

NEBRASKA STAC MEETING MINUTES

September 5, 2024

1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

ATTENDEES - Rob Lawson, Tami Nordman, Fred Stevens, John Mayberger, Roger Yerdon, Amy Miller, Crista Remmenga, Chelsea Clark, Shannon Bassett, Julie Breuer, Jana Ingwersen-Laws, Andrew Tonnies, Dan Ruterburies, Shelly Kelly, Tim Murdock, Dan Ross, Tim Kalkowski, Kent Zimmerman, Al Juhnke, Nick Streff, Nolan Lemna, Patrick Lechner, Katie Hickle, Larry Hudkins, Elbert Traylor, Melissa Baier, David Schroeter, Debbie Borg, Alexa Davis, Kyle Huaschild;
VIA TEAMS & PHONE: Brad Lubben, Buffalo Bruce, Chandler Schmidt, Crystal Powers, Curt Becker, Dustin Wilcox, Holle Evert, Jonathan Garcia, Andrew Houser, Joseph Reed, Finna Kennison, Mark Brohman, Catherine Mills, Mark Porath, Jennifer Prenosil, Mary Reece, Rich Walters, Craig Romary, Jessica Russell, Samantha Smith, Jamie Thoene, Britt Weiser, Grant Gydesen.

FUTURE Meetings: 1121 Lincoln Mall – Rm 352

❖ DECEMBER 19, 2024 (NOTE DATE CHANGE)

2025

- ❖ MARCH 13, 2025
- ❖ JUNE 5, 2025
- ❖ SEPTEMBER 4, 2025
- ❖ DECEMBER 5, 2025



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

- NE NRCS Staffing update:
 - Nathan Mueller – State Soil Health Specialist
 - Emily Webster – Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) Manager
 - Conor Ward – ASTC-Partnerships
 - Big thanks to those who have served on detail for the last few months in the open Program Manager spots.

- **SEE SLIDES – HIGHLIGHTED Points below**
- Continuous CRP Signup 61
 - Looks different right now, because we are near our nationwide acreage cap & so we are having to do batching periods to not exceed the 27 million acreage cap.

The following are the FY 2024 continuous CRP deadlines.

Date	Action
July 31, 2024	Deadline for producers to submit an offer for new or re-enrolled land or combination of new or re-enrolled land for continuous CRP signup 61.
August 7, 2024	Deadline for producers to request a conservation plan from NRCS. County Office deadline to enter the status in COLS as “Submit for Plan” for continuous CRP signup 61. Note: FSA must provide offers to NRCS within 5 workdays of receiving the submitted offer from the producer.
September 6, 2024	Deadline for NRCS or TSP to complete the conservation plan, sign, and obtain signatures of all signatories on CRP-1, and return the conservation plan to FSA.
September 30, 2024	Deadline for COC or CED to approve CRP-1's and load CRP-1 approvals in COLS.

- October 1 - Wait for directive from Congress
- NE Grassland CRP Signup 206 – Working Lands Program
 - Announced June 3rd
 - Signup dates: June 3rd – June 28, 2024
 - NE was the top state in the nation = 237,853 acres with 807 offers.
 - DEADLINES:**
 - 9/16 – Interim plans signed
 - 9/30 – FSA approve contracts
 - 12/15 – NRCS final plan deadline
- ECP in NE
 - Counties approved
 - Custer, Lincoln, Logan – 2/26 Fire
 - Howard, Greeley – 4/26 Tornado
 - Keith – 5/23 Tornado
 - Box Butte & Morrill – Schiff Fire (signup dates 8/1-9/3/2024
 - These have all closed & we hope to get the funds out to the producers here soon.
 - Written approval must be granted by FSA prior to restoration work starting.
 - There is a 25% advance payment available on all practices upon application approval.

Q: Was the grass on signups just more competitive this year or did you receive more offers compared to prior years?

A: Similar offers make it more competitive as we are nearing a 27 million acreage nationwide cap. National set a higher cutoff score to avoid exceeding the cap.

Q: Do you happen to have an average cost acre per grassland on CRP?

A: I do not. There isn't a state average because it's so diverse across the state.

Q: Whatever happened to the 2022 Blizzard Snow Removal? Will there be an announcement?

A: It is still tabled. National is still figuring out where it is going to work the best. The State will put out an announcement once more details are decided.

Q: Could the election change this?

A: Yes, administrations can change priorities.



NRCS CONSERVATION PROGRAMS UPDATE: *John Mayberger - NRCS ASTC-Programs, Fred Stevens - NRCS Programs Specialist*

- **SEE SLIDES. HIGHLIGHTED Points below.**
- Announced the acting positions & names. Also introduced Emily, Amy, & Crista as new staff additions.
- Amy Miller & Crista Remmenga will be your new POC's for the State Technical Committee Meeting.
- Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)
 - **The IRA does not create any new programs** – it gives NRCS additional funds to **expand its existing climate efforts** and satisfy unmet demand
 - IRA funds began in **fiscal year 2023**; all IRA funds must be spent by **September 30, 2031**
 - Reviewed Eligible & Approved Practices
 - Reviewed Final Estimated Allocations
 - Thresholds
 - Reviewed Obligations
 - **Applying for Programs for FY25**
 - NRCS accepts producer applications for its conservation programs year-round.
 - Producers interested in **EQIP, CSP and RCPP Classic** will have until **November 15, 2024**, to apply to be considered for funding in the FY25 cycle. Funding is provided through a competitive process.
 - **RCPP AFA** application dates will be advertised by the partners.
- **FY24 CSP Classic Signup (See Slides)**
 - Rankings are due November 8, 2024
 - Reviewed Active Contracts by County, then by Acres by County
- **EQIP (See Slides)**
 - FY24 Allocations & Top Practices
- **LOCAL WORKING GROUPS:**
 - General Summary of Recommendations
 - NEXT LWG MEETINGS WILL OCCUR IN 2025

- Dates, times and locations are available at www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/conservation-state/nebraska/technical-committee
 - **RCPP PROGRAM UPDATE (See Slides)**
 - General summary of projects – LMR & AFA
-

ACEP CUT-OFFS & COMPENSATION 2025:

Shawn McVey, Easement Coordinator & Roger Yerdon, Easement Program Manager - NRCS

- **See slides. Important highlights listed below.**
 - FY 2025 ACEP (WRE, WRE-WREP, ALE, & ALE-GSS) Application Cut-offs
 - **October 4, 2024** IRA funding Round 1
 - **November 15, 2024** Farm Bill funding
 - **December 20, 2024** IRA funding Round 2
 - Will use appraisals again in FY2025 to determine WRE acquisition costs.
 - 95% GARC, NTE rate of \$13,690/ac irrigated cropland, NTE \$9,730/ac all other land
 - Approved August 28, 2024
-

PARTNER UPDATES:

- **Alexa Davis - DNR**
 - Interim Director – NEW
 - Funding for Water Sustainability
 - New state funding for the Nitrogen Reduction Center Program
- **Katie Hickel – NDEE**
 - 319 program – NOI Completed
 - Interim director Thad Finneran is now leaving & they will be getting a new one.
 - Nitrate study accepted by the Governor's office & now able to give presentations on the study. Reach out if you would like to schedule a speaker.
 - EPA Technical Assistance for Non-Source Pollution issues in the State.
- **Andrew Tonnies – Center for Rural Affairs**
 - Peer led mentorship for conservation
- **Tim Kalkowski – NE Grazing Lands Coalition**
 - Grazing School Sept 17-19, 2024
- **Shelly Kelly – Sandhills Task Force**
 - Ranching for Profit
 - Sandhilltaskforce.org

- **Crystal Powers** – NE Extension, NE Water Center
 - PLEASE REACH OUT FOR REGISTRATION DETAILS.
 - Bio-Char Regional Conference
 - NE Water Center Water Conference - October
 - Organic Conference - December
 - Save the Date: Feb. – 50th Water Tour
 - NRCS funded Master Irrigator
 - Organizing 3 new programs
 - Beyond the Data
 - NE Master Irrigator
 - NE Strategic Coalition (Climate Smart Training)
- **Dustin Wilcox** – NARD
 - NARD Meeting coming up Sept 22-24th.
 - Can register on our NRD Website
- **Craig Romary** – Department of Ag
 - NE Bufferstrip Program still has funding.
 - Can be combined with other programs.
 - Weblink & contact information.
 - <https://bit.ly/NDAbuffer>
 - https://nda.nebraska.gov/pesticide/buffer_strip.html
 - craig.romary@nebraska.gov
 - 402.471.6883

WRAP UP

- Working on End of Fiscal Year items throughout the State.
- If you have specific Agenda Items that you would like to see presented, please let one of us with NRCS know.



