

2014 Environmental Quality Incentive Program Proposal

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:

The LWG meeting was held Wednesday, September 11, 2013. Participants included representatives from Northeastern SWCD, Roy NRCS F.O., Clayton NRCS F.O., local agricultural producers, and area agricultural service and supplies companies. 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:

Funding allocation percentages proposed for fiscal year 2012 are as follows:

- 70% - Rangeland
- 25% - Irrigated Cropland
- 5% - Headquarters (Windbreaks)

COST SHARE RATE FACTOR:

Cost share rates to be set at 75% in calculating the 2014 payment schedule, and use 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.

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

Strip-till or no-till practices (329): \$22.80/acre up to \$14,592 per contract.

Brush Management (314): \$50,000 limit per contract.

RANKING CRITERIA:

Use 2013 ranking criteria.

In case of ties, the highest average soil erodibility will be considered a higher priority application.

INITIATIVES:

No special initiatives will be pursued this year.