### **NEBRASKA STAC MEETING MINUTES**

December 7, 2023 1:00 - 2:45 p.m. 100 Centennial Mall N. RM 397B Lincoln, NE 68508

### YOUTUBE RECORDING LINK

**ATTENDEES:** Camilla Kerner, Rob Lawson, Tami Nordman, Conor Ward, Jami Thoene, Fred Stevens, Marty Norton, John Mayberger, Kevin Hutsell, Ann McPherrin, John Mayberger, Katie Hickle, Kent Zimmerman, Al Juhnke, Samantha Smith, Elbert Traylor, David Schroeder;

**VIA TEAMS:** Beth Arens, Kelly Brunkhorst, Burdette Piening, Chandler Schmidt, Dan Ross, Dan Ruterbories, David Potter, Neil Dominy, Emily Woockman, Steve Fairbairn, Bill Gresham, Timothy Griffin, Andrew Houser, Jenny Prenosil, Kalee Olson, Kira Cooney, Kole Pederson, Kristie Freudenburg, Patrick Lechner, Mark Brohman, Shawn McVey, Mary Reece, Craig Romary, Steven Jara, Jami Thoene, Carlos Villarreal, Wade Ellwanger, Britt Weiser, Bryce Puck, Jessica Russell, Ele Nugent, John Rissetto, Dustin Wilcox, Kira Cooney, Buffalo Bruce;

VIA PHOHE: Tim Kalkowski, Mike Crosley.

### **FUTURE Meetings:** (POSSIBLE IN NEW BUIDLING)

- **❖** MARCH 7, 2024
- **❖** JUNE 13, 2024
- **❖** SEPTEMBER 5, 2024
- **❖** DECEMBER 5, 2024

### **WELCOME & OPENING COMMENTS:** Robert Lawson - NRCS State Conservationist

- o Agenda Review
- O UPDATES ON NRCS STAFF:
  - Neil Dominy is back in Nebraska from a 4-month detail.
  - Brad Sonksen retired last month.
    - Cammie Kerner is Acting until March.
    - There was an internal Programs Workshop for our NRCS employees at the end of October.

- RCPP Projects Announced Early November.
  - 2 NE led projects.
    - Twin Platte NRD
    - The Nature Conservancy
  - Encourage partners to visit w/ Rob or Neil on potential future projects.
- Soil Conservation Technician positions open
  - 11 locations in the state
  - Job Announcements open Dec. 6 & Closes Dec. 18, 2023.

### **CONSERVATION PROGRAMS UPDATE:** Camilla Kerner - NRCS Acting ASTC-Programs

- o SEE SLIDES & HANDOUT attached. HIGHLIGHTED Points below.
- o Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)
  - EQIP & CSP
    - November 17, 2023 Application Cut-off
    - ACT NOW Application Cut-ff Announcement is MARCH 1, 2024
      - Any IRA eligible applications taken up until the November 17 general application cut-off, and any IRA eligible application received after that, will be processed, and ranked in EQIP and CSP IRA ACT NOW by order of application received.
      - Once eligibility is met
        - EQIP: 10 business days to assess and rank the application.
        - CSP: 20 business days to assess and rank the application.
        - Preapprovals in ACT NOW pools will be conducted weekly by state office.
      - Once the application is preapproved 10 business days to obligate for EQIP and CSP <u>once applicant states their intent to</u> proceed (5 days).
    - IRA Implementation
      - Key Points
        - One or more core practices or activities on the 2024
           CSAF list must be planned in a contract.
        - Facilitating practices and activities can receive payment but must directly support a core practice addressing climate change in the contract.
        - IRA and non-IRA funds cannot be combined in a contract.
        - Practices and activities must be implemented, and payments completed prior to September 30, 2031.
           Look at shorter contract lengths.

- Payments will count toward program-specific payment limitations (440-CPM-530, Subpart M).
- FY24 Climate Smart Core Practices (see slides)
- FY24 EQIP General Allocations (See slides)
- FY24 EQIP IRA Allocations (See slides)
- o FY24 CSP Renewals
  - All FY24 contracts will still fall under the 2018 Farm Bill payment limitations.
    - CSP payment limitation is \$200,000 per individual or entity during the farm bill (\$400,000 for JV or General Partnerships)
  - If the Renewal applicant has reached, or is near, the limit during the initial contract their renewal contract will be reduced so as to not exceed the limit for the farm bill.
  - 138 applications received.
  - 54 applications (43%) either cancelled or ineligible due to hitting the payment limitation.
  - The remaining eligible applications have a lower average contract value than typical for the state.
  - Projected Renewal obligation of \$6,000,000
  - Renewal applications must be obligated by December 22, 2023.
  - Classic Signup
    - Application deadline was November 17, 2023
      - o 546 applications received.
      - Nebraska CSP contract average is \$100,000
      - Projected approval of 312 contracts
        - Possibly more depending on actual application cost.
    - To encourage dispersal of workload each DC area will have a minimum number of application approvals.

#### FY24 ACEP

- FY24 application cut-off November 13, 2023.
- Will use appraisals again in FY2024 to determine acquisition costs for WRE.
  - 90% GARC, NTE rate of \$12,970/ac irrigated cropland, NTE \$9,320/ac all other land
- Emergency Watershed Protection Program Floodplain Easements (EWPP-FPE)
  - Applications = 21, Acres = 5,590
  - Estimated Requested funding: \$20,313,085
  - 14 have cancelled or found ineligible
  - Offers accepted = 7, Acres = 800
  - 4 Closed Easements on 170 Acres this calendar year
- o FY24 NWQI
  - Bazile Creek
    - Applications 60
    - Funding \$553,813.26

- Wahoo Creek
  - Applications 9
  - Funding \$268,515.52
- Turkey Creek
  - Applications 22
    - o Funding \$352,426.62
- Big Sandy Creek
  - Applications 7
  - Funding \$503,466.60
- \*NEW\* BOW CREEK
  - Planning phase
  - Bow Creek NRD Area w/ Lewis & Clark NRD
  - Plan Development FY24
    - Recruiting producers & determining interests & working with partners
  - NO FY24 Funding
- LOCAL WORK GROUP MEETINGS WILL BE COMING UP AFTER THE 1<sup>ST</sup> OF THE YEAR,
   SO PLEASE GET YOUR INPUT IN BY ATTENDING.
- CHANGES TO 314 AND TO 315 (SEE SLIDES)
  - 314 Multiple treatments allowed within practice of lifespan (10yrs)
  - 315 Herbaceous Weed Treatment
    - Multiple treatments allowed withing practice of lifespan (10yrs)
    - Allows payment for treatment of Noxious weeds.
- NEW EQIP PRACTICE INCENTIVE FOR PAYMENT IN 2024 (SEE SLIDES)
  - Annual Forages for Grazing Systems (810)
    - Scenario 24
    - Scenario 28
  - Herbicide for Annual Grass & Broadleaf weed control on rangelands
  - Prescribed Grazing
    - Required on all RANGLAND practices.

Q: Dan Ruterbories – Was nutrient management eligible under IRA?

A: Conor – Yes Nutrient Management is an eligible Ira core practice.

