 gram an amount necessary to encourage
7 enrollment in the program based on the
8 lowest of—

9 “(I) the fair market value of the
10 land, as determined by the Secretary,
11 using the Uniform Standards of Pro-
12 fessional Appraisal Practice or an
13 area-wide market analysis or survey;

14 “(II) the amount corresponding
15 to a geographical cap, as determined
16 by the Secretary in regulations; or

17 “(III) the offer made by the
18 landowner.

19 “(ii) OTHER.—Compensation for a
20 30-year wetland easement shall be not less
21 than 50 percent, but not more than 75
22 percent, of the compensation that would be
23 paid for a permanent wetland easement.

24 “(B) FORM OF PAYMENT.—Compensation
25 shall be provided by the Secretary in the form

1 of a cash payment, in an amount determined
2 under subparagraph (A).

3 “(C) PAYMENT SCHEDULE.—

4 “(i) EASEMENTS VALUED AT LESS
5 THAN \$500,000.—For wetland easements
6 valued at \$500,000 or less, the Secretary
7 may provide easement payments in not
8 more than 10 annual payments.

9 “(ii) EASEMENTS VALUED AT MORE
10 THAN \$500,000.—For wetland easements
11 valued at more than \$500,000, the Sec-
12 retary may provide easement payments in
13 at least 5, but not more than 10 annual
14 payments, except that, if the Secretary de-
15 termines it would further the purposes of
16 the program, the Secretary may make a
17 lump sum payment for such an easement.

18 “(c) EASEMENT RESTORATION.—

19 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide
20 financial assistance to carry out the establishment of
21 conservation measures and practices and protect
22 wetland functions and values, including necessary
23 maintenance activities, as set forth in a wetland
24 easement plan.

25 “(2) PAYMENTS.—The Secretary shall—

1 “(A) in the case of a permanent wetland
2 easement, pay an amount that is not less than
3 75 percent, but not more than 100 percent, of
4 the eligible costs as determined by the Sec-
5 retary; and

6 “(B) in the case of a 30-year wetland ease-
7 ment, pay an amount that is not less than 50
8 percent, but not more than 75 percent, of the
9 eligible costs, as determined by the Secretary.

10 “(d) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—

11 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall assist
12 owners in complying with the terms and conditions
13 of easements.

14 “(2) CONTRACTS OR AGREEMENTS.—The Sec-
15 retary may enter into 1 or more contracts with pri-
16 vate entities or agreements with a State, non-govern-
17 mental organization, or Indian tribe to carry out
18 necessary restoration, enhancement, or maintenance
19 of a wetland easement if the Secretary determines
20 that the contract or agreement will advance the pur-
21 poses of the program.

22 “(3) FUNDING.—Not less than 10 percent of
23 the funds made available to carry out this section
24 shall be available to provide technical assistance
25 under this subsection.

1 “(e) WETLAND ENHANCEMENT OPTION.—The Sec-
2 retary may enter into 1 or more agreements with a State
3 (including a political subdivision or agency of a State),
4 nongovernmental organization, or Indian tribe to carry out
5 a special wetland enhancement option that the Secretary
6 determines would advance the purposes of the program.

7 “(f) ADMINISTRATION.—

8 “(1) WETLAND EASEMENT PLAN.—The Sec-
9 retary shall develop a wetland easement plan for eli-
10 gible land subject to a wetland easement, which will
11 include the practices and activities necessary to re-
12 store, protect, enhance, and maintain the enrolled
13 land.

14 “(2) DELEGATION OF EASEMENT ADMINISTRA-
15 TION.—

16 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may
17 delegate any of the easement management,
18 monitoring, and enforcement responsibilities of
19 the Secretary to other Federal or State agencies
20 that have the appropriate authority, expertise
21 and resources necessary to carry out such dele-
22 gated responsibilities or to other conservation
23 organizations if the Secretary determines the
24 organization has similar expertise and re-
25 sources.

1 “(B) LIMITATION.—The Secretary shall
2 not delegate any of the monitoring or enforce-
3 ment responsibilities under the program to con-
4 servation organizations.

5 “(3) PAYMENTS.—

6 “(A) TIMING OF PAYMENTS.—The Sec-
7 retary shall provide payment for obligations in-
8 curred by the Secretary under this section—

9 “(i) with respect to any easement res-
10 toration obligation as soon as possible after
11 the obligation is incurred; and

12 “(ii) with respect to any annual ease-
13 ment payment obligation incurred by the
14 Secretary as soon as possible after October
15 1 of each calendar year.

16 “(B) PAYMENTS TO OTHERS.—If an owner
17 who is entitled to a payment dies, becomes in-
18 competent, is otherwise unable to receive such
19 payment, or is succeeded by another person or
20 entity who renders or completes the required
21 performance, the Secretary shall make such
22 payment, in accordance with regulations pre-
23 scribed by the Secretary and without regard to
24 any other provision of law, in such manner as

1 the Secretary determines is fair and reasonable
2 in light of all of the circumstances.

3 “(g) WETLANDS RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PRO-
4 GRAM.—

5 “(1) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary
6 may enter into 1 or more agreements with a State
7 (including a political subdivision or agency of a
8 State), nongovernmental organization, or Indian
9 tribe to carry out a special wetlands reserve en-
10 hancement program that the Secretary determines
11 would advance the purposes of this section.

12 “(2) RESERVED RIGHTS PILOT PROGRAM.—

13 “(A) RESERVATION OF GRAZING AND
14 HAYING RIGHTS.—As part of the wetlands re-
15 serve enhancement program, the Secretary shall
16 carry out a pilot program for land in which a
17 landowner may reserve grazing and haying
18 rights in the warranty easement deed restriction
19 if the Secretary determines that the reservation
20 and use of the grazing rights—

21 “(i) is compatible with the land sub-
22 ject to the easement;

23 “(ii) is consistent with the long-term
24 wetland protection and enhancement goals

1 for which the easement was established;
2 and

3 “(iii) complies with a comprehensive
4 conservation plan.

5 “(B) DURATION.—The pilot program es-
6 tablished under this paragraph shall terminate
7 on September 30, 2016.

