

8-19-04

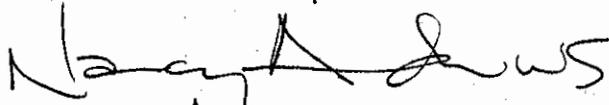
Dear Mr McKay,

I am writing to suggest important changes to the USDA's proposed rules for the operation of the Conservation Security Program (CSP).

In particular I would like to encourage the USDA to adhere to the provisions of the law and recently appropriated full funding of CSP by Congress. The USDA needs to get rid of the idea of restricting sign-up for CSP to a few selected watersheds and undefined categories. The benefits of this program are certainly not geographically limited so there is no reason to limit sign-up.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,


Nancy Andrews
249 Hamline Av. S.
St. Paul, MN 55105

CONSERVATION SECURITY PROGRAM

LISTENING SESSION

2/26/04 Madison, WI

My name is John Kinsman, a third generation dairy farmer living in the hills of South Central Wisconsin. I milk 36 cows in an intensive rotational grazing organic operation. Representing the National Family Farm Defenders as president and the National Family Farm Coalition as its vice-president.

1. The Conservation Security Program must be made available to all US farmers as was clearly stated in the 2002 farm bill. Limiting to a few select watersheds will make the program a divisive political football.

Full funding, as was originally intended, must be restored. The urgency is greater to stop the erosion of soil and human resources from the land. The failures of the farm bill in rewarding the eroders and polluters is destroying (mining) our resources for future generations.

The USDA's using budget restraints as the basis for gutting the program is a hollow argument. The administration has seemingly endless dollars for invading other countries and other regressive policies. Our land, our resources should be one of our greatest priorities.

2. The proposed rule discourages and restricts farmers who are most in need of participating in good conservation practices. Many of these are experiencing severe financial difficulties due to low farm gate prices. They would very likely participate if there were adequate financial incentive. A three year time frame to meet all conservation needs would be an achievable goal for most farmers.

3. Farmers do not have the dollars to implement these practices as proposed. Cost share rates must be returned to the maximum 75% cap as the law originally stated. The 90% reduction rate is not worth the paperwork required and will attract no participants. Based on my 40 years working with farmers and ranchers across the country, I am certain many will change their farming methods if given the proper financial assistance and meaningful advice.

Rotational grazing, organic agriculture and other sustainable methods should be included in the CSP. For far too many years farm programs have rewarded eroding unsustainable farming practices. Myself and others who farmed sustainably and used good conserving methods were actually penalized by then being ineligible for most farm program payments.

Does the USDA wish to be characterized as illustrated in the attached cartoon?

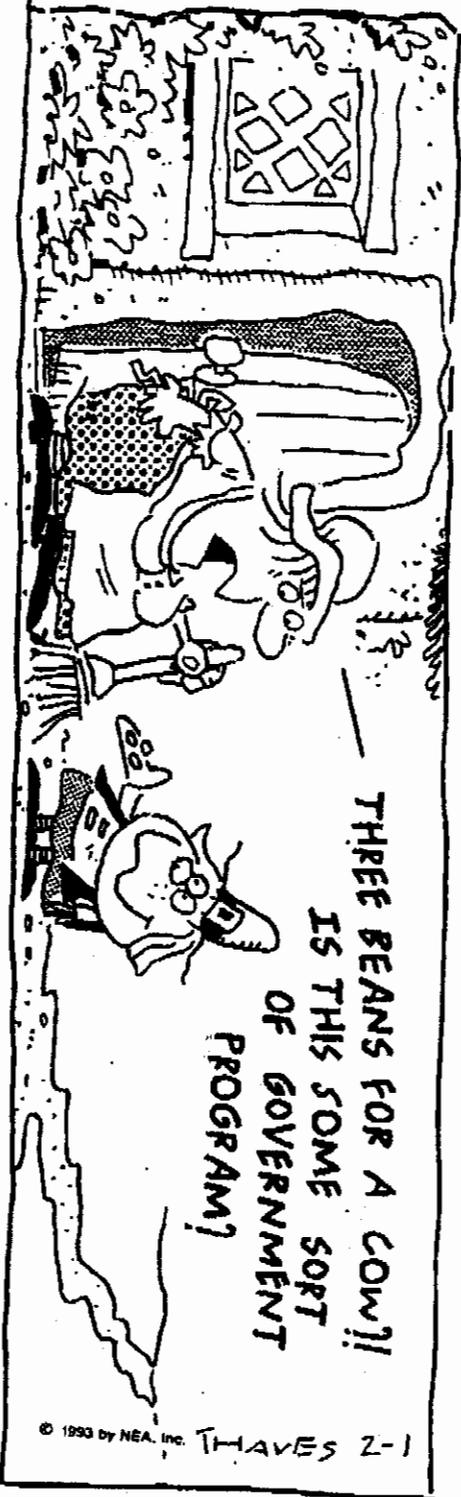
John Kinsman
E 2940 Hwy K
LAVALLE, WI 53941
608 986 3815

44
David McKay, Conservation Operations
NRCS
PO Box 2890
Washington, DC 20013

FROM: John Kinsman

1st of three pages

FRANK & ERNEST® by Bob Thaves



Vertical text on the right side of the page, possibly a page number or reference code.

