

Cover Crop Incentive Programs



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Lower Platte South Natural Resources District Cover Crop Cost-Share Program

Purpose: Reduce erosion, increase soil organic matter, capture and recycle nutrients, increase biodiversity, suppress weeds, manage soil moisture, and minimize soil compaction by utilizing cover crops within selected areas of the LPSNRD.

Eligibility

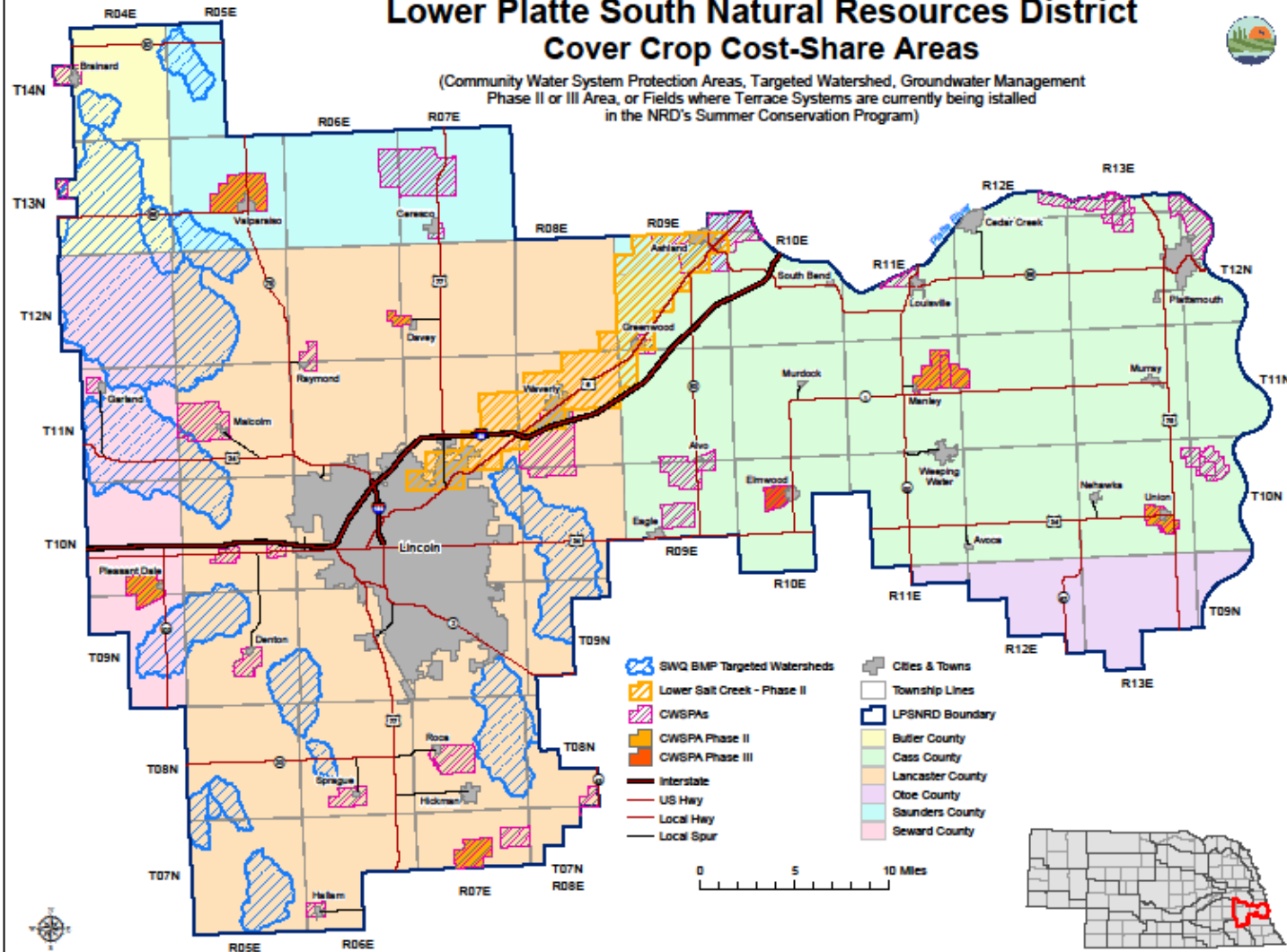
Land shall be located in the following areas:

- Community Water System Protection Area (CWSPA)
- Targeted Watersheds
- Groundwater Management Phase II or III Areas
- Fields where terrace systems are being installed in the NRD's Summer Conservation Program (District wide)
- HEL & NHEL fields must be in a continuous no-till cropping system – HEL fields that are cut for silage are not eligible.
- Each participant will enroll a total of 20 – 80 acres