8 **“SEC. 1265D. ADMINISTRATION.**

9 “(a) INELIGIBLE LAND.—The Secretary may not ac-
10 quire an easement under the program on—

11 “(1) land owned by an agency of the United
12 States, other than land held in trust for Indian
13 tribes;

14 “(2) land owned in fee title by a State, includ-
15 ing an agency or a subdivision of a State, or a unit
16 of local government;

17 “(3) land subject to an easement or deed re-
18 striction which, as determined by the Secretary, pro-
19 vides similar protection as would be provided by en-
20 rollment in the program; and

21 “(4) land where the purposes of the program
22 would be undermined due to on-site or off-site condi-
23 tions, such as risk of hazardous substances, pro-
24 posed or existing rights of way, infrastructure devel-
25 opment, or adjacent land uses.

1 “(b) PRIORITY.—In evaluating applications under the
2 program, the Secretary may give priority to land that is
3 currently enrolled in the conservation reserve program in
4 a contract that is set to expire within 1 year and—

5 “(1) in the case of an agricultural land ease-
6 ment, is grassland that would benefit from protec-
7 tion under a long-term easement; and

8 “(2) in the case of a wetland easement, is a
9 wetland or related area with the highest functions
10 and values and is likely to return to production after
11 the land leaves the conservation reserve program.

12 “(c) SUBORDINATION, EXCHANGE, MODIFICATION,
13 AND TERMINATION.—

14 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may subor-
15 dinate, exchange, terminate, or modify any interest
16 in land, or portion of such interest, administered by
17 the Secretary, either directly or on behalf of the
18 Commodity Credit Corporation under the program
19 when the Secretary determines that—

20 “(A) it is in the Federal Government’s in-
21 terest to subordinate, exchange, modify or ter-
22 minate the interest in land;

23 “(B) the subordination, exchange, modi-
24 fication, or termination action—

1 “(i) will address a compelling public
2 need for which there is no practicable al-
3 ternative, or

4 “(ii) such action will further the prac-
5 tical administration of the program; and

6 “(C) the subordination, exchange, modi-
7 fication, or termination action will result in
8 comparable conservation value and equivalent
9 or greater economic value to the United States.

10 “(2) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall
11 work with the owner, and eligible entity if applicable,
12 to address any subordination, exchange, termination,
13 or modification of the interest, or portion of such in-
14 terest in land.

15 “(3) NOTICE.—At least 90 days before taking
16 any termination action described in paragraph (1),
17 the Secretary shall provide written notice of such ac-
18 tion to the Committee on Agriculture of the House
19 of Representatives and the Committee on Agri-
20 culture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.

21 “(d) LAND ENROLLED IN OTHER PROGRAMS.—

22 “(1) CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM.—The
23 Secretary may terminate or modify a contract en-
24 tered into under section 1231(a) if eligible land that

1 is subject to such contract is transferred into the
2 program.

3 “(2) OTHER.—Land enrolled in the wetlands
4 reserve program, grassland reserve program, or
5 farmland protection program, as such programs
6 were in effect on September 30, 2013, shall be con-
7 sidered enrolled in this program.

8 “(e) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS FOR AGRICULTURAL
9 LAND EASEMENTS.—Of the funds made available under
10 section 1241 to carry out the program for a fiscal year,
11 the Secretary shall, to the extent practicable, use no less
12 than 40 percent for agricultural land easements.”.

13 (b) COMPLIANCE WITH CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS.—
14 Before an eligible entity or owner of eligible land may re-
15 ceive assistance under subtitle H of title XII of the Food
16 Security Act of 1985, the eligible entity or person shall
17 agree, during the crop year for which the assistance is pro-
18 vided and in exchange for the assistance—

19 (1) to comply with applicable conservation re-
20 quirements under subtitle B of title XII of that Act
21 (16 U.S.C. 3811 et seq.); and

22 (2) to comply with applicable wetland protection
23 requirements under subtitle C of title XII of that
24 Act (16 U.S.C. 3821 et seq.).

1 (c) CROSS REFERENCE.—Section 1244 of the Food
2 Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3844) is amended—

3 (1) in subsection (c)—

4 (A) in paragraph (1)—

5 (i) by inserting “and” at the end of
6 subparagraph (A);

7 (ii) by striking “and” at the end of
8 subparagraph (B); and

9 (iii) by striking subparagraph (C);

10 (B) by redesignating paragraph (2) as
11 paragraph (3); and

12 (C) by inserting after paragraph (1) the
13 following:

14 “(2) the agricultural conservation easement
15 program established under subtitle H; and”; and

16 (2) in subsection (f)—

17 (A) in paragraph (1)—

18 (i) in subparagraph (A), by striking
19 “programs administered under subchapters
20 B and C of chapter 1 of subtitle D” and
21 inserting “conservation reserve program
22 established under subchapter B of chapter
23 1 of subtitle D and the agricultural con-
24 servation easement program under subtitle

1 H using wetland easements under section
2 1265C”; and

3 (ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking
4 “subchapter C of chapter 1 of subtitle D”
5 and inserting “the agricultural conserva-
6 tion easement program under subtitle H
7 using wetland easements under section
8 1265C”; and

9 (B) in paragraph (4), by striking “sub-
10 chapter C” and inserting “subchapter B”.

11 **Subtitle J—Regional Conservation**
12 **Partnership Program**

13 **SEC. 1901. REGIONAL CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PRO-**
14 **GRAM.**

15 Title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 is amend-
16 ed by inserting after subtitle H (as added by section 1801)
17 the following:

18 **“Subtitle I—Regional Conservation**
19 **Partnership Program**

20 **“SEC. 1271. ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSES.**

21 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall estab-
22 lish a regional conservation partnership program to imple-
23 ment eligible activities through—

24 “(1) partnership agreements with eligible part-
25 ners; and

1 “(2) contracts with producers enrolled in a cov-
2 ered program.