Attn: CSP Proposed Rule

127 Marlborough Street
Springfield, MA 01109

Dear Mr. McKay,

My name is Kristin Brennan and I am writing to you in my capacity as an employee of The Food Project, a nonprofit organization based in Lincoln and Boston, MA.

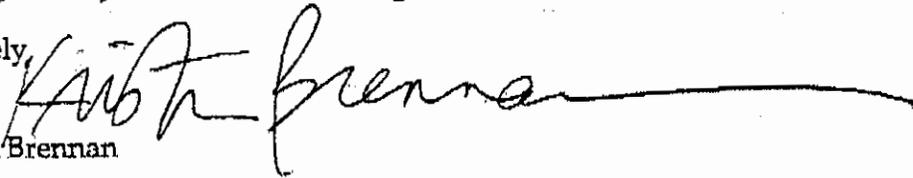
I believe that the CSP can be a very useful tool for helping organizations like The Food Project, which promotes and practices sustainable agriculture, conserve and improve natural resources, but only if the proposed rule is changed to reflect the original spirit of the program.

Specifically, I would like to recommend the following changes:

1. **Make All Farms Eligible:** the proposed rule restricts enrollment. Please restore eligibility for all farmers and ranchers who wish to take care of their land.
2. **Motivate Farmers:** the proposed rule allows only those who already practice conservation to participate. Please allow farmers to achieve high conservation standards while in the program, not as a precondition for applying.
3. **Make Incentive Payments Meaningful:** the proposed rule has very low payment rates that don't cover the farmer's costs. For this program to succeed payments to the participants must be increased so that farmers are financially rewarded for outstanding environmental performance.
4. **Broaden Conservation Efforts:** please allow farmers to address any or all natural resource concerns on their farm, and allow them to make use of all effective conservation practices, instead of restricting what can be done.

Thank you very much for considering these comments.

Sincerely,


Kristin Brennan

January 30, 2004

No CSP
Comment

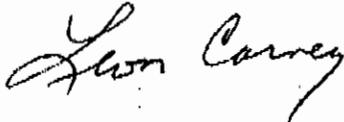
David McKay
NRCS Conservation Operations Division
P. O. Box 2890
Washington, DC 20013

Re: Clean Up River Environment "CURE"

Dear Mr. McKay,

I am a board member of the Beaver Creek clean water partnership task force here in Murray County, Minnesota. Having lived on and still own land on Beaver Creek since 1946 I can tell you exactly what is wrong with the polluted river environment of Beaver Creek. The Murray County Farm Service Agency has redetermined the Flood Plains of Beaver Creek to be NW-Non-Wetlands. No Grass Waterways, no buffer strips and no conservation plans to address the sheet erosion and nutrient run-off. I say redetermined because when the previous owners had title to the properties they were considered W-Wetland. If the Natural Resource Conservation Service would follow the rules and not play politics to determine who can be subsidised for drainage practices (Conservation Practices Susidies-same as tilling and drainage in Murray County) Beaver Creek wouldn't be in the mess it is. What is really sad is that just about every Public Water Course in the Country has the same senario and nobody dares to mention it. The rules have been bent because some of these Farmers who get all the subsidies get angry if they don't get their way. The solution has been give em what they want maybe they will go away. This is the past practice and history of your agency in Murray County on the Flood Plains of Beaver Creek. Without the subsidies these Angry Farmers wouldn't have enough money to mess up the Public Waters by abusing and draining the wetlands.

Sincerely,



Leon Carney

1-28-04

Dear David McKay,

I believe rewarding farmers for being better stewards of their land is vital for a healthy society now and more importantly for our children in the future.

I am writing to comment on the USDA's proposed rules for the CSP.

The CSP is a conservation entitlement program to be available to all farmers. Please do not limit it to geographical locations like water sheds and categories of farmers or farm practices.

Farmers should be rewarded when using sustainable practices such as rotational grazing and diverse crop rotations. Pastured cropland is as valuable as other cropland. The cropland definition should include "pastured cropland".

CSP must provide a meaningful base payment and cost-share payments of up to 75% for new practices and cost-share maintenance and management

payments. 90% for beginning farmers
and ranchers. Bonus payments
should be provided for sustainable
practices such as management of
intensive rotational grazing and
crop rotations which conserve resources.
A major portion of payments should
go to those who are providing actual benefits
rather than ~~those~~ for implementation
of new practices unproven to deliver
environmental benefits.

Thank you,

Jan Hatling 920 217 42
W1672 850th ave
Spring Valley, WA 54767