

South Dakota's



Conservation

Implementation Strategy

The Vision:

- ◆ The goal of South Dakota (SD) Conservation Implementation Strategy (SD CIS) is to solve high priority natural resource concerns in a focused and targeted manner.
- ◆ By planning our approach, we are able to prioritize and focus conservation investments in SD.
- ◆ NRCS has technical staff in the field and partners that are willing to help coordinate this strategic effort through targeted projects throughout SD.
- ◆ By clearly identifying locally-led goals and priorities, partnerships can be more effectively leveraged, conservation can be strategically delivered and investments for treating resource concerns can be focused.

The Process:

- ◆ Starting in 2020, NRCS will make an annual call for project proposals.
- ◆ Project proposals can be submitted by any partner or NRCS staff willing to develop the project proposal.
- ◆ Project proposals will be approved prior to any funds being awarded. The purpose is to allow time for outreach and planning prior to any conservation being implemented.
- ◆ Starting in 2021, NRCS will put 1/3 of its conservation funding from the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Agriculture Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) into CIS proposals. This amount will increase by 1/3 each subsequent year. Depending on final Farm Bill rules, in the 2021 proposal year - 2022 funding year, the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) will be available for CIS strategies.

- ◆ The phased in approach is meant to allow time for proposal development prior to submittal. This will allow partners and NRCS to work collaboratively to develop complete and effective project proposals.
- ◆ Approved CIS projects will assist NRCS with budgeting as well as the State Resource Assessment development.
- ◆ The support and assistance of partners will help SD ensure we have identified resource concerns and developed realistic plans to address these concerns.
- ◆ NRCS is committed to continual improvement of the approach by an ongoing discussion of challenges and successes through a steering committee made up of the Leadership Team, field and state staff.

Benefits of this Approach:

- ◆ Collectively focusing our expertise and resources on the highest priority resource concerns in the highest priority areas will yield the most impressive returns.
- ◆ Funding and support from other agencies and groups can be leveraged and coordinated to focus on mutual issues of high priority.
- ◆ Gives guidance to our employees and partners as to where we are going, what we are working to accomplish, and how we are going to get there.
- ◆ Provides clear goals and objectives that can form strategies to monitor and evaluate progress and achievements.
- ◆ Clearly identifies the resources necessary to carry out the work and provides a solid basis for requesting funding and assistance from a variety of sources.
- ◆ This restructure of efforts should allow the state office staff to be more responsive and provides an opportunity to build and organize an even stronger support infrastructure.
- ◆ The strategy will give us the information we need to tell the story of what we have accomplished and how the work we have done together with landowners and our partners is changing our landscape and benefitting communities.

Conservation Implementation Strategy



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