3 “(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the program
4 are—

5 “(1) to combine the purposes and coordinate
6 the functions of the agricultural water enhancement
7 program established under section 1240I, the Chesapeake
8 Bay watershed program established under section
9 1240Q, the cooperative conservation partnership
10 initiative established under section 1243, and the
11 Great Lakes basin program for soil erosion and sedi-
12 ment control established under section 1240P, as
13 such sections were in effect on September 30, 2013;

14 “(2) to enhance priority resource concerns on
15 agricultural and nonindustrial private forest lands,
16 including ground and surface water associated with
17 such lands;

18 “(3) to encourage cooperation among partners
19 and producers to—

20 “(A) address priority resource concerns in-
21 volving agricultural and nonindustrial private
22 forest lands on a local, State, multi-state, or re-
23 gional level;

24 “(B) encourage producers to cooperate in
25 achieving the goals of applicable Federal, State,

1 and local natural resource and environmental
2 laws, thereby avoiding the need for additional
3 regulatory measures to be applied to owners
4 and operators of agricultural and nonindustrial
5 private forest land;

6 “(C) to encourage producers to cooperate
7 in the installation and maintenance of conserva-
8 tion activities, practices, systems, and manage-
9 ment measures that affect multiple agricultural
10 or nonindustrial private forest operations for
11 the purpose of achieving landscape-level im-
12 provement of priority resource concerns;

13 “(D) to promote the development and dem-
14 onstration of innovative conservation activities,
15 practices, systems, and management measures
16 to deliver technical, financial, and educational
17 assistance;

18 “(E) to promote ground and surface water
19 conservation and improve water quality through
20 efforts on agricultural land, including—

21 “(i) water quality or water conserva-
22 tion planning, including resource condition
23 assessment and modeling;

24 “(ii) performance measurement and
25 management to reduce nutrient loss;

1 “(iii) water quality or water conserva-
2 tion restoration or enhancement projects;

3 “(iv) in the case of nutrient-impacted
4 watersheds, prioritization of nutrient loss
5 reduction as a conservation goal;

6 “(v) activities designed to mitigate the
7 effects of damaging drought or precipita-
8 tion; or

9 “(vi) related activities that the Sec-
10 retary determines will help achieve water
11 quality or water conservation benefits on
12 agricultural land;

13 “(4) to encourage producers to cooperate in the
14 installation and maintenance of conservation activi-
15 ties, practices, systems, and management measures
16 that provide climate change benefits, including in-
17 creasing resilience to rising temperatures, extreme
18 weather events, and related climate changes while
19 reducing greenhouse gas emissions;

20 “(5) to improve the capacity of regional, state
21 or local partners to deliver assistance to producers
22 that is effective in addressing priority resource con-
23 cerns; and

24 “(6) to implement the partnership in such a
25 way that encourages producers to achieve assessed

1 conservation outcomes and allows them to receive
2 payments and technical assistance linked to levels of
3 those outcomes.

4 **“SEC. 1271A. DEFINITIONS.**

5 “In this subtitle:

6 “(1) COVERED PROGRAMS.—The term ‘covered
7 programs’ means all conservation programs under
8 subtitle D.

9 “(2) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITY.—The term ‘eligible
10 activity’ means any of the following conservation ac-
11 tivities when delivered through a covered program:

12 “(A) Water quality restoration or enhance-
13 ment projects, including nutrient management
14 and sediment reduction.

15 “(B) Water quantity conservation, restora-
16 tion, or enhancement projects relating to sur-
17 face water and groundwater resources, includ-
18 ing—

19 “(i) the conversion of irrigated crop-
20 land to the production of less water-inten-
21 sive agricultural commodities or dryland
22 farming; and

23 “(ii) irrigation system improvement
24 and irrigation efficiency enhancement.

25 “(C) Drought mitigation.

1 “(D) Flood prevention.

2 “(E) Water retention.

3 “(F) Habitat conservation, restoration,
4 and enhancement.

5 “(G) Erosion control.

6 “(H) Other related activities that the Sec-
7 retary determines will help achieve conservation
8 benefits.

9 “(3) ELIGIBLE PARTNER.—The term ‘eligible
10 partner’ means any of the following:

11 “(A) An agricultural or silvicultural pro-
12 ducer association or other group of producers.

13 “(B) A State or unit of local government.

14 “(C) An Indian tribe.

15 “(D) A farmer cooperative.

16 “(E) An institution of higher education.

17 “(F) A nongovernmental organization with
18 an established history of working cooperatively
19 with producers to effectively address priority re-
20 source concerns related to agricultural produc-
21 tion and nonindustrial private forest land or
22 with demonstrated technical capabilities that
23 would substantially increase the success of the
24 program.

1 “(4) PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT.—The term
2 ‘partnership agreement’ means an agreement be-
3 tween the Secretary and an eligible partner.

4 “(5) PROGRAM.—The term ‘program’ means
5 the regional conservation partnership program estab-
6 lished by this subtitle.

7 **“SEC. 1271B. REGIONAL CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIPS.**

8 “(a) PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS AUTHORIZED.—
9 The Secretary may enter into a partnership agreement
10 with an eligible partner to implement a project that will
11 assist producers with installing and maintaining an eligi-
12 ble activity.

13 “(b) LENGTH.—A partnership agreement shall be for
14 a period not to exceed 5 years, except that the Secretary
15 may extend the agreement 1 time for up to 12 months
16 when an extension is necessary to meet the objectives of
17 the program.

18 “(c) DUTIES OF PARTNERS.—

19 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Under a partnership agree-
20 ment, the eligible partner shall—

21 “(A) define the scope of a project, includ-
22 ing—

23 “(i) the eligible activities to be imple-
24 mented;

1 “(ii) the potential agricultural or non-
2 industrial private forest operations af-
3 fected;

4 “(iii) the local, State, multi-State, or
5 other geographic area covered; and

6 “(iv) the planning, outreach, imple-
7 mentation, and assessment to be con-
8 ducted;

9 “(B) conduct outreach and education to
10 producers for potential participation in the
11 project;

12 “(C) at the request of a producer, act on
13 behalf of a producer participating in the project
14 in applying for assistance under section 1271C;

15 “(D) leverage financial or technical assist-
16 ance provided by the Secretary with additional
17 funds to help achieve the project objectives;

18 “(E) if proposed by the partner and ap-
19 proved by the Secretary, provide technical as-
20 sistance to producers participating in the
21 project;

22 “(F) conduct an assessment of the
23 project’s effects; and

1 “(G) at the conclusion of the project, re-
2 port to the Secretary on its results and funds
3 leveraged.

4 “(2) CONTRIBUTION.—A partner shall provide
5 a significant portion of the overall costs of the scope
6 of the project, as determined by the Secretary.

7 “(d) APPLICATIONS.—

8 “(1) COMPETITIVE PROCESS.—The Secretary
9 shall conduct a competitive process to select applica-
10 tions for partnership agreements and may assess
11 and rank applications with similar conservation pur-
12 poses as a group.

