

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS)

DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST'S MONTHLY REPORT

11/9/2023

PERSONNEL/OFFICE

- The Lancaster and Cass County Service Centers are under normal operations.
- Weeping Water Soil Conservationist, Samantha Ziph, started a 120-day detail position in another office on 10/22/23.

LPSNRD LAND TREATMENT

- Drought conditions have continued to impact the installation of structural practices in LPSNRD since the fall of 2022. Current soil moisture conditions are variable across the district; staff are still conducting soil moisture evaluations on all projects prior to construction. Projects are being released on a site-by-site basis but many are being withheld due to inadequate soil moisture conditions.
- LPSNRD currently has the following land treatment cost-share program applications:
 - Lancaster County
 - 25 Fall 2023 Structural Applications
 - 24 Fall 2023 Cover Crop Applications
 - Cass County
 - 30 Fall 2023 Structural Applications
 - 2 Fall 2023 Cover Crop Applications

USDA PROGRAMS

- The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) EQIP and CSP applications will be handled through the "ActNow" process. The ActNow process allows applications with select climate smart agricultural practices to be accepted, ranked, and potentially funded as we receive them; anytime between now and 3/1/24.
- For FY2024, IRA has added an additional \$29 million dollars to the Nebraska EQIP funds for applications with select climate smart agriculture contracts.
- Technicians are working on structural projects as fields are harvested and checking completed projects.
- Planning staff are working on EQIP and CSP pre-Fy24 contract management, reviewing FY24 applications, completing in field inventories, and beginning application assessments for ranking.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 11/17/23- Deadline to apply for FY2024 EQIP
- 11/17/23- Deadline to apply for FY2024 CSP
- ON GOING until 3/1/24- ActNow applications for EQIP IRA & CSP IRA

Tom Cowan – District Conservationist