



USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service South Dakota State Technical Committee Meeting

March 12, 2025 | 10 a.m. Central Time

Drifters – 25 Hustan Avenue, Ft. Pierre, SD

Join the STC meeting via Microsoft Teams on your computer, mobile app or room device:

[Join the meeting now](#) Meeting ID: 280 369 721 006 Passcode: c3Ms6wE7

Dial-in by phone [+1 202-650-0123](#), [47696061](#)# Phone conference ID: 476 960 61#

AGENDA

1. Welcome

Moderator, Colette Kessler, Assistant State Conservationist Partnerships

- Introductions

2. Opening Remarks

Tony Sunseri, State Conservationist

- Soil Health Awareness Week

3. Congressional Delegates Updates

4. Updates of the USDA Serving South Dakota

- **USDA Rural Development (RD)**
Dana Kleinsasser, Deputy State Director, Huron
- **Farm Service Agency (FSA)**
Owen Fagerhaug, Agricultural Program Specialist, Farm Service Agency, Huron
- **Risk Management Agency (RMA)**
Eric Bashore, Director/Jeremy Not Afraid, Senior Risk Management Specialist, Billings, MT
- **Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**
Tony Sunseri, State Conservationist, Huron

5. Ecological Sciences Update, Conservation Planning and Conservation Practices Update

Jessica Michalski, State Resource Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service

- Drought Situation across South Dakota
 - Land management under drought conditions and USDA Assistance
 - NRCS – conservation planning and mitigating impacts
Emily Rohrer, State Rangeland Management Specialist and Marcia Deneke, State Agronomist; Kent Vlieger, State Soil Health Specialist
 - New for Ag Producers: Drought Resources fact sheet
 - FSA – Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)
- Open Discussion: other organizational assistance or activities
- Dakota Conservation Network, SDACD <https://conservesd.org/>
 - Growing Connections – SD Soil Health Coalition Partnership

6. Workload Update for Wetland Determinations and Highly Erodible Land

Deke Hobbick, Assistant State Conservationist for Compliance, NRCS

7. NRCS SD Engineering Update

James Reedy, State Conservation Engineer, NRCS

- USDA NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program
- NRCS SD Engineering assistance helping landowners

8. Farm Service Agency Conservation Program of the Farm Bill Update

Owen Fagerhaug, Agricultural Program Specialist, Farm Service Agency

- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
- Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)

9. NRCS Conservation Programs of the Farm Bill Updates

Val Dupraz, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, NRCS

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- News: EQIP Fire Act Now (March 28 Deadline for EQIP Disaster Assistance
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/eqip-environmental-quality-incentives/news/march-28-deadline-for-eqip-disaster>)
- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
- Agricultural Conservation Easements Program (ACEP)
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

10. NRCS Soils Update

Nathan Jones, State Soil Scientist

- South Dakota Soil Properties Project - *Chyenna Young, Assistant State Soil Scientist, NRCS, Pierre*

11. Partnerships and USDA NRCS Agreements Update

Colette Kessler, Assistant State Conservationist Partnerships, NRCS

- Update of Conservation Collaboration Cooperative Agreements (CCCA) for FY2025

12. General Discussion, Questions, Round Robin of Conservation Partners Updates:

- Matt Gottlob, Coordinator, SD Pheasants Forever
- Bruce Toay, Ducks Unlimited
- Ryan Heiniger, Executive Director / David Frabotta, Director of Communications, Conservation Technology Information Center
- Kris Dozark, 319 Implementation Coordinator, Environmental Scientist, SD DANR
- Laura Kahler, Director, SD Grasslands Initiative
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Additional information

USDA NRCS South Dakota Staffing and Personnel Updates

-> NRCS South Dakota Web Page: The Personnel Directory can be found under Contact Us

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/contact/state-office-contacts/south-dakota-state-office>

Subscribe to updates for the USDA NRCS SD State Technical Committee, please visit www.farmers.gov, then scroll down to “Subscribe to Updates”– follow the menus to find “State Technical Committee” in the topic list. Also, please take the opportunity to consider other topics and geographic locations down to the county level.



Find **archived individual STC Meeting information** at the USDA NRCS SD web page for <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/events/south-dakota-state-technical-committee-meeting> (Shortened URL: <https://bit.ly/StateTechnicalCommittee>). Please use this link to find the [State Technical Committee meetings recordings on NRCS SD YouTube Channel Playlist](#)

The meeting notifications of the regularly scheduled State Technical Committee (STC) are also distributed via a shared mailbox: sm.fpac.nrcs.sd.partnerships@usda.gov. Notifications via U.S. Postal Service may be requested by contacting the NRCS State Office Randi Papka randi.papka@usda.gov or calling (605) 352-1200.

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Executive Proclamation

State of South Dakota

Office of the Governor

Whereas, agriculture is South Dakota's number one industry, contributing 129,753 jobs and 32.1 billion dollars in total output, with farmers and ranchers creating this impact through the management of cropland, forests, grasslands, and livestock; and,

Whereas, soil provides the foundation and means by which we can grow productive plants and raise healthy animals; and,

Whereas, farmers and ranchers serve as leading advocates for the importance of our soils as a state resource. They promote management practices that increase its health, productivity, and resilience; and,

Whereas, healthy soil can improve the nutrient density of the food it produces. Healthy soil grows healthy food which results in healthy people; and,

Whereas, sustainable farms and ranches serve as cornerstones for our communities by building increased soil organic matter which cycles nitrogen, sequesters carbon naturally, reduces production costs, and enhances wildlife habitat; and,

Whereas, sustainable agricultural production improves the profitability of our farms and ranches, protects our water quality, stabilizes our roads and bridges, and enhances South Dakotans' quality of life:

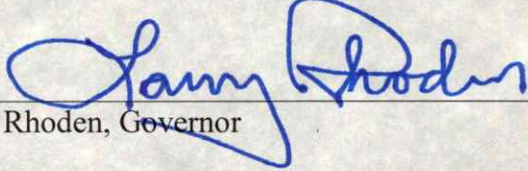
Now, Therefore, I, Larry Rhoden, Governor of the State of South Dakota, do hereby proclaim the week of March 9, 2025, as

SOIL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK

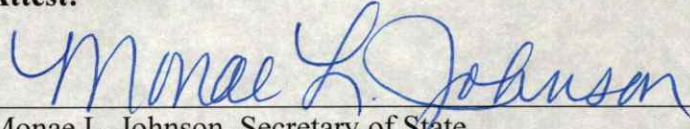
in South Dakota.



In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of South Dakota, in Pierre, the Capital City, this Sixth Day of March in the Year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Twenty-Five.


Larry Rhoden, Governor

Attest:


Monae L. Johnson, Secretary of State



South Dakota

Soil Health Coalition

Promotional Kit

Soil Health Awareness Week

By the governor's proclamation, South Dakota will celebrate Soil Health Awareness Day on March 13, 2025. We hope you'll help us celebrate the benefits of soil health the entire week of March 9-15! Below you'll find materials to share on social media and links to resources to help students learn more about the importance of keeping the soil healthy.

Soil Health Awareness Week Logo

Share this logo on your social media channels to remind people how important the soil is!

Download logo at <https://tinyurl.com/ys2ttbmn>



Why It Matters

A variety of themed logos are available to show the various ways soil health affects our lives! Download themed logos for [wildlife](#), [economics](#), [water quality](#), [consumers](#), [carbon](#), [producers](#), [roads and bridges](#), [everyone](#), and [young and old](#).



Video: Soil Health is...

This short video explains the benefits of soil health! Download it at <https://tinyurl.com/4s9mb94r> or view it on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/Mm7J5agmzE8>

Testimonials

Hear what producers who are using soil health practices have to say about the benefits they are seeing!

Download these graphics at <https://tinyurl.com/bd7rdkra>



"When I started no-tilling I was saving moisture and I figured it would reduce the erosion, but there's a lot more to that."

It's a way to pull carbon out of the air and put it in the ground. Carbon and organic matter are basically the same thing, so if I can pull carbon out of the air and put it in the ground I'm making the soil healthier."

-Dennis Hoyle, Roscoe, SD

Soil Health, It Matters Because of Carbon!



"We can learn so much by just looking at some of these prairie soils. There's literally hundreds of thousands of organisms in this little chunk of soil, creating a relationship with the plants to exchange nutrients from the plants for the nutrients in the soil."

This is what I want to emulate in our crop ground."

-Bryan Jorgensen, Ideal, SD



"The economics of farming have to work. You still have to be able to pencil in a profit when you are putting in your grain."

But, we have found that we can produce the yields for our wheat that can make it profitable and then by following with a cover crop, our corn and our soybeans are more profitable the next year."

-Brian & Jamie Johnson, Frankfort, SD

Soil Health, It Matters Economically!



"We see that no-till minimizes your risks in, say, a rainy, wet year or a hot dry summer with 90-100 degree heat that is continuous."

It just seems like it is saving some of your bushels out there. We plan to stick with it and keep going with the no-till process because we believe it works."

-Liz and Steve Sigdestad, Pierpont, SD



"The Big Sioux River is the water source for Sioux Falls, South Dakota."