13 “(2) CRITERIA USED.—In carrying out the
14 process described in paragraph (1), the Secretary
15 shall make public the criteria used in evaluating ap-
16 plications.

17 “(3) CONTENT.—An application to the Sec-
18 retary shall include a description of—

19 “(A) the scope of the project, as described
20 in subsection (c)(1)(A);

21 “(B) the plan for monitoring, evaluating,
22 and reporting on progress made towards achiev-
23 ing the project’s objectives;

24 “(C) the program resources requested for
25 the project, including the covered programs to

1 be used and estimated funding needed from the
2 Secretary;

3 “(D) the resources requested under section
4 1271C(c)(4);

5 “(E) the partners collaborating to achieve
6 project objectives, including their roles, respon-
7 sibilities, capabilities, and financial contribu-
8 tion; and

9 “(F) any other elements the Secretary con-
10 siders necessary to adequately evaluate and
11 competitively select applications for funding
12 under the program.

13 “(4) APPLICATION PRIORITY.—The Secretary
14 shall give a higher priority to applications that dem-
15 onstrate the greatest potential to—

16 “(A) have a high percentage of producers
17 involved and of the agricultural or nonindustrial
18 private forest land included in the area covered
19 by the agreement;

20 “(B) assist producers in meeting the goals
21 and objectives of Federal environmental and
22 natural resource laws and regulations;

23 “(C) significantly leverage non-Federal fi-
24 nancial and technical resources and coordinate

1 with other local, State, regional, or national ef-
2 forts;

3 “(D) deliver high percentages of applied
4 conservation to address water quality, water
5 conservation, or other State, regional, or na-
6 tional priority resource concerns;

7 “(E) provide innovation in conservation
8 methods and delivery, including outcome-based
9 performance measures and methods;

10 “(F) identify producers participating in the
11 project, on whose behalf the partner is apply-
12 ing;

13 “(G) advance conservation and rural com-
14 munity development goals simultaneously;

15 “(H) assist producers in States with sig-
16 nificant water quantity concerns; or

17 “(I) meet other factors that are important
18 for achieving the purposes of the program, as
19 determined by the Secretary.

20 **“SEC. 1271C. ASSISTANCE TO PRODUCERS.**

21 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter into
22 contracts to provide financial and technical assistance
23 to—

24 “(1) producers participating in an eligible activ-
25 ity with an eligible partner; or

1 “(2) producers participating in an eligible activ-
2 ity in a critical conservation area designated under
3 section 1271F without an eligible partner.

4 “(b) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—

5 “(1) COMPLIANCE WITH COVERED PROGRAM
6 RULES.—

7 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in
8 subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall ensure
9 that the terms and conditions of a contract
10 under this section are consistent with the appli-
11 cable rules of the covered programs to be used
12 as part of the project, as described in the appli-
13 cation under section 1271B(d)(3)(C).

14 “(B) ADJUSTMENTS.—Except for statu-
15 tory program requirements governing appeals,
16 payment limitations, and conservation compli-
17 ance, the Secretary may adjust the discre-
18 tionary program rules of a covered program—

19 “(i) to provide a simplified application
20 and evaluation process;

21 “(ii) to better reflect unique local cir-
22 cumstances and purposes if the Secretary
23 determines such adjustments are necessary
24 to achieve the purposes of the proposed
25 project;

1 “(iii) to better link technical and fi-
2 nancial assistance to assessed conservation
3 outcomes; and

4 “(iv) to increase the improvement in
5 priority resource concerns achieved by the
6 proposed project.

7 “(2) ALTERNATIVE FUNDING ARRANGE-
8 MENTS.—

9 “(A) IN GENERAL.—For the purposes of
10 providing assistance for a critical conservation
11 areas designated under section 1271F, the Sec-
12 retary may enter into alternative funding ar-
13 rangements with a multistate water resource
14 agency or authority if—

15 “(i) the Secretary determines that the
16 goals and objectives of the program will be
17 met by the alternative funding arrange-
18 ments;

19 “(ii) the agency or authority certifies
20 that the limitations established under this
21 section on agreements with individual pro-
22 ducers will not be exceeded; and

23 “(iii) all participating producers meet
24 applicable payment eligibility provisions.

1 “(B) CONDITIONS.—As a condition on re-
2 ceipt of funding under subparagraph (A), the
3 multistate water resource agency or authority
4 shall agree—

5 “(i) to submit an annual independent
6 audit to the Secretary that describes the
7 use of funds under this paragraph;

8 “(ii) to provide any data necessary for
9 the Secretary to issue a report on the use
10 of funds under this paragraph; and

11 “(iii) not to use any funds for admin-
12 istration or contracting with another enti-
13 ty.

14 “(C) LIMITATION.—The Secretary may
15 enter into not more than 10 alternative funding
16 arrangements under this paragraph.

17 “(c) PAYMENTS.—

18 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with statu-
19 tory requirements of the covered programs involved,
20 the Secretary may make payments to a producer in
21 an amount determined by the Secretary to be nec-
22 essary to achieve the purposes of the program.

23 “(2) PAYMENTS TO CERTAIN PRODUCERS.—The
24 Secretary may provide payments for a period of 5
25 years—

1 “(A) to producers participating in a
2 project that addresses water quantity concerns
3 and in an amount sufficient to encourage con-
4 version from irrigated to dryland farming; and

5 “(B) to producers participating in a
6 project that addresses water quality concerns
7 and in an amount sufficient to encourage adop-
8 tion of conservation practices and systems that
9 improve nutrient management.

10 “(3) WAIVER AUTHORITY.—To assist in the im-
11 plementation of the program, the Secretary may
12 waive the applicability of the limitation in section
13 1001D(b)(2) of this Act for participating producers
14 if the Secretary determines that the waiver is nec-
15 essary to fulfill the objectives of the program.

16 “(4) PAYMENTS TO PARTNERS.—The Secretary
17 shall provide, directly or through cooperative and
18 contribution agreements with partners, financial as-
19 sistance to such partners to complete tasks essential
20 to the success of the project which may include nat-
21 ural resource assessment and planning, outreach to
22 producers, monitoring, technical assistance, and
23 evaluation of project progress and other such essen-
24 tial tasks as determined by the Secretary.

1 **“SEC. 1271D. FUNDING.**

2 “(a) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—The Secretary shall
3 use \$100,000,000 of the funds of the Commodity Credit
4 Corporation for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018
5 to carry out the program established under this subtitle.

