

Nebraska NRCS Disaster Response Report

May 8, 2019



Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Assistance

Through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Nebraska NRCS is offering two special initiatives to producers impacted by the Bomb Cyclone blizzard and subsequent flooding. EQIP is providing financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers through the Livestock Mortality Initiative to help properly dispose of dead livestock. EQIP is also providing assistance through the Cover Crops for Disaster Recovery Initiative to plant cover crops on cropland damaged from flooding.

Livestock Mortality Initiative:

This assistance was made available on March 21. Applications for this initiative are accepted on a continuous basis with two application cutoff dates for ranking and contract approval. The initial application cutoff date was April 5. The second cutoff date was May 1. To accommodate producers still needing assistance, a third application cutoff date of July 1 was announced last week with a ranking deadline of July 12.

As of May 8, Nebraska NRCS has received 32 Livestock Mortality Initiative EQIP applications involving 1,699 head of livestock. This head count includes 1,181 cattle, 12 sheep, 3 goats, and 3 swine. There are currently 18 contracts obligated for \$80,919. The remaining 14 applications with cost estimates for \$54,363 are being prepared for contracts. The total request for funds, including active contracts and remaining applications equals \$135,282. Early start waivers have been approved and NRCS continues to work through the obligation process as timely as possible to facilitate the carcass removal needs of our impacted USDA participants.

Cover Crops for Disaster Assistance Initiative:

This assistance was made available on April 17. Nebraska NRCS currently has 10 applications in eligible or pending status under the Cover Crops for Disaster Assistance Initiative totaling \$8,057. This initiative will address soil erosion and/or water quality resource concerns resulting directly from March 2019 severe weather damage on eligible cropland acres. The most significant impacts to cropland include extreme wet conditions, sand deposition and scouring.

Applications for this initiative will be accepted on a continuous basis with two application cutoff dates for ranking and contract approval. The initial application cutoff date is May 17, with a ranking deadline of May 31. The second cutoff date is June 21, with a ranking deadline of July 12.

Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) Assistance

The Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) is administered by USDA's Farm Service Agency. Nebraska NRCS is providing technical assistance to three of the five emergency practices available under the ECP Program: EC-2 grading and shaping of land damaged by the flood, EC-4 repair to structural practices such as terraces, waterways, and stock ponds, and EC-8 repairs to field windbreaks.

As of May 8, NRCS has received a total of 501 ECP applications referrals from FSA. NRCS has provided technical assistance on 235 of the referrals and returned them to FSA, and determined another 106 applications can be addressed more efficiently under the EC-1 practice of debris removal. The remaining 160 ECP applications are being worked on at NRCS.

Nebraska NRCS Disaster Recovery Response

Nebraska NRCS has been working with state and federal agencies to assist agricultural producers impacted by the "bomb cyclone" and flooding that occurred on March 14, 2019. Nebraska NRCS' response has consisted of three main programs:

- The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- The Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)
- The Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP)

This report provides an update on the extent of recovery work underway, and the progress being accomplished.

Cultural Resources Evaluation Process on ECP Applications

On April 24, 2019, NRCS expanded its role in environmental compliance activities by having field personnel look for the presence or absence of cultural resources in the field. This change was made to help expedite the cultural review and clearance process at the Nebraska State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO). Without the additional cultural resources information provided by NRCS personnel site visits, the SHPO office was having difficulty determining if cultural resources existed in the field. This would have likely resulted in extending the time needed for SHPO to get a response back to FSA so repair work could begin in the field.

As of this week, NRCS Cultural Resource Specialists have processed 180 ECP applications that could potentially overlap with cultural resources. The information regarding the presence or absence of cultural resources was provided to the local NRCS field office for them to provide to FSA. Approximately 40 ECP applications reported archaeological sites may overlap with these project areas. FSA will take these projects to the Nebraska SHPO to consult on further actions along with all others that have a potential to effect historic properties.

Nebraska NRCS has reached out to other states for assistance in cultural resources evaluations. At this time it appears archaeologists in Colorado, California, and the Federal Preservation Officer will provide support part time from their current locations on ECP. We are coordinating with FSA via teleconferences on ECP progress twice a week and also with FSA and the SHPO twice a week.