Our riparian buffers are low grounds or streams that are headed to the Big Sioux River, and what we're doing is planting grasses and trees on the edges of them. Making them wider, to make that buffer strip bigger to help filter the water for better water quality."

-Chad Schooley, Castlewood, SD

Soil Health, It Matters Because of Water Quality!



"The purpose for cover crops was water management, erosion and overall soil health. The infiltration year one, you can see that, we've had some big rains in the spring the last few years and cover crops have certainly shined."

There are so many living things there, when you go out there and dig with a living cover, it just looks alive."

-Jordan Reimnitz, Corsica, SD

Five Principles of Soil Health: Soil Cover



Keeping soil covered with a layer of crop residue or growing plants is the first principle of soil health because soil cannot be built if it is being lost. Soil "armor" is the first line of defense against the powerful forces of wind, rain, and sun, and it also offers a host of other benefits!

Benefits of soil cover:

1. Controls erosion
2. Reduces weed pressure
3. Moderates soil temperatures
4. Retains moisture
5. Reduces compaction/crusting
6. Offers a home for biology



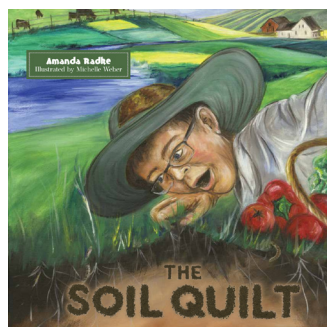
Five Principles

These infographics explain the five principles of soil health, which can be used to improve land and communities. Download at <https://tinyurl.com/rpuee5tw>

Benefits

These social media graphics explain some of the benefits of soil health!

Download them and others at <https://tinyurl.com/d4h4vuyn>



Youth Resources

Make soil health education a part of your classroom or home studies! Check out the many different resources available for students at

www.sdsoilhealthcoalition.org/youth-resources/

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Managing Drought on Cropland

March 12, 2025



FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION
FSA | NRCS | RMA | Business Center

1

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Managing Drought on Cropland

Decisions made last fall, following harvest, are impacting how soil responds to drought today.

- Fragility of crop residue
- Anchored and upright residue vs. detached and/or buried
- Number of fall tillage passes
- Type of equipment used
- Direction of tillage operation(s)
- Amount of residue left on the soil surface



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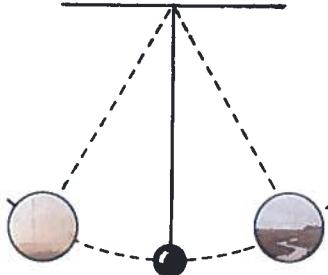
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

- **Why Does NRCS Do What We Do?**
 - Conservation Planning Assists Producers in Preparing for the Unexpected

Current Ag Outlook

- Near-equal chance of below or above normal precipitation
- Near-equal chances of above- or below normal temperatures



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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
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- **How Do NRCS Staff Assist Producers**

NRCS will make recommendations that are tailored to meet the goals and objectives of producer.

Employees use conservation practices and technical skills to provide science-based, well thought out conservation planning alternatives.

Employees work on-the-ground, side-by-side with producers to identify concerns and discuss producer's individual conservation goals.

Recommended treatment includes a balance between the land use for economic return and protecting its ability to be productive from generation to generation.

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Drought Management Considerations:

-  Minimize soil disturbance
-  Consider alternative or drought tolerant crops
-  Manage nutrient applications
-  Reduce water losses
-  Adopt conservation practices which build healthy soil

FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION FSA | NRCS | RMA | Business Center

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U.S. Department of Agriculture

Cropland Planning Benefits:

Agriculture is usually the first economic sector to be affected by drought.

The ability of a soil to capture and retain moisture over a growing season can function like a bank account against which crops, or forage can draw when a drought occurs.

Conservation practices which positively affect available water holding capacity, and water retention, reduce vulnerability to drought and can also increase soil organic matter, improve soil structure, and reduce erosion losses.

FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION FSA | NRCS | RMA | Business Center

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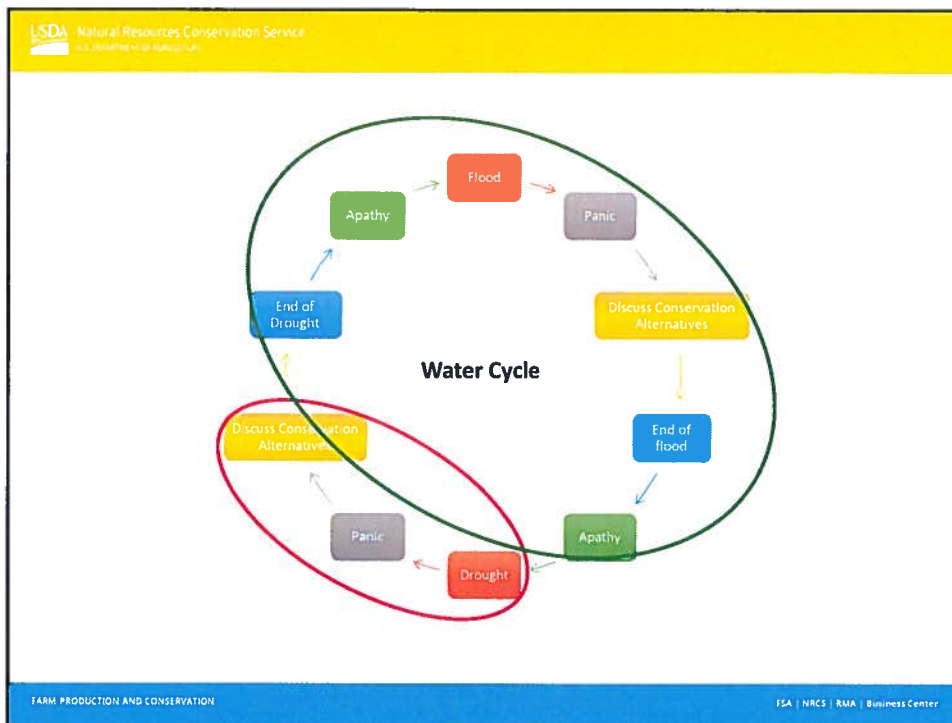
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Drought Planning on Grazinglands

