

**Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Report To
Papio-Missouri River NRD Board
June 14, 2012
Neil Jensen, District Conservationist**



Photo courtesy of USDA NRCS.

Local Working Group Meeting Planned

Local meetings open to individuals interested in setting natural resources goals for Nebraska.

A Local Working Group that provides advice on the priorities for many U.S. Department of Agriculture conservation programs will meet June 28, 2012 at the Blair USDA Service Center. The meeting will begin at 1:30 p.m.

The public is encouraged to attend and express their natural resource concerns. Ideas generated from the public will help the U.S. Department of Agriculture tailor their natural resource programs to meet the needs identified locally.

There is a Local Working Group in each Natural Resources District. Membership on the Local Working Group includes Federal, State, county, Tribal or local government representatives. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) guides the Local Working Group.

The Local Working Group recommends to the NRCS State Conservationist how conservation programs like the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), or Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) would be used most effectively in their area. This recommendation can include special target areas, cost share rates on conservation programs, which conservation practices should have cost assistance, or how many dollars could be needed. This work group allows local input into how Federal dollars are spent.

For more information about the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the programs and services they provide, visit your local USDA Service Center or www.ne.nrcs.usda.gov.



Photo courtesy of USDA NRCS.

HIGH PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAM SHOWS PRODUCERS' COMMITMENT TO CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) has been a popular program in Nebraska. USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) received 1,044 applications for the first CSP ranking period of the fiscal year.

Nationwide, NRCS received 17,654 applications for CSP. NRCS expects to enroll a total of 10.8 million acres into the program in fiscal year 2012.

CSP offers payments to producers who maintain a high level of conservation on their land and agree to adopt higher levels of stewardship. Eligible lands include cropland, pastureland, rangeland and non-industrial forestland. CSP is offered in all 50 states, tribal lands and the Pacific and Caribbean areas through continuous sign-ups. Administered by NRCS, this Farm Bill program provides many conservation benefits including improved water, soil, and air quality, decreased soil erosion, and enhanced wildlife habitat.

Within the Papio-Missouri River NRD, participants are considering 17 different enhancement activities.

- ✚ Air Quality Enhancement Activity
 - AIR04 - Use drift reducing nozzles, low pressures, lower boom height, and adjuvants to reduce pesticide drift
 - AIR07 – GPS, targeted spray application (Smart Sprayer), or other chemical application electronic control technology
 - AIR08 – Nitrification inhibitors or urease inhibitors

- ✚ Animal Enhancement Activity
 - ANM10 – Harvest hay in a manner that allows wildlife to flush and escape
 - ANM 21 – Prairie restoration for grazing and wildlife habitat

- ✚ Energy Enhancement Activity
 - ENR01 – Fuel use reduction for field operations

- ✚ Plant Enhancement Activity
 - PLT06 – Renovation of a windbreak, shelterbelt or hedgerow for wildlife habitat
 - PLT15 – Establish pollinator and/or beneficial insect habitat

- ✚ Soil Quality Enhancement Activity
 - SQL05 – Use of deep rooted crops to break up soil compaction

- ✚ Water Quality Enhancement Activity
 - WQL04 – Plant tissue tests and analysis to improve nitrogen management
 - WQL05 – Apply nutrients no more than 30 days prior to planned planting date
 - WQL07 – Split nitrogen applications, 50% after crop emergence or pasture green up
 - WQL10 - Plant a cover crop that will scavenge residual nitrogen

- ✚ Water Quantity Enhancement Activity
 - WQT01 – Irrigation system automation
 - WQT03 – Irrigation pumping plant evaluation
 - WQT05 – Remote monitoring and notification of irrigation pumping plant operation
 - WQT07 – Regional weather networks for irrigation scheduling



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