The Natural Resources Conservation Service is currently accepting applications for the conservation program, EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentive Program). “Ranking of the applications could happen shortly after the fiscal year begins,” said Claudia Stevenson, resource conservationist.

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

EQIP provides a voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers who promote agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible national goals. EQIP offers financial and technical help to assist eligible participants install or implement structural and management practices on eligible agricultural land.

EQIP offers contracts with a minimum term of two years and a maximum term of 10 years. These contracts provide incentive payments and cost-shares to implement conservation practices. Persons who are engaged in livestock or agricultural production on eligible land may participate in the EQIP program.

EQIP activities are carried out according to an environmental quality incentives program plan of operations developed in conjunction with the producer that identifies the appropriate conservation practice or practices to address the resource concerns.

The practices are subject to NRCS technical standards adapted for local conditions. The local conservation district approves the plan.

Practices such as first-time NoTill, organic farming, livestock pipelines and tanks, windbreaks, range management, terraces, irrigation water management (covert high pressure systems to low pressure, real-time water management, etc.) are all considered for cost share or incentive payments.

Farmers and ranchers can submit applications to NRCS on the south side of the USDA Service Center. We will take applications on an on-going basis. Various times during the year, the applications will be evaluated for points and sent to the state office for ranking.

Schedule a time soon to meet with Stevenson on this great conservation program. For more local information about the program see the website:
http://www.ne.nrcs.usda.gov/partnerships/nrd/upper_republican_nrd_priorities.html

Wetland Reserve Program

The Wetlands Reserve Program is a voluntary program offering landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property.

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical and financial support to help landowners with their wetland restoration efforts.

The NRCS goal is to achieve the greatest wetland functions and values, along with optimum wildlife habitat, on every acre enrolled in the program.

This program offers landowners an opportunity to establish long-term conservation and wildlife practices and protection.

With this program, large wetlands can be enrolled in a contract that ‘buys’ the land at current market prices.

For more information about the programs listed or other conservation programs, please call 308-352-4776, ext. 3.