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KANSAS BULLETIN NO. KS300-12-43

SUBJECT: LTP—Fiscal Year 2012 Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program Applications Action

Action required by Field Offices (FOs): April 20 and May 25, 2012
Action required by Area Offices (AOs): May 4 and June 1, 2012

Purpose: To encourage applicants to consider other alternatives for funding sources for wildlife conservation due to limited Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2012

Expiration Date: September 30, 2013

The FY 2012 National apportionment for WHIP has decreased, and Kansas has only been allocated technical assistance funds to support prior-year WHIP contracts. **There will be no general WHIP financial assistance funds allocated in the state of Kansas this FY.**

Waivers

Because there will be no general WHIP funds this FY, no waiver requests for general WHIP applications to start a practice prior to contract approval will be processed.

Alternatives

Applicants desiring to enhance or restore a wetland should consider applying to the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP). WRP applications are accepted year round and FOs may refer to Bulletins KS300-12-21, KS300-12-22, and KS300-12-39 for more information.

Existing FY 2012 WHIP applicants should also consider applying to the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)—Wildlife Habitat (WLH) ranking category. To be eligible under this ranking category, at least 51 percent of the application acres must be within the designated critical habitat area for Greater and/or Lesser Prairie-Chicken (see attachment 1 for a map of eligible areas) and meet all additional requirements of the original FY 2012 EQIP—WLH ranking category. There is \$346, 511 available to fund qualifying applications under EQIP—WLH.

If an application does not meet the EQIP—WLH criteria or an applicant(s) does not choose to apply in another conservation program, an applicant may defer their WHIP application to FY 2013 or may elect to cancel their application.

(more)

DIST: A, F, S, Franklin, C. Nelson, Thurlow, Mitchener (KDWPT)

For **ALL** general WHIP FY 2012 applications already on file, FOs are to inform applicants that their application will not be funded this FY so they may consider other funding sources. See attachment 2 for notification letter to be sent to all general WHIP FY 2012 applicants already on file.

Applications Switching to EQIP—WLH

For 2012 WHIP, applicants that meet the original FY 2012 EQIP—WLH criteria (i.e., cutoff date, conservation plan requirements) and desire to apply to EQIP—WLH:

1. Enter EQIP—WLH application into Program Contracts System (ProTracts) based on the date of the original WHIP request. Original signed WHIP applications will be kept on file and it will be stated in the conservation technical assistance notes and on the original WHIP application that the participant switched their application to EQIP—WLH.
2. The new application shall be ranked under EQIP—WLH ranking category using established ranking criteria to address the resource concerns by April 20, 2012. Applications must meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the following Kansas bulletins.
 - a. KS300-12-25
 - b. KS300-12-29 and Attachment 8
 - c. KS300-12-30

NOTE: Applicants will need to sign a new EQIP application using the current date in the date box with the applicant's signature. However, the "Application Date" will be entered as the date of the original WHIP application.

Deadlines: Areas will make funding decisions by May 4, 2012. Documents will be forwarded for second level review by May 25, 2012. Obligations should occur by June 1, 2012.

Contact. Forward all questions through established channels to Gaye L. Benfer, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, at (785) 823-4569 or gaye.benfer@ks.usda.gov.

(Signed)

ERIC B. BANKS
State Conservationist

Attachments