



2001 Conservation Technical Assistance



Customer Focus— Stephens County, OK

“In all the years we operated the farm, we never used NRCS. My son encouraged me to go down about the erosion problem. We worked on a comprehensive conservation plan for the farm and looked at several alternatives. Now the erosion is fixed and we’re going to begin work on cross-fencing for better grazing management.”

Corene Knutson
Ratliff City, OK

Corene Knutson operates 270 acres in Stephens County, Oklahoma, with the help of her daughter and son-in-law Debra and Chris Fuller. A deep gully that had developed in her pastureland was not only an eyesore, it was becoming a hazard for people and livestock. Her son’s suggestion to contact NRCS for help was something she had never done before. Help came from NRCS in the form of technical and program assistance from Earl Weisner, District Conservationist, and Curt Owens, Soil Conservation Technician, NRCS employees at the Duncan Field Service Center.

A conservation plan was developed to address Corene’s gully erosion problem and other resource concerns. Erosion estimates indicated that the gully was advancing at a rate of just over 1400 tons/year. Program assistance provided cost-share to construct a grade stabilization structure to stop the gully erosion and provide a multi-purpose structure that will also provide livestock water. Corene is now ready to focus on improving her grazing resource by utilizing cross-fencing for better grazing management.

Oklahoma Summary

Overview

Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) provides basic technical services through direct one-on-one contacts between NRCS employees and a diverse clientele in the state of Oklahoma. These contacts ultimately result in the development of conservation plans corresponding to the needs of the individual landuser in consideration of specific resource concerns. Conservation planning assistance provides natural resource inventories, treatment alternatives, and engineering assistance to a variety of urban, tribal, and traditional landusers to meet client and basic resource needs. Using this help, landusers plan and apply practices and conservation systems that reduce soil erosion, improve water quality, and enhance forestland, wetlands, grazing lands, cropland, and wildlife habitat. Technical assistance in the form of conservation planning also provides the basis for potential participation in a host of state and federal conservation programs addressing specific resource concerns. A close partnership between NRCS, 88 local conservation districts, and the Oklahoma Conservation Commission provides the vehicle for delivery of conservation technical assistance in the state.

Accomplishments

In fiscal year 2001, NRCS provided conservation technical assistance to 108,329 customers all across Oklahoma. This technical assistance focused on the development and application of conservation plans to meet a resource management system level of treatment. A resource management system level of treatment assures that all resource concerns within the planned treatment area are addressed to minimum quality criteria. Resource management system level conservation plans were developed on a combined 333,196 acres of cropland, forest land, grazed land, hayland, other land, and urban land. Resource management systems were applied on a combined 574,288 acres of cropland, forest land, grazed land, hayland, other land, and urban land. These systems are providing sustainable resource protection from erosion and degradation, ensuring continued production of food, fiber, and a quality environment.

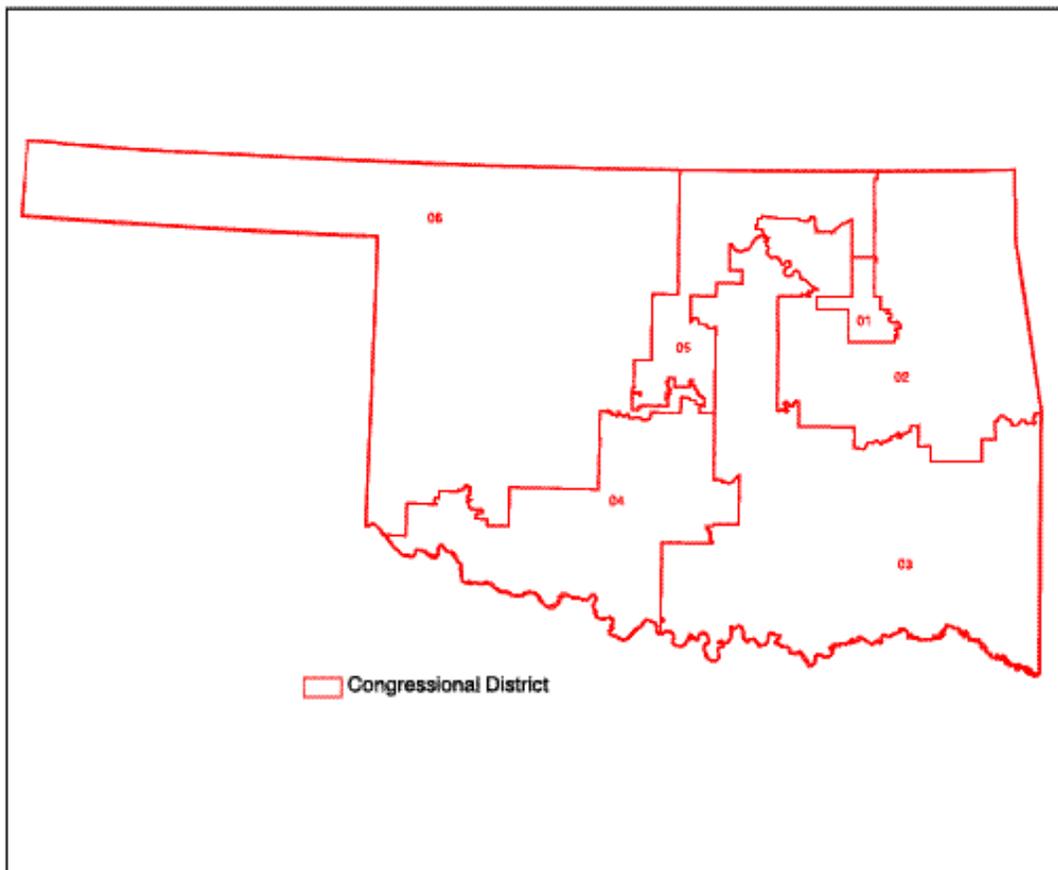
Outlook

Conservation program funding levels proposed in the recent farm bill legislation would require an additional emphasis on conservation technical assistance to landusers for the development of conservation plans relative to applications for program assistance. Non-program requests for technical assistance are expected to continue, but response to these requests will be secondary to program obligations. The challenge will be to meet program needs and to respond to basic technical assistance requests with an ever-shrinking workforce.

State Contact

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Oklahoma Congressional Districts



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