Q: Kaley Olson – Is ACT-NOW being used as an internal term or public term? The Center usually tries to help promote this information, so are you saying to producers.. come in & apply now?

A: Conor – ACT NOW can be used as a public facing term, but the messaging to the public on what it is should be that it's an extended funding opportunity. The process itself is meant to be an internal expedited process in getting contracts and funds obligated at a faster rate than is typical. Kaley & Conor will work via email to send out a letter.

- RCPP & INTIATIVES PROJECTS UPDATE Fred Stevens NRCS Programs Specialist
  - (SEE SLIDES FOR MORE INFORMATION)
  - RCPP Projects
    - **NEW FY23** 
      - Project #3294
      - Project #3374
      - Project #3290
- Q: Chandler Schmidt When is the application period for NWQI or for the planning part? Last year you said that there would be no new applications accepted? Why now & what changed?

A: Rob – Nothing has changed, interested party needs to get with your District Conservationist. All packets need to be submitted in July an application and plan take several months to complete. We are always open to conversations about new projects. Elbert Traylor with NDEE also added that Bow Creek was already in the planning process for NWQI.



### FSA REVIEW: Patrick Lechner – FSA PROGRAMS CHIEF

- Signup Results
  - SU59 Continuous (SAFE)
    - 1,173 offers
      - 191 approved
  - SU50 General Signup
    - 621 Offers
      - o 499 Approved
      - o 104 in COMPLETE Status
  - SU205 CRP Grasslands
    - 1117 offers
      - o 1063 approved
      - Some still pending
- o NO NEW CONTRACTS UNTIL APPROVAL FROM HQ.
- ECP Updates
  - **ECP-Snow Removal NEW** 
    - Authorizing ECP for Snow Removal 11/29/2023
    - Enable access to feed
    - **Enable access to water**
    - **Enable access to livestock** 
      - Conditions of Snow Removal
      - REQUESTING TO IMPLEMENT

- If a county meets any of the three criteria, COC may send a request to implement ECP for snow removal to the State Office.
  - Minimal criteria will be 12in of snow.
  - Reviewed other two criteria.

- National Approval to implement required on a county-by-county basis.
- Retroactive to October 2022. (FY2023)
- Eligible Snow Removal Activity
  - Provide access to food, water, and livestock access roads.
  - Starts at 12 inches of snow to 30 inches of snow.
  - Next category is 30 inches of snow and up.
- Ineligible Land and Activity
  - Public Roads
  - Bales scattered in the field, not stacked.
  - Clear snow around homestead and for personal transportation.
- LAVAINE MOORE WILL BE RETIRING AT THE END OF DECEMBER.
- NRCS GROUNDWATER RECHARGE: Marty Norton NRCS Civil Engineer & Kevin Hutsell NRCS State Irrigation Engineer
  - See Slides for more information.
  - o Reason this Program is being presented to you.
  - o Background...
    - Groundwater accounts for roughly 40% of CA's water supply in non-drought years compared to upwards of 60% during drought years.
    - Drought in <u>recent years</u> have caused <u>significant depletion</u> of groundwater levels.
    - <u>CA water agencies</u> have built basins to capture water in rainy years to enable groundwater recharge.
    - One CA Irrigation District <u>doubled the amount of water</u> it diverts by <u>working</u> with farmers willing to take excess during this past year's above average rainfall.
    - The idea of <u>using farmland</u> as stormwater runoff surge capacity is <u>catching</u> on.
    - Groundwater depletion recognized by NRCS as a <u>Resource Concern</u>.
    - CA NRCS Recharge Pilot Program
      - Interim Groundwater Recharge Practices
        - o 815 Groundwater Recharge Basin or Trench
          - <u>Structural Practice</u> for permanent feature (15 years) land dedicated to recharge
        - o 817 On Farm Recharge

- Management Practice in tandem with agriculture
- Conditions Where Practice Applies
- o Potential Supporting Practices
- Under Criteria Section
  - Monitoring Requirements
  - Assessment Requirements
- REVIEWED FINACIAL ASSISTANCE (Total Scenario Costs)
- Moving Forward...
  - FY2024 review pilot program data at National Headquarters and adopt groundwater recharge conservation practices into FOTG.
  - FY2025 groundwater recharge conservation practices available for financial assistance (EQIP funding) Nationwide
- Q: Katie Hickle Structural Practices and Farm Management Practices, will contracts be longer than 1 year?

A: Kevin Hutsell – We will work with programs to determine if contracts should be 1-year, 3-year contracts or something else.

A: Elbert's comments – Groundwater recharge could be partnered with Rainwater Basin Project. DNR surface water division would be interested in developing use of this standard.

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#### **PARTNER UPDATES:**

- Craig Romery NE DEPT OF AG.
  - Nebraska Buffer Strip Program funding is still available. I am more than willing to provide information to NRCS field staff and others on the program, however, information on rental rates, practices involved, and general program process is at <a href="https://nda.nebraska.gov/pesticide/buffer\_strip.html">https://nda.nebraska.gov/pesticide/buffer\_strip.html</a> (or <a href="https://nda.nebraska.gov/pesticide/buffer\_strip.html">https://nda.nebraska.gov/pesticide/buffer\_strip.html</a>
- o Elbert introduced the NEW Source Program Coordinator
  - Katie Hickel

#### WRAP UP - LOCAL WORK GROUP MEETINGS COMING UP

NEXT MEETING WILL PROBABLY NOT BE IN THE DENNEY FEDERAL BUILDING & WLL
PROBABLY BE IN OUR NEW BUILDING, SO PLEASE WATCH THE LOCATION ON
INVITE.

# NRCS Groundwater Recharge

State Technical Committee Meeting
07 December 2023

Marty Norton

Assistant State Conservation Engineer

Kevin Hutsell
State Irrigation Engineer



**Natural Resources Conservation Service** 

# Background...

- <u>Groundwater</u> accounts for roughly **40%** of CA's water supply in **non-drought years** compared to upwards of **60%** during **drought years**.
- Drought in <u>recent years</u> have caused <u>significant depletion</u> of groundwater levels.
- <u>CA water agencies</u> have built basins to capture water in rainy years to enable groundwater recharge.
- One CA Irrigation District <u>doubled the amount of water</u> it diverts by <u>working with</u> <u>farmers</u> willing to take excess during this past year's above average rainfall.
- The idea of <u>using farmland</u> as stormwater runoff surge capacity is <u>catching on</u>.
- Groundwater depletion recognized by NRCS as a Resource Concern.