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FSA Updates September 2024 State Tech Meeting

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Price Support and Conservation Division

- Jana Ingwerson-Laws – FSA Conservation Program Specialist
 - 402-437-5883
 - jana.ingwersonlaws@usda.gov

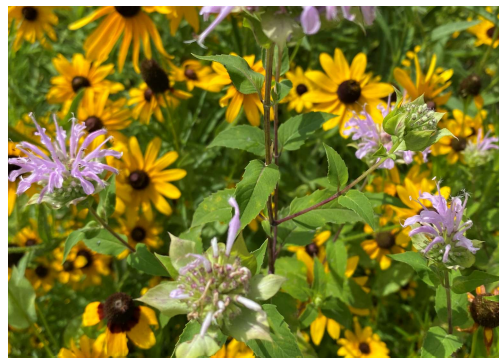
- Julee Patzel – FSA Conservation Program Specialist
 - 402-437-5050
 - julee.patzel@usda.gov

- Patrick Lechner – FSA Price Support/Conservation Program Chief
 - 402-437-5586
 - patrick.lechner@usda.gov



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2024 CRP Signup Results



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General CRP Signup 62

- Signup conducted March 4 – March 29, 2024
- Nebraska Numbers:
 - Total Offers = 177
 - Accepted Offers = 147 (7597.92 acres)
 - Rejected Offers = 30 (770.41 acres)
 - 91% Accepted Rate

Practice	Acres
CP1 (Introduced Grasses)	895.85
CP2 (Native Grasses)	5712.39
CP4D (Wildlife Habitat)	42.82
CP25 (Rare and Declining Habitat)	891.35
CP42 (Pollinator Habitat)	55.83

Continuous CRP Signup 61

- Batching to not exceed 27 million acreage National cap
- Offers after 7/31/2024 can be made up to 9/30/2024, but no guarantee when and if offer will be accepted (excludes CREP)

Breakdown of Continuous CRP Signup 61

Signup Type	Total Offers	Practice Acreage	Average Rental Rate per Acre
Continuous	462	4,917	\$148
Platte Republican CREP	19	649.6	\$193
Farmable Wetlands Program	5	62.92	\$239
Highly Erodible Land	135	6,238	\$103
Upland Wildlife SAFE	258	11,176	\$160
Totals	879	23,043.52	

Continuous CRP Signup 61 Deadlines

- **September 6, 2024** – NRCS must complete conservation plans and return to FSA
- **September 30, 2024** – FSA must approve all contracts
- Important Note:
 - The authority to conduct a CRP signup under Section 3831 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Bill) ends on September 30, 2024. At this time, this authority to administer CRP has not been extended

Grassland CRP Signup 206

- Announced June 3rd
- Signup dates: June 3rd – June 28, 2024
- Nebraska was top state = 237,853 acres accepted (807 offers)
 - 673,736 acres offered (1,539 offers)
 - 35% of acres accepted
 - Top Counties: Holt, Franklin, Furnas
- Maximum ranking score = 195
- Offers with ranking score 82 or greater were deemed acceptable
 - Last years cutoff score = 77
- Interim conservation plans authorized

Grassland CRP Signup 206 Deadlines

- Interim plans must be signed by **9/16/24**
- No ground-disturbing activities can occur until a final conservation plan is approved and environmental compliance is complete.
- FSA must approve contracts by **9/30/24**
- Final conservation plans must be complete by **12/15/2024**
- If participant does not want to proceed after final plan, can terminate the contract without liquidated damages



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ECP in Nebraska



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Counties Approved for ECP

- Lincoln – Valentines Day Fire
- Custer – Betty's Way Fire 2/26
- Lincoln – Betty's Way Fire 2/26
- Logan – Stapleton Fire 2/26
- Howard – 4/26 Tornado
- Greeley – 4/26 Tornado
- Keith – 5/23 Tornado
- Box Butte and Morrill – Schiff Fire (signup dates 8/1/24-9/3/24)

Counties Approved for ECP

County	Disaster	Signup Dates
Lincoln	Valentines Day Fire	6/17/24 – 8/16/24
Lincoln	Betty's Way Fire 2/26/24	6/17/24 – 8/16/24
Custer	Betty's Way Fire 2/26/24	6/17/24 – 8/16/24
Logan	Stapleton Fire 2/26/24	6/17/24 – 8/16/24
Howard	Tornado 4/26	6/11/24 – 8/12/24
Greeley	Tornado 4/26	6/11/24 – 8/12/24
Keith	Tornado 5/23	7/15/24 – 9/12/24
Box Butte and Morrill	Schiff Fire	8/1/24 - 9/3/24



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Conservation Programs

*FY2024 Programs Update
IRA, CSP, EQIP, RCPP, NWQI*



John Mayberger, ASTC/Programs

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www.ne.nrcs.usda.gov

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NRCS, Climate and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)

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Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)

- Signed into law by President Biden in August 2022
- The IRA provides NRCS with \$19.5 billion in **additional** funds for its **existing** conservation programs:
 - \$8.45 billion Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
 - \$4.95 billion Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)
 - \$3.25 billion Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
 - \$1.4 billion Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)
 - \$1 billion Conservation Technical Assistance
- **The IRA does not create any new programs** – it gives NRCS additional funds to **expand its existing climate efforts** and satisfy unmet demand
- IRA funds begin in **fiscal year 2023**; all IRA funds must be spent by **September 30, 2031**



Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)

- **Nebraska IRA Allocation FY2023**
 - IRA-CSP = \$4.7 million
 - IRA-EQIP = \$2.4 million
- **Nebraska IRA Allocation FY2024**
 - IRA-CSP = \$14.8 million
 - IRA-EQIP = \$29.0 million



The IRA Focuses on Mitigation

- The IRA directs NRCS to use the additional funds specifically for **climate change mitigation**.
- Mitigation activities *reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve carbon storage*.
- FY24 list of **NRCS climate-smart mitigation activities**: nrcs.usda.gov/mitigation-activities.pdf
- NRCS is continually evaluating mitigation activities and IRA implementation approach and will update them as appropriate.
 - [Federal Register notice](#) (Nov. 21, 2022)

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Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry (CSAF) Mitigation Activities List for FY2024

Highlighted activities have been added to the list in FY2024.
*Noted activities are added to the list as "provisional."

Mitigation Categories	Code	Conservation Practice Standard Name (practice unit)	Code	Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) Enhancement Activities
Soil Health	222	Conservation Cover (acres)	E222A	Conservation cover for pollinators and beneficial insects ¹
			E222B	Establish Monarch butterfly habitat
	228	Conservation Crop Rotation (acres)	E228A	Resource conserving crop rotation
			E228B	Improved resource conserving crop rotation
			E228C	Soil health crop rotation
			E228D	Modifications to improve soil health and increase soil organic matter
			E228E	Intercropping to improve soil health
			E228F	Perennial grain crop conservation rotation
	229	Residue and Tillage Management, No Till (acres)	E229A	No till to reduce soil erosion
			E229B	No till to reduce tillage induced particulate matter
			E229C	No till to increase plant-available moisture
			E229D	No till system to increase soil health and soil organic matter content
			E229E	No till to reduce energy
	322	Contour Buffer Strips (acres)		None Available
	334	Soil Carbon Amendment (acres) ²		None Available
	340	Cover Crop (acres)	E340A	Cover crop to reduce soil erosion
			E340B	Intensive cover cropping to increase soil health and soil organic matter content
			E340C	Use of multi-species cover crops to improve soil health and increase soil organic matter
			E340D	Intensive orchard/vineyard floor cover cropping to increase soil health
			E340E	Cover crop to minimize soil compaction
			E340F	Cover crop to reduce water quality degradation by utilizing excess soil nutrients
			E340G	Cover crop to suppress excessive weed pressures and break pest cycles
			E340H	Using cover crops for biological strip till
			E340I	Cover crop to improve moisture use efficiency and reduce salts
	345	Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced Till (acres)	E345A	Reduced tillage to reduce soil erosion
			E345B	Reduced tillage to reduce tillage induced particulate matter
			E345C	Reduced tillage to increase plant-available moisture
			E345D	Reduced tillage to increase soil health and soil organic matter content
			E345E	Reduced tillage to reduce energy use

FACTSHEET • NOVEMBER 2023
 [FARMERS.GOV/CLIMATE-SMART](https://farmers.gov/climate-smart)

Facilitating Practices Enable Mitigation

- IRA funding can also be used for practices needed to ***facilitate a mitigation practice***.
- Here are some examples of conservation systems that include mitigation practices and the practices that may be needed to facilitate them.



Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)

Tree Shrub Site Preparation (490)

Mulching (484)

Microirrigation (441)

Pasture and Hay Planting (512)

Access Control (472)

Herbaceous Weed Treatment (315)

Waste Separation Facility (632)

Waste Transfer (634)

Pumping Plant (533)

Prescribed Grazing (528)

Watering Facility (614)

Stream Crossing (578)

Fence (382)

Livestock Pipeline (516)

Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)

Access Control (472)

Fence (382)



FY2024 IRA Implementation in Nebraska

- **EQUIP-IRA**
 - Nebraska Obligations = \$28.9 million
 - Contracts = 662
- **CSP-IRA**
 - Nebraska Obligations = \$14.8 million
 - Contracts = 156



FY2024 IRA Implementation in Nebraska

Policy Modifications

- Increased all payment caps
- Increase payment rates 10% on all CSAF practices
- Consistency for all programs application, ranking and obligation deadlines.
- Revised policy to allow more flexibility when considering applications for management practices that an applicant has previously implemented when a resource concern still exists.
- Staffing considerations

Applying for Programs for FY25

- NRCS accepts producer applications for its conservation programs year-round.
- Producers interested in **EQIP, CSP and RCPP Classic** will have until **November 15, 2024**, to apply to be considered for funding in the FY25 cycle. Funding is provided through a competitive process.
- **RCPP AFA** application dates will be advertised by the partners.





