



June 26, 2020

This letter was emailed out to each Tribal leader and Natural Resources Directors on June 26, 2020

Dear Tribal Leader,

I hope this letter finds you safe and healthy. I would like to invite you to an opportunity to provide input and comments on the final rule for the 2018 Farm Bill programs. To comply with the state's COVID-19 rules, we will be having a webinar on July 10, 2020 at 9:30 a.m. More details will be emailed out in the next few weeks.

In May 2019, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) held coordination and collaboration meetings in several locations around the state. The input and comments NRCS received was compiled and submitted to our national office. The input and comments were considered, and many were included in development of the final rules for Farm Bill programs at the national level.

Currently, NRCS would like to provide information and seek input as the final rules are being submitted to the Federal Register. With this new Farm Bill, we have seen some changes in the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), and the Agriculture Conservation Easement Program (ACEP).

Also, we'd like to share with you some of the changes that NRCS staff are working through with our internal contracting processes. This year NRCS at the national level worked very hard to get programmatic guidance out to the states. Because of the delay, staff had a very short time frame to receive, rank, and screen applications.

Internally, NRCS developed tools that assisted staff to identify applications that could be funded. We will discuss these changes, what they mean for Fiscal Year 2021 applications and how we are hoping to streamline our processes moving forward.

We look forward to hearing your valuable input as NRCS finalizes the final rules for our conservation programs.



United States Department of Agriculture

Sincerely,

Roylene Comes At Night

ROYLENE COMES AT NIGHT
State Conservationist

Attachments:

- Farm Bill Information Session Agenda
- FSA Eligibility Tool
- Conservation Planning Summary Intake Form
- EQIP Screening Tool

Cc: Natural Resources Director

Robin Slate, State Tribal Liaison, NRCS, Puyallup, WA