

**Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Report To
Papio-Missouri River NRD Board
March 13, 2008
Verlon Barnes, District Conservationist**

A. THANKS!

I appreciate the PMR NRD Board Directors and Staff for their promotion and support of increased Technical Assistance funding for NRCS. I hear that in Washington DC that Marlin initiated the discussion on this topic immediately when meeting with USDA Secretary Mike Johanns.

B. NRCS Workforce and Vacancies:

Nebraska NRCS currently has 39 vacancies which is 13% of our approximate 300 total workforce. Four of these are likely to be filled in the near future. The remaining 35 will indefinitely remain open. We have 3 vacancies in the PMR NRD. These will likely not be filled until after Oct 1, 2008.

C. Farm Bill is still Pending:

A new Farm Bill is still pending. The Continuing Resolution that we are currently working under will expire March 15, 2008. There will likely be an extension of 30 days until April 18, 2008. After that there is discussion of a possible 1 year extension of the current Farm Bill.

D. WRP Status:

Current workload for WRP in Nebraska shows the PMR NRD with 66 contracts (40%), the next closest NRD is the Nemaha with 27 contracts (15%), and the rest of the state or 21 NRD areas have 76 contracts (45%).

E. EQIP Status:

The Environmental Quality Incentive Program or EQIP is a program that provides practice payment incentives to agricultural producers to implement and maintain conservation practices.

We have 3 EQIP funding categories in the PMR:

1) EQIP - General

Nebraska Total is \$20,809,000 in 1063 contracts

PMR NRD has \$511,000 (2.5%) in 46 (4.3%) contracts

2) EQIP - Animal Feeding Operations (AFO)

Nebraska Total is \$4,350,000 in 44 contracts

PMR NRD has \$209,000 (4.8%) in 2 (4.5%) contracts

3) EQIP - Ground and Surface Water Conservation (GSWC)

Nebraska Total has \$19,035,000 in 636 contracts

PMR NRD has \$33,000 (0.2%) in 1 (0.2%) contract

Not including the EQIP-AFO, the PMR NRD ranked number 17 of 23 NRDs for FY08 EQIP funds allocated.

F. Nutrient Management (590) and Waste Management (633) Practices:

We continue to have difficulty in getting livestock producers with Animal Feeding Operations (AFOs) to successfully complete their Nutrient Management and Waste (Manure) Management responsibilities. Taking timely soil tests, manure analysis tests, tracking manure application, applying commercial nutrients at UNL recommendations, and documentation of all these items are what is required.

G. Food Security Act (FSA) Compliance Reviews:

Our annual Compliance Reviews will be coming up in May and June. We continue to have a few producers who seem to be doing too much tillage for what is allowed on their highly erodible land. So, consequently we will probably have a few who will be found in non-compliance this Spring.