

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
ACTIVITY REPORT
AUGUST 2007

CONSERVATION PLANNING/APPLICATION

- Blair Field Office (FO) staff completed 2 conservation plans, and Neil Jensen, RC, completed 2 wetland determinations and 2 Highly Erodible Land (HEL) determinations.
- Blair FO has 6 miscellaneous cost-share applications for P-MRNRD FY2008. The applications include CRP seeding, pasture renovation and cropland conversions.
- Blair FO has 5 CAP (Conservation Assistance Program) and 4 EQIP cost-share applications for summer; 2 CAP and 2 EQIP are completed and paid.
- Blair FO has received 43 CAP applications at \$236,192 for fall 2007 and 38 EQIP co-pay applications at \$272,542. The total is 81 CAP/EQIP applications for \$508,734. Blair FO staff expects to receive approximately 15 to 20 additional applications for fall conservation work.
- Blair FO staff completed 7 reconstitutions.
- Walthill FO completed 2 terrace and 1 waterway projects for payment; they also staked 2 CAP terrace projects and completed 5 conservation plans.
- Walthill FO staff completed a wetland determination reconsideration (appeal).
- Conservation plans have been written for 700 acres in Burt County.
- Tekamah FO completed field reviews and estimates for terraces and grade stabilization structures; Andy Bohnenkamp, NRCS Tekamah, has slated 24 EQIP and 5 NRD terrace jobs for the upcoming fall terrace workload along with 1 or 2 grade stabilization projects.
- Tekamah FO has 5 NRD and 12 EQIP applications for 17 terrace jobs to be completed this fall. They have completed 5 Lower Elkhorn NRD and 6 Papio-Missouri River NRD cost-share payments and completed a payment for a prescribed burn on CRP.
- Tekamah FO completed 6 wetland determinations and 6 HEL determinations.
- Justin Linder, NRCS Tekamah, met with producer near Oakland who wants to do maintenance on a farmed wetland.
- Dakota County has 7 pasture project installations underway. Pipelines, tanks, fences and brush management are the practices being installed.
- Dakota County revised conservation plans on 9 tracts.
- Vern Dean, NRCS Dakota County, assisted Washington County with a water and sediment control basin project.
- Dakota County approved 5 CAP pasture system cost-share applications and processed a CAP payment on a completed pasture water system project.
- Omaha FO completed 8 plan revisions.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (EQIP)

- Blair FO received 2 signed applications and 5 requests for 2008 EQIP conservation practices – pending field visits by technical staff.
- Walthill FO staked 3 terrace projects.
- Tekamah FO is working to finalize a grade stabilization structure to be built this fall.
- Tekamah FO has received several EQIP applications. In Tekamah, promotion for EQIP is taking place and each staff member is talking with producers that potentially are looking to complete conservation practices. Justin Linder, Resource Conservationist, with the assistance of others, submitted a proposal for solar pumping

- plants to be a cost-sharable item and completed research and submitted what Lower Elkhorn NRD developed for a planned grazing incentive payment.
- Justin Linder, Tekamah, has designed 2 pivot sprinkler packages, one has been certified in Dakota County and the other in Washington County will be certified when weather permits.
 - Dakota County prepared an application for payment on a completed pipeline and water facility system. They also had an application approved for a grade stabilization structure.
 - Dakota County is actively promoting the 2008 EQIP signup period. Personal contacts, flyers and postcards are being used.
 - Omaha FO completed 2 EQIP payments.
 - Omaha FO completed approximately 12 EQIP status reviews.

WETLAND RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (WREP)

WETLAND RESERVE PROGRAM (WRP)

- Andy Bohnenkamp-NRCS Tekamah and Mitch Keebler-NRCS Omaha completed WRP construction layout, inspection and checkout on 4 WRP sites.
- Tekamah FO received 1 new WRP application and forwarded to the Wetlands Team for further application processing.
- Wetland team members conducted a restoration monitoring field visit on 3 sites in Dakota County; Dakota County FO staff completed a status review on an additional restoration site.

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)

CONTINUOUS CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CCRP)

- Walthill FO processed payments for: 2 grass waterways, 1 filter strip and 2 seedings.
- Walthill FO completed a filter strip and waterway contract; they also received 1 CRP application for a wetland restoration.
- Tekamah FO has been working with 3 producers for new Continuous CRP contracts (2 riparian buffers and 1 filter strip).
- Tekamah FO has 15 requests to complete haying and/or grazing on CRP contracts.
- Dakota County completed a status review on a CRP seeding.
- Omaha FO completed 1 CRP plan revision for haying and processed 1 CRP cost-share payment.

SILVER CREEK WATERSHED

- Reviews have been completed for Silver Creek projects that producers have requested.

PIGEON/JONES CREEK WATERSHED

- Site #28 was approved for EQIP funding; Sites #7, #8, #10 and #20 are being promoted for 2008 EQIP funding.

DISTRICT PROGRAMS

- Blair FO assisted 2 Washington County Rural Water customers with water payments and meter reading information.
- Walthill NRD staff conducted maintenance and installed new gates on Pigeon/Jones structures. They also helped grind 8,500-9,000 pesticide containers.

TRIBAL ASSISTANCE

- Walthill FO staff worked with Jason McCauley, BIA employee, on plans to repair deep gullies on 3 allotments in pasture and discussed design on an allotment waterway having a large drainage area.

INFORMATION/EDUCATION

- Terry Schumacher, NRD Blair, represented the P-MRNRD at the Washington County Fair.
- Walthill FO staff printed/mailed 980 postcards to producers promoting EQIP.
- The Dakota City FO staff provided news items for the NRD Share Page published in the Dakota County Star for the month of August. Articles included: CRP Rental Rates Increase; Deadline Set for 2008 EQIP Applications; FSA Office Closure Impacts Local Farmers; Scrap Tire Collection Announced; NRD Board Meeting in Dakota City. Photos with captions were included of a livestock watering facility being installed near Homer; NRD pesticide container collection and recycling project; and the county fair booth drawing winner.
- Dakota and Thurston County staff manned a conservation themed booth at the county fair August 2-5.
- Robert Hall, NRCS Omaha, presented a power point presentation on erosion and conservation practices to a local Boys Scout Troop.

TRAINING/MEETINGS

- NRCS FO staff attended Programs Training.
- Don Atkinson, RC at Walthill, attended a teleconference on GIS wetland tool.
- Andy Bohnenkamp, Tekamah, participated in a National Earth Team teleconference where the business plan and volunteer database were discussed.
- Neil Stockfleth, Dakota City, attended the Nebraska Grazing Conference at Kearney on August 7-8.
- Dakota County staff sponsored a female landowner and operator meeting on August 15, at the Dakota City Natural Resources Center. Ten women from the area took part in the event.
- Sam Thomas, Dakota City NRCS, attended a pump characteristics training session at Hastings on August 21-22.

Reported by: Robert Hall, Resource Conservationist, NRCS, Omaha, September 11, 2007