**Dakota Farm Talk – Conservation on Tribal Lands**

**Pam Geppert**

The Natural Resources Conservation Service partners with producers and landowners across South Dakota seeking to assist them in stewardship of the land for long term sustainability and economic viability. NRCS State Tribal Liaison Darrel DuVall states efforts to steward natural resources extend to tribal lands where conservation decisions are based on proven soil health practices.

**Darrel DuVall**

Those tribal decision makers are still looking at those primary principles of soil health, keeping the ground covered, keep growing roots in the ground, creating livestock as possible across the ground, and managing those grazing resources with some rest and recovery time.

**Pam Geppert**

Collaboration is key to conservation on reservation lands, and NRCS is able to bring numerous tribal agencies together on projects incorporating large tracts of tribal land. As an example, Duvall points to team work on the Lower Brule Sioux Reservation, which was recognized with the NRCS Conservation Cooperation Award in 2018.

**Darrel DuVall**

Their Wildlife Department teamed up with the Farm Department for some wildlife habitat, along with organic practices of adding cover crops in their rotation to make a big impact. When the entities and department can work together and come up with a proposal that then NRCS can assist with.

**Pam Geppert**

In addition, NRCS partners with tribal cultural resource staff to carry out conservation projects while protecting important cultural sites. Duvall believes many of today's conservation practices, such as managed grazing, rotational diversity and no till mimic concepts employed by indigenous people for centuries. I'm Pam Geppert reporting for the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Helping people help the land.