



NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Helping People Help the Land

www.ne.nrcs.usda.gov

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service provided over 1,900 conservation contracts in fiscal year 2013, delivering \$90 million in conservation assistance on over 1.5 million acres to Nebraska landowners and producers.

SIGNATURES ON THE LAND

PEOPLE AND PARTNERSHIPS GETTING CONSERVATION ON THE GROUND

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and our long-standing partners - the Natural Resources Districts (NRDs) - provided a wide range of programs and services to enable Nebraska landowners to implement conservation practices and management activities in 2013.

According to NRCS State Conservationist Craig Derickson, these programs and services are providing Nebraska landowners with technical and financial resources to help them protect and improve soil, water and air quality, as well as wildlife habitat.

“In Fiscal Year 2013,” Derickson said, “landowners continued to use a wide range of conservation programs and services to get more conservation on the ground.”

Derickson said that thanks to the hard work and dedication of NRCS employees and NRD personnel, the continued utilization of key conservation programs through the 2008 Farm Bill, as well as NRCS’s conservation technical assistance (CTA), land owners improved irrigation efficiency on 44,697 acres of land and improved soil quality on 37,314 acres.

In total, over \$90 million was allocated in financial assistance to install conservation practices for Nebraska producers.

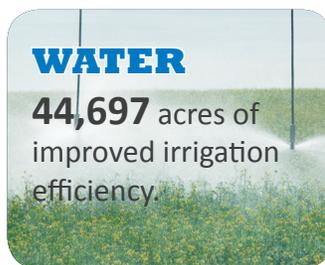
In addition, he said NRCS in Nebraska provided over 1,900 conservation contracts in fiscal year 2013, on over 1.5 million acres to local landowners and producers.

Through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Nebraska’s farmers and ranchers received close to \$30 million in financial assistance, including nearly \$4.6 million committed to improving irrigation efficiency through the Ogallala Aquifer Initiative.

“To help restore aging and drought-damaged windbreaks, NRCS provided \$80,000 through the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative,” Derickson said. Additionally, the NRCS provided \$3.7 million for wetland restoration through the Wetlands Reserve Program.



SOIL
37,314 acres of cropland with conservation applied to improve soil quality.



WATER
44,697 acres of improved irrigation efficiency.



LAND
384,312 acres of grazing and forest land protected through conservation.



2013 CONSERVATION PROGRAMS AT-A-GLANCE

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

NRCS developed 1,320 contracts covering over 600,000 acres delivering \$29.9 million in conservation assistance.

(includes all initiatives)

EQIP Ogallala Aquifer Initiative

NRCS contracted with agricultural producers on over 8,000 acres to develop \$4.6 million in irrigation water management practices.

EQIP National Water Quality Initiative

Over \$242,000 was allocated to help farmers and ranchers improve water quality and aquatic habitat.

EQIP Seasonal High Tunnel Initiative

Over \$120,000 was allocated to help producers improve plant and soil quality, reduce nutrient and pesticide transport, and provide communities with a local source of fresh produce.

EQIP Organic Initiative

Over \$179,000 was allocated to help producers transition to organic agriculture, or enhance their existing organic operations.

Conservation Stewardship Program

Over \$8 million in new conservation assistance was allocated to 425 contracts covering over 900,000 acres.

Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative

Over \$80,000 in conservation assistance was used to restore windbreaks across Nebraska.

Agricultural Water Enhancement Program

Over \$3.4 million in water quality and quantity conservation assistance was applied to 15,000 acres.

Wetlands Reserve Program

Over \$3.7 million in wetland restoration or creation was completed on 2,593 acres.

FARM BILL PROGRAMS

NRCS works directly with Nebraska's farmers and ranchers to help them make their operations more profitable and sustainable by designing conservation plans tailor-made for individual farming and ranching operations. Private dollars, coupled with Federal funding provided through the Farm Bill, work together to install conservation practices on Nebraska farm and ranch land. Below is an overview of some of those programs currently being applied by NRCS across Nebraska.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (EQIP)

Through EQIP, farmers may receive financial and technical help with structural and management conservation practices on agricultural land.

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CSP)

CSP encourages producers to address resource concerns in a comprehensive manner by undertaking additional conservation activities; and improving, maintaining, and managing existing conservation activities.

FARM AND RANCH LAND PROTECTION PROGRAM (FRPP)

This program provides matching funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farm and ranch land in agricultural uses. Working through existing programs, USDA partners with

state, tribal, or local governments and non-governmental organizations to acquire conservation easements or other land interests from landowners.

AGRICULTURAL WATER ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (AWEP)

AWEP is a voluntary conservation initiative that provides financial and technical assistance to producers to implement water enhancement activities on agricultural land to conserve surface and ground water and improve water quality.

WETLANDS RESERVE PROGRAM (WRP)

WRP offers landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property. Through this program, NRCS provides technical and financial support to help landowners with their wetland restoration efforts.

Together, these programs protect Nebraska's natural resources and enhance agricultural land. These programs allow producers to implement conservation practices that will address critical resource concerns through locally-led efforts, while maintaining productive lands and enhancing economic opportunities. For more information, please visit your local USDA Service Center, visit www.ne.nrcs.usda.gov, and follow us on Twitter at @NebraskaNRCS.



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CONSERVATION

591,677 acres with written conservation plans.

WETLANDS

2,593 acres of created, restored or enhanced wetlands.

OUTREACH

400 landowners attended soil health trainings and field events statewide.