

Eliminate the Conservation Technical Assistance Program

SAVINGS IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2016-2020	2016-2025
\$725	\$727	\$729	\$737	\$755	\$771	\$788	\$809	\$825	\$840	\$3,673	\$7,706

Heritage Recommendation:

Eliminate the Conservation Technical Assistance Program. This proposal saves \$725 million in 2016, and \$7.7 billion over 10 years.

Rationale:

The Natural Resources Conservation Service runs a costly program to offer technical assistance to landowners on natural resource management. This assistance includes help in maintaining private lands, complying with laws, enhancing recreational activities, and improving the aesthetic character of private land. The services are provided to both governmental and private entities.

Private landowners, not government, are the best stewards of property. If necessary, they can seek private solutions to conservation challenges. Federal taxpayers should not be forced to subsidize advice that private (and public) landowners should be paying for on their own.

Additional Reading:

- Daren Bakst, “Addressing Waste, Abuse, and Extremism in USDA Programs,” Heritage Foundation *Backgrounder* No. 2916, May 30, 2014, <http://www.Heritage.org/research/reports/2014/05/addressing-waste-abuse-and-extremism-in-usda-programs>.

Calculations:

Savings are expressed as budget authority and were calculated using the FY 2014 enacted spending levels as found on page 61 of USDA, “FY 2015: Budget Summary and Annual Performance Plan, U.S. Department of Agriculture,” <http://www.obpa.usda.gov/budsum/FY15budsum.pdf>. The FY 2014 spending level was increased at the same rate as discretionary spending for 2016–2025, according to the CBO’s most recent August 2014 baseline spending projections.