

Refining Source Water Protection Local Priorities for Fiscal Year 2021: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Bulletin



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The United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (“NRCS”) issued a National Bulletin (“Bulletin”) titled:

Refining Source Water Protection Local Priorities for Fiscal Year 2021

The purpose is described as refining:

. . . the source water protection local priorities that states submitted in FY19.

NRCS states that a:

Consistent approach and standardized database will be used in FY21 to identify the high priority areas within the local priorities that states submitted in FY19.

The Association of State Drinking Water Administrators (“ASDWA”) notes in a June 5th post the importance of understanding two terms used in the Bulletin. These are stated to include:

- Local priorities: These are the SWP areas that were developed last year (in FY 2019).
- High priority areas: These will be the newly refined areas to be used beginning FY 2021.

ASDWA also notes that:

. . . high priority areas will be refined from the local priorities to create some national consistency using HUC-12 watersheds and ground water protection areas representing no more than 20% of the total land area of the state. NRCS will use these newly designated high priority areas to target increased payments and assistance to landowners for implementing agriculture and forestry conservation and best practices to protect drinking water sources.

This is stated to be driven by the 2018 Farm Bill requirements.

A copy of the Bulletin can be downloaded [here](#).