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USDA-NRCS Accepting Proposals for the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)

Stillwater, OKLA – Gary O’Neill, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State Conservationist for Oklahoma, has announced that applications are being accepted for the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP). Applications will be due on January 31, 2014. O’Neill explained “This program provides funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farmland in agricultural uses. NRCS may provide funds join with other conservation partners such as state, tribal, local governments, and non- governmental organizations to acquire easements.”

O’Neill said “The FRPP program came about due to the rapid urban sprawl which continues to threaten the nation’s farm and ranch land. Social and economic changes are increasing the rate at which land is converted to non-agricultural uses. USDA has determined that it is in the state and national interest to protect agricultural lands and keep as much prime farm and ranch land in production as possible.”

NRCS is seeking proposals from local, state and federally recognized tribal governments and non-governmental organizations interested in working together to acquire conservation easements on farms and ranches. Eligible entities must submit applications on or before January 31, 2014, to receive consideration for funding in fiscal year 2014. The entities must have an established farm and ranch land protection program, have the authority to hold and manage easements; have the capacity to acquire, manage, and enforce the easements; and the funds to match the Federal contribution. Joy Owens, NRCS FRPP Program Contact, said “To be eligible, land must be privately owned, contain prime or unique farmland, or contain historical or archeological resources. Owners of the land must meet the Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) provisions of the 2008 Farm Bill.

While proposals will be submitted directly to the State Conservationist, Gary O’Neill, interested applicants should contact : Joy Owens, Resources Conservationist, 100 USDA, Suite 206, Stillwater, Ok 74074-2655, phone at (405) 742-1234, or e-mail at: joy.owens@ok.usda.gov for assistance and additional application information.

The announcement for Program Funding and additional information on the FRPP in Oklahoma is available from the Oklahoma NRCS Programs website which may be accessed at:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/ok/programs/easements/farmranch/>

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