

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS)

DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST'S MONTHLY REPORT

1/10/2024

PERSONNEL/OFFICE

- The Lancaster and Cass County Service Centers are under normal operations.
- Lincoln Resource Conservationist, Scott Mathine, started a detail in the Hawaii NRCS State Office on 12/4/23. Upon returning from the detail, Scott has accepted a promotion with the Area Office.
- The job announcement for the Lincoln Resource Conservationist has been posted on USAJobs and will close on 1/16/24. Link: <https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/767701900>
- Lincoln Program Assistant, Amy Miller, has accepted a promotion with the Nebraska NRCS State Office Programs Staff. Her last day in the Lincoln Field Office was 12/22/23.

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
 - 22 Fall 2023 Structural Applications
 - 24 Fall 2023 Cover Crop Applications
 - Cass County
 - 30 Fall 2023 Structural Applications
 - 2 Fall 2023 Cover Crop Applications
- We received the 2024 DNR/NSWCP Payment Schedule on 1/10/24 and will be preparing to present to the Land Resources subcommittee at their February meeting.

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 \$29 million (in addition to the \$20 million Nebraska EQIP General funds) for applications with select climate smart agriculture contracts.
- Technicians are working on structural projects as soil moisture conditions allow and checking completed projects.
- Planning staff are reviewing FY24 EQIP and CSP applications, completing in field inventories, conservation planning, cost estimates, and application assessments for ranking.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ON GOING until 3/1/24- ActNow applications for EQIP IRA & CSP IRA
- 1/15/24 Field Offices will be closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day Holiday
- 2/19/24 Field Offices will be closed for President's Day Holiday

Tom Cowan – District Conservationist