

**Natural Resources Conservation Service
Report To
Papio-Missouri River NRD Board
January 12, 2017
Neil Jensen, District Conservationist**



USDA Announces \$252 Million Available for Regional Conservation Partnership Program

USDA invites potential conservation partners, including private industry, non-government organizations, Indian tribes, state and local governments, water districts, and universities to submit project

applications for federal funding through RCPP.

NRCS will award up to \$252 million dollars to locally driven, public-private partnerships that improve the nation's water quality, combat drought, enhance soil health, support wildlife habitat, and protect agricultural viability.

USDA is now accepting proposals for Fiscal Year 2018 RCPP funding. Pre-proposals are due April 21. For more information on applying, visit the [RCPP website](#).

RCPP: Fiscal Year 2017 Projects by State

Wahoo Creek Water Quality Sites 26 and 27

- Through this project, partners will construct two (Sites 26 and 27) of the remaining ten uncompleted structures as identified in the Wahoo Creek Watershed Plan to address identified flooding and water quality concerns.

Divots in the Pivots

- The Divots in the Pivots Project will restore habitat for wetland-dependent birds in Nebraska's Rainwater Basin through Natural Resource Conservation Service easements and enhanced irrigation efficiency through the Environmental Quality Incentive Program.



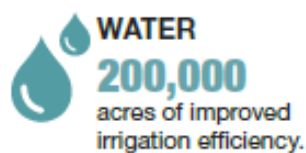
Jon Hansen, Survey Aide, has joined the NRCS staff in the Tekamah Field Office. He will be assisting to install NRCS and NRD conservation practices in the field. Jon started January 9.



Natural Resources Conservation Service

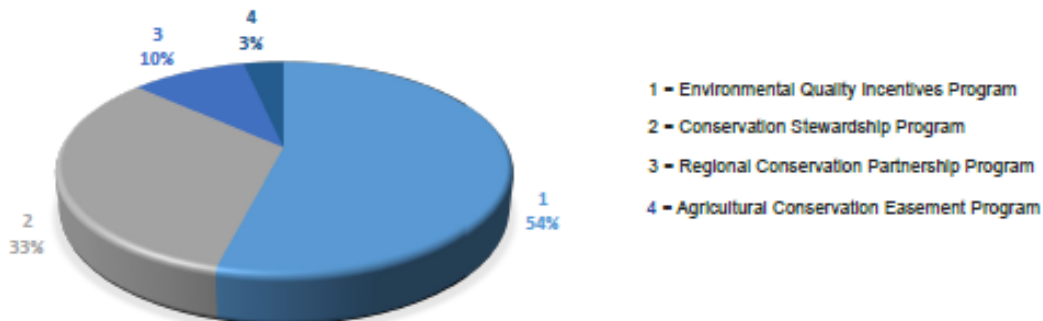
NRCS NEBRASKA

BY THE NUMBERS | 2016



USDA's **Natural Resources Conservation Service** provided a wide range of programs and services to enable Nebraska landowners to implement conservation practices and management activities in 2016. According to NRCS State Conservationist Craig Derickson, these programs and services, and the partnership with the Natural Resources Districts, are providing Nebraska landowners with technical and financial resources to help them protect and improve soil, water and air quality, as well as wildlife habitat. NRCS staff worked with Nebraska's landowners to apply conservation plans on over 600,000 acres during fiscal year 2016.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO NEBRASKA FARMERS AND RANCHERS BY PROGRAM



CONSERVATION PROGRAMS AT-A-GLANCE

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

New contracts: 707
Acres: 285,426
Obligated: \$17,348,195
(Includes all EQIP initiatives)

EQIP Ogallala Aquifer Initiative

Contracts: 92
Acres: 8,918
Financial assistance: \$3,357,511

EQIP National Water Quality Initiative

Contracts: 22
Acres: 2,778
Obligated: \$716,013

EQIP Organic Initiative

Contracts: 3
Acres: 1,621
Obligated: \$185,671

EQIP High Tunnel Initiative

Contracts: 16
Acres: 39
Obligated: \$81,401

Conservation Stewardship Program

Contracts: 602
Acres: 540,000
Obligated: \$10,474,630

2014 FARM BILL PROGRAMS

The 2014 Farm Bill was enacted in February 2014. NRCS offers voluntary Farm Bill conservation programs that benefit both agricultural producers and the environment. The following is a short description of each.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (EQIP)

EQIP provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers in order to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, reduced soil erosion and sedimentation or improved or created wildlife habitat.

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CSP)

CSP helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority resource concerns. Participants earn CSP payments for conservation performance—the higher the performance, the higher the payment.

THE AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM (ACEP)

ACEP provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands and their related benefits. Under the Agricultural Land Easements component, NRCS helps Indian tribes, state and local governments and non-governmental organizations protect working agricultural lands and limit non-agricultural uses of the land. Under the Wetlands Reserve Easements component, NRCS helps to restore, protect and enhance enrolled wetlands.

THE REGIONAL CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (RCPP)

RCPP promotes coordination between NRCS and its partners to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners. NRCS provides assistance to producers through partnership agreements and through program contracts or easement agreements.

Assistance is delivered in accordance with the rules of EQIP, CSP, and ACEP; and in certain areas the Watershed Operations and Flood Prevention Program.

Wondering about **Farm Bill 2014** programs?
Visit www.nrcs.usda.gov for more information.



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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call

(866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.