#### Notes

#### West Palouse Local Work Group – FY2024

Lincoln County Public Works Basement Meeting Room, 27234 Hwy 25. Davenport WA

#### May 4, 2023 - 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Attendees**

* Mike Baden - WSCC, Cari Roepke – NRCS, Marika Kearsley – NRCS, Delaini Disher – LCCD, Jeff Schibel – LCCD, Ron Jirava - Ritzville Producer, Nathan Cook - WDFW, Michael Swart - DOE, Brooke Durnin - AFM

**Opening Comments, Webinar Participation, Objectives & Agenda Review:**

* Introductions, opening comments and overview of agenda. The state NRCS office asked LWG to identify top resource concerns. Consideration of LWG proposing IRA funding specific to the West Palouse team.
* Marika shared an overview of LWG roles and responsibilities: regional stakeholders determine what local needs are that pertain to natural resources and the subsequent funding pools that may be available. A combination of fund pools can be used to best serve the region and the organizations within the LWG.

**Farm Bill FY22 Obligations & FY23 Program Updates**

* 18-19 CSP IRA 2023 applications
* 23 CSP 2023 Applications

**Resource Concern Priorities/Fund Pools**

* Marika also shared an overview of last year’s fund allocation across state programs for the West Palouse team.
* Each local work group can select up to 2 unique funding pools – cannot duplicate an existing national or state fund pool.
* Important to consider what is missing and where the needs that are not covered in the National or State fund pools are.
* Reviewed list of national and state fund pools (list provided by Marika). Marika discussed each fund pool and mentioned whether there is a history of application or approval for each category in the West Palouse area.

**Pool by land use/resource concern chosen by the West Palouse LWG for FY 24**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **West Palouse LWG Soil OM Depletion – 100%** | | | |
| **Resource Concern Category** | **Wind and Water Erosion – 25%** | **Wind and Water Erosion – 35%** | **Livestock Production Limitation – 40%** |
| **Resource Concerns** | Wind Erosion -100% | Sheet and Rill Erosion – 100% | Feed and Forage Balance - 50%, |
| Inadequate Livestock Water Quantity, Quality, & Distribution – 50% |

**Additional Practices Needed**

* Brooke asked about a potential fund pool for prevention or treatment of tree disease and pests in forestry, but Cari mentioned an overlap with existing fund pools. There is still a possibility that a forestry health practice can be prioritized in the region to address pest concerns and other similar issues.

**Priority Resource Concerns**

* The LWG reviewed the list of resource concerns. The group decided to keep the proposed priority resource concern breakdown from the previous year (shown above)
* LWG reviewed the previous year’s top 5 resource concerns and associated land uses. Discussed the existing resource concerns, re-evaluated resource concerns and ranked: wind and water erosion, fire management, livestock production limitation, soil quality limitations, source water depletion (in order)

**IRA Funding Overview and Proposals**

* New this year, the LWG has an opportunity to share proposals. “The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) is an investment in climate and clean energy, designed to promote climate smart, agricultural and resource concern policies.” IRA funded projects need to meet the requirements of one of the four priority categories.
* The group discussed preliminary requirements for potential IRA projects, gave some insight on how NRCS and other groups can coordinate projects to get proposals approved.

**Other Updates**

* WSCC and DFW have prioritized wildlife habitat funding, including fire recovery. WSCC saw an increase in opportunities for forest health funding and Firewise projects.
* July 1st DOE will introduce online applications for burn permits in order to speed up the approval process and address air quality.

**Next Steps, Closing Comments & Adjourn**

* Attendees were encouraged to reach out to LCCD if they had a project proposal or wanted to collaborate with outreach tasks.
* Next year the LWG will meet in Ritzville. The meeting adjourned at 10:55am.