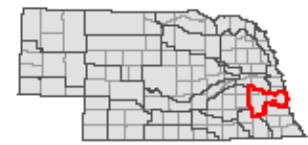
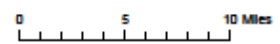
Lower Platte South Natural Resources District Cover Crop Cost-Share Areas



(Community Water System Protection Areas, Targeted Watershed, Groundwater Management Phase II or III Area, or Fields where Terrace Systems are currently being installed in the NRD's Summer Conservation Program)



- SWQ BMP Targeted Watersheds
- Lower Salt Creek - Phase II
- CWSPAs
- CWSPA Phase II
- CWSPA Phase III
- Interstate
- US Hwy
- Local Hwy
- Local Spur
- Cities & Towns
- Township Lines
- LPSNRD Boundary
- Butler County
- Cass County
- Lancaster County
- Otoe County
- Saunders County
- Seward County



June 2019

Sources: Lower Platte South Natural Resources District; Nebraska Dept of Natural Resources; Nebraska Dept of Environmental Quality; Nebraska Department of Roads

Terms

- ▶ Cover crop options include:
 - ▶ #1 – Rye only
 - ▶ #2 – Rye/rape/radish
 - ▶ #3 – Deluxe cocktail mix (5 species minimum)
- ▶ Payment rates/acre:
 - ▶ \$25/acre for single species
 - ▶ \$30/acre multiple species
 - ▶ Annual Payment Limit of \$2,000 per farm/producer
- ▶ Planting deadlines:
 - ▶ Aerial/Broadcast – prior to October 1st
 - ▶ Drilling – Prior to November 1st
- ▶ NRCS certification will be upon termination of cover crop in spring
- ▶ Haying/Grazing is not allowed
- ▶ Cover crop mixtures and rates will comply with NRCS Code 340 – Cover Crop Conservation Practice Standards



Environment Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Purpose: Assists farm, ranch, and forest production and improves and protects environmental quality. The program offers financial and technical assistance to help agricultural producers voluntarily implement conservation practices that keep lands health and productive.

Eligibility

- ▶ Farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners who own or rent agricultural land
- ▶ Special payment rates for historically underserved (HU) producers
- ▶ EQIP offers payments for over 100 conservation practices, including **cover crops!**

Terms

- ▶ Cover crop options:
 - ▶ Seed mixtures are designed according to landowner's objectives and goals
 - ▶ Cover crops must be planted according to NE-CPA-7 Cover Crop Design Worksheet
 - ▶ Contracts may be 1 – 3 years
- ▶ Payment rates/acre:
 - ▶ Basis cover crop (typically single species) - \$26.96/ac; \$43.80 HU
 - ▶ Multiple Species (3 or more species) - \$33.97; 52.84 HU
 - ▶ Payment cap of \$7,500/yr. and \$9,375/yr. HU
 - ▶ Other payment scenarios may be available depending upon your individual goals (ex: adaptive management)
- ▶ Planting Deadlines:
 - ▶ Contingent on goals and selected species – dormant seeding may be feasible

Terms Continued.....

- ▶ Cover crops cannot be harvested for grain or hay, unless cover crop is being used to facilitate a grass seeding
- ▶ Grazing is allowed providing the primary purpose of the cover crop is being met. Prescribed grazing plan must be followed.
- ▶ NRCS Certification will occur after the crop is seeded, established, or terminated. This varies according to the resource concern being addressed.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

Helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional activities to address resource concerns. CSP pays participants for conservation performance.....the higher the performance, the higher the payment.





Eligibility

- PRODUCERS THAT OPERATE PRIVATE AND TRIBAL AGRICULTURAL LANDS, CROPLAND, GRASSLAND, PASTURELAND, RANGELAND, AND NONINDUSTRIAL PRIVATE FOREST LAND
- PRODUCERS MUST HAVE EFFECTIVE CONTROL OF THE LAND FOR THE TERM OF THE CONTRACT (5 YEARS)

Opportunities!



- COVER CROPS TO REDUCE SOIL EROSION
- COVER CROPS TO INCREASE SOIL HEALTH AND SOIL ORGANIC MATTER
- USE OF SOIL HEALTH ASSESSMENT TO ASSIST WITH DEVELOPMENT OF COVER CROP MIXES TO IMPROVE SOIL HEALTH
- COVER CROPS TO MINIMIZE COMPACTION
- COVER CROPS TO REDUCE WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION
- COVER CROPS TO SUPPRESS EXCESSIVE WEED PRESSURE AND BREAK PEST CYCLES
- USING COVER CROPS FOR BIOLOGICAL STRIP TILL



NRCS is still taking applications for FY2020 CSP and EQIP contracts!

- ▶ For more information visit nrcs.usda.gov/farmbill or farmers.gov
- ▶ Find your local USDA Service Center at farmers.gov/service-locator

QUESTIONS ?