

## NO MORE CUTS TO CONSERVATION

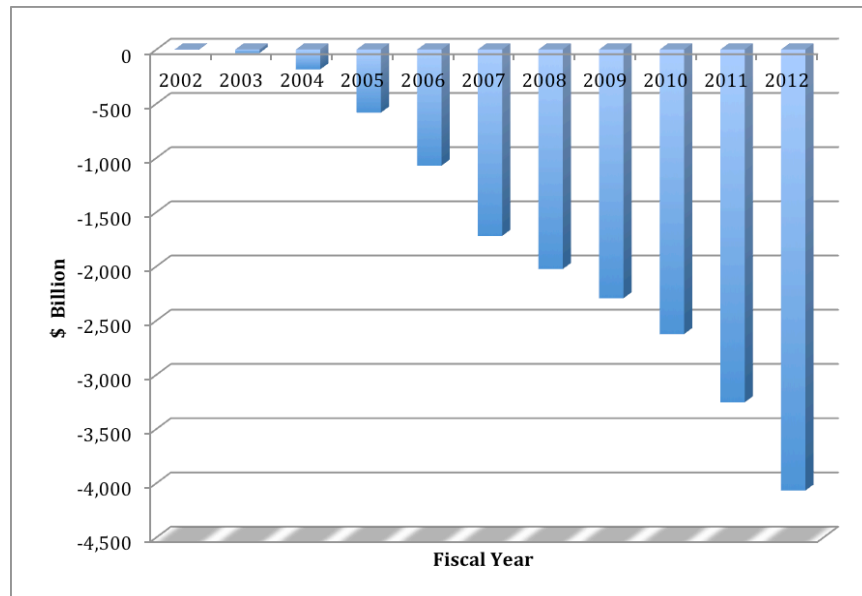
America's farmers and ranchers can produce far more than food and fiber. They can also contribute cleaner water, cleaner air, open spaces and abundant habitat for wildlife.

The conservation title of the farm bill is the most important federal law for farmers and ranchers who aspire to do just that. Yet today, it is under threat.

### Conservation programs have already given at the office

Conservation programs have been funded below the levels promised in farm bills every year since 2002. This conservation “debt” has grown to \$4 billion in fiscal year 2012. It is an obligation owed to the nation’s farmers and ranchers who want to conserve natural resources and protect the environment. One of three farmers is being turned away because of funding shortfalls.

*Conservation Debt Has Grown to \$4 Billion in 2012*



### More cuts looming

Some legislators have proposed to cut even *more* from conservation programs in the 2012 Farm Bill.

### Better places to save money

Not all farm bill programs are created equal. The fiscal axe should fall on farm programs with the most questionable public benefit:

- The so-called direct payment program, which distributes \$5 billion a year to highly profitable farm businesses regardless of need
- Generous subsidies for crop insurance premiums, which have exploded from \$1.5 billion in 2002 to \$7.4 billion in 2011.

Conservation programs can be spared from further cuts even as Congress maintains an effective and fair safety net for agricultural producers.