

**Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Report To  
Papio-Missouri River NRD Board  
November 14, 2013  
Neil Jensen, District Conservationist**



**Landowners are Encouraged to Sign Up for EQIP Funds Now**

Farmers and ranchers interested in soil, water and wildlife conservation are encouraged to sign up now for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

Individuals interested in entering into an EQIP agreement may file an application at any time, but the ranking of applications on hand to receive funding will begin Nov. 15, 2013, with a second round application ranking cutoff date of Jan. 17, 2014. Producers will be required to attain a minimum ranking score to be accepted for the first round of funding. The more conservation work a producer agrees to install, the higher the ranking score, and the greater the probability of being approved for funding.

The first step is to visit your local NRCS field office and complete an application. Producers are encouraged to sign up soon since all funding for EQIP in Nebraska could potentially be obligated by early 2014.

EQIP is one of NRCS's most versatile programs. It offers cost share and technical assistance to apply conservation measures on cropland and rangeland, as well as for animal feeding operations and establishing or enhancing wildlife habitat. There are special initiatives to help conserve water in the Ogallala Aquifer, conserve energy on the farm or ranch, and provide assistance to convert to organic agriculture. There are many opportunities available, and NRCS staff can help landowners and operators sort out their EQIP options.

The goal of EQIP is to provide a financial incentive to encourage landowners to install conservation practices that protect natural resources, resulting in cleaner air, water and more wildlife habitat.

For more information about EQIP and the other available conservation programs visit your local NRCS field office or [www.ne.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.ne.nrcs.usda.gov).

## Conservation Delivery Streamlining Initiative

NRCS initiated the Conservation Delivery Streamlining Initiative (CDSI) to implement a more effective, efficient, and sustainable business model for delivering conservation assistance across the Nation.

### *Benefits to the Nation's Farmers, Ranchers, and Taxpayers*

Improving how NRCS serves our customers will benefit our land and producers by:

- Reducing the average number of trips that clients will have to make to an NRCS field office
- Enabling NRCS and clients to finalize conservation planning and decision-making while in the field
- Accelerating the timeline between applying for a program and having a signed contract
- Accelerating the time between applying a practice and receiving payment for that practice
- Offering clients 24/7/365 service for many tasks

Through reduced document handling, reduced decision and approval times, improved access to best-available information and technology, and staffing strategies that are aligned with streamlined processes, NRCS and USDA will benefit from a business model that will enable field technical staff to spend as much as 75% of their time in the field with clients, compared to the 20-40% now often reported.

For all of us, CDSI will result in science-based conservation that is applied in the most efficient way to improve our nation's air, soil, water, wildlife, and energy use.



## November is Native American Heritage Month

During Native American Heritage Month, it is particularly fitting to recognize the important contributions Native Americans have made and continue to make on behalf of this great nation.

“Land of the Great Water – Sustainer of Life.”



The caption on the poster reads:

"The oral tradition of the Anishinaabe, or Ojibwe people, of the Great Lakes region is that centuries ago their ancestors migrated from the Atlantic coast. One of the prophecies they followed on this migration was to find a place where "food grows on the water." Manoomin, (wld rice) is seen as a special gift from the Creator. It became a healthy staple of the Ojibwe diet, as well as being important culturally and spiritually to the Anishinaabe people.

This painting by Shirley M. Brauker, a member of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, depicts three Native American women harvesting wild rice. The women wear customary calico clothes adorned with ribbons. The "Rice Spirit" watches from just beneath the water. Her hair is Manoomin."



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