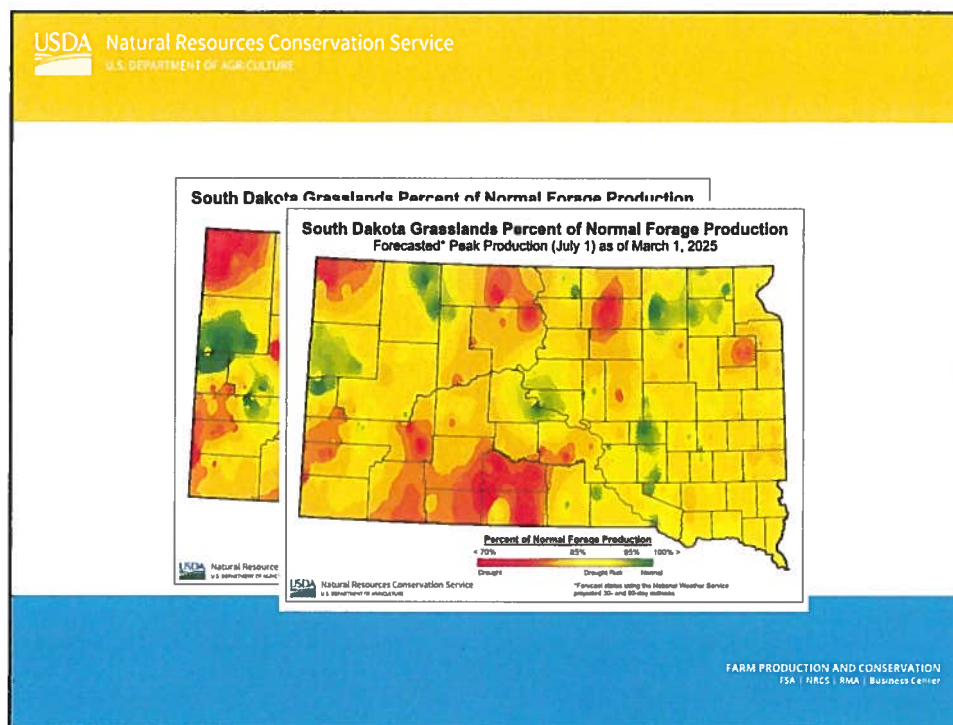


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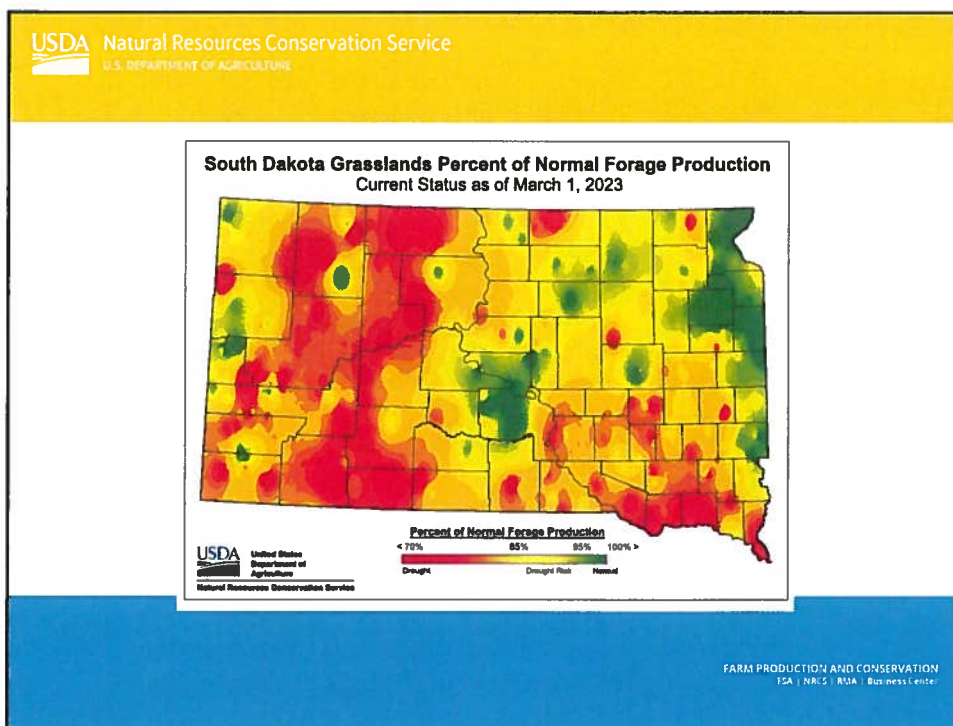
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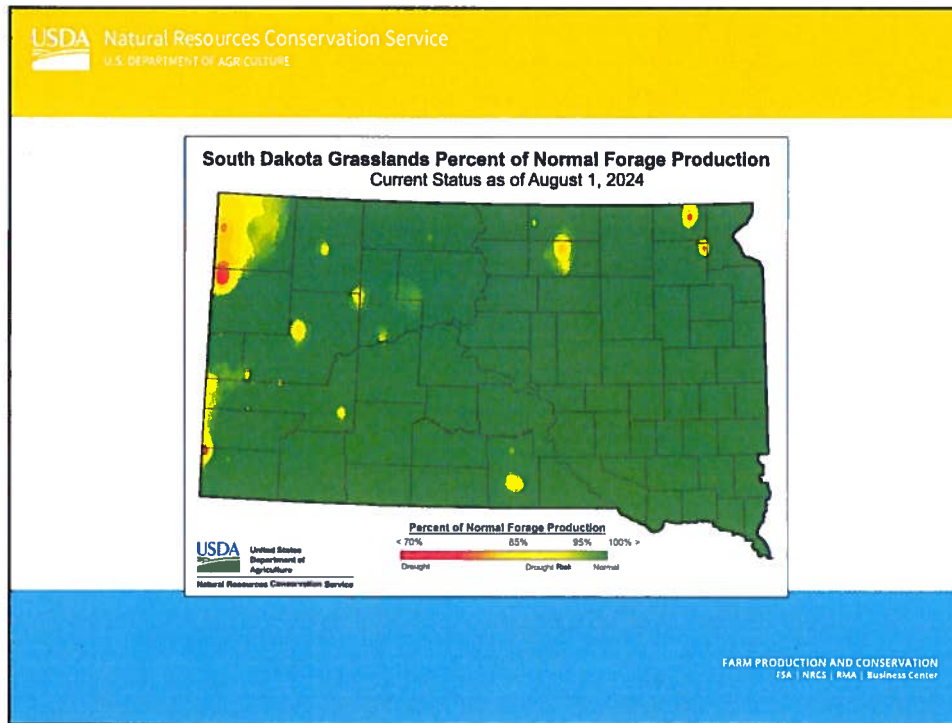
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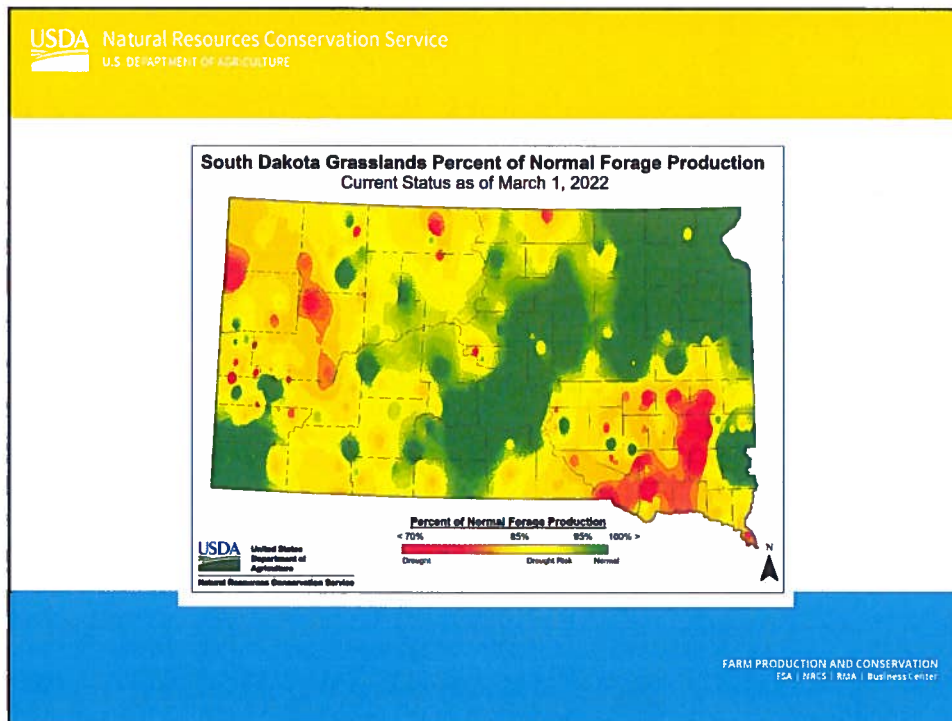
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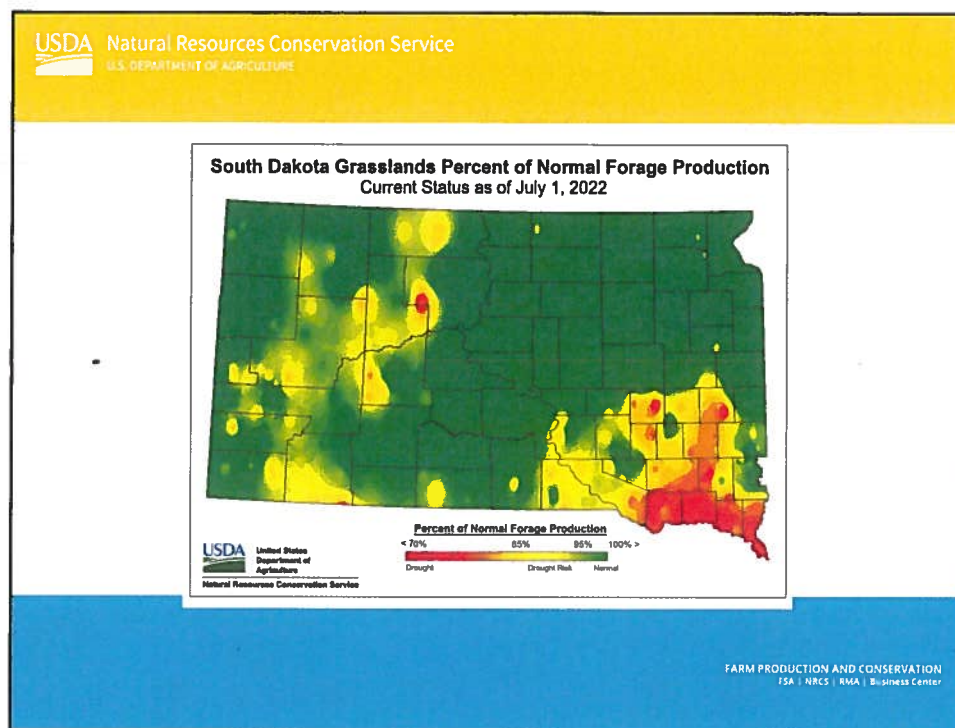
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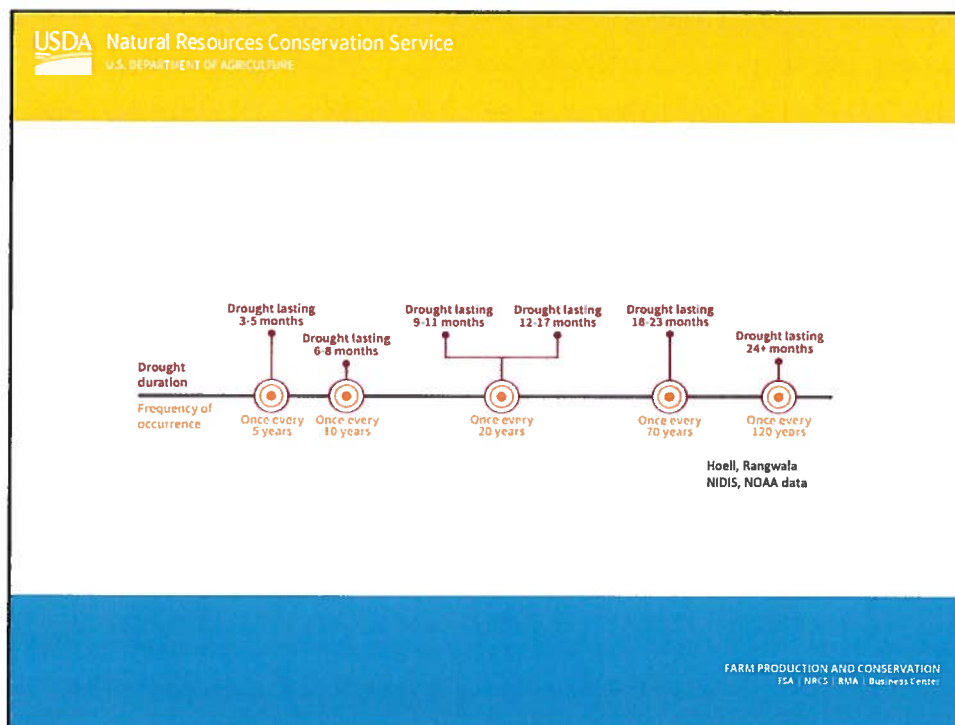
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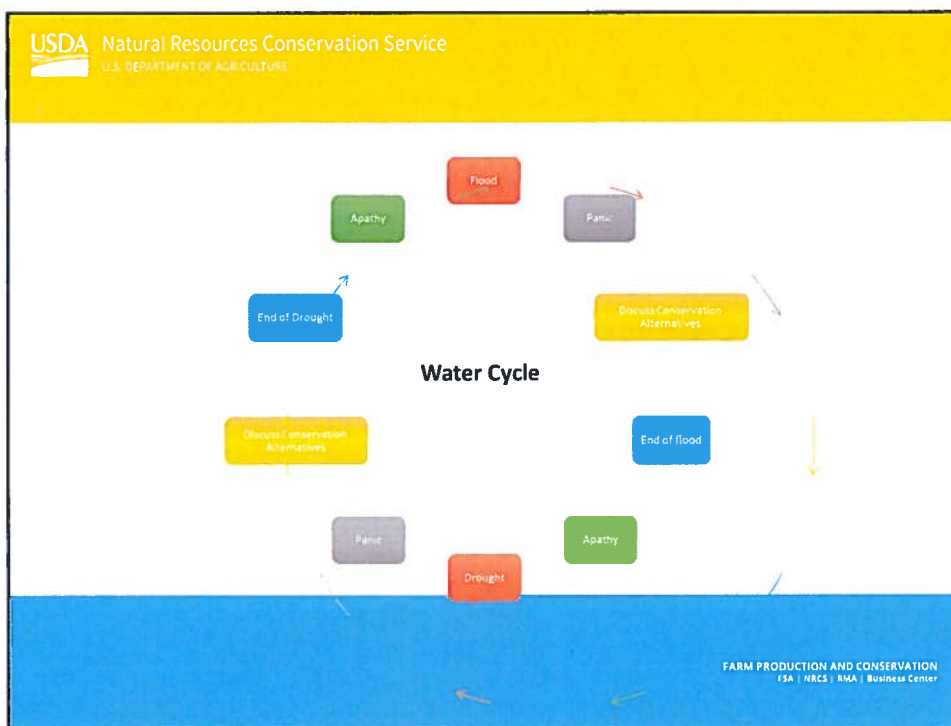
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Include your Drought Plan in your Grazing Plan!

