

Engineering (Watershed Programs)

- Engineers across the state worked hard in planning, designing, and completing construction inspection on stockwater systems, irrigation system upgrades, animal feeding operation improvements, erosion control projects, and other conservation efforts. In addition to typical EQIP workload, support to ECP has been a focus throughout FY21.
- PL-566 Watershed Plans are progressing on 8 watersheds within the Red River Basin, for flood damage reduction and watershed protection purposes.
- Supplemental Watershed Rehabilitation Plans are progressing on 7 high hazard flood control dams originally construction through PL-566, which do not meet current dam safety standards.
- A cooperative applied research project to evaluate the latest technologies available for Irrigation Water Management, and their applicability to Variable Rate Irrigation Systems is underway in cooperation with NDSU and several EQIP producers.
- A cooperative study with USGS was recently completed evaluating the applicability of hydrologic models for water balance computations on wetland mitigation sites (USGS SIR 2021-5091).

An EWP riverbank protection project was recently completed with LaMoure County to protect the Memorial Park Museum from erosion on the James River, see photos. A log cribwall, subsurface drainage system, reinforced soil lifts, and turf reinforcement matting was utilized to stabilize the site.



Helping People Help the Land

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Conservation Compliance

The NRCS Compliance Team assisted North Dakota agricultural producers by completing over 450 wetland and 2300 highly erodible land determinations. The team eliminated the backlog of requests over a year old and completed 1372 conservation compliance status reviews. NRCS delivers technical assistance in mitigation planning and banking as an alternative in water management. This year the team of specialists completed 36 wetland mitigation plans. The USDA issued a final rule for the Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended.

Visit <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/08/28/2020-18626/highly-erodible-land-and-wetland-conservation> to see the final rule. The NRCS accordingly updated policy and guidance for making technical determinations on March 15, 2021.



FY2021 Accomplishments North Dakota



“Public interest in making the wisest possible use of a nation’s natural resources is, in a sense, of greater importance than the individual’s interest — if that is of any significance. Actually, both are tied together in such a completely complementary way, there is no point in pursuing the subject beyond indicating that no man should have the right legally or otherwise, to recklessly or willfully destroy or unnecessarily waste any resources on which public welfare is dependent....”

~ Hugh Hammond Bennett

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

WBP Water Bank Program

The purpose is to preserve and improve major wetlands as habitat for migratory waterfowl and other wildlife, conserve surface waters, reduce runoff and soil and wind erosion, contribute to flood control, improve water quality, improve subsurface moisture and change the natural beauty of the landscape.

Contracts: 40
Obligation: \$2,471,567
Acres: 5331.3

WRE Wetland Reserve Easements

NRCS provides technical and financial assistance directly to private landowners and Indian tribes to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands through the purchase of a wetland reserve easement.

For acreage owned by an Indian tribe, there is an additional enrollment option of a 30-year contract.

New Enrollments: 9
Obligation: \$1,970,233
Acres: 1795

EQIP Environmental Quality Incentives Program

Contracts: 474
Obligations: \$18,823,197
Acres: 197,454

EQIP- National Water Quality Incentives and Source Water

Contracts: 8
Obligations: \$575, 000

CSP Conservation Stewardship Program

CSP is the largest voluntary conservation program in the Nation that helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority resource concerns. Participants earn CSP payments for conservation performance - the higher the performance, the higher the payment available.

CSP –Grassland Conservation Initiative

Obligated \$401,430.00
Contracts 53
Acres 4459.1

CSP- Renewals

Obligated \$7,798,792
Contracts 56
Acres 106,475.5

CSP Classic

Obligated \$8,281,461.00
Contracts 54
Acres 128,940.7



Participants learning soil texturing and ecological site identification at the Conservation Planning on Rangeland course.

Ohn Weir (Oklahoma State University) instructs Whitney Huesers and Jon Fettig on ignition techniques.



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Ecological Science

COVID 19 provided additional challenges in delivering live face to face trainings in FY '21. Despite these challenges Ecological Sciences provided three face to face rangeland related trainings in 2021: Range Health Short Course, Conservation Planning on Rangelands, and the ND Burn School.

Eighteen employees attended the 2-day Rangeland Health Short Course that was held in Bismarck June 22nd and June 23rd. This course trained participants on how to conduct the Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health v4 for rangeland inventories.

Twenty-six employees attended the weeklong Conservation Planning on Rangelands course that was held in Bismarck August 23rd to August 27th. This course focused on teaching the inventory and analysis phases of the planning process on range and tame pastureland.

Twenty-seven employees attended the ND Burn School that was held in Fargo September 7th to September 10th. The ND Burn School drew employees from across the state where they learned fire behavior, prescribe burn planning, and participated in a training burn.

Soil Science

NRCS soil scientists in North Dakota documented over 1,307 Technical Soil Services (TSS) and logged over 4,621 hours while doing so. The top 5 activities include:

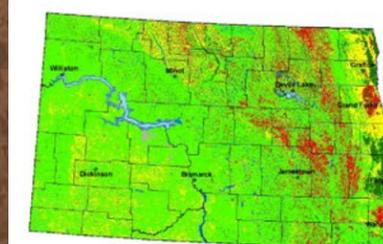
1. 32.2% Technical consultations
2. 25.1% On-site investigations
3. 15.2% Develop informational materials and educate others
4. 6.6% Develop and validate soil interpretations
5. 6.2% Provide training to NRCS and partners

Other TSS:

- 5.4% Apply ecological site information
- 4.7% Maintain and update eFOTG
- 4.3% Provide compliance assistance
- 0.3% Quality assurance

Two new interpretations were developed in FY2021 and are currently available in Web Soil Survey to assist with identification and documentation of resource concerns.

1. Salinity Risk Index (ND)
2. Water Erosion Potential (ND)



Salinity Risk Index (ND)



Water Erosion Potential (ND)

Rating class

- Very low
- Low
- Moderate
- High
- Very high
- Not rated