

Brookings Conservation District Board Meeting
NRCS Monthly Board Report
February 2, 2022

Assistance/Progress

- CRP
 - A CRP General sign-up was announced and began on 1/31 and continues thru 3/11.
 - A Grassland CRP sign-up was announced and will begin on 4/4 and continue thru 5/13.

- CSP
 - Processing modifications and payment applications for those wanting payment in 2022.
 - Finishing up the last one this week.
 - FY22 CSP Classic sign-up ended on 1/21.
 - We have 3 applications.

- EQIP
 - EQIP Cover Crop Initiative
 - Signup deadline was January 14th.
 - We have 12 applications.
 - 242 applications in SD totaling over \$5 million.
 - It appears 1 will be selected for funding in Brookings.
 - Certifying completed practices.
 - Batching date for applications was Dec 3rd.
 - We have 4 new applications.
 - We have started screening the applications using the new Workload Prioritization Tool (WPT) and getting eligibility taken care of.

- Big Sioux RCPP
 - Batching date was Dec 3rd.
 - We have 2 applications in Brookings Co.

- Expanding Soil Health Through Carbon Markets RCPP
 - Recently announced RCPP project between SDSU, Dakota Ethanol, American Coalition for Ethanol and others.
 - \$5.25 million available to producers in Brookings, Kingsbury, Lake, Miner, McCook, Minnehaha and Moody Counties for Conservation Tillage, Nutrient Management and Cover Crop practices.
 - It appears NRCS will be mostly hands-off on this project.
 - Video of meeting available at: <https://vimeo.com/667508636/3582ca1367>

- WRP/WRE/FPE
 - David is still on paternity leave; he is scheduled to return to work on 3/1.
 - We recently announced the easement monitoring assignments for FY22.
 - Offsite monitoring is due 3/11.
 - Onsite monitoring is due 8/1.
- HEL/Wetland Determinations
 - 0 Preliminary Technical Determinations (PTD's) outstanding.
- CIS Proposal
 - The batching date for applications was January 21.
 - We ended up with 4 applications.
 - A bulletin was sent out for FY22 Call for Proposals.
 - The deadline is March 4th to submit a 2-page pre-proposal.
 - We are discussing submitting a pre-proposal for grazing related practices in the NE part of the county.

Other Items of Interest

- We are currently at 25% staffing levels in the office, which means we can have 2 people at a time. This time our partners are included in that count. The President's executive order requiring vaccination for employees has been put on hold due to a recent court ruling.
 - Jeremy's Work Cell – 605-633-0527
 - Megan's Work Cell – 605-220-4716
 - David's Work Cell – 605-680-3996
- Robert Lawson is serving as our acting State Conservationist. It has been announced that Anthony (Tony) Sunseri has been selected as our new State Conservationist. He comes to us from California as their Assistant State Conservationist in Field Operations in Area 1 (Northern CA). No start date has been given.
- Interviews were completed for the Soil Conservation Technician position. We ended up interviewing 6 candidates, and I would say most were excellent candidates. We have no start date for the new employee yet.

Plans for Board review & approval

- No plans submitted for board review and approval.