



NEWS RELEASE

 **NRCS** Natural Resources Conservation Service

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NRCS Provides Technical and Financial Assistance to Landowners for Ice Storm Cleanup

Little Rock, Ark., Feb. 18, 2009 – The U. S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service is providing Arkansas landowners funding through the Emergency Watershed Protection program for the removal of storm debris (remains of damaged or downed trees) from stream channels, culverts and bridge structures caused by the January 2009 ice storm.

“The debris is causing flooding, stream bank erosion, impairment of watersheds, and an imminent threat to bridge structures and adjacent homes,” said Kalven L. Trice, state conservationist.

The Emergency Watershed Protection program is designed to reduce threats to life and property in the wake of natural disasters. It provides technical and cost-sharing assistance. Assistance includes removing debris and sediment; installing stream bank protection devices; and stabilizing levees, channels and gullies.

“We received \$500,000 to aid the ice storm damaged areas,” Trice said. “We have people in every affected county assisting conservation districts and assessing where we can help.”

EWP recovery assistance is made available to project sponsors and individuals through project sponsors. Project sponsors are any legal subdivision of a state government or a state agency including: cities, counties, towns, and county conservation districts.

EWP provides a federal cost-share rate of 75 percent of the construction cost of emergency measures and debris removal. The sponsor is responsible for the remaining 25 percent of the cost. The 25 percent cost-share may be “in-kind” contributions.

Applications for EWP assistance will be accepted at USDA Field Service Centers.

For more information, contact NRCS at your local USDA Service Center, listed in phone directories under U.S. Government, or visit our Web site at: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>.

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