6 “(b) DURATION OF AVAILABILITY.—Funds made
7 available under subsection (a) shall remain available until
8 expended.

9 “(c) ADDITIONAL FUNDING AND ACRES.—

10 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the funds
11 made available under subsection (a), the Secretary
12 shall reserve at least 8 percent of the funds and
13 acres made available for a covered program for each
14 of fiscal years 2014 through 2018 in order to ensure
15 additional resources are available to provide tech-
16 nical and financial assistance to producers to carry
17 out this program.

18 “(2) ASSISTANCE TO PARTNERS.—The Sec-
19 retary shall reserve at least 10 percent of the fund-
20 ing provided in subsection (a) to provide payments
21 to partners.

22 “(3) UNUSED FUNDS AND ACRES.—

23 “(A) RETURN.—Any funds or acres re-
24 served under paragraph (1) of this section for
25 a fiscal year from a covered program that are
26 not obligated under this program by April 1 of

1 that fiscal year shall be returned for use under
2 the covered program or redirected to support
3 unfunded applications within the geographic
4 areas of approved partnership agreements; and

5 “(B) REALLOCATION.—Any funds reserved
6 under paragraph (2) of this section for a fiscal
7 year that are not obligated under this program
8 by April 1 of that fiscal year shall be reallo-
9 cated to partners demonstrating the highest
10 level of performance in achieving the objectives
11 of the program.

12 “(d) ALLOCATION OF FUNDING.—Of the funds and
13 acres made available for the program under subsections
14 (a) and (c), the Secretary shall allocate—

15 “(1) 40 percent of the funds and acres to
16 projects based on a State competitive process admin-
17 istered by the State conservationist, with the advice
18 of the State technical committee; and

19 “(2) 60 percent of the funds and acres to
20 projects based on a national competitive process to
21 be established by the Secretary, of which 60 percent
22 shall be reserved for the critical conservation areas
23 designated under section 1271F.

1 **“SEC. 1271E. ADMINISTRATION.**

2 “(a) DISCLOSURE.—The Secretary shall make pub-
3 licly available information on projects selected through the
4 competitive process described in section 1271B(d)(1).

5 “(b) REPORTING.—Not later than December 31,
6 2013, and every 2 years thereafter, the Secretary shall
7 submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of
8 Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutri-
9 tion, and Forestry of the Senate a report on the status
10 of projects funded under the program, including—

11 “(1) the number and types of partners and pro-
12 ducers participating in the partnership agreements
13 selected;

14 “(2) the number of producers receiving assist-
15 ance;

16 “(3) total funding committed to projects, in-
17 cluding Federal and non-Federal resources; and

18 “(4) a description of how funds are being ad-
19 ministered under section 1271B, including—

20 “(A) any oversight mechanisms that the
21 Secretary has implemented;

22 “(B) the process through which the Sec-
23 retary is resolving appeals by program partici-
24 pants; and

1 “(C) the means by which the Secretary is
2 tracking adherence to any applicable provisions
3 for payment eligibility.

4 “(c) EVALUATION.—Partners shall provide to the
5 Secretary—

6 “(1) annual performance reports;

7 “(2) at the end of each multi-year project, a
8 performance report that describes—

9 “(A) the progress that has been made to-
10 wards attainment of conservation objectives and
11 landscape-scale conservation outcomes;

12 “(B) the methods that have been used to
13 measure progress being made toward attain-
14 ment of conservation objectives and landscape-
15 scale conservation outcomes;

16 “(C) the number of producers who partici-
17 pated; and

18 “(D) the conservation practices adopted
19 and the frequency of adoption.

20 **“SEC. 1271F. CRITICAL CONSERVATION AREAS.**

21 “(a) IN GENERAL.—When administering the funding
22 reserved for critical conservation areas under section
23 1271D(d)(2), the Secretary shall select applications for
24 partnership agreements and producer contracts within
25 critical conservation areas designated under this section.

1 “(b) CRITICAL CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNA-
2 TIONS.—

3 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall des-
4 ignate up to 6 geographical areas as critical con-
5 servation areas based on the degree to which an
6 area—

7 “(A) includes multiple States with signifi-
8 cant agricultural production;

9 “(B) is covered by an existing regional,
10 State, binational, or multistate agreement or
11 plan that has established objectives, goals, and
12 work plans and is adopted by a Federal, State,
13 or regional authority;

14 “(C) has water quality concerns, including
15 concerns for reducing erosion, promoting sedi-
16 ment control, and addressing nutrient manage-
17 ment activities affecting large bodies of water of
18 regional, national, or international significance;

19 “(D) has water quantity concerns, includ-
20 ing—

21 “(i) concerns for groundwater, surface
22 water, aquifer, or other water sources; or

23 “(ii) a need to promote water reten-
24 tion and flood prevention;

1 “(E) is subject to regulatory requirements
2 that could reduce the economic scope of agricul-
3 tural operations within the area; or

4 “(F) is recognized as vital habitat for mi-
5 grating wildlife.

6 “(2) EXPIRATION.—Critical conservation area
7 designations under this section shall expire after 5
8 years, subject to redesignation, except that the Sec-
9 retary may withdraw designation from an area if the
10 Secretary finds the area no longer meets the condi-
11 tions described in paragraph (1).

12 “(c) ADMINISTRATION.—

13 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
14 graph (2), the Secretary shall administer any part-
15 nership agreement or producer contract under this
16 section in a manner that is consistent with the terms
17 of the program.

18 “(2) RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING ACTIVITY.—
19 The Secretary shall, to the maximum extent prac-
20 ticable, ensure that eligible activities carried out in
21 critical conservation areas designated under this sec-
22 tion complement and are consistent with other Fed-
23 eral and State programs and water quality and
24 quantity strategies.”.

