



The Farm Bill

The [farm bill](#) is the primary legislation governing the nation's food, farms, and farming systems, written by House and Senate Agriculture Committees and is reauthorized about every 5 years.

- The bill is broken down into 12 different "Titles," including a Conservation Title, which contains numerous voluntary programs vital to protecting water quality, as well as soil health, and wildlife habitat. Funding and structure of these major programs may be cut or changed in 2018.
- Examples include:
 - [The Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) – Farmers are reimbursed on a one-time basis for the cost of implementing on-farm conservation practices. Acts as a good introduction to conservation.
 - [The Conservation Stewardship Program](#) – Largest conservation program geared towards farmers who are exceptional environmental stewards. Farmers enroll entire farm to receive financial assistance long-term for maintaining conservation practices and implementing new ones.
 - [The Conservation Reserve Program](#) – Provides farmers with a rental payment in exchange for protecting environmentally sensitive land on their farms.
- Conservation supported through programs include: Cover crops, low/no-till, rotational grazing, & buffer strips.

Overview of the President's Infrastructure Proposal

- The [President's Infrastructure Proposal](#) provides \$21 billion in 2019 for infrastructure projects through offsetting budget cuts from other programs
- Seeks to streamline the permitting process so infrastructure can be built faster to meet the pressing demands of resilience efforts, however some of this streamlining comes at the expense of environmental safeguards.
 - EPA would no longer be able to evaluate another agency's Environmental Impact Statement
 - Eliminates EPA's authority to veto projects if they do not adhere to the Clean Water Act

Bradon Road Lock and Dam (2017 - 2018)

- To control transfer of Asian carp from the MS River basin into Great Lakes, US Army Corps of Engineers has proposed technological blockades at the [Brandon Road Lock and Dam](#)
 - In 2017, the Corps drafted a report outlining its [Tentatively Selected Plan](#) to address Asian Carp, set to begin in 2022
 - Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Ontario have formed an [interstate partnership](#) to cover the costs of the project and push the start date forward. This plan still requires state approval.

Ballast-Water (2016-2018)

- Ballast water provides ships with stability on long journeys, however contains invasive fish, plants, and microorganisms that can outcompete native species when discharged at ports.
- [The Commercial Vessel Incidental Discharge Act](#), introduced in Congress last year, would have stripped states from enacting separate laws governing ballast water discharge:
 - Allocated control over ballast water regulation to the Coast Guard rather than EPA.
 - Prevented states from enacting stricter rules than the federal government on ballast water discharge.