- Determine appropriate 'trigger dates' for your operation
- Based upon metrics such as:
 - Fall moisture
 - Early spring moisture
 - Late spring moisture
 - Available Water sources
 - Prior Condition of pastures
 - Availability of alternative forages
 - Etc

FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION

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Monitoring

- Monitor your precipitation 
 - COCORAHS!
- Monitor your utilization 
 - How much did your livestock eat? How much is left?
 - Leaving some standing vegetation helps with:
 - Plant recovery (=better forage for next year!)
 - Reducing evaporation from soil
 - Increasing snow catch in winter
 - Increase micro-biotic activity
- Monitor your livestock  
 - Body Condition Scoring
 - Fecal scoring

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Resources

- South Dakota Drought Tool
- SD Grazing Tool
- Resources from other partners:
 - Pray for Rain, Plan for Drought
 - Growing Resilience
 - SD Grassland Coalition
 - SD Soil Health Coalition

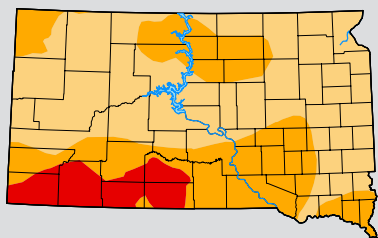
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Drought 2025:

Where to find sound advice and tools to help work through it



US Drought Monitor South Dakota

The Drought Monitor: Quick weekly Updates of drought conditions in South Dakota with one click on the web

https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/Data/pdf/current/current_SD_cat.pdf

Also see future drought outlook at <https://www.weather.gov/unr/drought>

Pray for Rain, Plan for Drought

—Sound advice from South Dakota ranchers who have successfully battled drought over the years. Includes:

Video interviews with ranchers Bart Carmichael, Jim Faulstich, Dan Rasmussen, Larry Wagner, Luke Perman, Jeff Zimprich, and others.

Publications on how to rotate, rest and recover pastures to be resilient with drought.

Mentor contacts with a list of ranchers who will talk on the phone about how they drought-proof their ranch by planning ahead for resilience to drought, when they sell livestock, how they protect their grass, etc.

Courtesy of the South Dakota Grassland Coalition. <https://sddroughtplan.org/>

Straight from South Dakota ranchers and experts

—A continuing compilation of soil health and grazing tips, including drought related topics, in a variety of online formats, that includes:

Podcasts and short-read blogs featuring South Dakota ranchers on how they are making their ranches resilient.

Free brief fact sheets on topics such as South Dakota's drought tool, what's involved in a drought contingency plan, trigger dates, calving on grass, the keys to resilient ranches, and more.

Video interviews with ranchers, conservationists and consultants including Jim Kopriva, Drew Anderson, Pat Guptill, Lealand Schoon, Van Mansheim, Emily Helms, and others that center on components of soil health and sound grazing systems. <https://www.growingresiliencesd.com/drought-management>

SDSU Extension and USDA/NRCS assistance

—South Dakota State University Extension, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and conservation district offices are involved in many of the recommendations for drought resilience. Visit their local offices or their websites.

Produced by the Growing Resilience team on behalf of the South Dakota NRCS and its partners. More information online at: <https://www.growingresiliencesd.com/>



Guidance from resilient ranchers during the dry spell in 2022

There were worries about drought just three years ago. Here's what ranchers experienced in planning ahead for drought had to say then. Their advice still applies.



Advice on Navigating a Dry 2022

"We've all been through droughts. They're inevitable here. We can't stop them, but there's a lot we can do to prepare to make them less stressful and hurtful to our operations. Our entire board has drought plans and grazing plans—a few thoughts from some board members are shown below. We'd be happy to talk with you about what we've learned."

*Board of Directors,
South Dakota Grassland Coalition*



When we comingled our herds, that meant all of our animals were eating in one spot on our ranch. The most impactful thing about that is all the rest of our ranch was recovering and better prepared for drought."

Brett and Lori Nix Murdo, SD Past Board Chair



"The next drought is right around the corner; we'll always need a flexible drought plan. It avoids surprises, avoids getting yourself painted into a corner. Put your attention on your grass resource."

Jim Faulstich Highmore, SD Board Vice Chair



"If I'm going to be short on forage, I know I'll have to get rid of some cattle. Overgrazed pasture can take 3 to 5 years to recover; well managed grass recovers quickly. Whatever decision you make, make it to protect your pastures."

Pat Guptill Quinn, SD Past Board Member



"Not planning is a plan to fail, I really believe that. Drought is what threw us into management-intensive grazing- I look at drought as a way to make our ranch better, improving grass and herd management skills to improve profits."

Bart Carmichael Faith, SD Past Board Member



"Good grazing practices show benefits in dry years. That's the first part of our drought plan. The second part is to start selling livestock, and then be prepared to bring those numbers back when it rains again. Think months ahead."