1 **TITLE II—CROP INSURANCE AND**
2 **DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

3 **SEC. 2001. INELIGIBILITY FOR FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE,**
4 **NONINSURED CROP DISASTER ASSISTANCE,**
5 **AND CERTAIN PAYMENTS BECAUSE OF CROP**
6 **PRODUCTION ON NATIVE SOD.**

7 (a) FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE ACT AMENDMENT.—

8 Section 508(o) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7
9 U.S.C. 1508(o)) is amended—

10 (1) in paragraph (1)(B), by inserting “, or the
11 producer cannot substantiate that the ground has
12 ever been tilled,” after “tilled”;

13 (2) in paragraph (2)(A), by striking “for bene-
14 fits under—” and all that follows through the period
15 at the end and inserting “for—

16 “(i) a portion of crop insurance pre-
17 mium subsidies under this subtitle in ac-
18 cordance with paragraph (3);

19 “(ii) benefits under section 196 of the
20 Federal Agriculture Improvement and Re-
21 form Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7333); and

22 “(iii) payments described in sub-
23 section (b) of section 1001 of the Food Se-
24 curity Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308).”; and

1 (3) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the
2 following new paragraphs:

3 “(3) ADMINISTRATION.—

4 “(A) IN GENERAL.—During the first 4
5 crop years of planting on native sod acreage by
6 a producer described in paragraph (2)—

7 “(i) paragraph (2) shall apply to 65
8 percent of the transitional yield of the pro-
9 ducer; and

10 “(ii) the crop insurance premium sub-
11 sidy provided for the producer under this
12 subtitle shall be 50 percentage points less
13 than the premium subsidy that would oth-
14 erwise apply.

15 “(B) YIELD SUBSTITUTION.—During the
16 period native sod acreage is covered by this sub-
17 section, a producer may not substitute yields
18 for the native sod acreage.”.

19 (b) NONINSURED CROP DISASTER ASSISTANCE
20 AMENDMENT.—Section 196(a)(4) of the Federal Agri-
21 culture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C.
22 7333(a)(4)) is amended—

23 (1) in subparagraph (A)(ii), by inserting “, or
24 the producer cannot substantiate that the ground
25 has ever been tilled,” after “tilled”;

1 (2) in subparagraph (B)—

2 (A) in the subparagraph heading, by strik-
3 ing “INELIGIBILITY” and inserting “REDUC-
4 TION IN”; and

5 (B) in clause (i), by striking “for benefits
6 under—” and all that follows through the pe-
7 riod at the end and inserting “for—

8 “(I) benefits under this section;

9 “(II) a portion of crop insurance
10 premium subsidies under the Federal
11 Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et
12 seq.) in accordance with subparagraph
13 (C); and

14 “(III) payments described in sub-
15 section (b) of section 1001 of the
16 Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C.
17 1308).”; and

18 (3) by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting
19 the following new subparagraphs:

20 “(C) ADMINISTRATION.—

21 “(i) IN GENERAL.—During the first 4
22 crop years of planting on native sod acre-
23 age by a producer described in subpara-
24 graph (B)—

1 “(I) subparagraph (B) shall
2 apply to 65 percent of the transitional
3 yield of the producer; and

4 “(II) the crop insurance premium
5 subsidy provided for the producer
6 under the Federal Crop Insurance Act
7 (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.) shall be 50
8 percentage points less than the pre-
9 mium subsidy that would otherwise
10 apply.

11 “(ii) YIELD SUBSTITUTION.—During
12 the period native sod acreage is covered by
13 this paragraph, a producer may not sub-
14 stitute yields for the native sod acreage.”.

15 **TITLE III—REPEALS AND TRAN-**
16 **SITIONAL PROVISIONS; TECH-**
17 **NICAL AND CONFORMING**
18 **AMENDMENTS; EFFECTIVE**
19 **DATE**

20 **SEC. 3001. REPEALS AND TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.**

21 (a) EMERGENCY FORESTRY CONSERVATION RE-
22 SERVE PROGRAM.—

23 (1) REPEAL.—Section 1231A of the Food Secu-
24 rity Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831a) is repealed.

25 (2) TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

1 (A) EFFECT ON EXISTING CONTRACTS.—

2 The amendment made by this subsection shall
3 not affect the validity or terms of any contract
4 entered into by the Secretary of Agriculture
5 under section 1231A of the Food Security Act
6 of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831a) before October 1,
7 2013, or any payments required to be made in
8 connection with the contract.

9 (B) FUNDING.—The Secretary may use
10 funds made available to carry out the agricul-
11 tural conservation easement program under
12 subtitle H of title XII of the Food Security Act
13 of 1985, as added by section 1801 of this Act,
14 to continue to carry out contracts referred to in
15 subparagraph (A) using the provisions of law
16 and regulation applicable to such contracts as
17 in existence on September 30, 2013.

18 (b) WETLANDS RESERVE PROGRAM.—

19 (1) REPEAL.—Subchapter C of chapter 1 of
20 subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of
21 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3837 et seq.) is repealed.

22 (2) TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

23 (A) EFFECT ON EXISTING CONTRACTS AND
24 EASEMENTS.—The amendment made by this
25 subsection shall not affect the validity or terms

1 of any contract or easement entered into by the
2 Secretary of Agriculture under subchapter C of
3 chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food
4 Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3837 et seq.)
5 before October 1, 2013, or any payments re-
6 quired to be made in connection with the con-
7 tract or easement.

8 (B) FUNDING.—

9 (i) USE OF PRIOR YEAR FUNDS.—

10 Notwithstanding the repeal of subchapter
11 C of chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII of
12 the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
13 3837 et seq.), any funds made available
14 from the Commodity Credit Corporation to
15 carry out the wetlands reserve program
16 under that subchapter for fiscal years
17 2009 through 2013 shall be made available
18 to carry out contracts or easements re-
19 ferred to in subparagraph (A) that were
20 entered into prior to October 1, 2013 (in-
21 cluding the provision of technical assist-
22 ance), provided that no such contract or
23 easement is modified so as to increase the
24 amount of the payment received.

1 (ii) OTHER.—The Secretary may use
2 funds made available to carry out the agri-
3 cultural conservation easement program
4 under subtitle H of title XII of the Food
5 Security Act of 1985, as added by section
6 1801 of this Act, to continue to carry out
7 contracts and easements referred to in
8 subparagraph (A) using the provisions of
9 law and regulation applicable to such con-
10 tracts and easements as in existence on
11 September 30, 2013.

12 (c) FARMLAND PROTECTION PROGRAM AND FARM
13 VIABILITY PROGRAM.—

14 (1) REPEAL.—Subchapter C of chapter 2 of
15 subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of
16 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838h et seq.) is repealed.