# CA NRCS Recharge Pilot Program

- Two Interim Practices submitted 2020
- Received Approval 2021
- FY2022 pilot program
  - field tested the practices
  - \$2 million applied in limited area
- FY2023 continued pilot program
  - provided for some program expansion
  - still not statewide



# CA Interim Groundwater Recharge Practices

- Practice 815 Groundwater Recharge Basin or Trench
  - DEFINITION: an off-channel impoundment with a permeable base underlain by an unconfined aquifer
  - PRACTICE APPLIES: infiltration structures that are configured as a basin or a channel
- Practice 817 On Farm Recharge
  - DEFINITION: the periodic application of surface or stormwater to cropland with connectivity to an unconfined aquifer
  - PRACTICE APPLIES: cropland inundated via a water conveyance system, either existing or installed under this practice

# Two recharge practice options

## Recharge basin or trench (815)

• <u>Structural Practice</u> for permanent feature (15 years) – land dedicated to recharge



## On-farm recharge (817)

 Management Practice in tandem with agriculture



# Narrow Recharge Trench





# Conditions Where Practice Applies (applicable to both practices)

- An <u>adequate supply of water</u> is available for recharge, either as stormwater runoff or surface water deliveries
- Recharge can occur without unacceptable levels of groundwater quality degradation
- The site is underlain by soils and vadose zone materials with sufficiently high vertical and horizontal <u>hydraulic conductivity</u>, and connectivity to an unconfined aquifer with adequate transmissivity and groundwater storage capacity

# Conditions Where Practice Applies (unique to each practice)

## Practice 815 (basin or trench)

• Failure of any structures or conveyance systems associated with this practice will not result in loss of life; or damage to homes, commercial or industrial buildings, main highways, railroads, or public utilities

## Practice 817 (cropland)

<u>Crops grown</u> on lands within the recharge footprint can <u>withstand the</u>
 effects of periodic inundation and saturated conditions throughout its
 entire root zone, without reducing plant productivity and health to
 unacceptable levels

# Conditions Where Practice Applies (application limitations)

Practice 815 (basin or trench) does <u>not</u> apply to:

- Practices intended to recharge confined aquifers.
- Direct recharge (injection) wells that deliver surface water directly to the underlying aquifer.
- On-Farm Managed Aquifer Recharge projects that inundate irrigated agricultural land for the purpose of groundwater recharge.
- Instream structures or any other impoundments intended primarily for flood control, water supply, sediment control, or habitat.
- Municipal stormwater management systems or other drainage structures that incidentally recharge groundwater.

# Conditions Where Practice Applies (application limitations)

## Practice 817 (cropland) does <u>not</u> apply to:

- Dedicated basins or channels where the recharge footprint is used exclusively for groundwater recharge.
- Stormwater management systems or other drainage structures that incidentally recharge groundwater.
- Groundwater recharge to support desired land use goals or ecological processes on rangeland or non-irrigated pasture.

# Under Criteria Section (applicable to both practices)

### **Monitoring Requirement**

- Install <u>observation wells</u> near the recharge footprint... "as needed"
- As required by the state or local permitting agencies, or as part of a local or areawide groundwater management plan
- Existing wells located nearby may be used if in same aquifer
- Use to monitor...
  - infiltration rates
  - groundwater levels
  - sample for contaminants

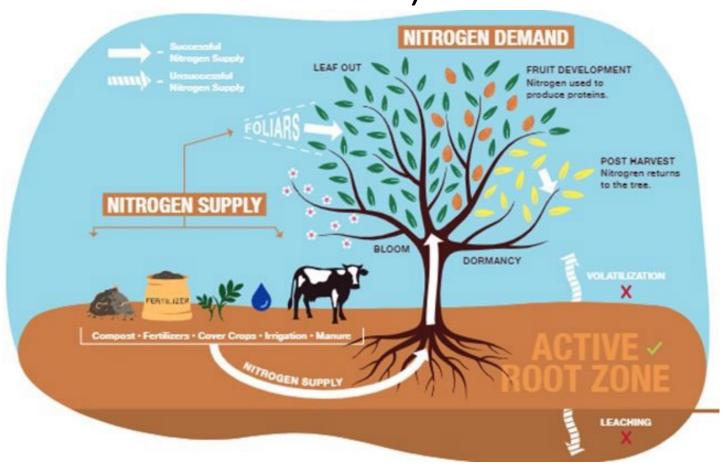


# Under Criteria Section (unique to 817 on-farm)

### **Assessment Requirement**

Recharge site must be assessed for nutrient and pesticide management and leaching hazard in accordance with criteria set forth in...

- Pest Management Conservation System (Code 595)
- Nutrient Management (Code 590)



Nitrogen Best Management Practices, Almond Board of California (2020)

# Potential Supporting Practices

### Pre-treatment of water (as needed)

- Water and Sediment Control Basin (Code 638)
- Sediment Basin (Code 350)
- Denitrifying Bioreactor (Code 605)
- Filter Strip (Code 393)
- Grassed Waterway (Code 412)
- Constructed Wetland (Code 656)
- Conservation Cover (Code 327)
- Cover Crop (Code 340)
- Field Border (Code 386)
- Residue and Tillage Management, No Till (Code 329)
- Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced Till (Code 345)

### **Structural Modifications**

- Irrigation Pipeline (Code 430)
- Irrigation Canal or Lateral (Code 320)
- Dike (Code 356)
- Diversion (Code 362)
- Irrigation Field Ditch (Code 388)
- Structure for Water Control (Code 587)
- Pumping Plant (Code 533)
- Surface Drain, Field Ditch (Code 607)
- Irrigation System, Surface and Subsurface (Code 443)

# FY24 Financial Assistance (Total Scenario Costs)

Costs reimbursed AFTER contract is signed and design criteria are met

### Recharge Trench or Basin (815): one-time payment after construction

**Trench:** \$5.42 per cubic yard excavated; 1,467CY excavated = \$7,949

**Basin:** \$5,834.38 per ac ft storage capacity <10 ac ft 8 ac ft basin = \$46,675

**Basin:** \$5,476.52 per ac ft storage capacity ≥10 ac ft 13 ac ft basin = \$71,195

### On farm recharge (817): annual payment each year field is inundated with water

\$141.30 per acre inundated* <60 acres cropland	40 acres = \$5,652
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\$127.22 per acre inundated\* ≥60 acres cropland 80 acres = \$10,177

<sup>\*</sup>If weather conditions prevent inundation, this practice can't be performed or reimbursed

# Moving Forward...

- FY2024 review pilot program data at National Headquarters and adopt groundwater recharge conservation practices into FOTG
- FY2025 groundwater recharge conservation practices available for financial assistance (EQIP funding) Nationwide

# Questions?



Natural Resources Conservation Service









# State Technical Committee December Updates

Farm Service Agency

fsa.usda.gov



# Price Support and Conservation Division

Patrick Lechner – Program Chief patrick.lechner@usda.gov

Lavaine Moore – Program Specialist <a href="mailto:lavaine.moore@usda.gov">lavaine.moore@usda.gov</a>

Jana Ingwerson-Laws — Program Specialist <u>jana.ingwersonlaws@usda.gov</u>



# FY 2023 CRP Signup Results

- SU59 Continuous
- SU60 General
- SU205 CRP Grasslands

# **ECP Updates**

ECP – Snow Removal





### **CRP OFFERS DASHBOARD** | Signup Overview : 59

Data from the FSA COLS as of 12/4/2023 2:07:08 AM

T

**TOTAL OFFERS** 

1,173

PRACTICE ACREAGE

36,390

**ESTIMATED PAYMENTS** 

\$5,112,935

AVG. ACRE RENTAL RATE

\$141

% OFFERS APPROVED

84.5%

**AVG. DAYS TO APPROVE** 

83.0

#### **OFFERS & PRACTICE ACREAGE BY STATUS**

Click on status below to filter view

Complete	Submitted	Submitted For Plan	Submitted to COC	COC Approved	
<b>129</b> 7,775 acres	<b>14</b> 281 acres	<b>34</b> 644 acres	<b>5</b> 164 acres	<b>991</b> 27,525 acres	

