

Mrs. Nancy A. Jackson
325 Andover St.
Hoyt Lakes, MN 55750

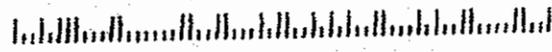


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Conservation Security Program Comments
ATTN: David McKay
NRCS Conservation Operations Division
PO Box 2890
Washington, DC 20013

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Dear Mr. McKay,

2/19/04

On behalf of all our small farmers who practice conservation and/or wish to, we strongly urge & request that the USDA follow the intent of the CSP, which is to help our small farmers practice conservation. They should not be penalized or limited by rigid rules applying only to certain farms. The future of our family farms and rural communities, as well as our soil and land, depends on equal treatment and incentives for these farmers to care for, and continue to care for, the land they farm.

Adequate payment to all farmers who practice conservation is essential to everyone's eventual well-being. Crop land put into pastureland should not penalize the farmer. There must be equal compensation for pastureland as this helps conservation.

We trust you will follow the intent of the CSP, which Congress passed, and help our small farmers, not agri-business which has no desire to practice true conservation. Thank you.

Linda Ronchetti

Linda Ronchetti

15 N. Erie Street
Aurora, MN 55705

Nancy A. Johnson
325 Andover
Hoyt Lakes MN 55750

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March 4, 2004

Mr. David McKay
NRCS Conservation Operations Division
P.O. Box 2890
Washington, D.C. 20013

Re: Comment on NRCS/USDA Conservation Security Program Proposed Rule

Dear Mr. McKay,

I am a rancher in northeastern New Mexico and I am writing to comment on the Proposed Rule for the Conservation Security Program (CSP), published in the Federal Register January 2, 2004.

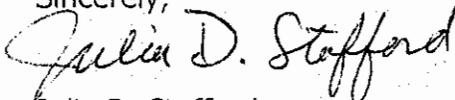
I have several strong concerns with the language of the proposed rule:

- 1) The program should be available to qualifying farmers and ranchers nationwide. It is unfair and contrary to the word and spirit of the law to limit CSP to a few select areas of the country.
- 2) Sustainable or regenerative agricultural practices, such as time-controlled grazing management, should be included under the CSP. Indeed, given the dire need nationwide to heal our eroding and degraded soils, such practices should be given preference under the CSP. Based on our own operation, I can attest to their beneficial impact on land, water and plant diversity.
- 3) Payments under the CSP must provide for base payments, cost share rates and enhanced payments that are reasonable and carry out the intent of the law. As proposed, the figures do not meet comparable local rates, provide incentives for farmers and ranchers to enroll in the program or encourage innovative practices that deliver real results.

The CSP is an important opportunity for ranchers and farmers nationwide. Please take these comments into account in arriving at final CSP rules.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Julia D. Stafford
P.O. Box 518
Raton, NM 87740

February 24, 2004

Mr. David McKay
Attention: Conservation Security Program
Conservation Planning Team Leader
Conservation Operations Division
USDA NRCS
P.O. Box 2890
Washington, DC 20013-2890

Dear Mr. McKay:

I am pleased to submit comments on the proposed rule to implement the 2002 Farm Bill Conservation Security Program. First, I applaud NRCS for developing a proposed rule in the face of the number of legislative changes that were made to the program following its enactment.

I have several concerns relative to the proposed rule. I understand that during the development of the proposed rule, changes were made to the statute that altered it from an uncapped entitlement program to a "capped entitlement" to be funded at approximately \$3.8 billion over 10 years. Given that change, NRCS proposed a much more limited program that would be available only to a relatively small number of producers in highly targeted watersheds. The proposed rule also placed significantly lower limits on cost-share rates and base payments than were allowed in the statute; restricted the number and types of practices that would be eligible for payment; and required producers to address resource concerns prior to enrolling in the program.

The enactment of the 2004 Consolidated Appropriations Bill, however, restored the CSP to an uncapped entitlement as it was originally written. Given that fact, I strongly urge NRCS to prepare a rule to implement the program as originally intended and without the severe restrictions in the currently proposed rule. The principal issues that need to be addressed in the supplement to properly implement the CSP as an uncapped entitlement include:

- allowing open enrollment to all eligible producers nationwide with no preference for producers in targeted watersheds;
- providing the full cost-share, maintenance and base payments as provided for in the statute;
- removing the limitation on the types of practices eligible for payment; and
- making the CSP a true rewards program by allowing producers to use CSP to address resource concerns after enrollment.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide my comments on the CSP proposed rule.

Sincerely yours,

Blwright Wise - Farmer - Sandusky County - Ohio

653

February 25, 2004

Conservation Operations Division
Natural Resources Conservation Service
ATTN: Conservation Security Program
P.O. Box 2890
Washington, DC 20013-2890

To Whom it May Concern:

Thank you for providing public comment on the USDA's proposed rules for the Conservation Security Program. However, the proposed rules for the CSP needs to eliminate the restrictions on participation in the CSP to a few "selected watersheds" and undefined "categories."

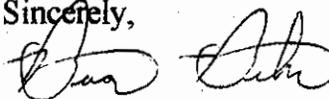
As a certified organic farmer, it is my view that the CSP should be a nationwide, accessible program, open to ALL farmers! CSP should allow farmers with USDA-approved organic certification plans under the National Organic Program to simultaneously certify under both the National Organic Program and CSP, if they meet the standards of both.

Also, the USDA's proposed rules fail to made adequate payments to farmers currently participating in effective conservation practices. It is my opinion that enhanced payments and NOT cost-share payments, should reward those farmers who participate in environmentally-beneficial systems. CSP payments should be set at the local rental rates based on land capability without the 90 % reduction proposed by the USDA!

Finally, your proposed rules should address managed rotational grazing and resource conserving crop rotations. Please be reminded that managed rotational grazing is recognized by scientists and farmers as an excellent way to protect our soil and water. Also, it has been scientifically proven that diversified crop rotations effectively build and improve soil while managing pests and reducing erosion.

Again, thank you for allowing public comment on the proposed rules. With genuine concern, I ask that the CSP be offered to ALL of America's farmers, especially certified organic farmers, to preserve our nation's natural resources for future generations.

Sincerely,



Brian Behrens
1927 Highway W
Grafton, WI 53024

Dear Mr McKay

3-4-4

We write regarding the USDA's proposed rules re the Conservation Security Program. The purpose of the CSP as passed by Congress is to be open to all farmers, not a select few, who practice conservation. Currently USDA would limit participation to just a few. This is unfair. It must be open to all who do practice conservation. That is issue # 1. #2- USDA proposed rules do NOT adequately pay farmers who practice conservation. Farm payments are skewed toward large corporate farms. This too must change--unfair to small farmers. #3 USDA should not penalise small farmers who shift to pastureland from crops--pasture helps conservation, & farmers who practice conservation by shifting should be paid equally. #4 Farmers must be allowed to be certified with both CSP & National Organic Program instead of the current "red tape" of separate requests. Please act now, now sometime, on behalf of our land, our small farmers, and our rural communities. They are our best caregivers. Thank you.

Ruth Hansen

2003-03-04 10:34:37 #347

Ruth Kaufert
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1403 W Broadway Ave.
Apache Junction, AZ 85220



Conservation Security Program Comments
ATTN: David McKay
NRCS Conservation Operations Division
PO Box 2890
Washington, DC 20013

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