Dan Rasmussen Belvidere, SD Board Consultant

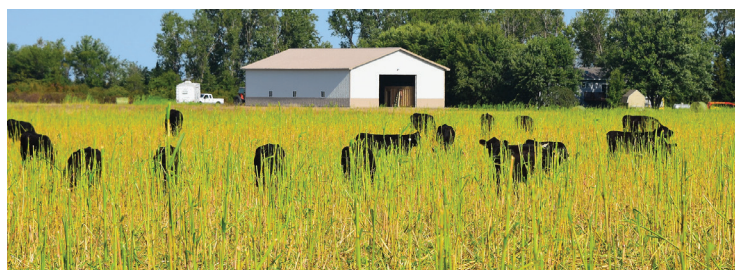
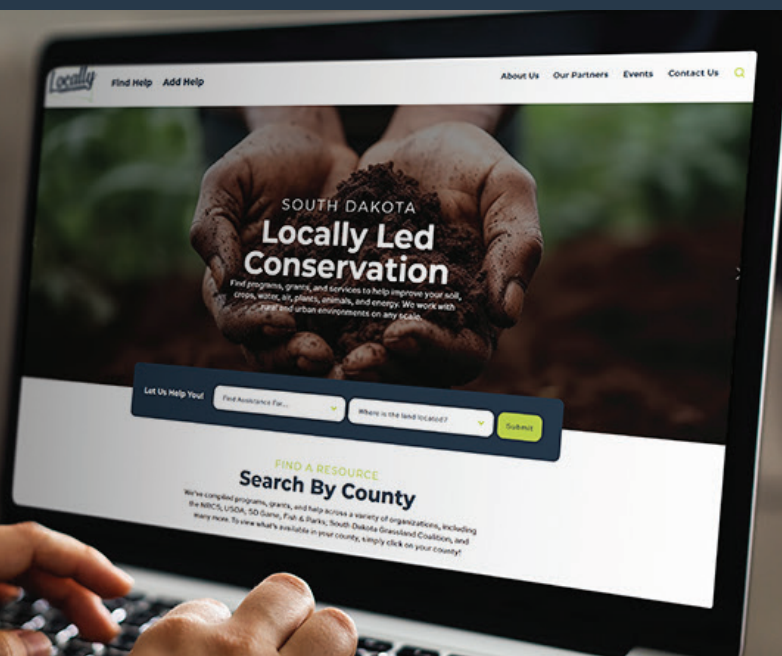
More information on the web at www.sddroughtplan.org



Dakota Conservation Network



www.conserveds.org



Dakota Conservation Network (DCN) serves as a hub of conservation information and resources for community members, farmers, ranchers, and landowners in South Dakota. Whether you're passionate about sustainable practices, wildlife preservation, or simply curious about how to make a positive impact, this website is here to guide you.

Discover Programs, Grants, and Services

DCN provides a wide range of programs, grants, and services to help improve soil health, conserve water, promote clean air, support biodiversity, and boost crop productivity. From small-scale gardens to large agricultural operations, DCN has a wide range of resources and support to meet your needs.

Search By County

Finding help in your area is easy with our county-based search feature. Just select your county, and you'll find a list of programs and services available near you, making it simple to access the support you need.

How We Can Help

DCN compiles a range of solutions to address your specific challenges. Whether you need financial support, expert specialists, planning guidance, workshops, or educational resources, we've got you covered. Start by identifying your conservation goal, and then explore our website to find the right assistance for you.



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Get In Touch

Blaine Brakke, Locally Led Project Coordinator
(605) 280-4813
blaine.brakke@sdconservation.net

Caitlin Uthe, Communications & Design
(605) 799-6885
caitlin.uth@sdconservation.net

Dakota Conservation Network: Connecting Conservation in South Dakota



Growing Connections is a **FREE** mobile app that helps producers share soil health, land management, and livestock information and receive advice from experienced mentors.

- Search for mentors by location or topic.
- Engage with producers and mentors about your interests and goals.
- Share ideas and create posts.
- Stay informed about local events and resources.

AVAILABLE NOW!
Download it today.



Download on the
App Store



GET IT ON
Google Play

Or use the web version at
www.growingconnectionsapp.com

News Release

 Valorie Dupraz, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs
Valorie.dupraz@usda.gov or (605) 690-6724

March 28 Deadline for EQIP Disaster Assistance

Huron, S.D., Mar. 4, 2025 – In response to agricultural producers impacted by the Power Dam Road Fire and Lincoln Fire in Mellette County, South Dakota, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has announced open enrollment for disaster assistance through the [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) (EQIP), which offers financial and technical support to help producers plan and implement post fire restoration practices on their land.

While applications are accepted year-round, **March 28, 2025**, is the final date by which an operator or landowner must sign an application at their [local NRCS office](#) for Fiscal Year (FY25) funding consideration.

“We will work one-on-one with producers to assess the critical damages from the disaster, develop an effective recovery plan and implement conservation solutions that helps rebuild agricultural communities, working lands and natural resources that were lost to the wildfires, said Valorie Dupraz.

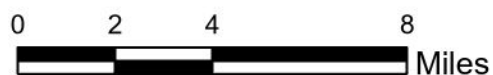
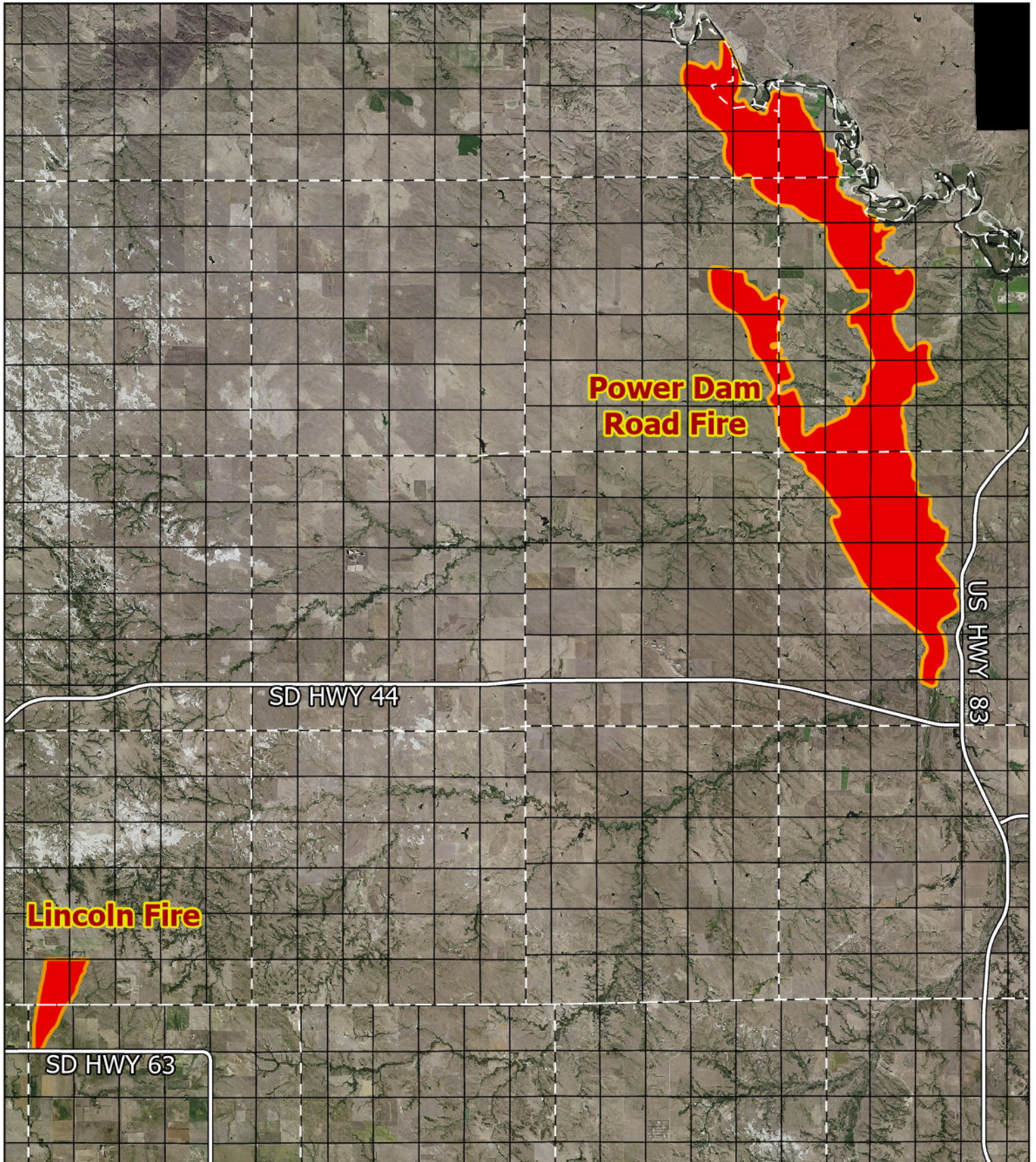
The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) South Dakota will evaluate disaster assistance applications using the ACT NOW process. ACT NOW allows NRCS to pre-approve a ranked application when the ranking score meets or exceeds an established threshold score. The minimum threshold ranking score for EQIP disaster assistance funding is 100 points. Applications will be batched and processed in the order received.

This EQIP disaster assistance funding is targeted toward the conservation practice, Prescribed Grazing. The focus will be to defer grazing on the burned acres to allow for adequate time for recovery of the area.

NRCS accepts applications for conservation programs year-round, but to be included in this funding batch, interested producers can apply at their local [USDA Service Center](#) by submitting a Conservation Program Application (NRCS-CPA-1200) by March 28, 2025.

