Conservation Compliance on Highly Erodible Land and Wetlands

Highly erodible land (HEL) and wetland conservation (WC) provisions aim to reduce soil loss on erosion-prone lands and to protect wetlands for the multiple benefits they provide. HEL and WC provisions apply to all land that is considered highly erodible or a wetland, and that is owned or farmed by persons voluntarily participating in USDA programs.

To comply with HEL and WC provisions, agricultural producers and affiliated persons must fill out and sign form AD-1026 certifying they will not:

- Plant or produce an agricultural commodity on highly erodible land without following an NRCS-approved conservation plan or system;
- Plant or produce an agricultural commodity on a converted wetland; or
- Convert a wetland that makes the production of an agricultural commodity possible. In addition, producers planning to conduct activities that may affect their HEL or WC compliance; for example land clearing, conducting drainage activities, land leveling, filling, dredging, or excavation, including the clearing of woody vegetation; must notify FSA by filing form AD-1026. FSA will notify NRCS, and they will then provide highly erodible land or wetland technical evaluations and issue determinations if needed. It is extremely important that producers comply with the HEL and WC provisions to continue receiving USDA Program benefits. Please contact your local USDA Service Center for more information.
NRCS is Now Accepting Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Applications

(EQIP) Applications Must be received by Wednesday, June 23, 2021

CASPER, Wyo, May 25, 2021 – USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Wyoming is currently accepting applications for enrollment into the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). EQIP is a voluntary Farm Bill program which provides financial assistance for conservation systems such as animal waste management facilities, irrigation system efficiency improvements, fencing, water supply development, riparian protection, and wildlife habitat enhancement. **Producers interested in implementing conservation practices to improve natural resources on their private agricultural land have until Wednesday, June 23, 2021 to submit applications.**

The opportunities to participate in EQIP are diverse. In addition to the general EQIP enrollment, the Program also affords socially disadvantaged, beginning, and limited resource farmers and ranchers specific opportunities to improve or enhance natural resources on their lands. There are even specific opportunities for landowners impacted by the 2018 wildfires and those with interests in organics, improving wildlife habitat, forest health, and air quality.

**Producers must have farm records current with the Farm Service Agency and submit a complete program application to NRCS to be considered for financial assistance through EQIP.** Applications are accepted at all Wyoming NRCS offices located in USDA Service Centers across the state. To find out more information about EQIP please visit the [Wyoming EQIP webpage](#). To locate an NRCS field office near you, please visit the [Wyoming USDA Service Center webpage](#).

When visiting with NRCS staff about the EQIP program, landowners are encouraged to inquire about NRCS’ comprehensive conservation plans. The Agency continually strives to put conservation planning at the forefront of its programs and initiatives. Conservation plans provide landowners with a comprehensive inventory and assessment of their resources, as well as an appropriate start to improving the quality of soil, water, air, plants, and wildlife on their land.

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**Borrower Training for Farm Loan Customers**
Borrower training is available for all Farm Service Agency (FSA) customers. This training is required for all direct loan applicants, unless the applicant has a waiver issued by the agency.

Borrower training includes instruction in production and financial management. The purpose is to help the applicants develop and improve skills that are necessary to successfully operate a farm and build equity in the operation. It aims to help the producer become financially successful.

Borrower training is provided, for a fee, by agency approved vendors. Contact your local FSA Farm Loan Manager for a list of approved vendors.

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5880 Enterprise Dr. STE100
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County Committee:
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Heather Harlan, Vice Chair
Lee Moore, Member
William Kossert, Member
Brandi Forgey, Member
Next COC Meeting: July 27, 2021
@ 1:00pm