USDA NRCS
United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

National Water Quality Initiative Fact Sheet

North Dakota: Initiative Overview

Through the National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is offering financial and technical assistance to farmers, ranchers and forest landowners interested in improving water quality and aquatic habitats in priority watersheds with impaired streams. NRCS will help producers implement conservation and management practices through a systems approach to control and trap nutrient and manure runoff. Qualified producers will receive assistance for installing conservation practices such as cover crops, filter strips and terraces. For over 75 years, NRCS has provided agricultural producers with assistance to implement voluntary conservation practices that protect natural resources while maintaining production and profits.

The National Water Quality Initiative will work in selected watersheds to help farmers, ranchers and forest landowners improve water quality and aquatic habitats in impaired streams.

Priority Watersheds

In North Dakota, a total of six watersheds are eligible for NWQI funding. Financial and technical assistance will be made available to to eligible farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners from Grant, Eddy, or Foster counties residing within the watersheds. (Please see maps on next page.) Within these priority watersheds, eligible producers and landowners will be able to improve water quality and aquatic habitats in impaired streams. ND NRCS will help producers implement conservation and management practices though a systems approach to control and trap nutrient and manure runoff. Qualified producers will receive assistance for installing conservation practices, such as cover crops, filter strips, and nutrient management. Priority watersheds were selected based off one of the following categories:

Impaired—A stream or water body documented to be impaired, and identified on North Dakota's 303(d) list of impaired waters as designated by the EPA.
Threatened—A stream or water body with water quality data documenting an impairment, but does not have the TMDL implementation plan and is not listed on the 303(d) list of impaired waters as designated by the EPA.
Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL)—A stream or water body that has been on the EPA's 303(d) list of impaired waters, but may have been removed because there is a TMDL plan for implementation.
Critical—A stream or water body upstream of an impaired segment or area, and is known to be a contributing source of downstream impairment for a stream in one or more of the three categories listed above.

Conservation Funding and Practices

NRCS conservation professionals will provide technical assistance and planning tools to determine which conservation actions will provide the best results to improve water quality on your land. Nutrient management systems, erosion control, conservation tillage, pest management, and buffers systems are just some of the practices being offered as part of the National Water Quality Initiative. To help install these conservation practices, financial assistance to share in the cost of these conservation practices is available though the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

Partnerships

NRCS identified priority watersheds through the help of local partnerships and state water quality agencies. Partners sometimes offer financial assistance in addition to NRCS programs. NRCS will continue to coordinate with local and state agencies, conservation districts, nongovernmental organizations and others to implement this initiative. This strategic approach will leverage funds and provide streamlined assistance to help individual agricultural producers take needed actions to reduce the flow of sediment, nutrients and other runoff into impaired waterways.

