

Budget Formulation Process

What is the NRCS Budget Formulation Process?

Federal budgeting is a cyclical activity that begins with formulation of the president's budget and concludes with the audit and review of expenditures. The process extends over a period of at least two-and-a-half years. The main steps are formulation of the president's budget, congressional budget decisions and execution of the budget. While the basic steps continue from year to year, particular procedures used vary in accord with the style of the president, the economic and political conditions, and other factors.

In NRCS, budget preparation begins shortly after the budget for the next fiscal year is submitted to Congress and almost two years prior to the year for which the funds are being requested. For example, the process of developing budget proposals for fiscal year 2003 began in April 2001. Program proposals and alternative funding levels are developed for each of the major operating programs administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

What are the factors considered in the development of the budget?

Factors considered in the development of budget proposals include:

- Conservation Technical Assistance Infrastructure
- Departmental and Presidential priorities and initiatives (i.e. grazing lands conservation, GIS and digitization of soil surveys).
- Strategic Plan and Annual Performance Plan.
- Workload requirements resulting from new laws or changes to existing laws (e.g. Farm Bill, Clean Water Act).
- National Conservation Program priorities.
- National Performance Review recommendations.

- Technical assistance requirements to support conservation cost-sharing programs administered by the Farm Service Agency.
- Overall Federal budgetary constraints and spending limits established under the Congressional spending caps and budget reconciliation actions.
- Other factors such as inflation, Federal pay raises, program productivity improvements, workload backlogs, and other managerial concerns.



Where can I get more information about the NRCS Budget Process?

For more information on the NRCS budget process, call the NRCS Budget Planning and Analysis Division at (202) 720-4533.

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