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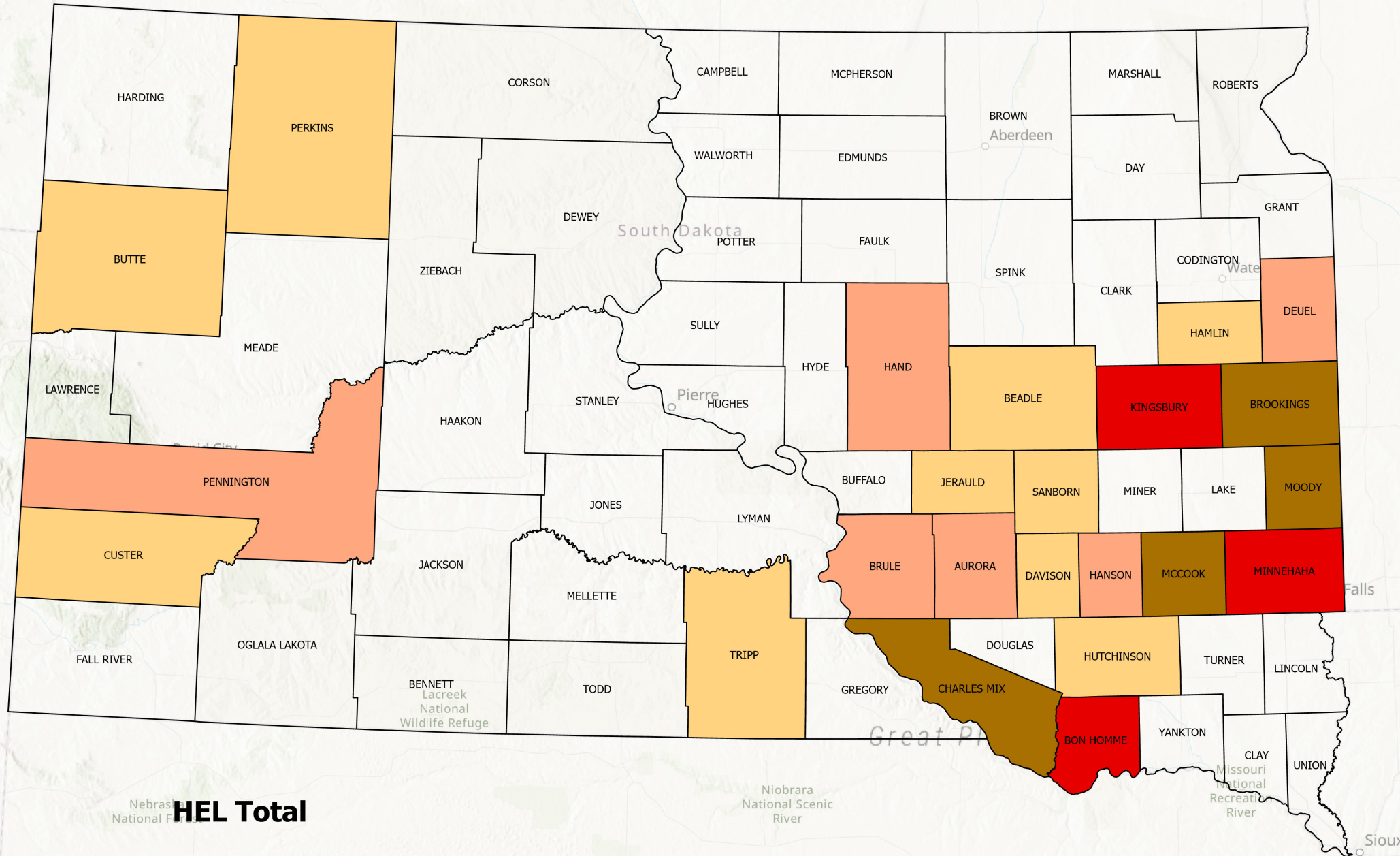
Power Dam Road and Lincoln Fires 2024



Map made on:
February 27, 2025



SOUTH DAKOTA HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND DETERMINATIONS (as of Mar.6th,2025)

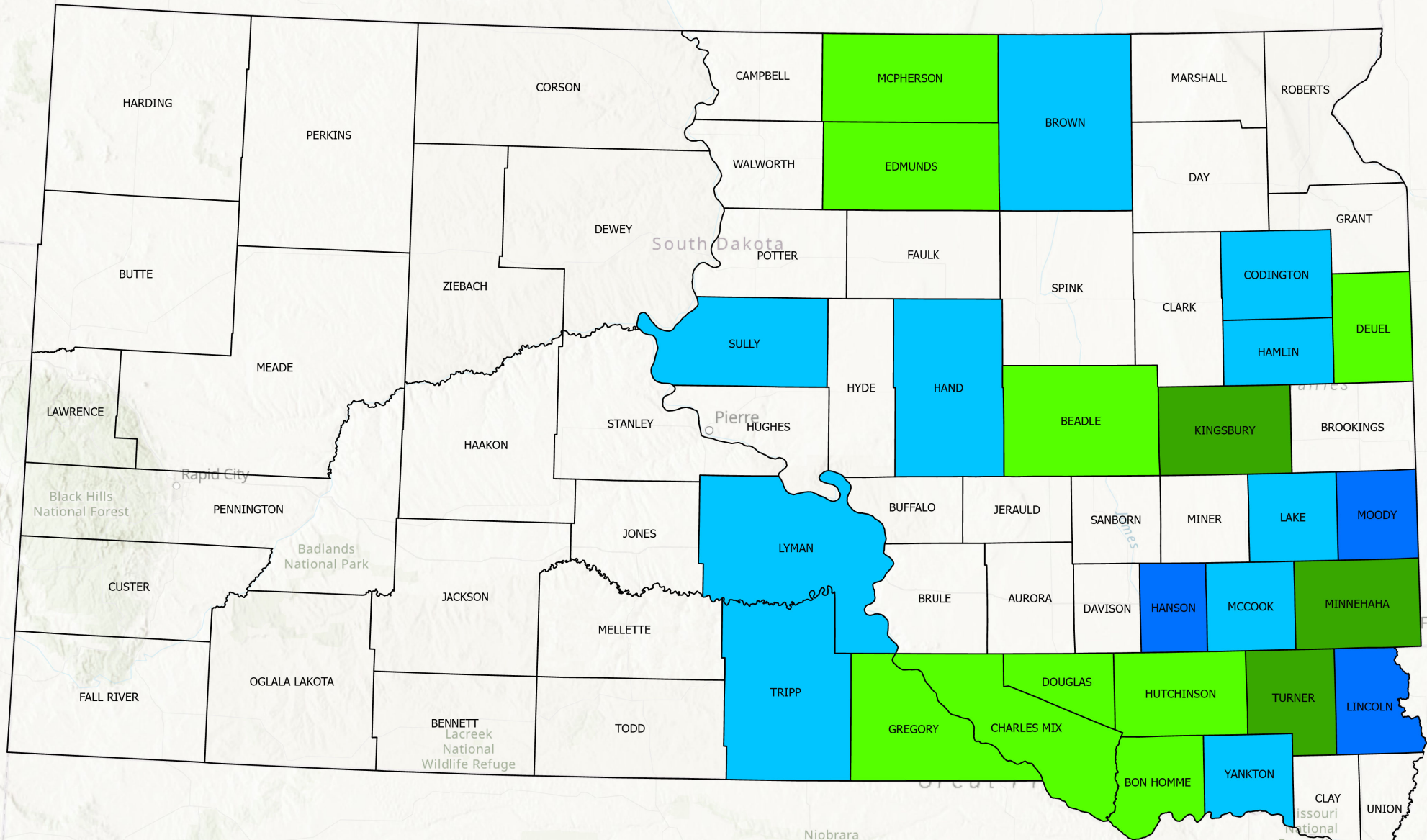


HEL Total

1-2	11-16
3-9	17-25

Current Total Outstanding: 157 Highly Erodible Land Determinations
HEL Workload Completed FY25: 488

SOUTH DAKOTA WETLAND DETERMINATIONS (as of Mar.6th,2025)



WD Total

	1-2		13-17
	3-9		19-29

Current Total Outstanding: 192 Wetland Determinations
Outstanding Potential Violations: 71
WD Workload Completed FY25: 324



SD STAC Update – Jim Reedy, SCE

Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service
nrcs.usda.gov

1

Engineering **Technical** Assistance

Engineers & Civil Engineering Technicians across the state

Design, Installation, Construction Assistance

- Surveying
- Design calculations & documentation
- Construction drawings & specifications
- Construction layout, inspection & as-builts

“Typical” Practices...

Natural
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nrcs.usda.gov

2

ECP Drought Emergency Assistance

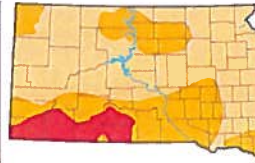
FSA Program, NRCS TA

National ECP Practices (Continued)

G EC6 - Drought Emergency Measures (Continued)

The following table provides the CS policy.