17 (2) TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

18 (A) EFFECT ON EXISTING AGREEMENTS
19 AND EASEMENTS.—The amendment made by
20 this subsection shall not affect the validity or
21 terms of any agreement or easement entered
22 into by the Secretary of Agriculture under sub-
23 chapter C of chapter 2 of subtitle D of title XII
24 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
25 3838h et seq.) before October 1, 2013, or any

1 payments required to be made in connection
2 with the agreement or easement.

3 (B) FUNDING.—

4 (i) USE OF PRIOR YEAR FUNDS.—

5 Notwithstanding the repeal of subchapter
6 C of chapter 2 of subtitle D of title XII of
7 the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
8 3838h et seq.), any funds made available
9 from the Commodity Credit Corporation to
10 carry out the farmland protection program
11 under that subchapter for fiscal years
12 2009 through 2013 shall be made available
13 to carry out agreements and easements re-
14 ferred to in subparagraph (A) that were
15 entered into prior to October 1, 2013 (in-
16 cluding the provision of technical assist-
17 ance).

18 (ii) OTHER.—On exhaustion of funds
19 made available under clause (i), the Sec-
20 retary may use funds made available to
21 carry out the agricultural conservation
22 easement program under subtitle H of title
23 XII of the Food Security Act of 1985, as
24 added by section 1801 of this Act, to con-
25 tinue to carry out agreements and ease-

1 ments referred to in subparagraph (A)
2 using the provisions of law and regulation
3 applicable to such agreements and ease-
4 ments as in existence on September 30,
5 2013.

6 (d) GRASSLAND RESERVE PROGRAM.—

7 (1) REPEAL.—Subchapter D of chapter 2 of
8 subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of
9 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838n et seq.) is repealed.

10 (2) TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

11 (A) EFFECT ON EXISTING CONTRACTS,
12 AGREEMENTS, AND EASEMENTS.—The amend-
13 ment made by this subsection shall not affect
14 the validity or terms of any contract, agree-
15 ment, or easement entered into by the Secretary
16 of Agriculture under subchapter D of chapter 2
17 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security
18 Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838n et seq.) before
19 October 1, 2013, or any payments required to
20 be made in connection with the contract, agree-
21 ment, or easement.

22 (B) FUNDING.—

23 (i) USE OF PRIOR YEAR FUNDS.—
24 Notwithstanding the repeal of subchapter
25 D of chapter 2 of subtitle D of title XII

1 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16
2 U.S.C. 3838n et seq.), any funds made
3 available from the Commodity Credit Cor-
4 poration to carry out the grassland reserve
5 program under that subchapter for fiscal
6 years 2009 through 2013 shall be made
7 available to carry out contracts, agree-
8 ments, or easements referred to in sub-
9 paragraph (A) that were entered into prior
10 to October 1, 2013 (including the provision
11 of technical assistance), provided that no
12 such contract, agreement, or easement is
13 modified so as to increase the amount of
14 the payment received.

15 (ii) OTHER.—The Secretary may use
16 funds made available to carry out the agri-
17 cultural conservation easement program
18 under subtitle H of title XII of the Food
19 Security Act of 1985, as added by section
20 1801 of this Act, to continue to carry out
21 contracts, agreements, and easements re-
22 ferred to in subparagraph (A) using the
23 provisions of law and regulation applicable
24 to such contracts, agreements, and ease-

1 ments as in existence on September 30,
2 2013.

3 (e) ENVIRONMENTAL EASEMENT PROGRAM.—Chap-
4 ter 3 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act
5 of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839 et seq.) is repealed.

6 (f) CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANTS AND PAY-
7 MENTS.—

8 (1) REPEAL.—Section 1240H of the Food Se-
9 curity Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–8) is re-
10 pealed.

11 (2) TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

12 (A) EFFECT ON EXISTING CONTRACTS.—

13 The amendment made by this subsection shall
14 not affect the validity or terms of any contract
15 entered into by the Secretary of Agriculture
16 under section 1240H of the Food Security Act
17 of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–8) before October
18 1, 2013, or any payments required to be made
19 in connection with the contract.

20 (B) FUNDING.—The Secretary may use
21 funds made available to carry out conservation
22 innovation grants and payments under section
23 1240S of title XII of the Food Security Act of
24 1985, as added by section 1601 of this Act, to
25 continue to carry out contracts referred to in

1 subparagraph (A) using the provisions of law
2 and regulation applicable to such contracts as
3 they existed on September 30, 2013.

4 (g) AGRICULTURAL WATER ENHANCEMENT PRO-
5 GRAM.—

6 (1) REPEAL.—Section 1240I of the Food Secu-
7 rity Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–9) is repealed.

8 (2) TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

9 (A) EFFECT ON EXISTING CONTRACTS AND
10 AGREEMENTS.—The amendment made by this
11 subsection shall not affect the validity or terms
12 of any contract or agreement entered into by
13 the Secretary of Agriculture under section
14 1240I of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16
15 U.S.C. 3839aa–9) before October 1, 2013, or
16 any payments required to be made in connec-
17 tion with the contract or agreement.

18 (B) FUNDING.—

19 (i) USE OF PRIOR YEAR FUNDS.—
20 Notwithstanding the repeal of section
21 1240I of the Food Security Act of 1985
22 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–9), any funds made
23 available from the Commodity Credit Cor-
24 poration to carry out the agricultural
25 water enhancement program under that

1 section for fiscal years 2009 through 2013
2 shall be made available to carry out con-
3 tracts and agreements referred to in sub-
4 paragraph (A) that were entered into prior
5 to October 1, 2013 (including the provision
6 of technical assistance).

7 (ii) OTHER.—On exhaustion of funds
8 made available under clause (i), the Sec-
9 retary may use funds made available to
10 carry out the agricultural conservation
11 easement program under subtitle H of title
12 XII of the Food Security Act of 1985, as
13 added by section 1801 of this Act, to con-
14 tinue to carry out contracts and agree-
15 ments referred to in subparagraph (A)
16 using the provisions of law and regulation
17 applicable to such contracts and agree-
18 ments as in existence on September 30,
19 2013.

20 (h) WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVE PROGRAM.—

21 (1) REPEAL.—Section 1240N of the Food Se-
22 curity Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb–1) is re-
23 pealed.

24 (2) TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

1 (A) EFFECT ON EXISTING CONTRACTS.—

2 The amendment made by this subsection shall
3 not affect the validity or terms of any contract
4 entered into by the Secretary of Agriculture
5 under section 1240N of the Food Security Act
6 of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb–1) before October
7 1, 2013, or any payments required to be made
8 in connection with the contract.

