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Water Retention

Water retention projects increase adaptive capacity for climate change, and add to landscape and ecosystem resiliency, including reducing peak flows and enhancing water supply opportunities for agricultural use. Water retention projects should enhance water management capabilities at various scales, including on-farm and watershed scales. Projects including small dams, temporary backflows, or on-farm water retention basins, can reduce flooding downstream, improve water quality, and provide local habitat benefits.

The purpose of the water retention activity is to build structures that improve the management of surface water throughout a watershed to protect against flooding, drought and the impacts of climate change, and provide:

- enhanced water storage;
- reduced peak flows, which can moderate the timing and volume of runoff and reduce negative impacts downstream;
- improved water quality by capturing sediments, nutrients, contaminants and pesticides;
- protection to aquifers and enhancement of recharge; and
- increased wildlife habitat, biodiversity and ecosystem resilience.

Eligible Practices:

- small dam construction
- other structures and activities for permanent or temporary water retention (ex: berms and gated culverts)

Ineligible Practices:

- water retention activities designed to consolidate wetlands
- irrigation infrastructure
- dugout construction
- surface and sub-surface drainage excavation and tile installation