** See the enclosed table on pages 3-5 for data on the number of applications received by office location and their status. Note that 75 ECP applications are not currently accessible due to damages caused by the floods.*

Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP) Assistance

All potential EWP Program sponsors, from whom we have received a letter of EWP assistance request have also submitted an application to the FEMA Individual Assistance Request (IAR) portal. Our assumption is FEMA will send sponsors to NRCS if their respective projects are eligible for EWP Program assistance, but most sponsors want to see what is being offered by FEMA prior to making a commitment to NRCS.

The bulk of the potential EWP Program projects that we have received and reviewed typically have included:

1. Log Jams and or vegetative debris that is blocking natural water courses and potentially creating risk to public roads, culverts, bridges, etc.

2. Streambank stabilization erosion issues that are jeopardizing roads and bridges and other forms of public infrastructure
3. Road crossing at channel; many Nebraska bridges experienced sever scouring and erosion in and around bridges and road culverts. Many of these potential sites will include the need for riprap armoring and other forms of stabilization to ensure future events do not completely destroy the public infrastructure.
4. To a lesser degree, we have had some interest in EWP assistance for levee repairs and drainage ditches sediment/sand removal. For the levee situation we have been promoting consideration of EWP-Flood Plain Easements. For drainage ditches we have found most to be operation and maintenance issues that existed prior to the disaster event.

Nebraska NRCS has made and continues to correspond with potential sponsors related to EWP Program assistance and the need to submit a letter or request to receive assistance. NRCS will accept requests of EWP assistance through May 20, 2019, which is 60 days after the date of the natural disaster occurrence. A press release was sent out to statewide media and conservation partners announcing this cutoff date. Letters for EWP assistance requests received after this date will need to be evaluated in accordance with EWP Program manual policy.

EWP Flood Plain Easement Inquiries

Nebraska NRCS has received 34 inquiries about the EWP-FPE Program with 10 of these people signing applications for the EWP-FPE program. An estimated \$11,359,987 is the costs for land purchases, restorations and administrative costs associated with these easements. We have had inquiries for land on the Missouri River, Bazile Creek, Verdigre Creek, Niobrara River, Loup River, Elkhorn River and the Platte River.

**Please see the attached spreadsheet on page 6 showing a list of EWP sponsors and number of sites.*

More Information

Nebraska NRCS is continuously updating its website with resources available to for those impacted by the Bomb Cyclone and subsequent flooding. This information is updated as more programs and information becomes available. <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/ne/programs/financial/ewp/>.

Nebraska ECP Application Status as of May 8, 2019

Report Compiled:

5/7/19 3:53 PM

Arrows indicate change from: 4/30/2019

ADMIN			Total	Signups	Processed	Approved	Complete	NFA			
Area	NRD	NRCS Office		S 1.0	S 2.0	S 3.0	S 4.0	S 5.0			
Totals			501 ↑95	160 ↓32	235 ↑80			106 ↑47			
Central	CP	Central City	6	6							
		Grand Island									
		Kearney	29	↑6	11	↓1	13	↑4	5	↑3	
		Lexington**	2				1		1		
	LL	Albion	15		2	↓13	7	↑7		6	↑6
		Broken Bow	11	↑4	6	↑2	5	↑2			
		Burwell									
		Fullerton	32	↑4	9	↓16				23	↑20
		Ord	11	↑3	6		3	↑2		2	↑1
		Spalding	9	↑3	7	↑2				2	↑1
	LN	St. Paul	18	↑4	9	↓4	6	↑6		3	↑2
		Spencer	7	↑3	3	↑1	4	↑2			
	LR	Alma	6		3	↓2	1			2	↑2
		Franklin	1			↓1				1	↑1
	UBB	Osceola									
	UE	Ainsworth	7	↑7	6	↑6				1	↑1
Neligh		3	↑1	3	↑1						
O'Neill		15	↑9	8	↑4	5	↑5		2		
East	LC	Bloomfield	30	↑13	20	↑9	6	↑1		4	↑3
		Hartington	8	↑1	6	↑1	2				
		Ponca									
	LE	Norfolk	2			↓1	2	↑1			
		Pierce	5	↑2	4	↑2	1				
		Stanton	7	↑3	2	↑2	5	↑1			
		Wayne									
		West Point	17				14			3	
	LPN	Columbus	82	↑7	1	↓3	57	↑8		24	↑2
		David City	4		4						
		Fremont	82	↑15	11	↓25	60	↑36		11	↑4
		Schuyler	6				5			1	
		Wahoo	12	↑1	5	↑1	7				
	LPS	Weeping Water	21			↓3	14	↑3		7	
	N	Auburn	2	↑1	1	↑1	1				
		Falls City									
		Syracuse									
	PMR	Blair	22	↑2	13	↓1	6	↑2		3	↑1
		Dakota City	1				1				
		Omaha									
Tekamah		20		8		7			5		
Walthill		3	↑1	1	↑1	2					
West	UNW	Chadron	3	↑3	3	↑3					
		Rushville	2	↑2	2	↑2					

