

(2) Implementation**(A) In general****(i) In general**

In carrying out the Initiative, the Secretary shall provide funding to entities with eligible projects, as described in subparagraph (B), subject to the priorities described in subparagraph (C).

(ii) Use of funds

Funds provided to an entity pursuant to clause (i) shall be used—

(I) to create revolving loan pools of capital or other products to provide loans to finance eligible projects or partnerships;

(II) to provide grants for eligible projects or partnerships;

(III) to provide technical assistance to funded projects and entities seeking Initiative funding; and

(IV) to cover administrative expenses of the national fund manager in an amount not to exceed 10 percent of the Federal funds provided.

(B) Eligible projects

Subject to the approval of the Secretary, the national fund manager shall establish eligibility criteria for projects under the Initiative, which shall include the existence or planned execution of agreements—

(i) to expand or preserve the availability of staple foods in underserved areas with moderate- and low-income populations by maintaining or increasing the number of retail outlets that offer an assortment of perishable food and staple food items, as determined by the Secretary, in those areas; and

(ii) to accept benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.).

(C) Priorities

In carrying out the Initiative, priority shall be given to projects that—

(i) are located in severely distressed low-income communities, as defined by the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund of the Department of Treasury; and

(ii) include 1 or more of the following characteristics:

(I) The project will create or retain quality jobs for low-income residents in the community.

(II) The project supports regional food systems and locally grown foods, to the maximum extent practicable.

(III) In areas served by public transit, the project is accessible by public transit.

(IV) The project involves women- or minority-owned businesses.

(V) The project receives funding from other sources, including other Federal agencies.

(VI) The project otherwise advances the purpose of this section, as determined by the Secretary.

(d) Authorization of appropriations

There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this section \$125,000,000, to remain available until expended.

(Pub. L. 103-354, title II, §243, as added Pub. L. 113-79, title IV, §4206, Feb. 7, 2014, 128 Stat. 824.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, referred to in subsec. (c)(2)(B)(ii), is Pub. L. 88-525, Aug. 31, 1964, 78 Stat. 703, which is classified generally to chapter 51 (§2011 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 2011 of this title and Tables.

SUBCHAPTER V—NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

§ 6961. Under Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment**(a) Authorization**

The Secretary is authorized to establish in the Department the position of Under Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment.

(b) Confirmation required

If the Secretary establishes the position of Under Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment authorized under subsection (a), the Under Secretary shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

(c) Functions of Under Secretary**(1) Principal functions**

Upon establishment, the Secretary shall delegate to the Under Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment those functions under the jurisdiction of the Department that are related to natural resources and environment (except to the extent those functions are delegated under section 6932 of this title).

(2) Additional functions

The Under Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment shall perform such other functions and duties as may be required by law or prescribed by the Secretary.

(d) Succession

Any official who is serving as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment on October 13, 1994, and who was appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall not be required to be reappointed under subsection (b) to the successor position authorized under subsection (a) if the Secretary establishes the position, and the official occupies the new position, within 180 days after October 13, 1994 (or such later date set by the Secretary if litigation delays rapid succession).

(Pub. L. 103-354, title II, §245, Oct. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 3223.)

CODIFICATION

Section is comprised of section 245 of Pub. L. 103-354. Subsec. (e) of section 245 of Pub. L. 103-354 amended section 5314 of Title 5, Government Organization and Employees.

§ 6962. Natural Resources Conservation Service**(a) Establishment**

The Secretary is authorized to establish and maintain within the Department a Natural Resources Conservation Service.

(b) Functions

If the Secretary establishes the Natural Resources Conservation Service under subsection (a), the Secretary is authorized to assign to the Service jurisdiction over the following:

- (1) The Water Bank Act (16 U.S.C. 1301 et seq.).
- (2) The forest land enhancement program under section 2103 of title 16.¹
- (3) Title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3801 et seq.), except subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D of such title [16 U.S.C. 3831 et seq.].
- (4) Salinity control measures under section 1592(c) of title 43.
- (5) The Farms for the Future Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 4201 note).
- (6) Such other functions as the Secretary considers appropriate, except functions under subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 [16 U.S.C. 3831 et seq.].