### PROGRAM ACTIVITY BY MONTH

TREND SEASONALITY
RUNNING TOTAL



#### TOTAL OFFERS BY ADMIN STATE

Click on state or county below to filter view

Select to view the graphs below by:

STATE COUNTY

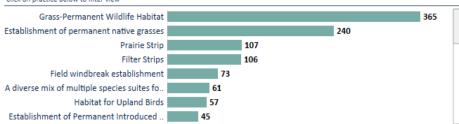
TOTAL OFFERS





#### TOTAL OFFERS BY PRACTICE TYPE

Click on practice below to filter view







Data from the FSA COLS as of 12/4/2023 2:07:08 AM

435

**TOTAL OFFERS** 

PRACTICE ACREAGE

**ESTIMATED PAYMENTS** 

**AVG. ACRE RENTAL RATE** 

% OFFERS APPROVED

**AVG. DAYS TO APPROVE** 

621

31,284

\$3,324,010

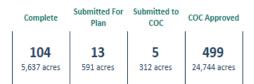
\$106

80.4%

152.3

#### OFFERS & PRACTICE ACREAGE BY STATUS

Click on status below to filter view



### PROGRAM ACTIVITY BY MONTH





#### TOTAL OFFERS BY ADMIN STATE

Click on state or county below to filter view

Select to view the graphs below by: STATE COUNTY

TOTAL OFFERS





#### TOTAL OFFERS BY PRACTICE TYPE

Click on practice below to filter view

Establishment of permanent native grasses Rare and declining habitat 134 A diverse mix of multiple species suites fo.. 105 Establishment of Permanent Introduced ... 39 Wildlife food plot 30 Permanent wildlife habitat 11 Hardwood tree planting 3





### **CRP OFFERS DASHBOARD** | Signup Overview : 205

Data from the FSA COLS as of 12/4/2023 2:07:08 AM

T

TOTAL OFFERS

1,177

PRACTICE ACREAGE

415,887

**ESTIMATED PAYMENTS** 

\$7,294,487

AVG. ACRE RENTAL RATE

\$18

% OFFERS APPROVED

90.3%

**AVG. DAYS TO APPROVE** 

114.1

#### **OFFERS & PRACTICE ACREAGE BY STATUS**

Click on status below to filter view

Complete	Submitted For Plan	Submitted to COC	COC Approved
<b>32</b> 15,054 acres	<b>67</b> 10,497 acres	<b>15</b> 3,191 acres	<b>1,063</b> 387,145 acres

### PROGRAM ACTIVITY BY MONTH

TREND SEASONALITY
RUNNING TOTAL



### TOTAL OFFERS BY ADMIN STATE

Click on state or county below to filter view

Select to view the graphs below by:

STATE COUNTY

TOTAL OFFERS





### TOTAL OFFERS BY PRACTICE TYPE

Click on practice below to filter view

Permanent Native Grasses and Legumes

1,177



# **ECP Update & Expanded Authority**

## Authorizing ECP for Snow Removal – 11/29/2023

- Snow removal is necessary during severe winter storms to maintain herd health and prevent animal mortality (potential contamination of surface and ground water or air pollution from burning of carcasses)
  - Enable access to feed
  - Enable access to water
  - Enable access to livestock



## **Conditions of Snow Removal**

- County was included in a Presidential Disaster Declaration due to a winter storm/snowstorm according to FEMA.gov
- County is a contiguous county to a Presidential Disaster Declaration, and authorized for FSA Emergency Loans
- A County (or portion of a county) experienced a 40% increase in normal snowfall
  - As documented on CRP-42
  - Substantiated by weather statistics from an official weather station, including winds after the storm, if drifting occurred.



# Requesting to Implement

- If a county meets any of the three criteria, COC may send a request to implement ECP for snow removal to the State Office.
- National Approval to implement required on a county-by-county basis
- Retroactive to October 2022. (FY2023)



## Eligible Snow Removal Activity

- Clear field roads or private roads to access feed stocks
- Clear areas used to feed and water livestock, and travel corridors to feed stocks (haystacks, etc.)
  - If feeding areas are within a farmstead, the area cleared to access feed/water for livestock is eligible.

## Ineligible Land and Activity

- Clear public roads
- Clear snow to bales left scattered in the field and not stored in a stack
- Clear snow around a homestead or personal transportation routes
  - ECP will not provide assistance to clear snow for personal transportation, only for transportation to access feed/livestock

    Farm

Service Agency



## Questions?

Farm Service Agency

fsa.usda.gov

# Changes to 314 and 315

### **Brush Management (314)**



 Multiple treatments allowed within practice lifespan (10 yrs.)

### **Herbaceous Weed Treatment (315)**



- Multiple treatments allowed within practice lifespan (10 yrs.)
- Allows payment for treatment of Noxious Weeds

New EQIP Practice Incentive for Payment in 2024

**Annual Forages for Grazing Systems (810)** 

Cropland planted to annual forages for grazing

 Intended for use as alternative forage source to allow for improvement of Perennial Rangeland / Pasture



## Annual Forages For Grazing Systems (810)

#### Scenario 24

- Purpose is to grow annual forages on cropland to improve quality and quantity of forage for livestock, reduce soil erosion, and increase soil quality
- Use this scenario to improve a resource concern that exists on other land uses within the system
- 2024 payment rate \$72.60 per acre
- Can NOT be used as a production increasing practice such as growing the size of herd

#### Scenario 28 (FI)

- Incentive created to promote grazing deferment for growing fine fuel for a prescribed burn
- Payment rate intended to offset the difference in income potential between growing a forage crop and a row crop on cropland acres
- 2024 payment rate \$259.40 per acre
- Limited to acres needed to offset forage needs of the cow herd that would have used pasture being deferred (forage balance required)

# Herbicide for Annual Grass and broadleaf weed control in rangelands

Indaziflam – (active ingredient)

- Herbicide shows good results for cheatgrass control
- 3–5-year residual pre-emergent control
- New EQIP payment scenario through the herbaceous weed treatment practice (315) will be available in 2024



# Prescribed Grazing

(Grazing Management)





- Prescribed Grazing (528) per acre payment on all grazing related projects
  - Exceptions Brush Management (314) and Prescribed Burning (338) invasive tree removal

## Brush Management





- Mechanical
- Chemical



# Prescribed Burning

(And associated Prep work for firebreaks etc.)





