



## Conservation Innovation Grants — Fund — Wildlife Conservation

Wildlife don't distinguish between public and private lands. Working farms, ranches and forests provide habitat for a diverse array of animals that depend on these lands for their survival. Through Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) program, we're supporting the development of new programs, systems and technologies to protect wildlife on private lands while at the same time helping to improve the health of agricultural operations for the future.

### Bringing Back Bee Populations through Farmer Certification Program

Pollinators are responsible for one in every three bites of food we eat and contribute more than \$15 billion to our nation's crop values each year, but bee populations have been in decline for decades.

Through an NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant, Xerces Society developed the Bee Better Certification program, which certifies science-based pollinator-friendly conservation practices on farms. Farmers that adopt these practices can become Bee Better Certified and use the Bee Better Seal on their product packaging, giving consumers the option to support farms that are supporting bees.

The Bee Better standards have been adopted on nearly 20,000 acres of land, and major companies are using the certification program. Haagen-Dazs, has committed to adopting Bee Better standards for six of their ice cream flavors.



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Through CIG, the Bee Better Program has been able to bring about meaningful change on working farms, helping farmers protect bees and the valuable services they provide.

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—Scott Black  
Executive Director,  
Xerces Society





Silk recently unveiled Bee Better Certified almond milk products, and Walmart announced that by 2025, all fresh produce suppliers to Walmart stores must be certified in one of ten sustainable farming standards, which includes the Bee Better Certified program.

## Helping Endangered Fish through Irrigation Diversions

Irrigation diversions channel stream water through a series of narrowing pipes, eventually reaching fields through irrigation devices. To protect endangered fish, laws require irrigation diversions to be screened, which keeps fish from getting stuck in the pipes.

Through an NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant, the Farmers Irrigation District and the Farmers Conservation Alliance created the Farmers Screen, an innovative design that was better at keeping fish out of the irrigation system than screens that had been used before. They've installed 51 screens in eight states, including the nation's largest horizontal fish screen, located at Derby Dam near Reno, Nevada which is supporting the recovery of the iconic Lahontan cutthroat trout in the Truckee River.

## More Information

Conservation Innovation Grants is a competitive program that supports the development of new tools, approaches, practices, and technologies to further natural resource conservation on private lands. Through creative problem solving and innovation, CIG partners work to address our nation's water quality, air quality, soil health and wildlife habitat challenges, all while improving agricultural operations.

For more information or to apply for a Conservation Innovation Grant visit [nrcs.usda.gov/CIG](https://nrcs.usda.gov/CIG).



“It took a while before we were approved to take our design to market. CIG helped us pilot our new fish screen technology during that time.”

—Julie O'Shea  
Executive Director,  
Farmers Conservation Alliance

