



Natural Resources  
Conservation Service

## NEWS RELEASE

**United States Department of Agriculture**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **California NRCS Announces Sign Up for Conservation Program in Russian River**

**DAVIS, CA**, February 8, 2010 – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State Conservationist Ed Burton announced a \$1-million special initiative to conserve water in the Russian River and its tributary streams during important life cycle periods of salmon. The NRCS in Sonoma and Mendocino counties is accepting applications for its Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) for practices that reduce the amount of water diverted for irrigation and frost protection of vineyards and orchards. The deadline for applications is February 26, 2010.

Burton said, "Farmers in this area have expressed their commitment to taking a voluntary approach to water conservation. This EQIP initiative will support their efforts with best management practices that include wind machines, microsprinkler systems, sprinkler head control modules and the use of weather stations for determining the best time to apply water without waste."

Federal studies have shown that direct pumping from rivers and streams during cold snaps and times of low-flow have had significant impacts on salmonid populations, sometimes resulting in large fish kill events. Agricultural producers in the Russian River watershed have been working to find ways to reduce stress on salmonid populations while irrigating and protecting crops from frost.

For more information, please contact Charlette Epifanio of the NRCS in Sonoma County at 707.794.1242, ext 105, or Carol Mandel of the NRCS in Mendocino County at 707.468.9223.

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The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment.

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