

Program 304 – Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Program

Program Description

The Soil and Water Conservation Fund was created in 1977 to provide financial assistance to private landowners for installation of soil and water conservation practices. Various conservation practices are eligible for cost-share assistance of up to 75 percent. The Natural Resources Commission determines the list of eligible practices, establishes operating procedures, and annually allocates the funds among the 23 Natural Resource Districts (NRDs). The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service provides technical assistance needed in planning and installing the conservation measures. NRDs are responsible for the administration of the program at the local level.

Program Objectives

The objective of the Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Fund is to promote efforts by landowners to better manage and conserve the State's natural resources. Funds allocated to natural resources districts (NRDs) are used to reimburse landowners for up to 50 percent of costs incurred in implementing conservation practices approved by the Natural Resources Commission and deemed appropriate by each NRD for conditions in their jurisdictions. Funds can only be requested if federal programs do not address the specified practice, or if federal funds were insufficient to satisfy landowner requests.

Performance Measures

Performance measures for the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Program are the number and extent of water and soil conservation practices implemented with cost-share available through the fund. A summary of implementation activity by practice follows.

Practices	Actual			Estimated
	FY 05-06	FY 06-07	FY 07-08	FY 08-09
Claims Paid	1,787	2,500	1,622	1,650
Feet of Terraces	787,819	750,000	721,371	700,000
Feet of Terrace Outlets	189,699	175,000	189,699	175,000
Dams	7	10	3	5
Grade Structures	7	10	6	6
Reuse Pits	1	5	1	1
Diversions	25	20	20	20
Acres of Waterways	131	400	66	100
Water Control Basins	29	20	27	25
Dugouts	11	10	11	10
Acres of Grass Seeding	3,691	3,600	3,808	3,500
Acres of Windbreaks	428	500	992	950
# of Planned Grazing Systems	282	300	206	200
Acres of Grazing Systems	89,431	100,000	70,422	70,000
# of Irrigation Water Mgt. Sys.	297	300	322	325
Acres of Irrigation Management	30,401	35,000	50,070	50,000
Water Meters	574	0	0	0

Request Priorities & Significant Issues

The requested general fund amount for this fund (\$2,688,454) is based on the current appropriation. Because of the continuing nature of this program it is important that the unexpended balances remaining at the end of the biennium on June 30, 2009 be reappropriated.