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Conservation Stewardship Program



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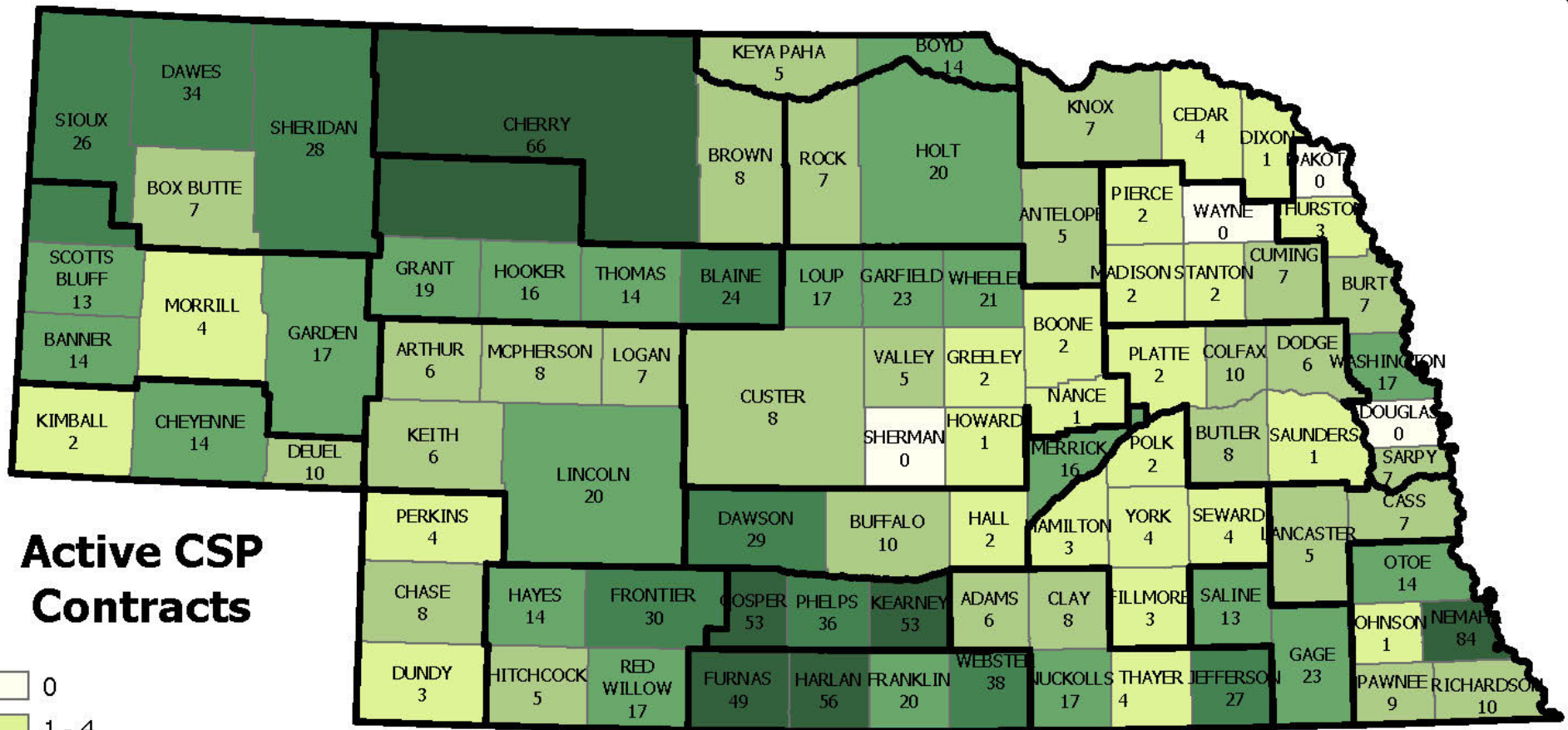
Conservation Stewardship Program - Nebraska

- FY2024 Allocations
 - CSP Classic = \$19.2 million
 - CSP Renewal = \$4.8 million
 - CSP IRA = \$14.8 million
- FY2024 Contracts
 - Classic Contracts = 161 (421,740 ac.)
 - Renewal Contracts = 70 (100,930 ac.)
 - CSP-IRA Contracts = 157 (310,900 ac.)
 - GCI Applications = 19

Conservation Stewardship Program - Nebraska

- Total Active CSP Contracts – September 2024
 - Contracts = 1,267
 - Contract Acres = 3 million
 - Obligated funds = \$126 million

Nebraska Active CSP Contracts by County



Sept. 4, 2024





- 0 ac.
 38 - 640 ac.
 640 - 6400 ac.
 6400 - 15000 ac.
 15000 - 30000 ac.
 30000 - 80000 ac.
 80000 - 120000 ac.
 120000 - 420000 ac.

Sept. 4, 2024



Most Popular CSP Activities in 2024

1. Cover crops

Multi-species cover crops to improve soil health and increase soil organic matter

Cover crops to reduce erosion

Cover crop to suppress excessive weed pressures and break pest cycles

2. Prescribed grazing

Use of body condition scoring to keep track of herd health

Improved grazing through monitoring and working with a range professional

Maintain quantity and quality of forage

3. Nutrient management

Improving nutrient uptake efficiency and reducing risk of nutrient losses

Reduce risks of nutrient loss by utilizing precision agriculture technologies



Most Popular CSP Activities in 2024

4. Tree/Shrub Establishment

Shrub planting for wildlife

5. Conservation cover

Conservation cover for pollinators and beneficial insects

6. Pest management

Reduce pesticide risk by utilizing PAMS techniques

Reduce pesticide risk in surface water using precision appl.

Eliminate use of chemicals to control pests to increase the presence of dung beetles



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Environmental Quality Incentives Program



Environmental Quality Incentives Program - Nebraska

- FY2024 Allocations (Total = \$64.8 million)
 - EQIP General = \$35.76 million (Includes NWQI & OTI)
 - EQIP-NWQI = \$1.7 million
 - EQIP-OTI = \$ 456,083.00
 - EQIP IRA = \$29.04 million
- FY2024 Applications and Contracts
 - EQIP General = 2,147 Contracts = 624 (284,244 ac.)
 - EQIP-IRA = 1,546 Contracts = 643 (244,944 ac.)

FY2024 EQIP Allocations

FA Allocation = \$35,756,664

- Urban and Small-Scale Agriculture (formerly High Tunnel) = \$492,957
- Wildlife Initiative = \$1,578,176 (includes WIN, GPGL and Quail WLFW initiative)
 - Great Plains Grassland Initiative = \$1,005,316
 - Quail WLFW Initiative = \$115,679
- Historically Underserved = \$2,432,539
- EQIP Organic Transition = \$21,733
- AFO's = \$1,874,027
- Conservation Activity Plans = \$215,566
- Organic = \$456,083
- Tribal = \$179,174
- Sandhills Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW) = \$139,373



FY2024 EQIP Allocations

FA Initial Allocation = \$35,756,664

- Disaster = \$1,500,000
- Source Water Protection = \$2,186,282
- EQIP-CIC = \$1,131,965
- Inefficient Energy = \$21,700

Balance left to distribute to Local Fund Pools = \$30,916,717

National Initiatives Allocations (NOTE: Included in FA initial allocation total)

- Joint Chiefs = \$421,196
- Water Smart (URNRD) = \$199,975
- NWQI = \$3,170,449
 - Bazile Creek (LCNRD, LENRD, UENRD) = \$2,397,462
 - Big Sandy (LBNRD) = \$534,612
 - Turkey Creek (LBBNRD) = \$214,359
 - Wahoo Creek (LPNNRD) = \$24,016



FY24 EQIP-Top 25 Practices

Practice	Count
340 - Cover Crop	955
528 - Prescribed Grazing	946
449 - Irrigation Water Management	842
314 - Brush Management	737
614 - Watering Facility	463
533 - Pumping Plant	442
642 - Water Well	282
382 - Fence	263
328 - Conservation Crop Rotation	262
590 - Nutrient Management	231
595 - Pest Management Conservation System	227
516 - Livestock Pipeline	198
329 - Residue and Tillage Management, No Till	156
338 - Prescribed Burning	127
380 - Windbreak / Shelterbelt Establishment and Renovation	120
587 - Structure For Water Control	119
600 - Terrace	115
442 - Sprinkler System	104
430 - Irrigation Pipeline	103
484 - Mulching	92
441 - Irrigation System, Microirrigation	66
394 - Firebreak	65
645 - Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	61
512 - Pasture and Hay Planting	59
620 - Underground Outlet	54



Planned and Applied 2015 – 2029 Top 25 Practices

Practice	Count
340 - Cover Crop	4,218
449 - Irrigation Water Management	3,191
314 - Brush Management	2,915
614 - Watering Facility	2,301
528 - Prescribed Grazing	1,963
533 - Pumping Plant	1,690
382 - Fence	1,627
328 - Conservation Crop Rotation	1,452
516 - Livestock Pipeline	1,322
642 - Water Well	1,128
600 - Terrace	943
590 - Nutrient Management	817
380 - Windbreak / Shelterbelt Establishment and Renovation	583
338 - Prescribed Burning	573
620 - Underground Outlet	573
329 - Residue and Tillage Management, No Till	492
342 - Critical Area Planting	488
484 - Mulching	429
426 - Pest Management Conservation System	426
430 - Irrigation Pipeline	410
587 - Structure For Water Control	407
512 - Pasture And Hay Planting	381
442 - Sprinkler System	364
394 - Firebreak	282
913- TA Checkout	251

Environmental Quality Incentives Program - Nebraska

- Total Active EQIP Contracts – September 2024
 - Total Active Contracts = 2,956
 - Total Contract Acres = 1,157,909.4
 - Obligated funds = \$123,263,955

2024 Mandatory Distribution

- Source Water Protection = 10%
- Wildlife Initiative = 10%
- Historically Underserved = 10%
- EQIP-CIC = 5%
- Livestock = 50%

FY2024 STATEWIDE FUND POOLS

- NE Great Plains Grassland Initiative
- Working Lands for Wildlife – Sandhills
- Working Lands for Wildlife - Quail
- Urban and Small-Scale Agriculture
- Organic
- Energy
- Conservation Activity Plans
- Animal Feeding Operations
- Tribal
- Disaster