9 (B) FUNDING.—

10 (i) USE OF PRIOR YEAR FUNDS.—

11 Notwithstanding the repeal of section
12 1240N of the Food Security Act of 1985
13 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb-1), any funds made
14 available from the Commodity Credit Cor-
15 poration to carry out the wildlife habitat
16 incentive program under that section for
17 fiscal years 2009 through 2013 shall be
18 made available to carry out contracts re-
19 ferred to in subparagraph (A) which were
20 entered into prior to October 1, 2013 (in-
21 cluding the provision of technical assist-
22 ance).

23 (ii) OTHER.—On exhaustion of funds
24 made available under clause (i), the Sec-
25 retary may use funds made available to

1 carry out the environmental quality incen-
2 tives program under chapter 4 of subtitle
3 D of title XII of the Food Security Act of
4 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa et seq.) to con-
5 tinue to carry out contracts referred to in
6 subparagraph (A) using the provisions of
7 law and regulation applicable to such con-
8 tracts as in existence on September 30,
9 2013.

10 (i) GREAT LAKES BASIN PROGRAM.—Section 1240P
11 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb-3)
12 is repealed.

13 (j) CHESAPEAKE BAY WATERSHED PROGRAM.—

14 (1) REPEAL.—Section 1240Q of the Food Se-
15 curity Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb-4) is repealed.

16 (2) TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

17 (A) EFFECT ON EXISTING CONTRACTS,
18 AGREEMENTS, AND EASEMENTS.—The amend-
19 ment made by this subsection shall not affect
20 the validity or terms of any contract, agree-
21 ment, or easement entered into by the Secretary
22 of Agriculture under section 1240Q of the Food
23 Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb-4) be-
24 fore October 1, 2013, or any payments required

1 to be made in connection with the contract,
2 agreement, or easement.

3 (B) FUNDING.—

4 (i) USE OF PRIOR YEAR FUNDS.—

5 Notwithstanding the repeal of section
6 1240Q of the Food Security Act of 1985
7 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb-4), any funds made
8 available from the Commodity Credit Cor-
9 poration to carry out the Chesapeake Bay
10 watershed program under that section for
11 fiscal years 2009 through 2013 shall be
12 made available to carry out contracts,
13 agreements, and easements referred to in
14 subparagraph (A) that were entered into
15 prior to October 1, 2013 (including the
16 provision of technical assistance).

17 (ii) OTHER.—The Secretary may use
18 funds made available to carry out the re-
19 gional conservation partnership program
20 under subtitle I of title XII of the Food
21 Security Act of 1985, as added by section
22 1901 of this Act, to continue to carry out
23 contracts, agreements, and easements re-
24 ferred to in subparagraph (A) using the
25 provisions of law and regulation applicable

1 to such contracts, agreements, and ease-
2 ments as in existence on September 30,
3 2013.

4 (k) COOPERATIVE CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP
5 INITIATIVE.—

6 (1) REPEAL.—Section 1243 of the Food Secu-
7 rity Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3843) is repealed.

8 (2) TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

9 (A) EFFECT ON EXISTING CONTRACTS AND
10 AGREEMENTS.—The amendment made by this
11 subsection shall not affect the validity or terms
12 of any contract or agreement entered into by
13 the Secretary of Agriculture under section 1243
14 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
15 3843) before October 1, 2013, or any payments
16 required to be made in connection with the con-
17 tract or agreement.

18 (B) FUNDING.—

19 (i) USE OF PRIOR YEAR FUNDS.—
20 Notwithstanding the repeal of section 1243
21 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16
22 U.S.C. 3843), any funds made available
23 from the Commodity Credit Corporation to
24 carry out the cooperative conservation
25 partnership initiative under that section

1 for fiscal years 2009 through 2013 shall be
2 made available to carry out contracts and
3 agreements referred to in subparagraph
4 (A) that were entered into prior to October
5 1, 2013 (including the provision of tech-
6 nical assistance).

7 (ii) OTHER.—On exhaustion of funds
8 made available under clause (i), the Sec-
9 retary may use funds made available to
10 carry out the regional conservation part-
11 nership program under subtitle I of title
12 XII of the Food Security Act of 1985, as
13 added by section 1901 of this Act, to con-
14 tinue to carry out contracts and agree-
15 ments referred to in subparagraph (A)
16 using the provisions of law and regulation
17 applicable to such contracts and agree-
18 ments as in existence on September 30,
19 2013.

20 (I) DESERT TERMINAL LAKES PROGRAM.—

21 (1) REPEAL.—Section 2507 of the Farm Secu-
22 rity and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (43 U.S.C.
23 2211 note) is repealed.

24 (2) TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

1 (A) EFFECT ON EXISTING CONTRACTS.—

2 The amendment made by this subsection shall
3 not affect the validity or terms of any contract
4 entered into by the Secretary of Agriculture
5 under section 2507 of the Farm Security and
6 Rural Investment Act of 2002 (43 U.S.C. 2211
7 note) before October 1, 2013, or any payments
8 required to be made in connection with the con-
9 tract.

10 (B) FUNDING.—The Secretary may use
11 funds made available to carry out the agricul-
12 tural conservation easement program under
13 subtitle H of title XII of the Food Security Act
14 of 1985, as added by section 1801 of this Act,
15 to continue to carry out contracts referred to in
16 subparagraph (A) using the provisions of law
17 and regulation applicable to such contracts as
18 in existence on September 30, 2013.

19 **SEC. 3002. TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**

20 (a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 1201(a) of the Food Se-
21 curity Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3801(a)) is amended in the
22 matter preceding paragraph (1) by inserting “, H, and
23 I” after “E”.

1 (b) PRIORITY RESOURCE CONCERN.—The following
2 sections of the Food Security Act of 1985 are amended
3 by inserting “priority” before “resource concerns”:

4 (1) Section 1238A(e)(4)(B)(ii) (16 U.S.C.
5 3838a(e)(4)(B)(ii)).

6 (2) Section 1238D(3)(A) (16 U.S.C.
7 3838d(3)(A)).

8 (3) Section 1240A(1)(B)(vi) (16 U.S.C.
9 3839aa-1(1)(B)(vi)).

10 **SEC. 3003. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

11 This Act, and the amendments made by this Act,
12 shall take effect on October 1, 2013.