

# State Technical Meeting

Thursday, July 12, 2012

## Conservation Update

1. Section Info.
  - a. Introduction
  - b. At the STO level, Alex Dubish, Program Specialist, accepted a position out in Montana as the GIS Program Specialist.
  - c. County Offices are extremely busy completing crop certifications, Cost Share Requests, Preparing for 2012 CRP Annual Rental Payments, SU43 and enrolling acres in CCRP.
  
2. General Signup 43
  - a. General Signup 43 was held from March 12<sup>th</sup> through April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012.
  - b. List of Accepted/Rejected Offers was released on May 25<sup>th</sup>.
  - c. Acceptance was based on 6 Environmental Benefit Index factors.
  - d. EBI cut off level was 209 points
  - e. Minnesota fared well with 85% acceptance across the State.
  - f. Breakdown: **(On Conservation June 2012 Highlights)**
    - i. Total Offers = 2904 for a total of approx. 120,000 acres
    - ii. Accepted = 2480 for a total of 99,716.7 acres.
  - g. On National Level, the Signup was better than expected
  - h. 3.9 acres accepted Nationally
  - i. Counties are busy reviewing all offers to ensure the EBI information is correct.
  - j. Producer notifications have been issued
  - k. NRCS is working on field verifications of existing cover.
  - l. Conservation Plans must be completed by mid August. (August 10, 2012)
  - m. SU43 CRP-1 must be approved by September 14, 2012.
  
3. Continuous Signup
  - a. Still have a lot of interest in CCRP
  - b. Counties are working with landowners who had rejected SU43 offers in order to offer acreage into a CCRP practice if eligible.
  - c. Back in March, Secretary Vilsack announced the million acre initiative to preserve grasslands and wetlands.
  - d. The National Office provided State the opportunity to request additional acres for State initiative practices.
    - i. CP23A – Wetland Restoration, Non-Floodplain
    - ii. CP33 – Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds (SE Corner)
    - iii. CP37 – Duck Nesting Habitat

- e. Mid-June, National Notice CRP-715 provided States with additional Incentive Practice Allocations. MN did quite well.

Practice	Description	Requested	Received	Current Allocation
CP23	Wetland Restoration, Floodplain	0	0	16,200
CP23A	Wetland Restoration, Non-Floodplain	50,000	42,094.00	35,500
CP33	Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds	500	500	650
CP37	Duck Nesting Habitat	20,000	8,804	8,900

- f. All pending offers have received approval authorization.

4. State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE)

- a. Secretary Vilsack's initiative included additional acres for SAFE projects.
- b. MN currently has 1 SAFE project – Back Forty Pheasant Habitat.
- c. On June 1, 2012, MN submitted a request for additional acres to the National Office.
- d. National Office has indicated that release of additional acres won't occur until possible the end of July.
- e. MN's has exhausted our current SAFE – CP38E acreage.

5. Conservation Programs

- a. Currently, MN has 1.56 million acres enrolled in CRP/CCRP/CREP/SAFE/FWP
- b. Acreage Expiring on 9/30/12:
  - i. 6.5 million acres Nationally
  - ii. MN – 292,000 acres, over 9000 contracts.
 

1. General – 249,000	CCRP – 43,000	Total	292,000
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- c. As stated, SU43 acres accepted = 99,716.7 100,000
- d. Current CCRP enrollments = 27,589.6 27,500
- e. Total = 127,306.3 127,500
- f. Leaves approximately 164,000 acres difference. However, some of these may be enrolled in other conservation programs.

6. 2012 Cost-Share Rates

- a. FSA updated the CRP C/S rates for 2012.
- b. New rates were released on June 27, 2012.
- c. SU42 and SU43 contracts not yet approved should be scheduled with the new effective rates.

7. Conservation Highlights (Handout)