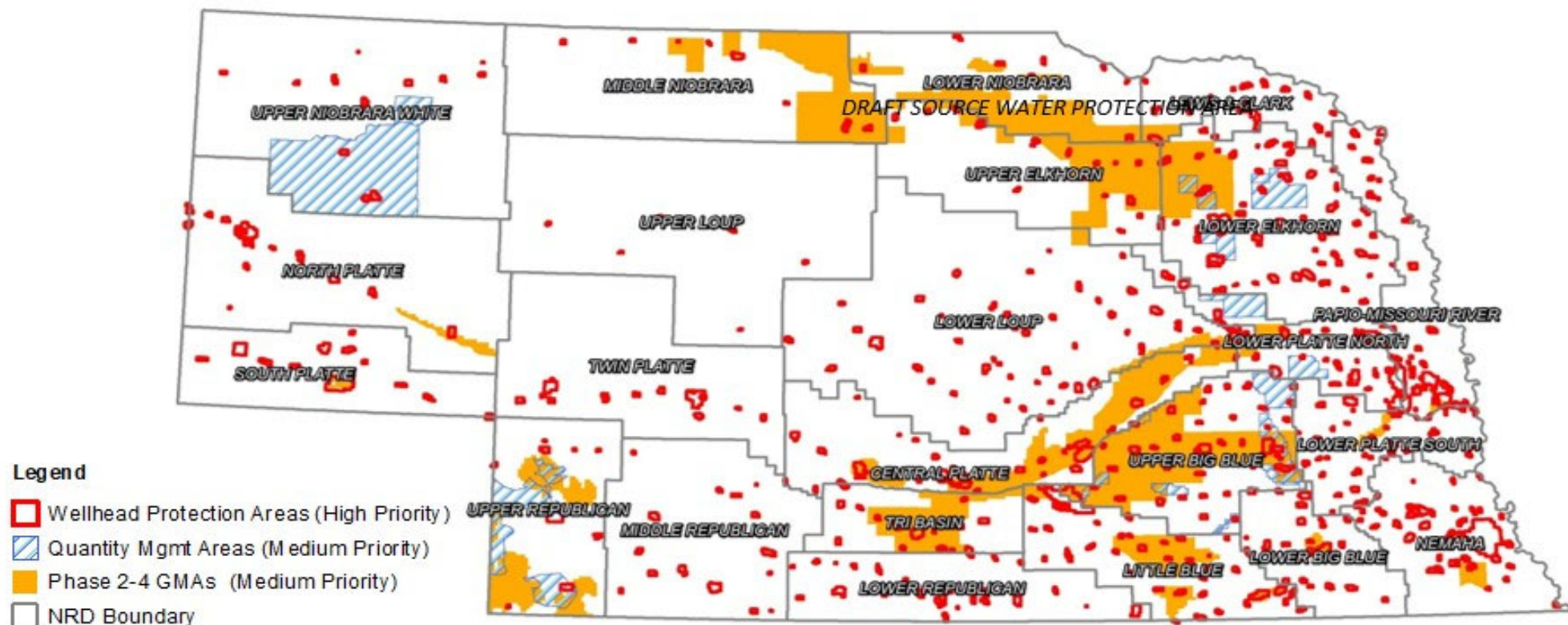
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Source Water Protection

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FY20 – FY24 Source Water Protection



The Phase 2-4 and Quantity Management Areas that intersect a Wellhead Protection Area are medium priority.

Total Medium & High Priority Areas: 8,006,050 acres

FY2024 Source Water Protection Practices (Wp)

- Conservation Cover
- Conservation Crop Rotation
- Contour Buffer Strips
- Cover Crop
- Critical Area Planting
- Well Decommissioning
- Groundwater Testing
- Field Border
- Riparian Herbaceous Cover
- Riparian Forest Buffer
- Filter Strip
- Grassed Waterway
- Irrigation Pipeline
- Irrigation System, Microirrigation
- Sprinkler System
- Irrigation Water Management
- Pasture and Hay Planting
- Range Planting
- Nutrient Management
- Pest Management
- Vegetated Treatment Area
- Constructed Wetland
- Wetland Restoration
- Wetland Enhancement

FY2024 Wildlife Practices

○ Count towards 10% wildlife requirement

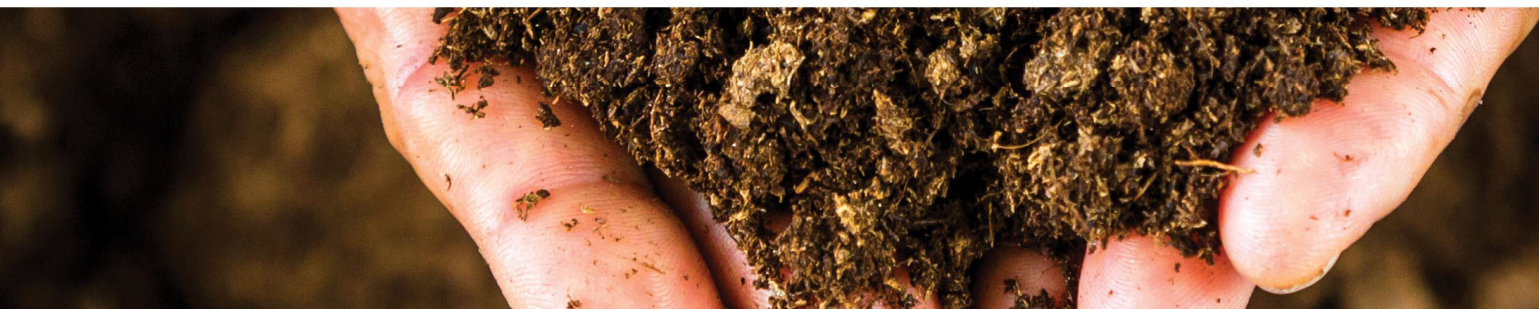
- 327 - Conservation Cover
- 390 - Riparian Herbaceous Cover
- 391 - Riparian Forest Buffer
- 395 – Stream Habitat Improvement and Management
- 396 – Aquatic Organism Passage
- 420 – Wildlife Habitat Planting
- 422 – Hedgerow Planting
- 472 – Access Control
- 580 – Streambank and Shoreline Protection
- 644 – Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management
- 645 – Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
- 646 – Shallow Water Development and Mgt
- 647 – Early Successional Habitat Development and Mgt
- 649 – Structures for Wildlife
- 657 – Wetland Restoration
- 658 – Wetland Creation
- 659 - Wetland Enhancement



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EQIP Conservation Incentive Contracts



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EQIP CIC – Nebraska FY2024

- **Goal:** Help producers address priority resource concerns on part of their operation as a “steppingstone” to achieving sustainable stewardship on their entire operation
- **Outcomes:**
 - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
 - Enhance carbon sequestration
 - Due to positive experiences under EQIP CIC, some participants go on to pursue further conservation benefits on their entire operation through applying for CSP
- **Land Use:** Crop, Pasture, Range, Forest
- **Priority Resource Concern:** “Soil Quality Limitations”, “Degraded Plant condition”, “Water Quality and Quantity”

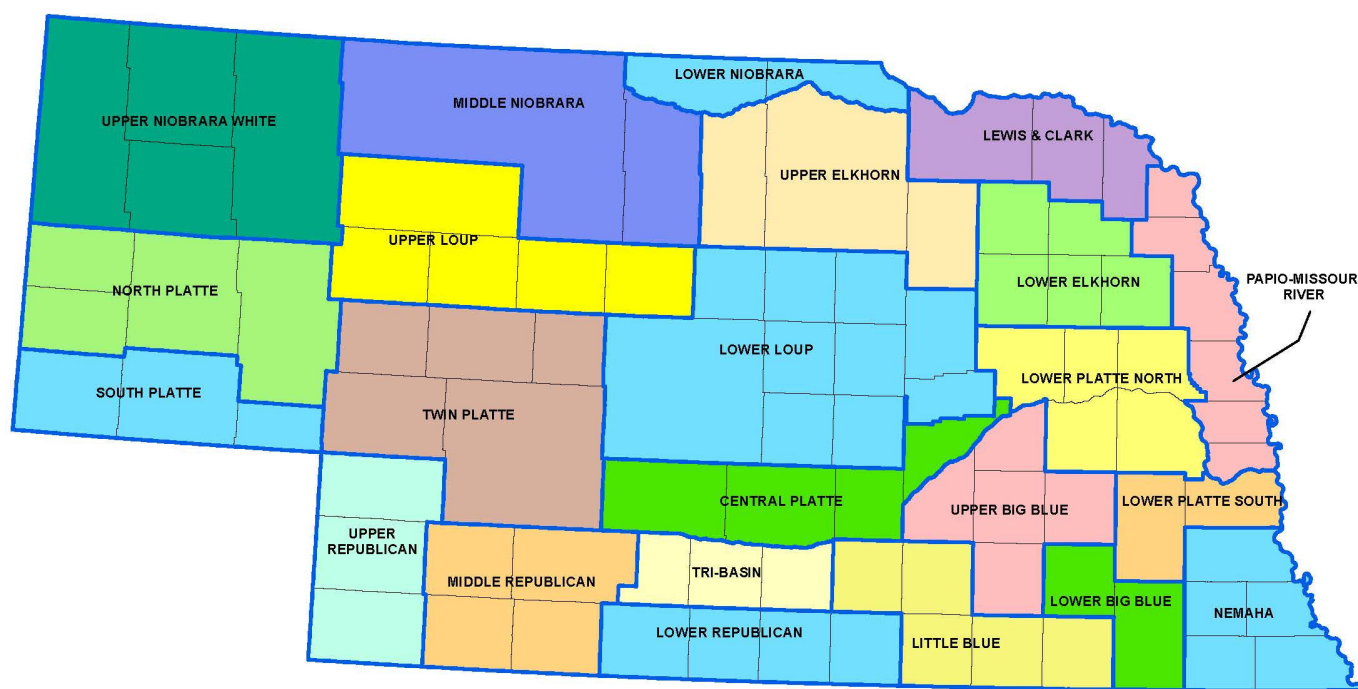




EQIP CIC – Nebraska FY2024 Incentive Practices

- 328 – Conservation Crop Rotation
- 329 – Residue and Tillage Management, No Till
- 338 - Prescribed Burning
- 340 – Cover Crop
- 449 - Irrigation Water Management
- 511 – Forage Harvest Management
- 528 – Prescribed Grazing
- 590 – Nutrient Management
- 595 – Pest Management Conservation System
- 645 – Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
- 647 – Early Successional Habitat Development and Management
- 808 – Soil Carbon Amendment
- 216- Soil Health Testing

FY2024 LOCAL WORK GROUP MEETINGS



LOCAL WORK GROUP MEETINGS

- Meetings completed in February/March 2024
- *LOCAL WORK GROUP AGENDA ITEMS:*
 - Priority Resource Concerns
 - Fund Pools - Ranking Tools – Screening Tools
 - Practice Payment Schedule
 - Local issues

Local Workgroup Recommendations

•General Summary

- Timing of Program Deadlines for the Fiscal Year (i.e. application batching dates, application ranking dates, obligation deadlines, etc.)
- Updates to payment rates and/or payment caps
- Priorities for funding (i.e. primary resource concerns to be addressed) so that ranking templates can be developed to align with these goals.