## FY2024 Programs Update

Nebraska State Technical Committee – December 7, 2024



#### **November 17, 2023**

- EQIP and CSP General Application Cut-off
- EQIP and CSP IRA ACT NOW March 1, 2024, Application Cut-off <u>Announcement</u>
- IRAACT NOW ranking pool threshold scores are being figured and will be available online

#### November 17, 2023 – March 1, 2024

- Any IRA eligible applications taken up until the November 17 general application cut-off, and any IRA eligible application received after that, will be processed and ranked in EQIP and CSP IRA ACT NOW by <u>order of application received</u>.
- Once eligibility is met
  - EQIP: 10 business days to assess and rank the application.
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- Key Points
- One or more core practices or activities on the 2024 CSAF list must be planned in a contract.
- Facilitating practices and activities can receive payment but must directly support a core
  practice addressing climate change in the contract.
- IRA and non-IRA funds cannot be combined in a contract.
- Practices and activities must be implemented, and payments completed prior to September 30, 2031. Look at shorter contract lengths.
- Payments will count toward program-specific payment limitations (440-CPM-530, Subpart M).

#### Natural Resources Conservation Service FY24 EQIP and CSP IRA Implementation U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

#### FY2024 Climate Smart Core Practices and Facilitating **Practices Eligible for Inflation Reduction Act Funding**

Practice Code	Conservation Practice Name	Approved Facilitating Practices	
311	Alley Cropping	490 Tree/Shrub Site Preparation	
313	Waste Storage Facility – used to implement bedded-pack.	None	
<mark>314</mark>	Brush Management – used to remove woody invasive material and the removed material will be left onsite.	595 Pest Management – scenario 194 to address woody seedlings	
<mark>315</mark>	Herbaceous Weed Control – used to release desired deep rooted perennial species	None	
<mark>317</mark>	Composting Facility	None None	
327	Conservation Cover	382 Fence, 472 Access Control 645 Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	
328	Conservation Crop Rotation	449 Irrigation Water Management, 595 Pest Management	
329	Residue Mgt – Notill	None	
332	Contour Buffer Strips	330 Contour Farming	
336	Soil Carbon Amendment	None	
338	Prescribed Burning	394 Firebreak, 528 Prescribed Grazing scenarios 8 or 39 – livestock deferment to build fine <u>fuel;</u> 810 Annual Forages	

	1	
340	Cover Crops	None
342	Critical Area Planting	382 Fence, 472 Access Control
345	Residue Mgt – Reduced Till	None
366	Anaerobic Digester	634 Waste Transfer, 313 Waste Storage Facility
<mark>367</mark>	Roofs and Covers – used	None None
	to cover a waste mgt	
	facility to capture biogas.	
372	Combustion System	533 Pumping Plant
	Improvement – <mark>used</mark>	
	for stationary or mobile	
	engine replacement or	
	repower to electric	
	<mark>motor</mark>	
374	Energy Efficient Agricultural	None
	Operation	
380 Windbreak/Shelterbelt		490 Tree/Shrub Site Preparation, 382 Fence,
	Establishment and Renovation	472 Access Control
<mark>383</mark>	Fuel Break	None None
<mark>384</mark>	Woody Residue	None None
	<u>Treatment</u>	
386	Field Border	330 Contour Farming
390	Riparian Herbaceous Cover	382 Fence, 472 Access Control

			-
Г	391	Riparian Forest Buffer	490 Tree/Shrub Site Preparation, 382 Fence,
L			472 Access Control
	393	Filter Strips	382 Fence,
			472 Access Control
	412	Grassed Waterway	410 Grade Stabilization Structure,
			606 Subsurface Drain
Ш	420	Wildlife Planting	382 Fence, 472 Access Control
			645 Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
	422	Hedgerow Planting	490 Tree/Shrub Site Preparation, 382 Fence,
			472 Access Control
	<mark>430</mark>	Irrigation Pipeline – used to	None
		reduce energy use.	
	<del>441</del>	Irrigation System –	430 Irrigation Pipeline, 436 Irrigation Reservoir
		Microirrigation – used to reduce	449 Irrigation Water Mgt,
		energy use	533 Pumping Plant,
			587 Structure for Water Control – flow meter
	<mark>442</mark>	Sprinkler System – used to	430 Irrigation Pipeline, 436 Irrigation Reservoir
		reduce energy use	449 Irrigation Water Mgt,
			533 Pumping Plant,
			587 Structure for Water Control – flow meter
	484	Mulching	None
	512	Pasture and Hay Planting	382 Fence, 472 Access Control
	528	Prescribed Grazing	382 Fence, 516 Livestock Pipeline,
			533 Pumping Plant, 561 Heavy Use Area
			Protection,
			576 Livestock Shelter Structure,
			578 Stream Crossing, 595 Pest Management –
			scenario 194 to address woody seedlings,
			614 Watering Facility, 642 Water Well
_			V

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<mark>533</mark>	Pumping Plant – used to	None None
	reduce energy use.	
550	Range Planting	382 Fence, 472 Access Control
585	Stripcropping	None
590	Nutrient Mgt	449 Irrigation Water Mgt - if applicant uses
		fertigation
<del>592</del>	Feed Management – used to	None None
	reduce enteric methane	
	emissions	
601	Vegetative Barriers	None
603	Herbaceous Wind Barriers	None
612	Tree/Shrub Establishment	490 Tree/Shrub Site Preparation, 382 Fence,
		472 Access Control,
		645 Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
632	Waste Separation Facility	634 Waste Transfer, 313 Waste Storage Facility
<mark>643</mark>	Restoration of Rare and	None
	Declining Communities – used to	
	restore floodplain hydrology	
657	Wetland Restoration	356 Dike, 382 Fence, 460 Land Clearing,
		472 Access Control,
		587 Structure for Water Control,
		644 Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management
666	Forest Stand Improvement	None
670	Energy Efficient Lighting System	None
672	Energy Efficient Building	None
	Envelope	

## FY24 EQIP General Allocation

NWQI	\$ 1,678,222.00	Distributed as shown below
	\$ 553,813.26	Bazille Creek - LC, LE & UE @ \$184,604.42
	\$ 503,466.60	Big Sandy - LB NRD
	\$ 352,426.62	Turkey Creek - LBB NRD
	\$ 268,515.52	Wahoo Creek - LPN

FA Initial Allocation Estimate		20,460,969
Urban & Small-Scale Ag (High Tunnels)	\$	500,000.00
Wildlife Initiative (10%)	\$	423,048.00
Great Plains Grassland Initiative	\$	1,023,048.00
Reserve	\$	600,000.00
Conservation Activities (CPA's, DIA's, CEMA's)	\$	200,000.00
Historically Underserved (10%)	\$	2,474,398.00
AFOs	\$	1,000,000.00
Organic	\$	100,000.00
Tribal	\$	100,000.00
Sandhills WLFW	\$	100,000.00
Disaster	\$	1,500,000.00
Source Water Protection (10%)	\$	2,046,097.00
EQIP CIC (5%)	\$	1,023,048.00
Inefficient Energy	\$	25,000.00
NWQI	\$	1,678,222.00
Northern Bobwhite	\$	219,771.00
WaterSMART (URNRD)	\$	219,771.00
Total above fund pools	\$	13,232,403
Balance after above funds pools	\$	7,228,566
Additional Funds to Distribute	E	timate
Northern Bobwhite	\$	
		219,771.00
Joint Chiefs	\$	
NWQI	\$	1,678,222.00
Water Smart	\$	219,771.00
Total to Distribute	\$	9,346,330.00

