

Chief Dave White's Talking Points

Increasing the Adoption of the Management of Ag Drainage Water for Conservation Benefits – Partner Forum IV

This special effort was initiated in part as a result of the June 2010, Conservation Evaluation and Assessment Project Report on the Upper Mississippi River Basin which was recently updated.

That report identified that nitrate loading from subsurface drainage was only reduced by 9% with the suite of conservation practices in place between 2003 and 2006. This pointed to the significant need for the greater adoption of the management of ag drainage water for conservation benefits, especially water quality.

The Ag Water Management Team, has been actively implementing the Action Plan that the partnership had the opportunity to review and commented on in the fall of 2011.

The Phase II team has made some good progress in implementing the Action Plan. We will get a report on our progress later this morning from Paul Sweeney, Senior Project Leader of that team.

Some of the accomplishments achieved, with our partners' help, include:

- The National "Managing Water, Harvesting Results" Summit
- The follow-up to the Summit Outreach Strategy
- State Ag. Water Management Action Plans
- Special land suitable for drainage water management maps
- More consistent payment schedules for the Conservation Activity Plans and DWM practices
- The development of internal and external training opportunities

NRCS is committed to working with our ag and conservation partners to increase the adoption of drainage water management and derive the environmental benefits from that practice.

NRCS is looking at all the tools and opportunities we have through technical assistance, programs and policy to take collaborative actions to have success in reaching our goal.