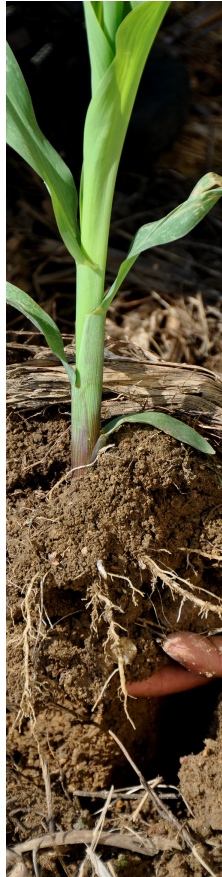
Local Workgroup Recommendations

•General Summary

- IRA Implementation processes
- When clarification in policy is needed (i.e. when replacement of practices is appropriate, whether management practices can be reapplied, etc.).
- Requests for practices to be included for consideration of funding in ranking pools.

Conservation Innovation Grants

- * There were no National or State CIG announcements in 2024
- * Announcements are anticipated for FY25



Natural
Resources
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RCPP



Introducing Emily Webster new RCPP Coordinator for Nebraska.



FB18 RCPP Projects

Resilient Futures for Nebraska Soils #1966

RCPP Type: Classic - State/Multi-State

Lead Partner: The Nature Conservancy

Partnership:

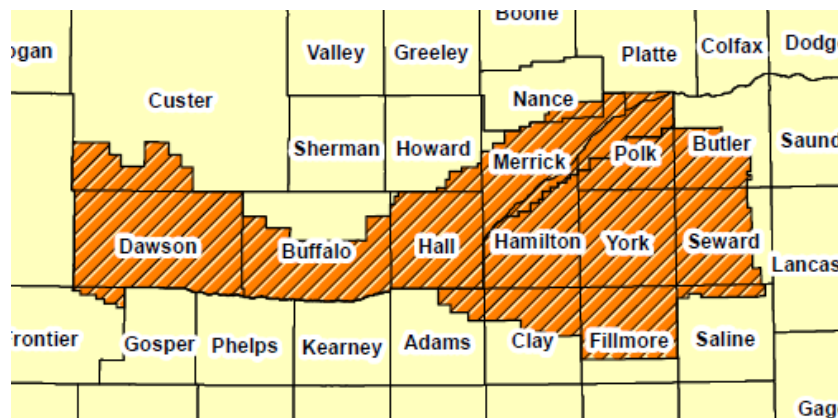
Cargill, McDonald's,
UBB NRD, CPNRD

Contract Started: 4/23/2021

Contract Expires: 4/23/2026

The Goals:

- Enroll 100,000 acres over 5 years
- Store 150,000 metric tons CO₂
- Prevent 375,000 tons of soil erosion
- Link producers to Carbon Credits (ESMC)



Success to Date:

FA Obligations:

FY21 Obligations: \$545,571.00 20 LMR

Contracts

FY22 Obligations: \$567,625.00 23 LMR

Contracts

FY23 Obligations: \$833,943.00 22 LMR

Contracts

FY 24 Obligations: \$1,386,271.00 30 LMR Contracts

Total Financial Assistance Available: \$981,828.00

Practices:

328 – Small Grain/Perennial

329 – Residue Mgt/No-Till

340 – Cover Crop

Cropland Cover for Soil Health and Wildlife #2135

RCPP Type: Classic Renewal - State/Multi-State

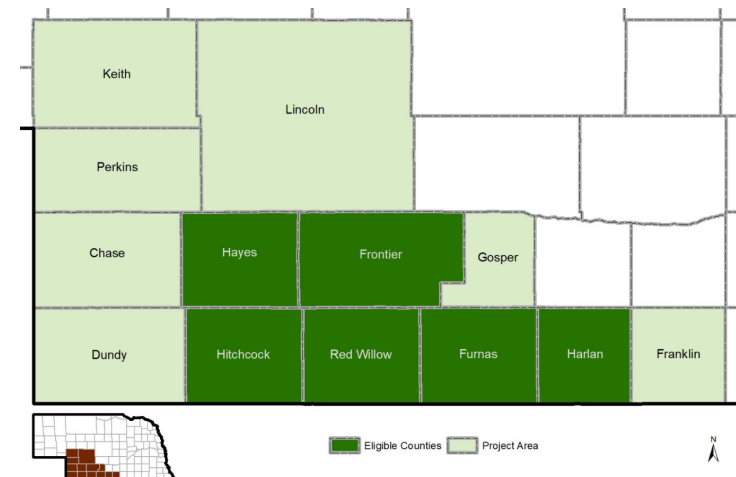
Lead Partner: NGPC

Contract Started: 1/29/2021

Contract Expires: 1/29/2026

The Goals:

Plant 7,000 acres of multi-species cover crop,
allowing grazing to max 75% - leaving 25% for
wildlife.



Success to Date:

Obligations:

FY22 Obligations: \$126,562.00 13 LMR Contracts

FY23 Obligations: \$86,783.00 6 LMR Contracts

FY24 Obligations: \$66,762.00 6 LMR Contracts

Total Financial Assistance Available: \$236,878.00

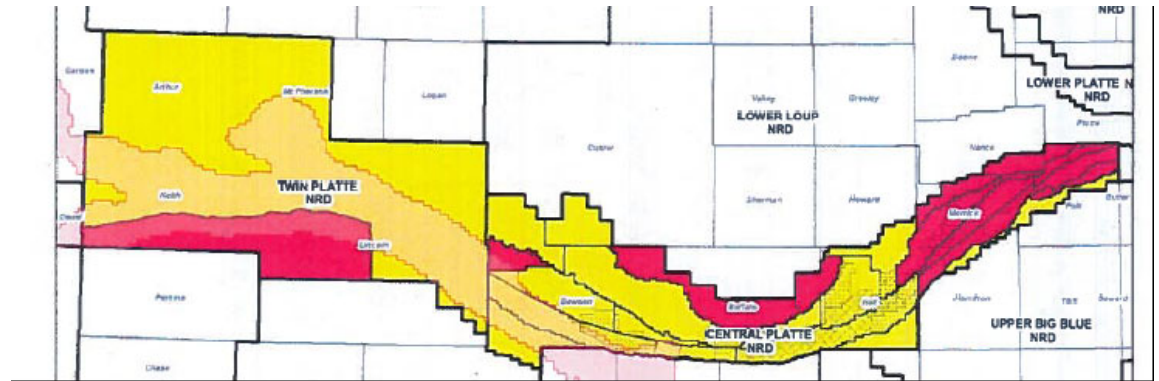
Practices:

340 – Cover Crop

472 – Access Control

Ogallala Aquifer and Platte River Recovery #2271

RCPP Type: Classic Renewal - State/Multi-State



Lead Partner: CPNRD

Partnership:

TPNRD, Thirty Mile Irrigation District, Southside Canal, Cozad Ditch Co.

Contract Started: 1/26/2022

Contract Expires: 1/26/2027

The Goals:

Continue reduction of water consumption and depletions by converting irrigated to dryland or efficient irrigation methods and technologies.