FY24 EQIP IRA Allocation

FA Initial Allocation Estimate		29,027,000
Urban & Small-Scale Ag	\$	300,000.00
Wildlife Initiative (10%)	\$	651,000.00
Great Plains Grassland Initiative	\$ 1	1,451,000.00
Northern Bobwhite	\$	300,000.00
Historically Underserved (10%)		2,474,398.00
AFOs	\$2	2,000,000.00
Organic	\$	200,000.00
Tribal	\$	200,000.00
Sandhills WLFW	\$	200,000.00
Source Water Protection (10%)	\$2	2,902,700.00
EQIP CIC (5%)	\$1	1,451,350.00
Inefficient Energy	\$	100,000.00
Total above fund pools		12,230,448
Balance after above funds pools	\$	16,796,552

## **Nebraska CSP Allocation**

- General \$22,445,000
- IRA \$14,787,000
- Total \$37,232,000

 Funds are distributed between CSP Renewal and Classic signups.

#### **FY24 CSP Renewals**

- All FY24 contracts will still fall under the 2018 Farm Bill payment limitations.
  - CSP payment limitation is \$200,000 per individual or entity during the farm bill (\$400,000 for JV or General Partnerships)
- If the Renewal applicant has reached, or is near, the limit during the initial contract their Renewal contract will be reduced so as to not exceed the limit for the farm bill.

#### FY24 CSP Renewals

- 138 applications received.
- 54 applications (43%) either cancelled or ineligible due to hitting the payment limitation.
- The remaining eligible applications have a lower average contract value than typical for the state.

#### **FY24 CSP Renewals**

- Projected Renewal obligation of \$6,000,000
- Renewal applications must be obligated by December 22, 2023.

## FY24 CSP Classic Signup

- Application deadline was November 17, 2023
  - 546 applications received.
  - Nebraska CSP contract average is \$100,000
  - Projected approval of 312 contracts
    - Possibly more depending on actual application cost.
- To encourage dispersal of workload each DC area will have a minimum number of application approvals.

## FY24 CSP Classic Signup

- In order to prioritized IRA funding all Classic applications that qualify for IRA will be processed using ACT NOW.
  - First come first served
  - Must meet minimum threshold score
  - Applications received and processed until IRA funds depleted.

- Applications taken year-round.
- FY24 application cut-off November 13, 2023.
- This was for WRE, WRE-WREP, ALE and ALE-GSS.
- Will use appraisals again in FY2024 to determine acquisition costs for WRE.
  - 90% GARC, NTE rate of \$12,970/ac irrigated cropland, NTE \$9,320/ac all other land

#### Fiscal Year Allocation of Funds

- ACEP-WRE \$2,014,067
- ACEP-WRE-WREP \$826,290
- ACEP-ALE \$652,477
- ACEP-WRE/WRP Stewardship Funds \$554,631
  - These funds are for maintenance and repair of existing easements.

Moving forward on:

Ranking all eligible applications

- \$7,560,800 estimated acquisition costs.
- \$6,077,000 estimated restoration costs.

- Moving forward on:
  - Ranking all eligible applications
    - \$3,760,300 estimated acquisition costs.

## <u>Emergency Watershed Protection Program – Floodplain</u> <u>Easements (EWPP-FPE)</u>

- Applications = 21, Acres = 5,590
- Estimated Requested funding: \$20,313,085
- 14 have cancelled or found ineligible
- Offers accepted = 7, Acres = 800
- 4 Closed Easements on 170 Acres this calendar year



Enabling, for the Farmer, Real-Time Advanced Irrigation Water Management

through Twin Platte NRD Water Data Program

RCPP Project #3294

Classic – NE

Activity Type: Land Management

Lead Partner: Twin Platte NRD

**Contributing Partners:** 

**Growers Information Services Cooperative** 

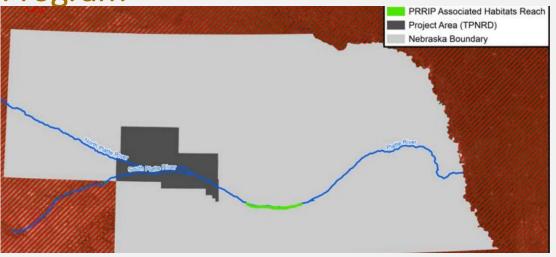
Financials: \$5,752,427

FA: \$4,716,990

Partner TA: \$0.00

NRCS TA = \$1,035,437

Contributions: \$5,752,426 Partner TA



#### **Practices:**

449 - Advanced Irrigation Water Management

IWM, Advanced

\$2,286.72

HU IWM, Advanced \$2,744.06

(\$4,716,990 / \$2,286.72 = est 2,062 irr systems)

Goal: Impliment advanced irrigation water management to ensure sustainability of the District's water resources in the near and long term while also providing ecosystem benefits, reducing carbon dioxide emissions, and enabling financial savings for farmers.

#### **Objectives:**

- (1) Actively recruit farmers to further engage in the District's existing Water Data Program by placing devices capable of sensing real-time, field-level evapotranspiration (ET), precipitation, soil moisture, and other parameters in their fields;
- (2) Incorporate these new data into the existing Water Data Program to provide farmers with real-time, field-level data to inform advanced irrigation water management (NRCS standard practice 449); and
- (3) Track and report the environmental and economic impacts of the updated Water Data Program throughout the District and beyond, to encourage farmers and water managers even beyond the District's borders to incorporate innovative technologies both for environmental benefit and to reduce farmers' input costs.

#### **Outcomes:**

- (1) Collects and provide data on irrigation water use and savings throughout the District.
- (2) Provide data on electricity usage, as well as run time of diesel-powered wells from which diesel usage will be calculated (demonstrate carbon dioxide emissions reduction of 38,450 metric tons).
- (3) Ecosystem benefits as the result of streamflow accretions arising from reduced groundwater pumping (reduced pumping estimated at 551,830 acre-feet)
- (4) Demonstrate direct financial savings to farmers, simply calculated as dollars saved through reduction of electricity (23.4 million kilowatt-hours) or diesel fuel (414,000 gallons).

