



Centralizing and Coordinating Soil Carbon Efforts Across the Federal Government

Recommendations for the upcoming Farm Bill

TITLE VII: RESEARCH

The US has an opportunity to reaffirm its leadership in agricultural research and activate soil carbon's potential as a climate solution.

To centralize and coordinate ongoing disparate research efforts on soil carbon within the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and across the federal government, Congress should establish a collaborative federal strategy and interagency committee to coordinate soil carbon research, education, and technical assistance.

SOIL CARBON RESEARCH CHALLENGES

- Soil carbon research and related efforts are not organized in a publicly available repository.
- Soil carbon efforts across the federal government are siloed, generating redundancies and decreasing effectiveness.
- Policymakers, farmers and ranchers, field agents, and technical assistance providers do not have swift access to advancements in soil carbon research.

THE FARM BILL OPPORTUNITY

- Coordinate and establish leadership for soil carbon research across the federal government.
- Develop a transparent federal soil carbon research strategy with measurable goals and deliverables.
- Promote partnerships with private sector investment and innovation to advance soil carbon research.
- Make information on soil carbon advancements readily accessible to agricultural stakeholders.

Improve leadership and coordination around soil carbon research, education, and technical assistance efforts across the federal government.

Current soil carbon efforts across the federal government are uncoordinated and siloed, impeding necessary research. A whole-of-government approach can enable the strong leadership and coordination that is critical to filling the gaps in soil carbon research and advancing the field.

An interagency committee, led by USDA and

including agencies like the Departments of Energy and the Interior, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council, and the Office of Science and Technology Policy can ensure that soil carbon research activities are more coordinated, transparent, efficient, and accessible to agricultural stakeholders.

- **Establish an interagency Soil Carbon Research Committee** that creates and oversees interagency soil carbon working groups.
- **Ensure working groups coordinate on cross-cutting priorities** including fundamental research, monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV), and data collection and management.
- **Ensure working groups engage communities and producers**, particularly those historically underserved, to ensure research is rooted in stakeholder engagement and on-the-ground perspectives.
- **Ensure working groups conduct annual budget reviews** with assistance from the Office of Management and Budget to align budget requests across soil carbon research priorities.
- **Direct the Soil Carbon Research Committee to create a comprehensive research action plan** that includes a baseline report on existing soil carbon research activities and progress reports to Congress at one-, three-, and five-year intervals.
- **Hire a dedicated official** to lead interagency soil carbon research efforts.

PROGRAM	2018 FARM BILL AUTHORIZATION	FY22 MANDATORY FUNDING	FY22 DISCRETIONARY FUNDING	RECOMMENDED ANNUAL FUNDING
Soil Carbon Research Committee (new)	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$5,000,000