Producer Benefits

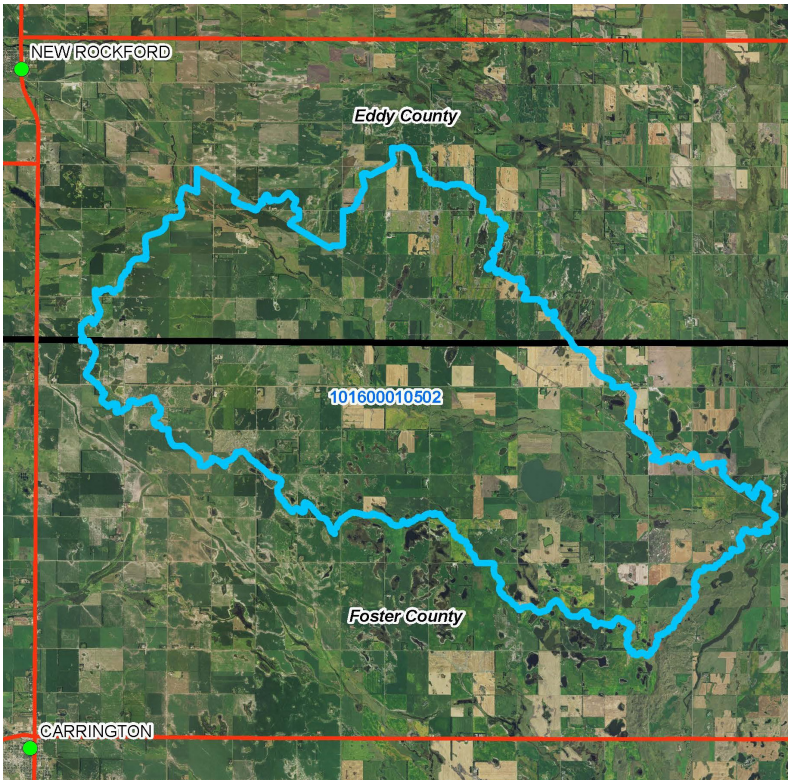
Water quality conservation practices benefit agricultural producers by lowering input costs and enhancing the productivity of working lands. Conservation investments are good for all Americans because well managed farms limit pollution from runoff, produce food and fiber, sustain rural economies, and provide food security to the Nation. All across the country—farmers, ranchers and forest landowners are voluntarily taking action and putting conservation on the ground to improve water quality on millions of acres!

Public Benefits

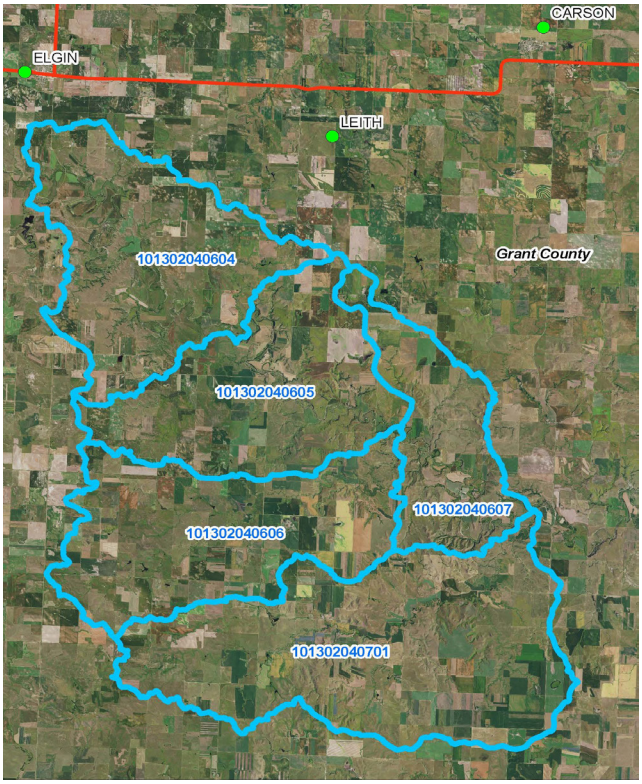
NRCS is proud to be involved in a nationwide effort with landowners and communities to improve and protect our water resources. The landowners and farmers participating in the initiative will receive conservation payments to work on the land in a sustainable way which provides cleaner water. In addition to the financial assistance, the land will remain productive into the future. Communities benefit by having clean waterways, safer drinking water and healthy habitat for fish and wildlife.

How to Apply

Almost every county in the Nation has a USDA Service Center. To get started, make an appointment at your local office. You will need to establish eligibility and farm records for your land. NRCS will help you complete an application while explaining which conservation practices are available in your watershed. Remember to check with your local NRCS office to see if you are located in a selected watershed. All applications for funding consideration, during fiscal year 2018, must be received by **May 18, 2018**.



Eddy & Foster County



Grant County

For more Information

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United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Bismarck, ND 58501

Phone: (701) 530-2000
http://www.nd.nrcs.usda.gov/

New Rockford Field Office:
Eddy County
Phone: (701) 947-2436

Carrington Field Office:
Foster County
Phone: (701) 652-2551

Carson Field Office:
Grant County
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