6	
17	↑12
75	↑5

Signed numbers (↑↓) indicate change from last report

Total # of ECP apps

apps rec'd from FSA

apps planned and returned to FSA for approval

apps approved by FSA and returned to NRCS

apps NRCS has certified to FSA for payment

EC/EC3, cancelled, or ineligible and no further NRCS action required

** Indicates office outside the eligible area accepting applications for land within eligible area

EWP Status as of May 8, 2019

SAMS#	Sponsor Name	Request Rec'd	Sponsor POC	Number of Sites	DSR #
yes	Knox County Dept of Roads, Board of Supervisors	3/20/2019	Kevin Barta	7	100-106
	Lewis and Clark NRD	3/22/2019	Annette Sudbeck	0	
yes	Ponca Tribe of Nebraska	3/22/2019	Diane Wagner	?	
yes	Papio Missouri NRD	3/18/2019	Zach Nelson	1	107
yes	City of Verdigre	3/20/2019	Leroy Hollmann	1	108
yes	City of Creighton	3/20/2019	Lindsay Nelson	1	166
no	Knox County Sanitary and Improvement District#2	3/20/2019	Rodney Kinning	0	
yes	Middle Republican NRD	4/5/2019	Alex Boyce	3	
yes	Thurston County Dept of Roads	4/23/2019	Randy Stromberg	15	170-187
	NDOT		Jason Jurgens	1	
no	Burt County Dept of Roads	4/12/2019	Ann Chytka	54	109-162
yes	Dakota County Dept of Roads	4/11/2019	Fred Kellogg	3	163-165
no	Platte County Dept of Roads		Jane Cromwell	187	
no	Wayne County Dept of Roads	4/17/2019	Mark Casey	0	
TBD	Dixon County Dept of Roads	5/2/2019	Arnold Mellick	30	400-429
	Cedar County Dept of Roads			0	
no	Village of Spencer	4/16/2019	Kyle Krotter	1	200
	Knox Benedictine Sisters	4/15/2019		0	
yes	Lower Platte North NRD	4/24/2019	Eric Gottschalk	3	167-169
no	Upper Niobrara White NRD	4/16/2019	Patrick O'Brien	5	
no	Town of Dannebrog	4/10/2019	Terry Webb	1	
yes	Saline County Dept of Roads	4/19/2019	Bruce Filipi	22	
no	Clear Creek Drainage District	4/25/2019	Harold Kolb	3	
yes	Village of Butte (Boyd County)		Shanna Brooks	?	
TBD	Holt County Dept of Roads	4/29/2019	Gary Connot		
TBD	Village of Spalding	4/24/2019	Ed Carlin/Gene Hitcher	7	
TBD	Butler County Dept of Roads	4/29/2019	Jim McDonald		
TBD	Town of Ord	5/1/2019	Paul Markowski	?	
TBD	Gering Valley Flood Control Project	5/1/2019	John Berge	7	
TBD	Town of Cedar Rapids	5/7/2019	Brady Yosten	4	
TBD	Town of Center	5/7/2019	Susan Wiebelhaus	1	
yes	Little Blue NRD	5/6/2019	Kyle Hauschild	5	

LEDGEND
Not Eligible
DSR being collected
Awaiting Sponsor to submit potential sites

Nebraska

Natural
Resources
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