

# Environmental Quality Incentives Program



photos: NRCS Oklahoma

## Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary conservation program that provides technical, financial, and educational assistance to farmers and ranchers. It serves as a tool to address serious natural resource conservation concerns by implementing conservation practices such as grassed waterways, filter strips, manure management facilities, cross fencing, wells, pipelines, pesticide and nutrient management, and wildlife habitat to achieve the most cost effective environmental benefits possible.

### Locally-led Program

EQIP funds are distributed in geographic priority areas and on statewide resource concerns. Priority areas and priority resource concerns are identified at the local conservation district level. Local work groups are made up of various federal, state and local agencies and tribal governments. The local work group identifies program priorities using a natural resource assessment and based on that assessment, develops proposals for priority areas.

The State Technical Committee provides advice and recommendations to the State Conservationist for EQIP. The State Technical Committee is an advisory group comprising similar statewide organizations as the local work groups, and includes agriculture organizations, agriculture businesses, and other organizations or groups interested in natural resources and the environment. About 80 different federal, state, tribal governments, and statewide agriculture and environmental organizations make up the committee that provides guidance on EQIP and other USDA programs in Oklahoma.

### Financial Assistance

EQIP requires the establishment of a 5 to 10 year contract and the development of a Natural Resources Conservation Service approved conservation plan. Producers are not obligated, but are encouraged to develop comprehensive or total resources management plans. Cost-sharing may pay up to 75 percent of the cost of certain conservation practices. Incentives may be made to encourage a producer to perform land management practices such as nutrient management, integrated pest management, irrigation water management, and waste utilization. Total cost-share and incentive payments are limited to \$10,000 per person per year and \$50,000 over the life of the contract.

### EQIP Program Funding to Date

Year	Apps Received	Total \$ Apps Requested	Number Apps Funded	Total \$ of Financial Assistance
1997	3,600	\$31 million	945	4.5 million
1998	2,700	\$17 million	835	4.1 million
1999	1,871	\$7.7 million	696	3.5 million
2000	1,918	\$8.3 million	587	3.4 million
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,089</b>		<b>3,063</b>	<b>15.6 million</b>

In Oklahoma, at least 80 percent of the funds are used in priority areas, and up to 20 percent can be used for other significant statewide natural resource concerns. Nearly \$2.9 of the \$3.4 million were directed at 30 priority areas in 2000. The remaining \$650,000 was committed to significant statewide resource concerns addressing soil erosion on cropland, water quality, and invasion of brush on grazing lands. Another \$113,000 went to conservation education activities consistent with the approved conservation priorities.

In addition to the technical assistance to plan and design these practices, there is financial assistance to help pay for some of the costs; often there is a need for education to aid the management. The education funds are being used for actions like: home study courses on irrigation or range management; technical sheets for the landowner to chart changes; presentations or workshops by various experts; tours of other landowners with these practices; and development of materials for installing buffer strip practices.

### EQIP Successes

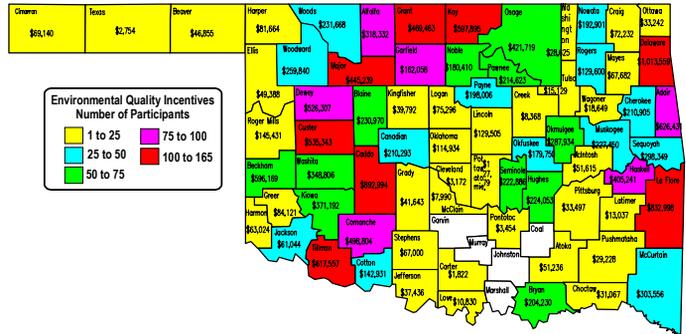
Betty Johnson of El Reno, Oklahoma has a 5-year EQIP contract to treat soil erosion problems on 239 acres. Her contract includes the construction of grade stabilization structures, diversion terraces, grassed waterway, concrete lined outlet and 6.7 acres of critical area planted.



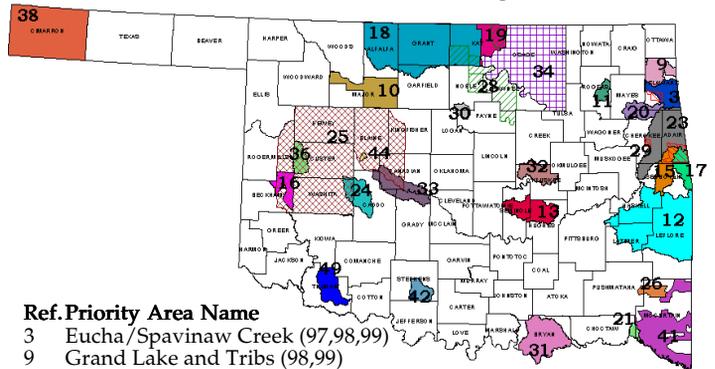
Iowa tribal member, Howard Springer of Payne County, Oklahoma, received cost-share benefits of approximately \$3,400 for a

grade stabilization structure and to sprig Bermuda grass on old cropland.

### Number of Participants and Cost-Share Allocation 1997 - 2000



### Oklahoma's 2000 EQIP Priority Areas



#### Ref. Priority Area Name

- 3 Eucha/Spavinaw Creek (97,98,99)
- 9 Grand Lake and Tribes (98,99)
- 10 Cimarron Watersheds (98,99)
- 11 Dog Creek (98,99)
- 12 East Central Resources (98,99)
- 13 Wewoka Creek (98,99)
- 15 Sallisaw Creek (97)
- 16 Northeast Beckham County (98,99)
- 17 Little Lee Creek (98,99)
- 18 Salt Fork (98,99)
- 19 Kay County Grazing Lands (98,99)
- 20 Spring Creek (98,99)
- 21 Clear Creek (98,99)
- 23 Illinois/Lake Tenkiller (97,98,99)
- 24 Cobb Creek (98,99)
- 25 Cheyenne-Arapaho Indian Lands (98,99)
- 26 North Glover River (98,99)
- 28 Pawnee, Ponca, Kaw, et. al.(98,99)
- 29 Cherokee Nation Tribal (98,99)
- 30 Lake Carl Blackwell (99)
- 31 Lower Blue - Island Bayou (99)
- 32 Okfuskee Tribes (99)
- 33 South Canadian Cross Timbers (99)
- 34 Osage Nation Natural Resources (99)
- 36 Foss Lake Watershed
- 38 Cimarron Ogallala Aquifer
- 41 Little and Red River Y2K Environmental
- 42 Mud Creek
- 44 Squaw Creek
- 49 Middle Deep Red Run

#### Tribal Proposals

- 25 - Cheyenne-Arapaho Indian lands – Covers lands held in trust for tribes and members in Blaine, Canadian, Custer, Dewey, Roger Mills, and Washita counties.
- 28 - Pawnee, Ponca, Kaw, Otoe-Missouria, and Tonkawa Tribes – Covers lands held in trust for these tribes and members in Kay, Noble, Pawnee, and Payne counties.
- 29 - Cherokee Nation Tribal Lands – Covers specific tribal lands in Adair, Cherokee, and Delaware.
- 34 - Osage Nation Natural Resources –Osage Nation Lands scattered throughout Osage County.

photos: NRCS Oklahoma

photo: USDA

