

2011 Environmental Quality Incentive Program

Local Work Group Summary for the Clayton Field Office

INTRODUCTION:

The Clayton Field Office is located in Union County in the extreme northeastern corner of the state. Both the Northeastern and Ute Creek Soil and Water Conservation Districts are within Union County. Clayton Field Office has the lead in conservation matters for Northeastern SWCD, while the Roy Field Office has the lead for Ute Creek. Union County encompasses approximately 2,450,000 acres. Of this acreage, about 2,267,000 acres are within Northeastern SWCD. Approximate land use acreages in Northeastern SWCD are:

Rangeland: 2,110,000 ac

Irrigated Cropland: 70,000 ac

Dry Cropland: 8,880 ac

Woodland: 5,000 ac

The Ogallala aquifer underlies approximately 65,000 acres at the eastern edge of the county. The majority of acreage of Union County is either private or state owned. A large portion of rangeland in the county is in deteriorating condition due to encroachment of juniper, piñon pine, and cholla.

LOCAL WORK GROUP (LWG):

The LWG meeting was held Wednesday, September 8, 2010. Participants included representatives from Northeastern SWCD, NRCS, FSA, USFS, and local agricultural producers. Facilitating the meeting was District Conservationist Randy Donges. The purpose of EQIP and of the meeting was explained to the group. The discussion that followed included resource concerns of Union County, proposed EQIP cost share rates, EQIP application ranking system, and practices deemed important to landowners. Input from attendees was solicited, and all comments and suggestions were noted.

PRIORITY RESOURCE CONCERNS:

Rangeland

- Noxious and invasive plants
- Plant productivity, health, & vigor
- Inadequate stock water

Irrigated Cropland

- Inefficient use of irrigation water
- Wind erosion
- Soil compaction
- Organic matter depletion

Dry Cropland

- Wind erosion
- Soil compaction
- Organic matter depletion

FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS:

The percentages of funding allocations proposed for Union County in fiscal year 2011 are as follows:

70% - Rangeland
23% - Irrigated Cropland
2% - Dry Cropland
5% - Headquarters (Windbreaks)

COST SHARE RATE FACTOR:

LWG recommends all practice cost share rates to be set at 75% in calculating the 2011 payment schedule and recommends the following payments and caps:

Playa lake deferred grazing (643): \$100.38/acre for playa bottoms (includes 150 foot buffer), and \$7.61/acre playa uplands up to 320 acres. Up to 3 year payment.

Riparian deferred grazing (472): \$12/acre within and up to an 800 foot buffer from the riparian zone. Up to 3 year payment.

Strip-till or no-till practices (329): \$22.80/acre up to 640 acre limit. Up to 3 year payment.

Please refer to the FY 2011 EQIP Cost list for final practice payment rates.

RANKING CRITERIA:

LWG recommends using 2010 ranking criteria. In case of ties, the highest average soil erodibility will be considered a higher priority application.

Please refer to the ranking criteria links for specific information.

INITIATIVES:

The Watershed and Small Acreage special initiatives will not be pursued this year.