



NRCS Programs and Services

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District Conservationist

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Who we are and what do we do

- Our agency was formed back in the dust bowl days in 1935 as the Soil Erosion Service (SES), later became the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), and today are the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
- We are a federal agency within the USDA and focus on private land conservation efforts with technical assistance and cost share authorized through the farm bill
- Most counties have a local office typically in the county seat
 - I manage the Boone, Stephenson, & Winnebago County offices out of Rockford
 - I have 14 years in with the agency and 8 yrs in Rockford

USDA-NRCS Programs available

- CTA – Conservation Technical Assistance
- EQIP – Environmental Quality Incentives Program
- CStP – Conservation Stewardship Program
- ACEP – Ag Conservation Easement Program
- CRP – Partner with FSA and provide technical assistance to landowners
- CPP – Partner with SWCD to administer State Cost Share

EQIP

- NRCS Flagship conservation cost share program
- Monarch Initiative
 - \$1,055/ac, \$1,530/ac if cropland
 - Prescribed burning, herbaceous weed control, brush mgmt
- Organic Initiative
 - Seasonal High Tunnels, Pollinator/Monarch plantings, cover crops
- Wildlife Pool
 - Wetlands, Seeding, Tree planting, windbreaks, etc

CStP

- Taking applications year round also but typically only considered for funding 1 time per year
- Contracts are for 5 years and applies to all acres that you farm in your control for those next 5 years
- Currently have approximately 28,250 acres enrolled in Winnebago County with 32 producers
- Available for cropland, forestland, and pastureland
- Receive annual payment for existing conservation and newly adopted enhancements such as pollinator plantings, tree/shrub plantings

ACEP

- ALE (Ag Land Easement) and WRE (Wetland Reserve Easement) are the two available programs
- WRE replaced the popular WRP of which we have 6 easements and approximately 1,600 acres enrolled here in Winnebago County
- \$5,500/ac for cropland/\$4,000/ac for non-cropland
- 2 year min ownership and 20 ac requirement
- Wetland easements would have seeding with pollinator friendly species, wetlands, tree plantings, etc

CRP

- Administered by our partner agency FSA (Farm Service Agency)
- NRCS provides technical assistance such as establishment, maintenance, compliance
- Very popular throughout the country
- Contracts range from 10-15 yrs depending on the practice
- Eligible land must have cropping history established with FSA (current cropping history is 2014-2018)
- Current Cap is 24 million nationwide, approved to go up to 27 million by end of new farm bill
- To determine eligibility contact your local FSA office, for Winnebago you would contact the Freeport office

CRP continued

- 435 landowners, 557 active contracts, 6859 ac, and \$1,473,595 of annual payments
- Practices range from grassed waterways, filterstrips, pollinator plantings, riparian buffers, native grass establishments, tree planting, wetland restoration, shelter belts
- Continuous, General, HELI, and SAFE are all available in Winnebago County pending available acres

CPP – Administered by SWCD

- State cost share administered by Soil and Water Districts
- Awarded up to 60% cost share assistance for projects
- Projects planned to meet NRCS standards
- NRCS assists with technical assistance
- Common projects include:
 - Pollinator and rain gardens for around the house

With NRCS technical assistance, landowners can nurture beautiful prairie areas that reflect the natural historical environment of the area.



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Thank you!

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Any Questions?

www.il.nrcs.usda.gov

***NRCS: Helping People Help
The Land.***

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