

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
REPORT TO THE
PAPIO MISSOURI RIVER NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
February 8, 2024**

PERSONNEL:

- The Soil Conservation Technician (SCT) positions in Blair & Tekamah are still vacant. Our plan is to develop flyers to advertise for contract employees that can hopefully gain experience and apply for a permanent position with NRCS in the future.
- PF biologist position is still vacant- I have not seen a job announcement yet.
- Callan Paisley, Soil Conservationist in the Tekamah field office, has accepted a new position with Nebraska NRCS's wetland team. He will begin his new position in the Omaha field office on February 12. Congratulations, Callan! Our local NRD team will greatly miss him- but we're happy he is staying with Nebraska NRCS in some capacity.

ACTIVITIES/Trainings :

- I attended the State DC and NARD meetings in Lincoln Jan. 23 & 24. I listened to some great sessions- one in particular reviewed the high cost of existing dam repair and insurance in the state- as well as some sessions pertaining to groundwater nitrates.
- Some engineering staff are participating in EFT training in Norfolk this week.
- We will be having our Local Working Group (LWG) meeting in March in the Blair field office. Be looking for more to come on that. The LWGs are comprised of NRD officials, ag producers representing various types of crops and livestock, non-industrial private forest landowners, and other individuals associated with the disciplines of soil, water, plant, wetland and wildlife sciences. These meetings are open to the public and provide an opportunity to provide recommendations on the local natural resource priorities that you would like to see for our programs in FY2025.

PROGRAMS: We continue to accept EQIP and CSP applications on a continuous basis. We're making progress on assessing and ranking existing applications and hope to have some obligated IRA (Inflation Reduction Act) contracts soon. As a state, we're doing our best to obligate all IRA funds before we move to our general funds.

FY24 Draft Initial CSP Allocation for the PMNRD

- \$720,000 for IRA
- \$1,276,000 for General

FY24 Draft Initial EQIP Allocation for the PMNRD

- \$562,270 for IRA
- \$200,000 for General

New Continuous CRP signup announced

- Staff are now having to fit in CRP requests for status reviews and suitability and feasibility assessments in addition to their IRA workload.
- Acres are limited, so FSA will be submitting applications in "batches" and the first batch deadline is early March.

That's all for this month. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to share with you what the NRCS staff have been up to!

Respectfully Submitted,

***Kristin Schlueter
P-MRNRD District Conservationist***