

A Quality Environment

DICKINSON SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

SPIRIT LAKE, IOWA 51360 712-336-3782, EXT. 3

JULY 2003

State Cost Share Programs Available

Cost share funds are currently available through the **Iowa Department of Agriculture, Division of Soil Conservation**. These State cost-share programs provide 50% to 75% of construction costs for several kinds of conservation practices depending on the practice and the location within the county.

These practices include waterways, terraces, sediment basins, grade stabilization structures, diversions, farmstead windbreaks, field windbreaks and wetland restorations.

A \$10 per acre no-till or ridge-till incentive is available to producers who plant using these tillage systems. This incentive is offered on a one-time only, per producer basis, with a maximum of 80 acres.

Please contact the Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District at the USDA Service Center in Spirit Lake or by calling 712-336-3782, Ext. 3 for more information on these cost-share programs, eligibility and/or to receive technical assistance.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) sign-up is under way.

Please contact the USDA Service Center staff if you are interested in conservation practices, such as:

**Contact your local
USDA Service
Center for more
information on
State Cost Share
and
EQIP
programs
available**

**Livestock Animal Waste Systems
Grazing Systems
Terraces
Waterways
Sediment Basins
Nutrient Management
Pest Management
No-till, Ridge-till, Strip-till and
Grade Stabilization Structures.**

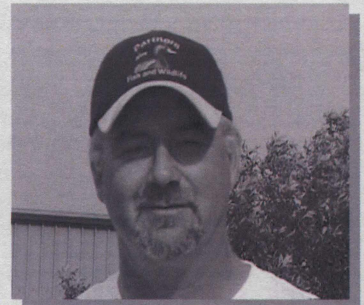
Incentive payments or cost share is available for these and other practices.

Ike Petersen New District Employee

Hi! I am Ike Petersen, a new employee at the Spirit Lake NRCS/SWCD office.

My wife, Deb, works for Iowa Lakes Community College in Estherville. We have three children and one granddaughter.

My position began in April 2003, as Water Quality Specialist in the Iowa Great Lakes Watershed. The main focus of my position is to work with landowners and farmers to implement NRCS Programs and FSA Conservation Reserve Programs (CRP) to improve water quality. My experience as a farmer for thirty years and utilizing these programs on my land, has helped me to understand the importance of the programs to water quality and the value gained by the landowner from the payments received. Having some knowledge in GIS has also been beneficial.



District Commissioners

Mark Ingwersen, Chairperson Scott Mitchell, Secretary
Chris Hoffman, Vice Chair Orville Berg, Treasurer
Bill Northey

Assistant Commissioners

Tom Koster Curt Smith Keith Van Kleeck

District Mission Statement

The Dickinson SWCD will serve its customers and the needs of the District's natural resources through education, promotion, and demonstration.

This position has been interesting since I work with other governmental agencies and learn from them what roles they have in these programs, and the importance of everyone working together to accomplish the goal of better water quality.

I have found there is a great interest in this project from people in many different positions in the community. With the contacts I have made, I find everyone is concerned with the problems we have and most are willing to look at the options available to them.

I am looking forward to meeting and working with the landowners in the Iowa Great Lakes Watershed.

Since I am working on targeted areas in the watershed, it could be some time before I get to everyone, so please feel free to contact our office if you are interested in a particular program or have any questions and I have not yet contacted you.

Native Grasses

The NRCS/SWCD office receives lots of questions about weed control and mowing of native grasses.

Generally, mowing weeds high (6-8 inches) in June, July and August the first year or two of establishing a native grass planting, will take care of most non-noxious weed problems in these areas. (Noxious weeds will continue to need attention.)

Chemical weed control in native species should be done with care (spot spraying) and, as always, completed according to label directions.

The biggest concerns with weed control are in areas that have a thicker cover of broad-leaf weeds (especially giant ragweed) or areas with noxious weeds. Thick stands of broad-leaf weeds can severely inhibit the growth of new seeding and should be mowed to reduce the competition. Foxtail in a new seeding doesn't always smother out the grass and legumes, but can do so if extremely tall and thick, and may need control.

If weeds are not a problem to the seeding, or no noxious weeds exist, then mowing should not take place.

Contact the Service Center with your questions on establishing and the maintenance of your native grass seeding practice.

Status Reviews

If you own land or manage land that recently was enrolled into a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), either general or continuous sign-up; or if you entered into a Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) easement, Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), and Dickinson Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) easements, a Status Review will be completed on these sites by NRCS this summer.

Status reviews are field checks to evaluate the progress of your CRP grass seeding, wetland construction, grassed waterway and tree/shrub planting. During the first three years of a CRP contract, the NRCS staff is required to check your conservation practice.

After visiting the site, a brief write-up is completed to document the status of the practice(s), along with any recommendations to be performed on the practice(s). A status review worksheet is completed and sent to the contract holder for signature. This documentation is provided to FSA and filed with all other contract information. This information is useful in determining the progress of a landowner's plan, for example, the establishment of native warm season grasses.

The first three years, contracts are reviewed by NRCS staff to determine if the practice(s) are established or are close to establishment and with proper maintenance, can be determined as "Final".

After a "Final" status review has been completed on a CRP contract, contact the Farm Service Agency (FSA) for County Office Committee (COC) approval prior to any maintenance work, such as mowing or spraying, being

done on finalized CRP contracts.

Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) sign-up is underway

Applications are due in August, 2003

Contact the USDA Service Center for more information and to sign up!

NRCS Staff:

Carroll Oskvig, District Conservationist
Tim Moran, Soil Conservation Technician

IDALS-DSC Staff:

Maxine Butler, State Secretary

District Staff:

Ike Petersen, Water Quality Specialist
Christine Evans, Soil Conservation Aide

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