# Improving Grassland Health and Connecting Resilient Lands in 6 Great Plains States

#### RCPP Project #3374

Classic – NE Lead, KS, MO, OK, SD, TX

Activity Type: Land Management

Lead Partner: The Nature Conservancy

Contributing Partners:

TNC – Nebraska Chapter

TNC - MO Chapter

Financials: \$4,229,049

FA: \$3,240,960 (2.1 NE, 1.1 MO)

Partner TA: \$226,860 (TA-E only)

NRCS TA = \$761,229

Contributions: \$310,000 Partner TA

**Practices:** 

110-Grazing Management Plans

160-Prescribed Burn Design

314-Brush Management

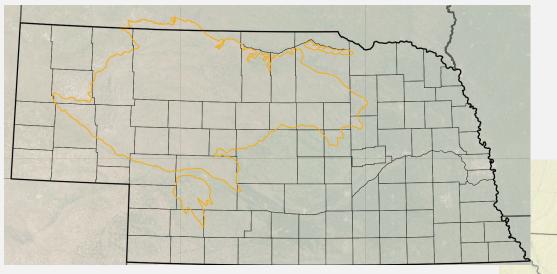
382-Fence

528-Prescribed Grazing

338-Prescribed Burning

512-Pasture/Hay Planting

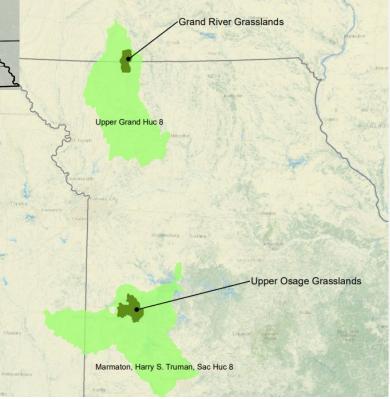
472-Access Control



# Nebraska, Missouri, and part of Iowa

## Project Area: NE Sandhills, MO Grasslands – 12,296,000 acres

These areas contain significant strongholds of native grasslands within the MOU and are facing substantial ecological and economic threats with few protections in place



• Goal: Facilitate the adoption of conservation practices by landowners on 300,000 acres of priority grasslands within the Great Plains (NE Sandhills, Grand River Grasslands and Osage Plains of MO and parts of IA).

Objectives:

- (1) Hosting field days and demonstrations across our priority areas that will garner participation from 250 landowners per year and
- (2) Issuing informational mailings and social media communications that will reach 500 landowners per year.
- (3) Facilitation of peer-to-peer learning groups and on-the-ground technical assistance with implementation of conservation practices being adopted.
- Outcomes:
- (1) Increased grassland health via brush encroachment and key species monitoring (Rangeland Analysis Platform (RAP)
- (2) Intact Grasslands: Avoid further conversion of grassland in the priority areas
- (3) Improved resilience among ranchers and communities Share information, expertise, and lessons learned throughout the community

Agropur Dairy Producers Best Management Practices

**Project** 

RCPP Project #3290

AFA –Lead State SD, NE, MN, IA, Idaho, Wisconsin

Activity Type: Land Management

Lead Partner: Agropur Contributing Partners:

Nestle Elanco

Financials: \$9,822,026

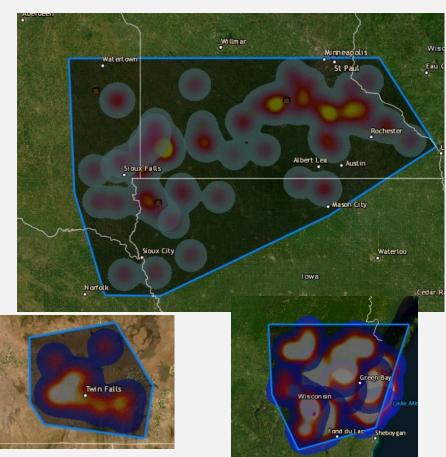
FA: \$7,400,000

Partner TA: \$900,000 NRCS TA = \$1,500,000

Contributions: \$10,000,000

#### Goal:

Incentivize the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) at farms in South Dakota, and potentially in other states, that opt into the program.

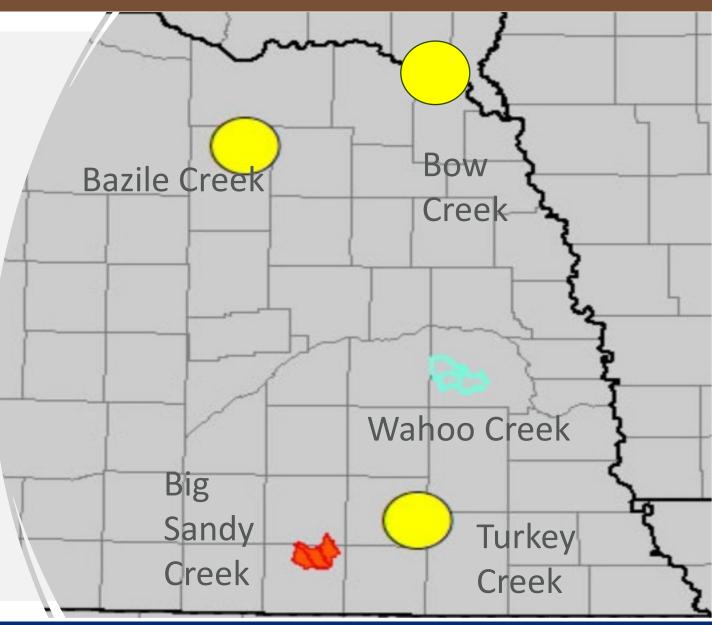




## QUESTIONS?

National Water
Quality Initiative
(NWQI)





#### Bazile NWQI Area-Implementation

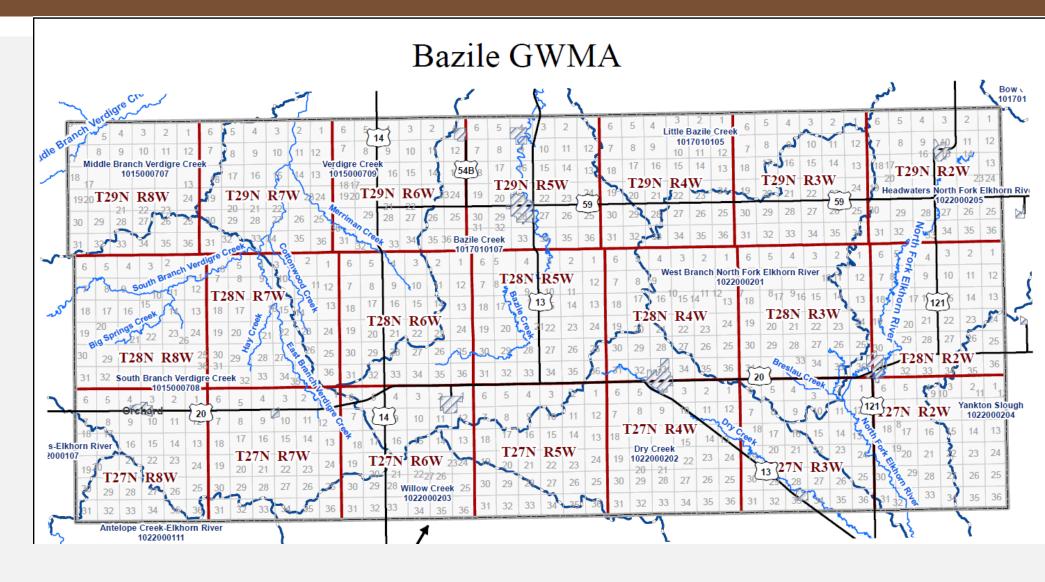
## Bazile Creek NRD Area:

