**Dakota Farm Talk – The Regional Conservation Partnership Program Assists Big Sioux River**

**Pam Geppert**

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program through the Natural Resources Conservation Service encourages a team approach to conservation efforts for a common goal. This partnership program, called RCPP, pulls resources from the NRCS and its partners to achieve a greater reach of conservation in targeted areas. The Big Sioux River Resource Unit project is one example of the RCPP in action, combining forces of NRCS with state and local partners, all contributing dollars and workforce to improve water quality in the Big Sioux River.

Big Sioux Resource Unit conservationist Darren Ruesch explains conservation actions will soon begin through the Big Sioux RCPP.

**Darren Ruesch**

And we are just in the process of obligating approximately 20 contracts and they range with dealing with animal waste storage facilities to grazing systems and cover crops and terracing.

**Pam Geppert**

The goal of the Big Sioux RCPP is to improve water quality of the Big Sioux River and its tributaries. But Ruesch states landowners implementing conservation practices through the partnership will also benefit from enhanced soil health.

**Darren Ruesch**

And some of the economic benefits you know, that they get from putting conservation on the ground is increased water infiltration and holding capacity. So when we lack the rain, their soils will be able to make water more readily available during the crop critical growth periods.

**Pam Geppert**

Application for additional practices within the Big Sioux RCPP will open this fall. Ruesch believes RCPP promotes the coordination of conservation efforts for enhanced reach and success. I'm Pam Geppert reporting for the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Helping people help the land.