IF component is...	THEN financial assistance is...
installing pipe to an existing or newly developed source of water because the primary source is inadequate	authorized using technical codes 342, 447, 516, 533, 574, 614, and 642.
Note: One-time connection to public rural water utility lines charged by the water service authority is limited to labor, equipment, and materials and is included in ECP payment scenario. Charges for fees and water service must be wisely borne by the producer.	
storage facilities, including tanks incorporated into a new or existing water distribution system, and troughs above ground, if needed to supply water for immediate needs of livestock;	
constructing and deepening wells for livestock water;	
constructing tail water recovery pits for any irrigation system to orchards and vineyards;	
developing springs or seeps for livestock water;	
wells where there is no other source of emergency water available that could be developed at less expense;	
measures to provide emergency water for livestock in confinement operations on the farm that were in confinement before the drought;	
permanently installed submersible pump of a size that would address the needs of livestock on hand at time of disaster;	
solar panels to provide power to pump water for livestock and the solar panels are the least costly alternative.	



Map released: Thurs. February 27, 2025
Data valid: February 25, 2025 at 7 a.m. CST

Intensity

None
No Drought
Moderate Drought
Severe Drought
Extreme Drought
No Drought
No Drought
No Drought

Authors

United States and Puerto Rico Agricultural
Department, National Drought Mitigation Center
Pacific Islands and Virgin Islands Agricultural
Extension Service, NMAA, Inc.

Natural Resources Conservation Service
nrcs.usda.gov

3

Livestock Water

Drought emergency or otherwise



Natural Resources Conservation Service
nrcs.usda.gov

4

Livestock Shelter Structures



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5

Stream Crossings



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Service

nrcs.usda.gov

6



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Erosion Control



Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service

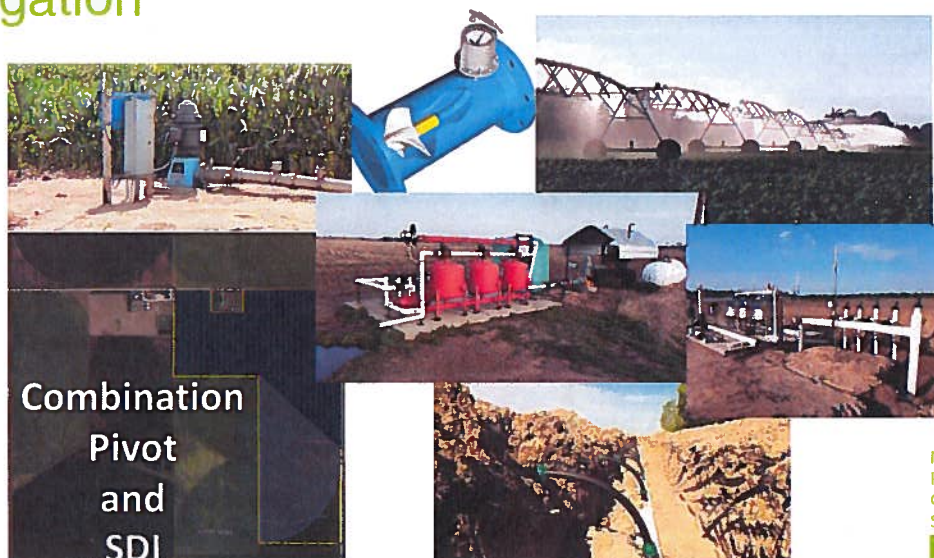
nrcs.usda.gov

7



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Irrigation



Combination
Pivot
and
SDI

Natural
Resources
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Service

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8

Streambank Stabilization



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9

Small-Scale



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10

Livestock Waste Control & TSP's



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LEARN MORE

[South Dakota NRCS Field Office Tech Guide](#)

[TheUSDANRCS YouTube Channel](#)

- Check out all the video playlists
- Especially “Conservation at Work” series

[South Dakota NRCS YouTube Channel](#)

[NRCS Illinois Engineering Videos](#)

[SD NRCS TSP website](#)

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EWP & Watershed

EWP projects in Hutchinson & Clay Counties

- GF&P on Dimock Lake auxiliary spillway headcut
- Clay County on streambank protection for county road bridge

Potential PL-566 projects with City of Mitchell on
Firesteel Creek & Angostura Irrigation District

“HELPING PEOPLE HELP THE LAND”

QUESTIONS?

Programs Report
SD State Technical Committee
March 12, 2025

Val Dupraz, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs

Valorie.dupraz@sd.usda.gov

Active Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) Contracts:

Program	Number of contracts	Total Contract Obligation	Total Acres Under Contract
CSP	1043	\$ 133,237,538	2,678,979
EQIP	1179	\$ 101,315,548	1,177,154
RCPP	39	\$ 3,935,985	15,621
Grand Total	2261	\$ 238,489,072	3,871,754

Currently selecting applications for funding:

Program	# Selected Applications	Total Funds
CSP	90	\$ 14,904,397
EQIP	179	\$ 19,212,323
Grand Total	269	\$ 34,116,720

RCPP Agreements:

23 agreements in active or 'selected/negotiation' status

\$213,285,893 (Technical and Financial Assistance)

ACEP ALE:

In the process of finalizing easement selections with the approximately \$3.2 Million allocation.

South Dakota Soil Health Study

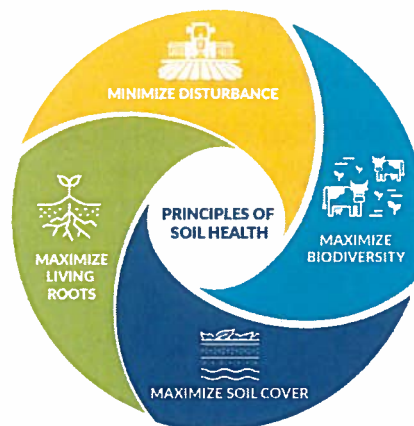


FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION
FSA | NRCS | RMA | Business Center

1

Explanation

- Spring of 2024
- How different management practices effect soil health over time



FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION

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2

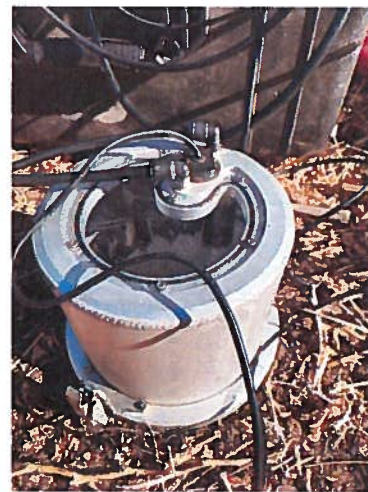
Site Selection

- Soil Series
- 2 locations within 3-5 miles of each other
- Differing management



Analysis

- Infiltration
- Bulk Density
- Chemical and Biological Analysis
 - Sampling depths:
 - 0-3"
 - 0-6"
 - 6-12"
 - 12-24"



Chemical and Biological Analysis

- Haney
- Microbial Carbon Capture
- Phospholipid Fatty Acid (PLFA)
- Total Nutrient Digest
- Wet Aggregate Stability
- Enzymes
- Water Holding Capacity
- POX-C
- Ace Protein
- Total Organic Carbon
- Routine Fertility Analysis
- Biome Makers – BeCrop Analysis (biodiversity and nutrient cycling)

Haney

- Water extractable organic carbon
- Water extractable total and organic nitrogen
- H3A Phosphorus (organic, inorganic, total)
- H3A Minerals (aluminum, ammonium, calcium, copper, iron, magnesium, manganese, nitrate, potassium, sodium, sulfur, zinc)
- **Soil Respiration (ppm CO₂)**
- pH
- **Organic Matter (LOI %)**
- Excess Lime
- Soluble Salts

Phospholipid Fatty Acids (PLFA)

- This test provides:
 - Bacteria (Gram (+) and Gram (-))
 - Fungi (Arbuscular Mycorrhizae and Saprophytes)
 - Protozoa
 - Undifferentiated Microbial Groups
- Gives us an idea of the microbial community in the soil. This can be affected by:
 - Plant community
 - Environmental conditions
 - Soil characteristics
 - Management

Wet Aggregate Stability

- How soils react to physical and chemical disturbances
- Ability to store water
- Movement of air and water
- Influence root growth

Goals

- Provide soil health data to landowners to help them make better management decision
- Educate the public on how management decisions can make a big impact on soil health
- Provide data on why soil health is important



FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION

FSA | NRCS | RMA | Business Center

9

Questions

Chyenna Young
Assistant State Soil Scientist
Chyenna.young@usda.gov
605-222-2761

FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION

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SD Pheasants Forever Update for 3-12-2025 State Technical Committee Meeting

Existing staff

Farm Bill Biologists continuing to work with producers to deliver conservation and access

- SD DNAR's RBI – over 48 linear miles of streams contracted or in planning stages
- Pheasant's Forever's Public Access To Habitat (PATH) program now over 25,000 acres in SD since 9-1-23 including 13,282.08 acres since 7-1-24
- Developing new conservation plans for future enrollment into programs

Habitat Specialists

- Helping manage SDGFP Game Production Areas (GPAs) including using new skid steers to remove eastern red cedar
- Field work in some areas have began in preparation of food plots and grass seedings

Monarch and Native Pollinator Biologist

- working with producers on NFWF grant that provides cost-share for seeding, prescribed fire, and fence
- if interested contact Carter Sergeant at csergeant@pheasantsforever.org or 563-210-9938

R3 and Veteran's Outreach Coordinator

- Planning of spring turkey hunts with youth hunters

Programs – Paused

Making Sure Every Acre Counts RCPP – funded by IRA funding and is currently paused

Accelerating Prescribed Fire in SD RCPP – funded by IRA funding and is currently paused

Planned Growth – Paused

- Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever is currently under a hiring freeze related to federal funding pauses impacted by IRA, BIL, and NFWF Funding
- SD PF has 3 exiting positions we are unable to currently backfill
- SD PF has 9 new positions impacted by this including 2 Prescribed Fire staff, 2 Precision Agriculture and Conservation Specialists, 4 Native Seed Collection Specialists, and an RCPP Coordinator

Matt Gottlob

SD State Coordinator

605-421-8821

mgottlob@pheasantsforever.org

THE HABITAT ORGANIZATION

Pheasants Forever's mission is to conserve pheasants, quail, and other wildlife, through habitat improvements, public access, education, and conservation advocacy.