Success to Date

Obligations:

FY23 Obligations: \$529,058.00 11 LMR Contracts

FY24 Obligations: \$459,747.00 11 LMR Contracts

Total Financial Assistance Available: \$1,143,270.00

Practices:

328 – Irr to Dry
442 – Sprinkler
430 – Pipeline
533 – Pumping Plant
587 – Structure for WC
441 – Drip Systems
449 – IWM
590 – Nutrient Mgt
329 – Residue Mgt
340 – Cover Crop

Building Ranch Resiliency # 2406

RCPP Type Classic- State/Multi State

Lead Partner: World Wildlife Fund

Partnership: American Bird Conservancy, SD Game/Fish & Parks, Rainwater Basin Joint Venture, Bureau of Land Mgt, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, Milborn Seeds, Northern Great Plains Joint Venture

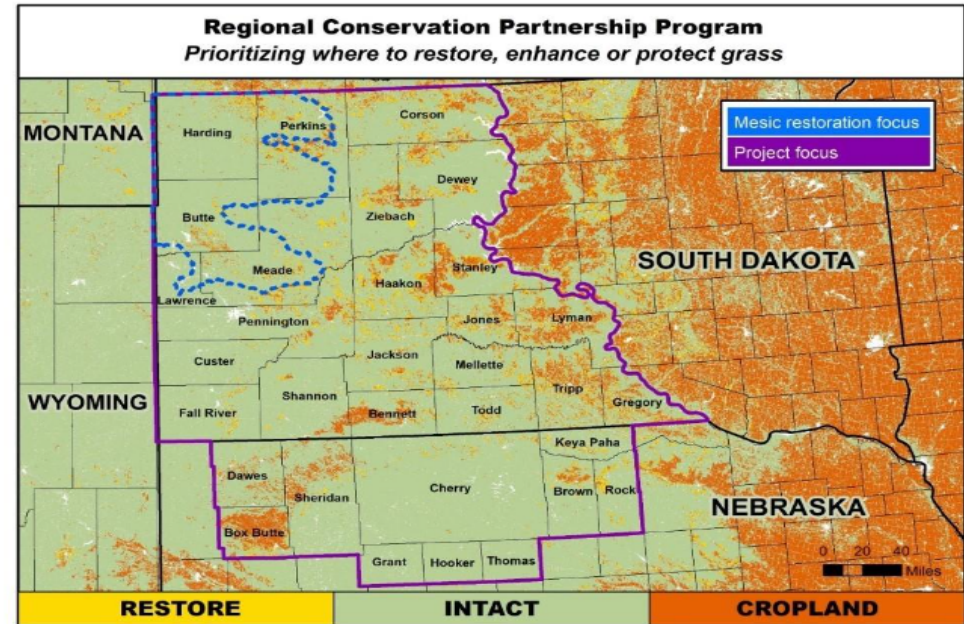
Contract Started: 10/26/2022

Contract Expires: 10/26/2026

The Goal:

Improve plant condition of 100,000 ac on 40 ranches for 10 years (NRCS contract term for infrastructure):

- ☐ Improving grazing management on at least: 35,000 ac
- ☐ 5,000 ac of enhanced habitat for wildlife
- ☐ 50 mi of fence replaced with wildlife-friendly fence
- ☐ 10 mi of new livestock pipe
- ☐ 1,400 ln ft of mesic restoration structures
- ☐ 100 ac of cedar removal
- ☐ Seeding 1,200 acres of marginal cropland to grass



Success to Date:

Obligations:

FY23 Obligations: \$29,788.00 1 LMR Contracts

FY24 Obligations: \$431,928.00 5 LMR Contracts

Total Financial Assistance Available: \$22,000.00

Practices:

-Livestock practices

Other Active RCPP Projects for Nebraska

AFA Projects

- Nebraska Forest Restoration – **#2173** “Nebraska Led”
- Life From Soil – The Ranch Sustainability and Viability Network – **#2752** “Montana Led”
- Kansas Nebraska Wetland Initiative – **#3256** “Kansas Led”
- Expanding Soil Health Through Carbon Markets – **#3535** “South Dakota”

Classic Projects

- Platte and Playa Wetland Protection – **#2434** “Nebraska Led”
- Improving Grassland Health and Connecting Resilient Lands – **#3374** “Nebraska Led”

FY 24 RCPP National Proposal Stats

Highlights:

- **\$1.5 Billion total funding for Classic and AFA projects**
- **\$100 Million set-aside for proposals led by a tribe or tribal entity**
- **321 Proposals Submitted**
 - **AFA- 167**
 - **Classic- 154**
- **Total request for all proposals \$5.3 Billion**
 - **AFA - \$2.9 Billion**
 - **Classic - \$2.5 Billion**

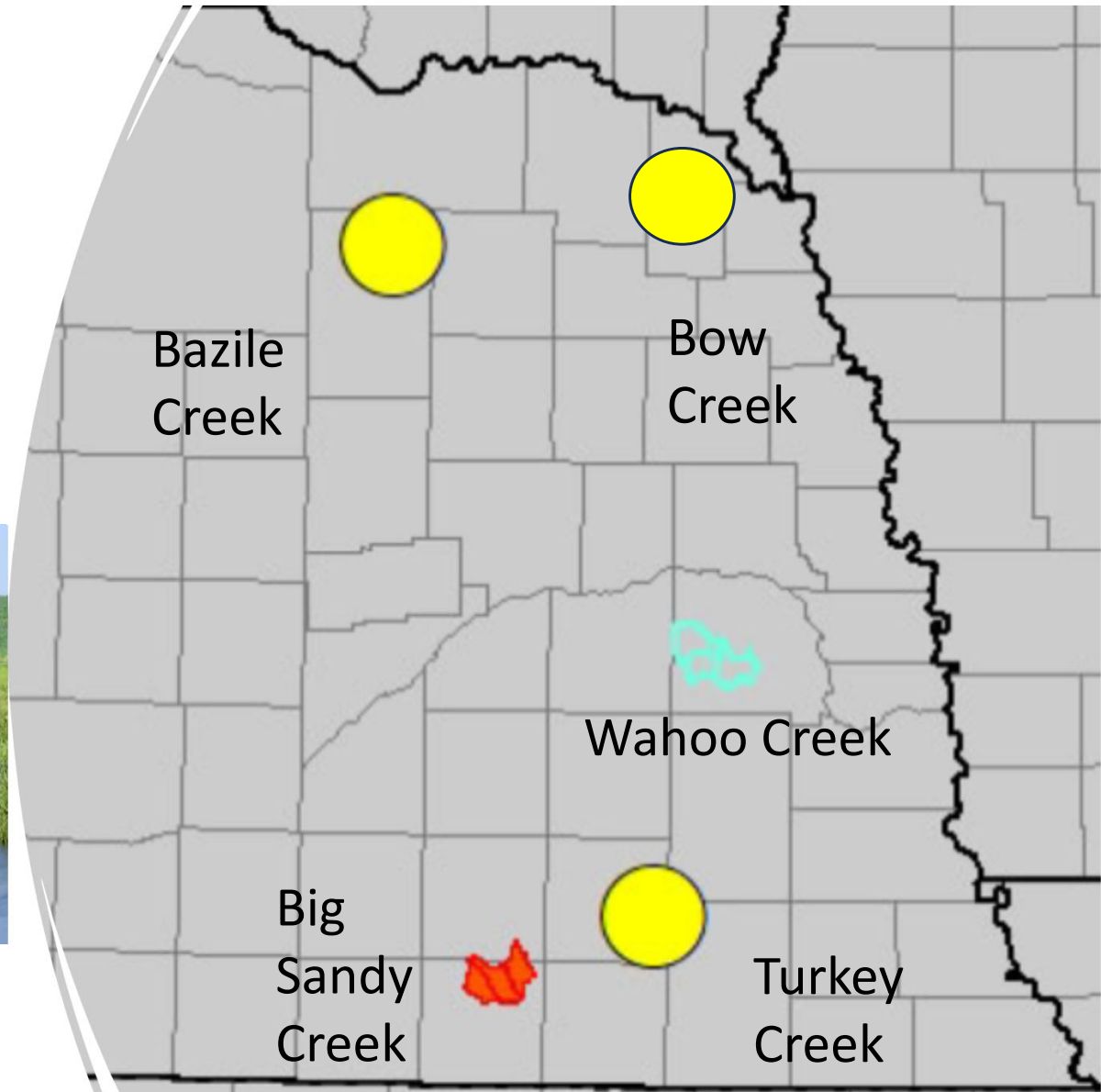
FY 2024 Timeline for RCPP Proposals

- Proposals were due by July 2nd to be entered in the RCPP portal.
- States had to have AFA proposals reviewed by July 26th and returned to the RCPP portal.
- States had to have Classic proposals reviewed by August 12th and returned turned to the RCPP portal.
- National RCPP Office is hoping to announce the awarded projects by October/November.

FY 24- New RCPP Proposal

- Nebraska led proposals:
 - AFA – 5 proposals
 - Classic – 3 proposals
- Nebraska as partners state:
 - AFA – 8 proposals
 - Classic – 0 Proposals

National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI)



Bazile NWQI Area- Implementation

Bazile Creek NRD Area:

