



**Proposed Changes to the Largest Conservation Programs
in the Farm Bill: CSP and EQIP Spending in Louisiana**

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House and Senate versions of the Farm Bill proposes cuts to certain programs and amendments to areas with a program. Among them, the largest conservation programs, CSP and EQIP programs are critical to conservation activity within the nation. These programs are equally important to Louisiana farmers to implement various conservation activities within working lands. House version proposes a complete elimination of CSP and increases funding for EQIP. Some of these proposed changes can have potential impacts to conservation adoption within the state.

The Farm Bill does not provide any specific instructions on state-level allocations for funds made available through EQIP and/or CSP. Acres and funds are allocated based on eligible land and conservation needs. Over the years, from 2010-2017, Louisiana received an average of 2.8% and 2.0% of national CSP funds and EQIP funds, respectively.

Reviewing the proposed changes to the programs and its potential impact on spending on CSP and EQIP under House and Senate versions are presented in Figure 1 and 2, respectively. A detailed list of changes is presented in Table 1. From the estimated calculations, using national estimates from Congressional Budget Office, under the proposed House Version of the Farm Bill, spending on CSP in Louisiana can be potentially affected up to an amount of \$100 million in the final years of the next farm bill; however, the EQIP spending can reach an all-time high of \$74 million in 2023, if farmers continue to utilize the program at the current levels. Under the Senate version, the spending on the CSP and EQIP together would decrease from \$63 million to \$45 million, again assuming farmers utilize these programs at current levels.

Although the exact impacts of the changes to the CSP and EQIP programs are difficult to estimate, funding of conservation on working lands is going to decrease for Louisiana; however, we can all benefit from further analysis and discussion.

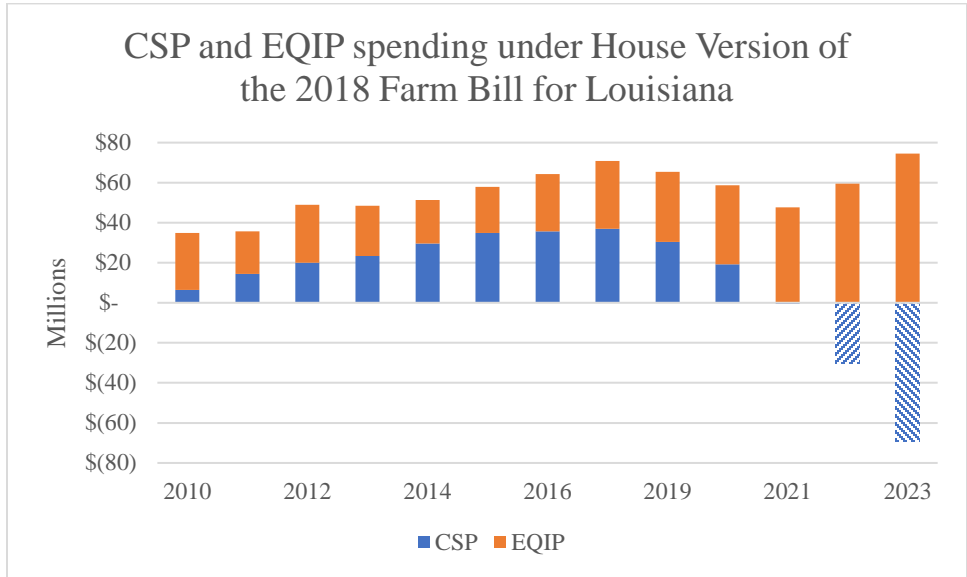


Figure 1

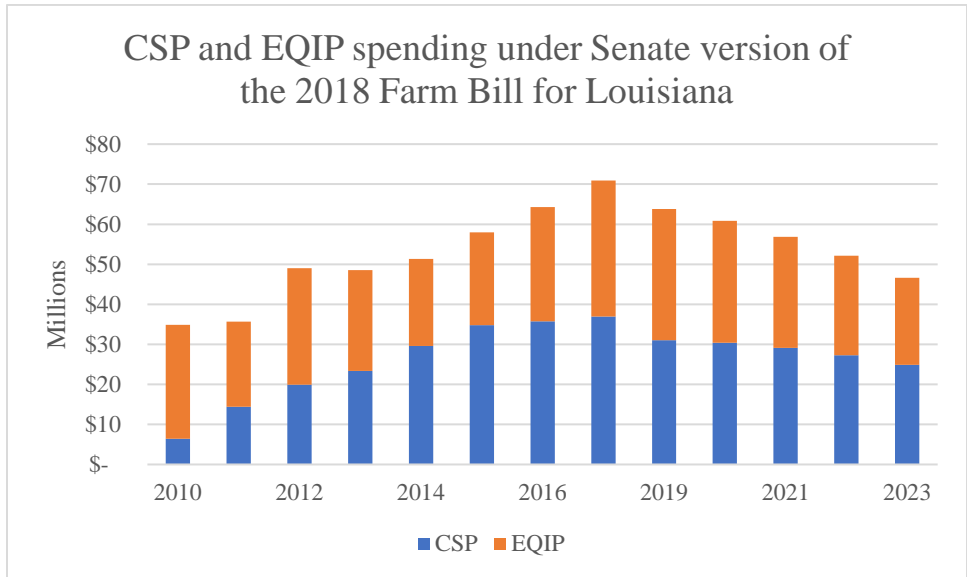


Figure 2

Table 1: House and Senate versions of the Farm Bill compared to the 2014 Farm Bill

	2014 Farm Bill	2018 House Draft	2018 Senate Draft
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Funded at \$1.75 billion /year (in the year 2018) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 60% - set aside for Livestock ▪ 5% - set aside for wildlife ▪ 5% - set aside for beginner farmers and underserved framers (HUD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase funding to \$3.0 billion/year by 2023 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No separate livestock set aside funds ▪ 5% - wildlife ▪ 5% - beginner farmers and underserved framers (HUD) ▪ 50% - for new stewardship contracts ▪ Proposed merging CSP into EQIP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fund at \$1.47 billion/year in 2019; increase funding to \$1.59 billion/year by 2023 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 50% - Livestock ▪ 10% - wildlife ▪ 15% - beginner farmers and underserved framers (HUD)
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 10 million acres/year are funded through 2022 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Proposed merging CSP into EQIP ➤ Removes requirements that the whole farm must be enrolled and must meet stewardship threshold 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 8.8 million acres/year will be funded ➤ Funding reduced by \$1.0 billion over 10 years
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Acreage is capped at 24 million acres ➤ Annual rental payments set at average county rental rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Proposed increase acreage cap to 29 million acres by 2023 ➤ Annual rental payments set at 80% county rental rates ➤ Cost-share payments reduced from 50% to 40% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Proposed increase acreage cap to 25 million acres ➤ Annual rental payments set at 85.5% county rental rates ➤ 40% of all continuous acres for acres focused on water quality improvement ➤ 30% of all continuous acres for acres focused on wildlife enhancement

	2014 Farm Bill	2018 House Draft	2018 Senate Draft
Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Funded at \$100 million /year ➤ Pulls 7% from EQIP, CSP, ACEP, and Healthy Forests Reserve Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 35% - projects in Critical Conservation Areas (CCAs) ▪ 40% - national projects other than CCA ▪ 25% - state projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase funding to \$250 million /year ➤ 7% funding from other programs is removed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funding areas remain the same 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase funding to \$200 million /year ➤ Pulls 7% from EQIP, CSP, ACEP each year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 40% - state projects ▪ 60% - critical conservation areas ▪ Eliminates national projects