Conservation Technology
Information Center

2025

Conservation in Action Tour **PLANTING OPPORTUNITY, GROWING SUCCESS**

Grow Success **AT THE 2025 CONSERVATION IN ACTION TOUR!**

Start your 2025 growing season off right by exploring conservation agriculture in the Great Plains! The 18th Annual Conservation in Action Tour is showcasing South Dakota. It's a unique planting season tour that will focus on soil health, biodiversity, crop production, and innovation.

Mark your calendars for May 6-7, 2025, and join us in Sioux Falls, where we will be "Planting Opportunity, Growing Success," as we travel through southeastern South Dakota to see how conservation and innovation are implemented on the land.

Be part of our first Tour on the Great Plains and join a community committed to driving change in soil and water quality, wildlife habitat, and careers in conservation agriculture.

Don't miss your chance to join the year's premier farm tour that shapes the future of agriculture and conservation. Support the 2025 Conservation in Action Tour in South Dakota, and Plant Opportunities that will Grow Success!

Sincerely,

Ryan Heiniger, Executive Director

CONSERVATION TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION CENTER

ABOUT THE CONSERVATION IN ACTION TOUR

The Conservation in Action Tour began in 2008, showcasing successful farmers in Indiana who prioritize soil and water quality. The flagship event of the Conservation Technology Information Center (CTIC) has grown into the gold standard of farm tours and has featured agricultural innovation in 13 states across 17 Tours.

On a Conservation in Action Tour, you'll do more than hear from dynamic speakers and talk with conservation-minded producers: You'll experience farming up close. We've seen sugarcane harvesting in Florida, aerial seeding demonstrations in Illinois, wheat processing in Michigan, and livestock grazing in Idaho.

With a record attendance of 270 attendees from 20 states, the Tour has a track record of national attention from many different sectors of agriculture. Farmers, agribusiness representatives, elected officials, policymakers, local conservation professionals, and more experience innovative farming that makes a difference in the community. We've seen farms in watersheds as big as the Chesapeake Bay and the Mississippi Delta and as small, but no less important, as the Indian Creek (Illinois) Watershed.

There are no floors, no walls, and no ceilings when you embark on a Conservation in Action Tour with CTIC. You touch the soil, see the crops, observe the livestock and the wildlife up close. You see the land, the water, the sky, and the connections between conservation-minded farming and the quality of your drinking water, air quality, and resilient production systems. We are CTIC, and this is our Conservation in Action Tour, where you are part of the action in conservation agriculture.

AGENDA

From Sioux Falls, South Dakota, we'll travel to innovative farms that showcase the best practices in conservation agriculture.

TUESDAY, MAY 6, 2025

5:30 P.M. TO 9:30 P.M. *Annual Banquet:*

Join us for a celebration of conservation agriculture featuring locally sourced foods and distinctive South Dakota cuisine. We'll welcome attendees and feature a keynote speaker at the Icon **Event Hall**, just a few blocks from the host hotel. You won't want to miss this opportunity to network and learn about innovation in South Dakota at a fantastic venue.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 2025

8:00 A.M. TO 12:00 P.M. *Conservation in Action Tour*

begins with farm visits featuring model producers. Experience farming up close. During **previous tours**, we've shown attendees sugarcane harvesting in Florida, aerial seeding demonstrations in Illinois, wheat processing in Michigan, and livestock grazing in Idaho. Transportation will be provided for all attendees.

12:00 P.M. TO 1:30 P.M. *Lunch provided* (location TBD)

1:30 P.M. TO 5 P.M. *Tour continues*

Conservation in Action Tour continues with farm visits.

5:30 P.M. TO 7:30 P.M. *Closing Reception*

To kick off our tour, we're hosting a banquet in downtown Sioux Falls at ICON. We also have a room block available at the Holiday Inn City Centre, Sioux Falls, with room rate of \$110++ per night until April 5, 2025. Full transportation and lunch are available on the day of the Conservation in Action Tour.

Interested in raising your company's visibility? Your branding can be front and center at the Tour with several sponsorship opportunities. Explore partnering with us by contacting CTIC Executive Director Ryan Heiniger for more information at heiniger@ctic.org.

For questions on agenda and the overall Conservation in Action Tour experience, contact CTIC Project Director Elise Koning at koning@ctic.org.

WWW.CTIC.ORG/TOUR

MORE INFORMATION COMING SOON!

Get the latest updates by signing up for our newsletter at ctic.org/news/newsletter.



REGISTER TODAY!

Early Bird Registration (through Feb. 15): **\$300**

Standard Pricing (Feb. 16-April 15): **\$350**

Late Registration (April 16-May 6): **\$400**

2025 CONSERVATION IN ACTION TOUR SPONSORS

Thank you to the following sponsors for your support of the 18th annual Conservation in Action Tour! We appreciate your commitment to CTIC and conservation agriculture.

BANQUET & KEYNOTE

POET

RUBY

syngenta

DIAMOND



Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



**Farm Credit Services
of America**



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**THE
FERTILIZER
INSTITUTE**

FRIENDS OF CTIC

**AGRICULTURAL RETAILERS
ASSOCIATION**



Conservation Technology Information Center

CONTACT INFORMATION

Conservation Technology Information Center

David Frabotta

216-410-5597

frabotta@ctic.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

18th ANNUAL CONSERVATION IN ACTION TOUR FEATURES UNIQUE PLANTING-SEASON FARM TOURS ON THE GREAT PLAINS

Regular registration open through April 15 for Sioux Falls, S.D., event on May 6-7

WEST LAFAYETTE, IND.—Conservation Technology Information Center (CTIC) has opened registration for its 18th annual [Conservation in Action Tour](#), a two-day celebration that includes behind-the-scenes ag industry stops and farm tours showcasing exceptional conservation agriculture, May 6-7, 2025, in Sioux Falls, S.D.

This unique planting-season tour will include multiple farm stops so attendees can get new perspectives on how management practices in the fall and early spring help optimize crop production for a cropping year. Attendees will get real-world insights on challenges producers face and the solutions they need to help drive the next generation of program design, strategic partnerships, engagement tactics and implementation guidelines. Ag industry stops will feature upstream and downstream value chain partners to understand how they are supporting producers.

With a record attendance of 270 attendees from 20 states, the Tour has a track record of national attention from many different sectors of agriculture. Producers, advisers, agribusiness representatives, elected officials, policymakers, researchers, and conservation agriculture agencies from the national, state and local levels experience innovative farming that makes a difference on crop production and communities.

“The Conservation in Action Tour is a true cross-section of all sectors that serve producers, from policymakers to program implementers, and from multinational agribusinesses to local technical assistance providers,” says Ryan Heiniger, executive director of CTIC. “This multidisciplinary group provides perspectives that we don’t get every day in our individual silos of work. It’s a melting pot of ideas that lay the foundation for inspiration, innovation and lasting friendships with the success and resiliency of the American producer as the common thread that connects us all.”

This is CTIC’s first Conservation in Action Tour in the Great Plains. The Tour began in 2008, showcasing successful farmers in Indiana who prioritize soil and water quality. It has grown into the gold standard of farm tours and has featured agricultural innovation in 13 states across 17 Tours. Participants have seen sugarcane harvesting in Florida, aerial seeding demonstrations in Illinois, wheat processing in Michigan, and livestock grazing in Idaho. Featured farms reside in watersheds

as big as the Chesapeake Bay and the Mississippi Delta and as small, but no less important, as the Indian Creek (Illinois) Watershed.

[Regular registration](#) is open until April 15, and special pricing for producers is available by contacting Tour Director [Elise Koning](#). Special group pricing is available, and complimentary [media passes](#) are limited and available upon request.

A room block at the [Holiday Inn City Centre](#) in Sioux Falls is available until April 5.

Learn more about the [2025 Conservation in Action Tour here](#).



###

ABOUT CONSERVATION TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION CENTER

Founded in 1982, CTIC champions, promotes and provides information on technologies and sustainable agricultural systems that conserve and enhance soil, water, air and wildlife resources, and are productive and profitable. It is one of the oldest nonprofit membership organizations solely dedicated to the advancement of conservation agriculture research, policies and program delivery for producers.