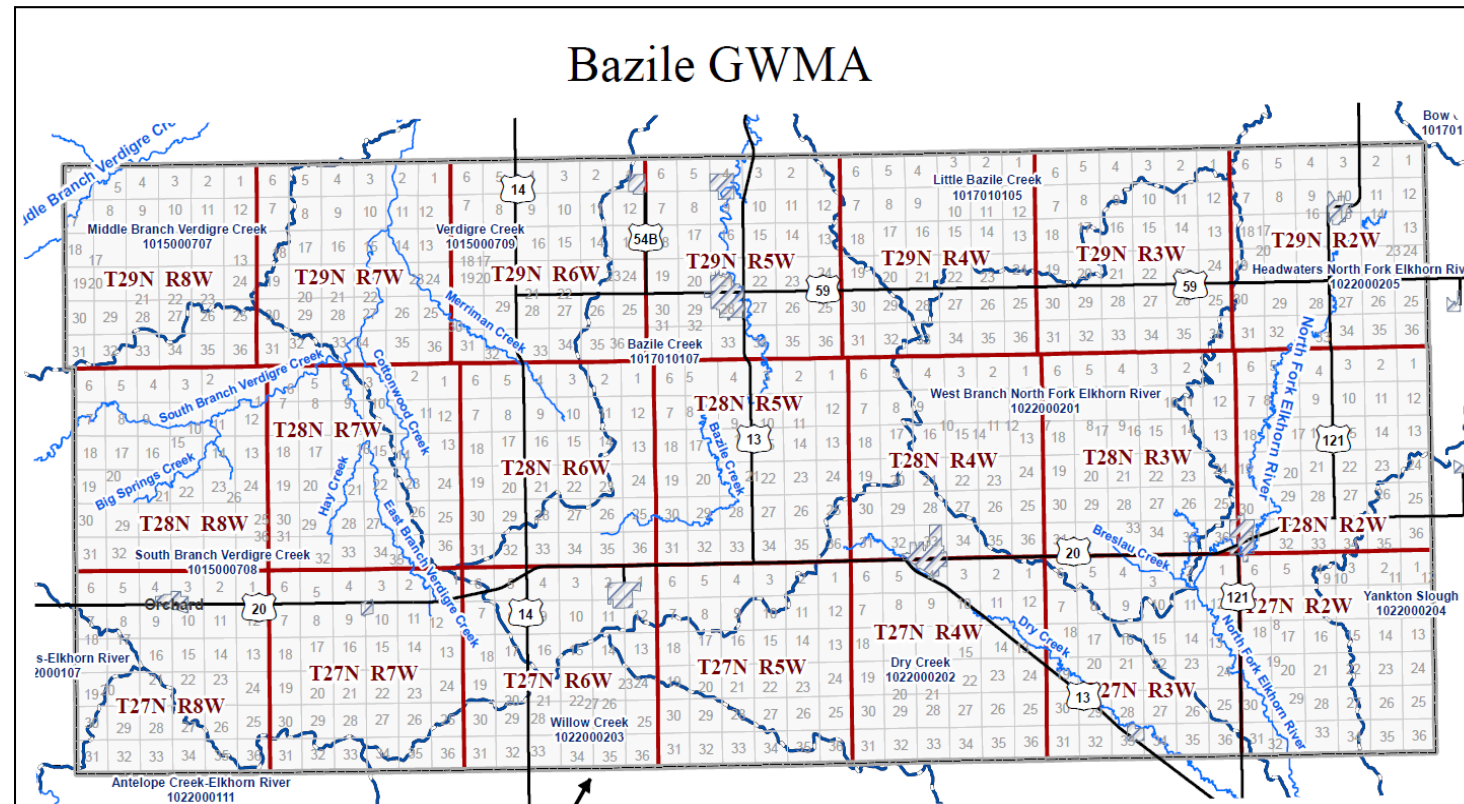
- Elkhorn
- Lower Niobrara
- Lewis and Clark
- Upper Elkhorn

FY 2024

Application Assessed	55
Funds Started With	
\$555,813.00	
Contracts Approved	19
Funds Obligated	
\$2,394,115.00	
Acres Treated	8,730.4 Ac

Most Common Practices:

- Nutrient Mgt
- Cover Crops
- Irrigation Water Mgt



Turkey NWQI Area- Implementation

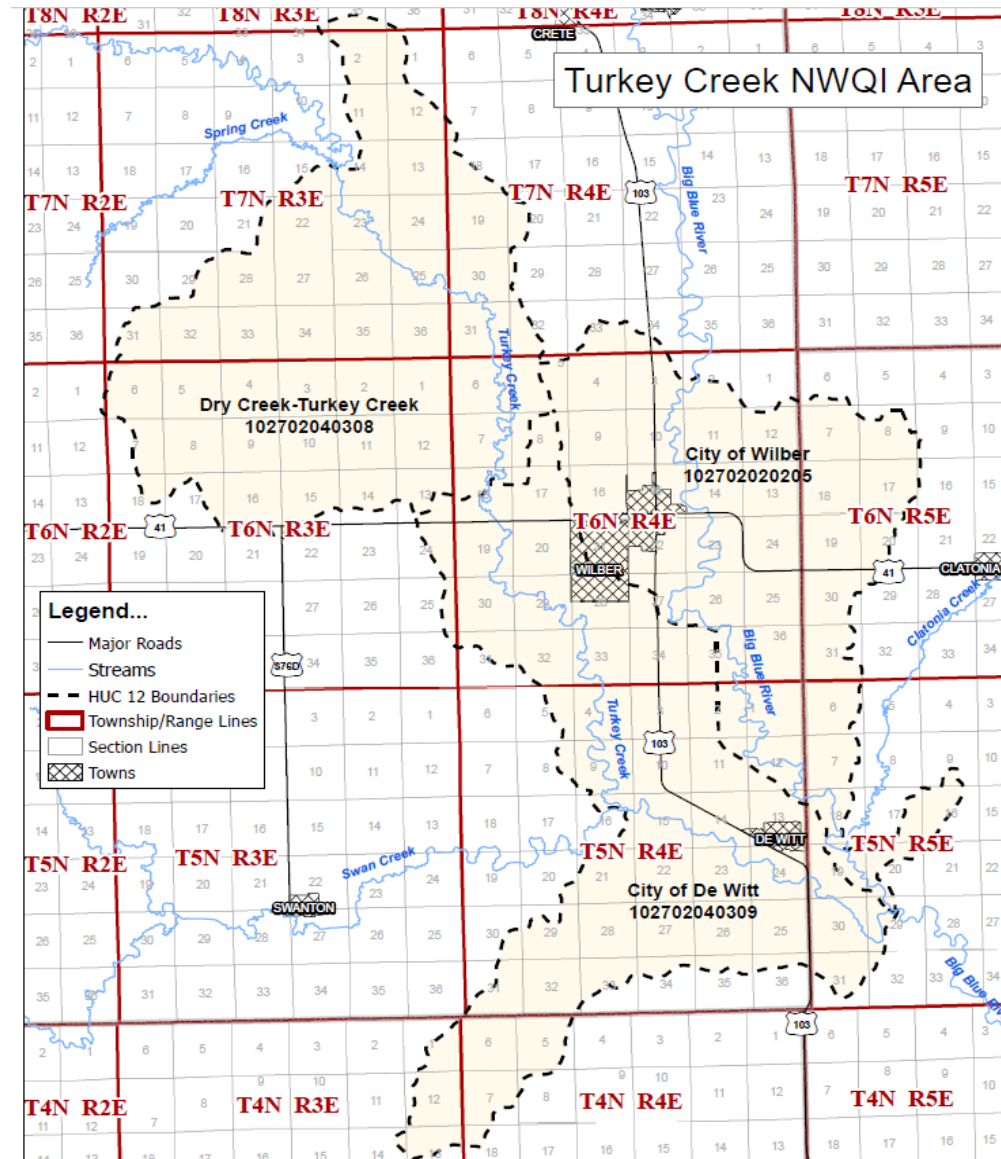
Turkey Creek NRD Area: - Lower Big Blue

FY 2024

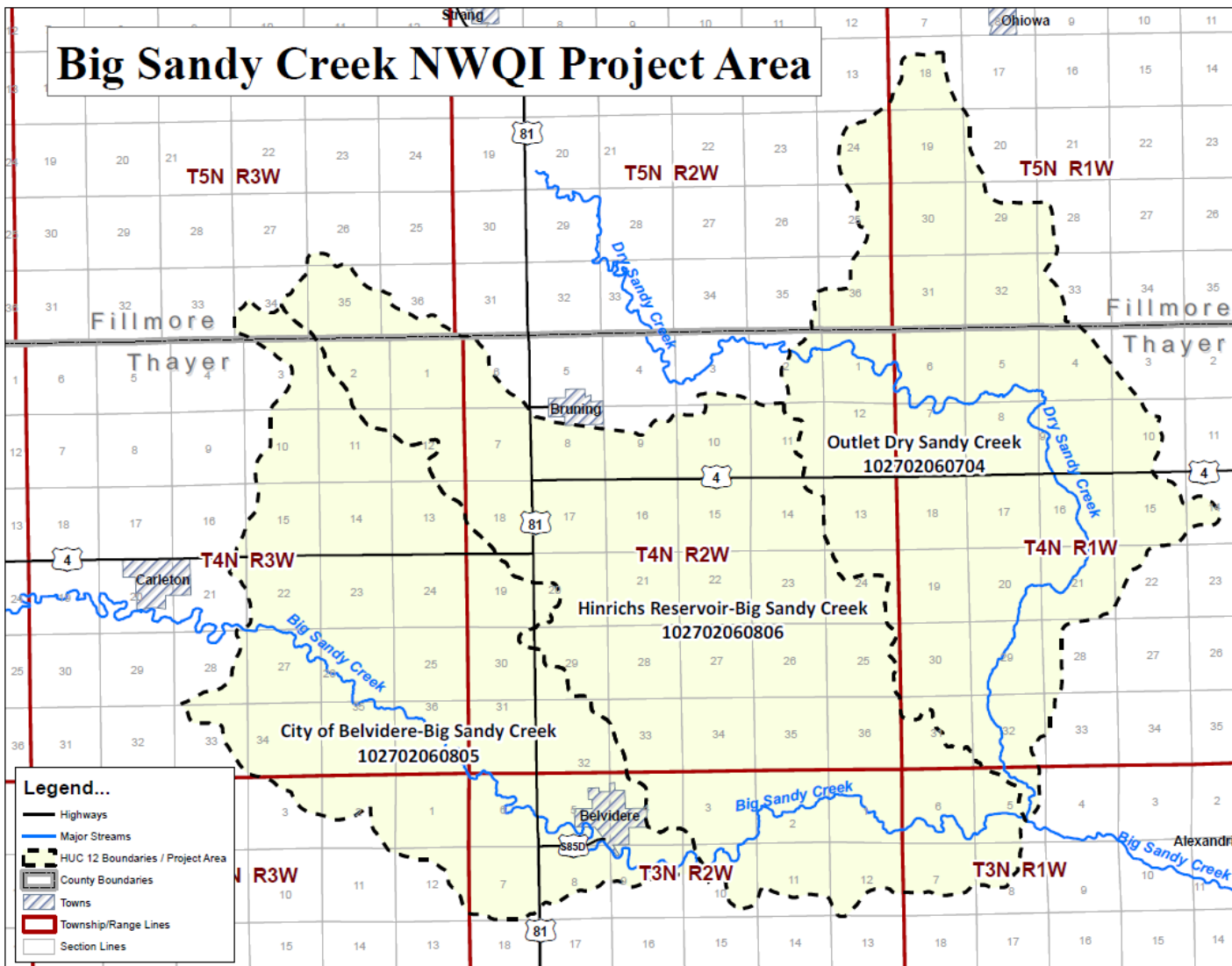
Application Assessed	11
Funds Started with	\$352,462.00
Contracts Approved	3
Funds Obligated	\$214,359.00
Acres Treated	468.5