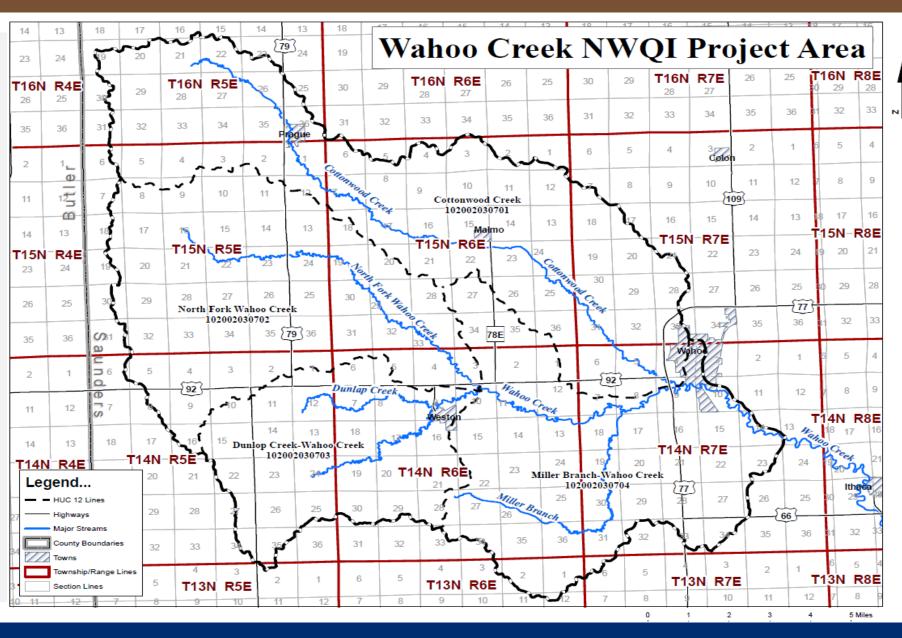
- Elkhorn
- Lower Niobrara
- Lewis and Clark
- Upper Elkhorn

FY 2024

Applications 60

**FY 2024 Funding** \$553,813.26





#### Wahoo NWQI Area-

**Implementation** 

# Wahoo Creek NRD Area:

- Lower Platte North

**FY 2024** 

**Applications 9** 

**FY 2024 Funding** \$268,515.52

#### Turkey Creek NWQI Area-Implementation

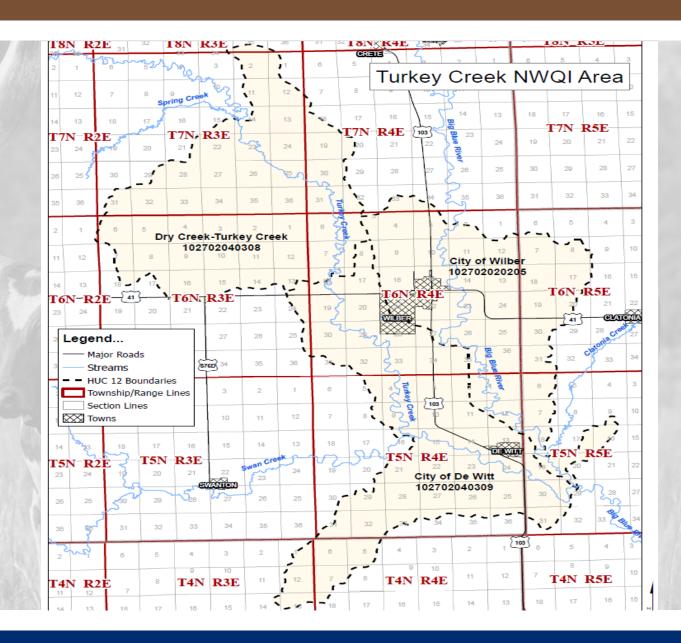
#### **Turkey Creek NRD Area:**

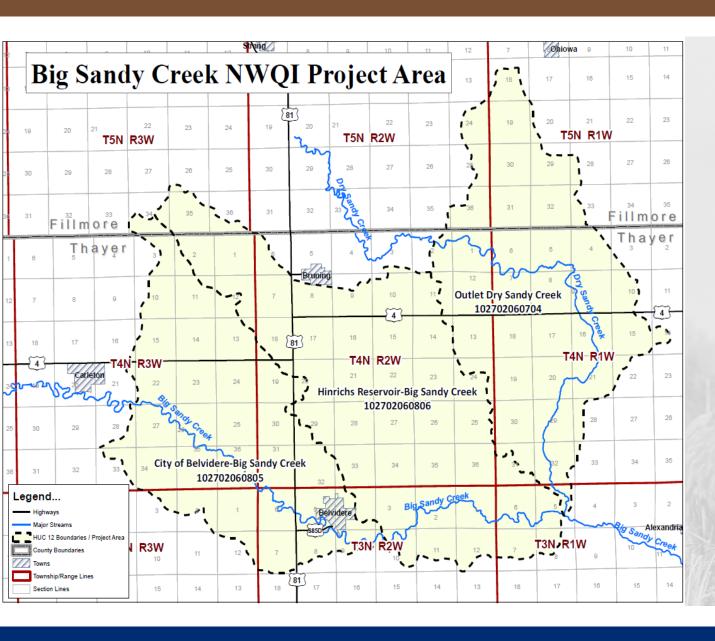
- Lower Big Blue

FY 2024

**Applications 22** 

**FY 2024 Funding** \$352,426.62





Big Sandy NWQI Area-Implementation

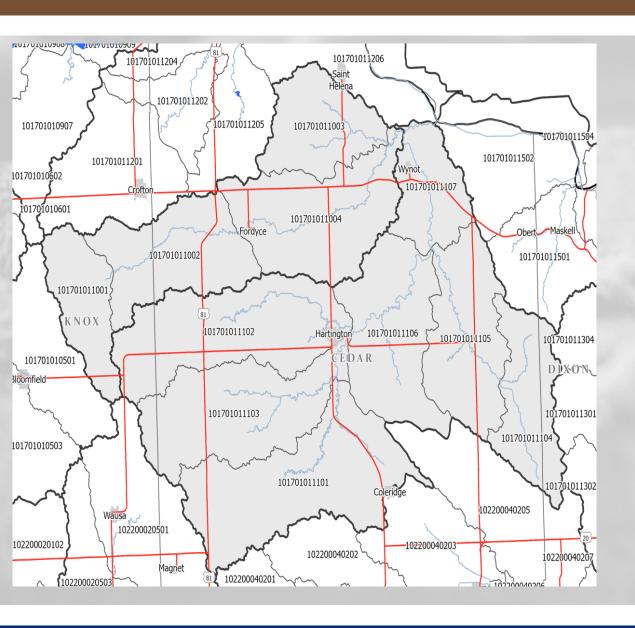
#### **Big Sandy Creek NRD Area:**

- Little Big Blue

FY 2024

**Applications 17** 

**FY 2024 Funding** \$503,466.60



Bow NWQI Area-Planning Phase

Bow Creek NRD Area:

- Lewis and Clark

Plan Development FY 2024

Recruiting producers and determining interest and working with partners.

No FY 2024 Funding



## **NWQI**

#### **NRCS Vision:**

A world of clean and abundant water, healthy soils, resilient landscapes, and thriving agricultural communities through voluntary conservation.



## QUESTIONS?

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