(c) Special concurrence requirements for certain functions

In carrying out the programs specified in paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of subsection (b) and the program under subchapter C of chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3837–3837f),¹ the Secretary shall—

- (1) acting on the recommendations of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, with the concurrence of the Consolidated Farm Service Agency, issue regulations to carry out such programs;
- (2) ensure that the Natural Resources Conservation Service, in establishing policies, priorities, and guidelines for each such program, does so with the concurrence of the Consolidated Farm Service Agency at national, State, and local levels;
- (3) ensure that, in reaching such concurrence at the local level, the Natural Resources Conservation Service works in cooperation with Soil and Water Conservation Districts or similar organizations established under State law;
- (4) ensure that officials of county and area committees established under section 590h(b)(5) of title 16 meet annually with officials of such Districts or similar organizations to consider local conservation priorities and guidelines; and
- (5) take steps to ensure that the concurrence process does not interfere with the effective delivery of such programs.

(d) Use of Federal and non-Federal employees**(1) Use authorized**

In the implementation of functions assigned to the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Secretary may use interchangeably in local offices of the Service both Federal employees of the Department and non-Federal

employees of county and area committees established under section 590h(b)(5) of title 16.

(2) Exception

Notwithstanding paragraph (1), no personnel action (as defined in section 2302(a)(2)(A) of title 5) may be taken with respect to a Federal employee unless such action is taken by another Federal employee.

(e) Savings provision

For purposes of subsections (c) and (d) of this section:

(1) A reference to the “Natural Resources Conservation Service” includes any other office, agency, or administrative unit of the Department assigned the functions authorized for the Natural Resources Conservation Service under this section.

(2) A reference to the “Consolidated Farm Service Agency” includes any other office, agency, or administrative unit of the Department assigned the functions authorized for the Consolidated Farm Service Agency under section 6932 of this title.

(Pub. L. 103–354, title II, §246, Oct. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 3223; Pub. L. 104–127, title III, §336(a)(2)(D), (b)(2)(B), (c)(3), (d)(2), Apr. 4, 1996, 110 Stat. 1005, 1006; Pub. L. 107–171, title VIII, §8002(c), May 13, 2002, 116 Stat. 473.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Water Bank Act, referred to in subsec. (b)(1), is Pub. L. 91–559, Dec. 19, 1970, 84 Stat. 1468, as amended, which is classified generally to chapter 29 (§1301 et seq.) of Title 16, Conservation. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1301 of Title 16 and Tables.

Section 2103 of title 16, referred to in subsec. (b)(2), was repealed by Pub. L. 113–79, title VIII, §8001(a), Feb. 7, 2014, 128 Stat. 913.

The Food Security Act of 1985, referred to in subsecs. (b)(3), (6) and (c), is Pub. L. 99–198, Dec. 23, 1985, 99 Stat. 1354. Title XII of the Act is classified principally to chapter 58 (§3801 et seq.) of Title 16, Conservation. Subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII of the Act is classified generally to subpart B (§3831 et seq.) of part I of subchapter IV of chapter 58 of Title 16. Subchapter C of chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII of the Act was classified generally to subpart C (§3837 et seq.) of part I of subchapter IV of chapter 58 of Title 16, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 113–79, title II, §2703(a), Feb. 7, 2014, 128 Stat. 767. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title of 1985 Amendment note set out under section 1281 of this title and Tables.

The Farms for the Future Act of 1990, referred to in subsec. (b)(5), is Pub. L. 101–624, title XIV, ch. 2, §§1465–1470B, Nov. 28, 1990, 104 Stat. 3616–3619, as amended, which is set out as a note under section 4201 of this title.

CODIFICATION

Section is comprised of section 246 of Pub. L. 103–354. Subsec. (f) of section 246 of Pub. L. 103–354 amended sections 2001, 2002, 2005, and 3862 of Title 16, Conservation, and repealed section 590e of Title 16.

AMENDMENTS

2002—Subsec. (b)(2). Pub. L. 107–171 substituted “forest land enhancement program” for “forestry incentive program”.

1996—Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 104–127, §336(d)(2)(A), redesignated par. (3) as (1) and struck out former par. (1) which read as follows: “The rural environmental conservation program under title X of the Agricultural Act of 1970 (16 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.).”

¹ See References in Text note below.