Most Common Practice:

- Nutrient Mgt
- Cover Crops
- Irrigation Sprinkler Package



Big Sandy Creek NWQI Project Area



Big Sandy NWQI Area- Implementation

Big Sandy Creek NRD Area:

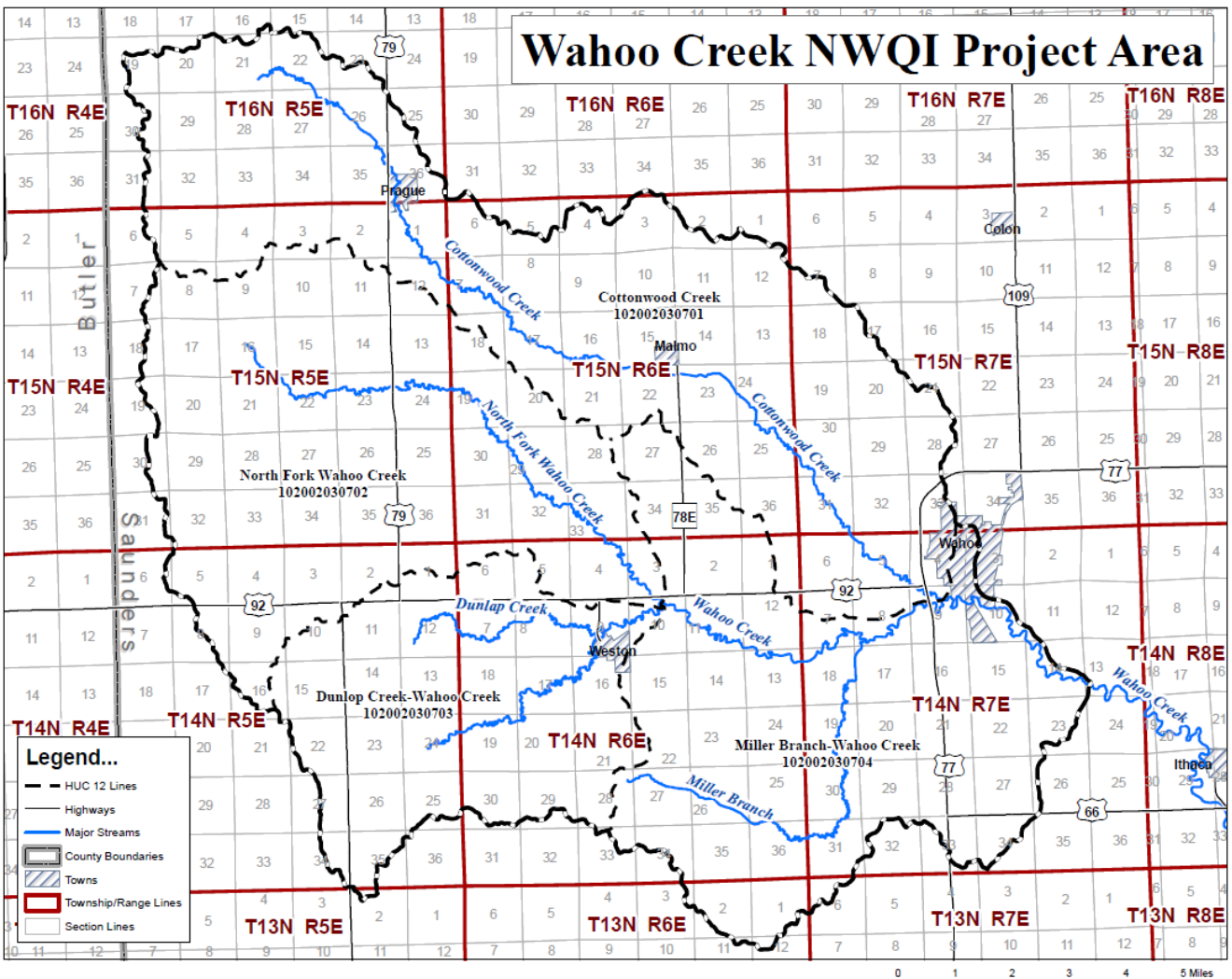
- Little Big Blue

FY 2024

Application Assessed	31
Funds Started With	\$503,466.00
Contracts Approved	17
Funds Obligated	\$450,919.00
Acres Treated	4,976.9 Ac

Most Common Practice:

- Pest Mgt
- Cover Crops
- Irrigation Water Mgt



Wahoo NWQI Area- Implementation

Wahoo Creek NRD Area:
- Lower Platte North

FY 2024

Application Assessed	4
Funds Started With	
\$268,515.00	
Contracts Approved	4
Funds Obligated	\$24,016.00
Acres Treated	219.9 Ac

Most Common Practices:

- Cover Crops

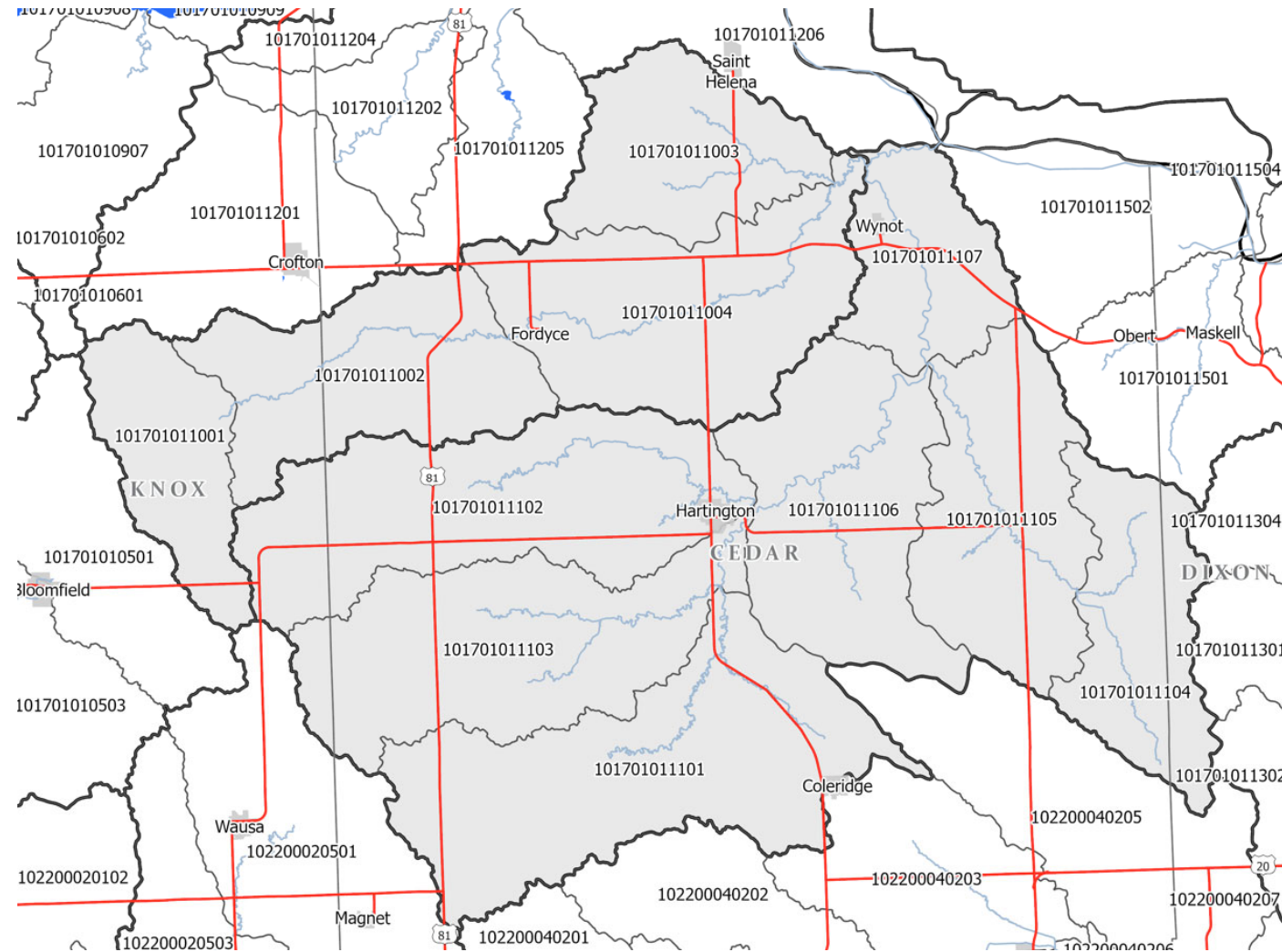
Bow NWQI Area- Planning Phase

Bow Creek NRD Area: - Lewis and Clark

Plan Development FY 2024

Recruiting producers,
determining interest and
working with partners.

No Funding for 2024





QUESTIONS?

FY2025 ACEP - Nebraska

- FY25 application cut-offs
 - October 4, 2024 IRA funding Round 1
 - November 15, 2024 Farm Bill funding
 - December 20, 2024 IRA funding Round 2
- This is for WRE, WRE-WREP, ALE and ALE-GSS

FY2025 ACEP - Nebraska

- Will use appraisals again in FY2025 to determine WRE acquisition costs.
 - 95% GARC, NTE rate of \$13,690/ac irrigated cropland, NTE \$9,730/ac all other land
 - Approved 8/28/2024

