



October 2006

## WHITMAN COUNTY FSA NEWS

### Changes to CRP Managed Haying and Grazing FSA Settles out of Court with the National Wildlife Federation

In October 2004, the National Wildlife Federation (NWF), Arkansas Wildlife Federation, Kansas Wildlife Federation, Indiana Wildlife Federation, Louisiana Wildlife Federation, South Dakota Wildlife Federation, and Washington Wildlife Federation filed a complaint in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington State challenging certain provisions of managed haying and grazing and alleging violations of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as amended, Food Security Act of 1985, as amended, and the Administrative Procedures Act, as amended.

A settlement agreement with NWF has been signed that has resulted in changes to the Managed Haying and Grazing provisions for CRP as well as the established nesting season/non-disturbance period dates.

CRP Contracts approved after September 25, 2006 will be limited to approval of Managed Haying and Grazing only 1 out of 10 years. There are "grandfather" provisions available for existing contract depending upon whether there was prior approval of Managed Haying and Grazing or whether Managed Haying and Grazing was written into the conservation plan. We ask that you check with us if you are interested in Managed Haying and Grazing and we can let you know if you fall into one of these categories.

The primary nesting season/non-disturbance period on CRP has been changed from April 1 – June 1 back to April 1 – August 1. This limitation is only applicable to Managed Haying and Grazing. Maintenance activities such as whole field spraying are permitted before April 1 and after June 1. Whole field mowing is not permitted during the period of April – July 1. Producers can request County Committee permission for spot treatment during these periods. Producers in the stand establishment phase of the contract (prior to contract certification by NRCS) are permitted to conduct weed control measures at their discretion.

These more restrictive limitations on Managed Haying and Grazing will remain in effective at least until FSA completes a NEPA analysis. We anticipate that the NEPA evaluation work will begin in fiscal 2007 and continue for 12 to 24 months. A public comment period will be available as part of the NEPA process for producers or interested parties that wish to comment on CRP Managed Haying and Grazing.

**Important:** All requests for either Managed Haying and Grazing or Emergency Haying and Grazing must have prior approval from the County Committee.

**Unapproved haying or grazing of CRP is a contract violation subject to payment reductions and/or contract termination.**

### Emergency Grazing of CRP Approved Related to the Columbia Complex Fire

Producers impacted by the Columbia Complex Fire are eligible to utilize CRP in surrounding counties including Whitman. Livestock owners affected by fire may use their CRP land for grazing without an assessed payment reduction to their annual rental rate. Also, CRP participants may allow grazing privileges for an eligible livestock producer without CRP land. Grazing will be allowed on CRP land for 60 days after the emergency use is approved. At least 25 percent of the CRP contract acreage must be left ungrazed for wildlife or the acreage may be grazed at 75 percent of the normal stocking rate. Other restrictions and limitations also apply. Producers must obtain an approved grazing conservation plan prior to grazing the acreage and should submit applications to the county office.

### Farm Divisions and Reconstitutions

Any land divisions or additions on your farm impacts your acreage bases. For program purposes, FSA adheres to a landowner designation of dividing bases in the manner agreed to by the parent farm owner and purchaser or transferee. This method of dividing the bases may be used when any part of a farm or tract is sold or ownership is transferred, an entire tract or farm is sold to two or more persons, or farm or tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons. The land sold or transferred must have been owned for at least three years unless the County Committee approves a waiver of this requirement.

#### Whitman County FSA

805 Vista Point Drive  
Suite 1  
Colfax, WA 99111  
(509) 397-4301  
Fax (509) 397-6763

Email:  
mike.mandere@wa.usda.gov

Website:  
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wa>

#### Office Hours

Monday – Friday  
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

#### County Committee

Gracie Miller, Chair  
Larry Schroetlin, V-Chair  
Greg Hall, Member

#### Office Staff

Mike Mandere, CED  
Ann Holbrook, CPT  
Fred Hendrickson, PT  
Bonnie Riebold, PT  
Kathy Carothers, PT  
Doreen Riedner, PT  
Nancy Doege, PT  
Jonelle Olson, PT  
Wes Taylor, PT

#### Farm Loan Manager

Steve King  
(509) 924-7350

#### Important Dates

November 3 – Committee  
Election Ballots Mailed

November 10 – Veterans' Day,  
Office Closed

November 17 – 2007 EQIP  
Signup Deadline

#### Get Your Payments Timely & Accurately

Changes in your Bank Account  
or has your Bank merged or  
changed names?

Don't Forget – Update your  
Direct Deposit Form.

USDA Avg Price Received by  
Farmer's for 2006 Wheat: **\$4.20**



**2007 EQIP SIGNUP MOVED FORWARD**

The cutoff for applications to participate in the 2007 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) has been moved up to **November 17, 2006**. Those wanting to apply for financial and technical assistance for conservation practices through the 2007 EQIP will **need to sign up before the November 17 cutoff**. Producers interested in EQIP should contact NRCS for more information or to submit an application.

**2007 Conservation Security Program (CSP)**

NRCS has been notified that the 2007 watersheds have been selected for the CSP program. In WA State, the Lower Snake Tucannon Watershed was selected (southern quarter of Whitman County). More information will be coming on upcoming public meetings and the signup dates.

**2006 County Committee Elections**

Ballots for Committee Elections in Local Administrative Area 1 (Western Whitman County) will be mailed November 3, 2006. This area is currently represented by County Committee Chairperson Gracie Miller. Unfortunately, due to term limit restrictions Gracie will be unable to run in this election. **Ballots must be returned by December 4, 2006. Please remember to sign your ballot return envelope.** The following have been nominated and have agreed to serve if elected to the County Committee:

Clark Miller                      Kim Pitts                      David Swannack

**Attention CRP Participants: Wind Blown Weed Advisory**

Fall is the time of year the wind picks up and sometimes “picks up” Russian thistles and Jim Hill Mustard and carries them to neighboring fields, roads, and even people’s yards. The County Committee reminds CRP participants to be good stewards; check your stands for Russian thistles, Mustard and other weeds that are susceptible to being moved by the wind. Please mow or chop any infestations. Don’t let your CRP be a source of irritation and complaints from your neighbors. Contact the County Office and we can provide you a list of contractors if you don’t have access to a mower. **Important: Many of you have received notification from REX inspections or other spot check activities that you were required to mow to remove weed carcasses. Any complaints that come in related to wind blown weeds originating from your CRP contract will result in a violation if the mowing was not completed as required.**

**Farm Storage Facility Loan Program**

The Farm Storage Facility Loan Program (FSFL) is a program where Commodity Credit Corporation provides low cost financing for producers to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities for eligible commodities. Eligible applicants may qualify for the 7-year loan program and may borrow up to \$100,000 per “person.” A down payment of 15% is required and a non-refundable application fee of \$45 must be paid at the time of application. Loans may be made for purchasing and installing eligible storage facilities, permanently affixed drying or handling equipment, or remodeling existing facilities. The need for more storage capacity for your farming operation must be documented. Please contact the County Office for further information. The October FSFL interest rate is 4.0%.

**Whitman County 2006 Crop Loan Rates**  
**Loans disbursed in October 2006 will mature July 31, 2007.**  
**October CCC Interest Rate 6.0%**

SWW: \$2.90 per bu HRS & HWS: \$3.15 per bu HRW & HWW: \$3.18 per bu	BLY: \$2.07 per bu (\$86 per ton) Oats: \$1.28 per bu Canola: \$7.32 per cwt.	DPEAS: \$6.63 per cwt LENTILS: \$12.76 per cwt S. Chickpeas \$7.43/cwt.
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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.