

Notes

West Palouse Local Work Group Work Session
WA Association of Wheat Growers Meeting Room – Ritzville, WA
March 17, 2014 – 8:30 am to 3:00 pm

Session Objective:

- Review FY13 Farm Bill accomplishments and FY14 applications, review natural resource data, including the most prevalent natural resource conservation issues to be addressed in the LWG area with various federal and state programs in FY15.

January 31 Session Notes Review

- Reviewed notes from January 31 session

Programs & Projects to Address Resource Conservation Priorities

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Land Use / Resource Concern Fund Pools

Farm Bill Program FY13 Accomplishments & FY14 Applications

Eligible Practices for Farm Bill Programs

Estimated Acres of Treatment, Geographic Areas & Practices

Ranking Questions

Targeted Watershed

Next Steps & Closing Comments & A

Resource Conservation Priority – Overall Pool of Funds	Pool of Funds
Soil Health & Erosion (wind & water)	30
Perennial Ground Cover & Management (CRP, land use changes)	30
Proper Management of Riparian Areas	8

Forest Health	8
Wildlife (habitat, predators, populations)	8
Technical Assistance to Follow up on land owner conservation objectives	8
Energy Conservation	8

Land Use / Resource Concern Pools - USDA Programs

Resource Conservation Priority	Land Use	Pool %	Estimated Acres of Treatment FY15	Watershed Area
Soil Erosion – Sheet, Rill & Wind	Cropland	30	3000 (\$150,000 estimate)	
Insufficient Water Inefficient use of irrigation water	Cropland	20	480 (\$100,000 estimate)	
Degraded Plant Condition Undesirable plant productivity & health	Rangeland	20	4000 (\$xx estimate)	
Degraded Plant Condition Undesirable plant productivity & health	Forestland	10	90 (\$75,000 estimate)	Forest land acreage
Soil Quality (Health) Perennial Ground Cover, Alternative Cropping Systems & Management	All Lands	20	1000 (\$300,000 estimate)	CRP acreage adjacent to rangeland
Initiatives				
Energy			Acres	

**If cannot fund an entire application in a category; divided between dry cropland and rangeland pool for next application

Farm Bill Program FY13 Accomplishments & FY14 Applications

Swannack reviewed the FY13 accomplishments. Noted that FY 14 applications 28 dryland, 9 irrigation, 9 range, 4 forest. See Swannack PowerPoint slides

Next Steps:

- Notes form today's meeting back to LWG members
- Comments back to Stacy
- LWG Kickoff Meeting on March 25 – chair and DC
- Ann to develop the report to STAC by April 25
- Concept Paper on Perennial Ground Cover...Tom, Allen, Andy, Ray, Todd
- Weblink for LWG on Lincoln CD website
- Notes to invitees including county officials

- Email communication for now

January 31, 2014 Session Notes

Natural Resource Conservation Priorities

Top natural resource priorities for the LWG area

- Wind erosion control xxxxxx(x=number of times mentioned by participants' as #1 priority)
- Forest health xx including overstocking, water stress, fire suppression, proper thinning
- Marginal wildlife habitat – getting a good stand of grass and diversity, tied to wind
- Water erosion xxxxx – thunderstorms have done a lot of damage, stop the water at point of impact
- Soil health including crop rotation, ecosystem approach, not monoculture, broader picture tools, cover crops
- Proper management of riparian areas
- Self-developed vision for our farmers, ranchers, land owners for resource conservation – technical

Notes:

- Local Work Group as a visioning group...rewarding work to effect conservation
- We are caretakers and stewards of land
- One size does not fit all for conservation treatments
- Convert lands from CRP take-out to Rangeland – needing funding for fencing – would include existing range land – big factor on sensitive land
- Have had neighbors with erosion from wind we haven't had in some time – solution would be able to take certain soil types and concentrate our work in the isolated spots that require special treatments
- Be careful on approach of where to emphasize where habitat developed
- Some years ago we did work with drop structure and dams that did not accomplish a lot – save our CRP to stop the erosion on the land before
- Have one drainage area 12,000 acres that drains to Cow Creek...getting better at using practices to reduce runoff from the upper watershed area
- Dams and sediment basins don't solve
- Have switched to no-till in more areas of Lincoln County
- When you look at the conservation needs...need to put a dollar sign next to each
- CRP is a priority, soil health, summer-fallow is where much of our wind erosion problem is
- Canola ground with cattle
- Livestock on CRP all the time
- Fish and Wildlife doing a terrible job of management – get a hold of the land owners and visit about the management of the wildlife in an area
- Too many deer in the Wilbur area –
- Need more recognition of other practices for soil health, soil structure, ph, organic matter – not just direct seed
- Predators are winning the battle (examples crows to hawks, coyotes) populations of beneficial birds being lost – needing to reach a balance
- Frozen ground conditions effect our erosion, water run-off and infiltration – technical folks need to learn what conditions we are dealing with
- Need to look at results of research...eg. perennial wheat
- Local Work Group with funds for projects

Programs & Projects to Address Resource Conservation Priorities

Resource Conservation Priority	Projects	Notes - Programs
Soil Quality - Health & Erosion (wind & water)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do a soil health baseline with producers and align with soil testing • Demonstration areas • Offer package of projects in an area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil Quality index – soil kits, scorecards •
CRP Takeout & Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put in perimeter and cross fencing in – focus on critical areas including freeways, breaks, areas next to existing range and pasture ground • Concentrate on certain watersheds where the CRP is bordering on the coulee areas, poor productive lands for providing assistance with fencing and grazing • Take out CRP by allowing grazing with projects and proper weed control • Analyze what CRP ground would be better to go back into cropping (often in large acres) with proper methods of pulling CRP out vs land that should remain with cover • projects where perennial cover is part of the working farm and rotate acres in perennial cover is on xx acres • projects for water development to encourage grazing and wildlife management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping CRP ground in cover in Adams and Lincoln Counties
Proper Management of Riparian Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See management through proper grazing • Work with WSU on riparian management techniques that fit our 2 counties • Promote flash grazing with our riparian management within exclusion areas • Weed control with proper grazing management • Local workshops for recommendations on riparian area management practices for 2 counties • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Forest Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration projects on burned over ground – eg Swanson Lake • Proper stocking of trees and populations – thinning and management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding (50%) is available for thinning, forest management
Wildlife (habitat, predators, populations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management and control projects for wildlife in the 2 county area – trappings, special hunts, doe permits, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hunter access program • Status quo • Youth hunting program

	<p>wolf control if necessary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See above CRP takeout projects – work with WDFW • Work with producers on riparian wildlife habitat projects • Look at proper predator control, matched with soil health, CRP takeout • Projects with connectivity with habitats • Projects related to reducing wildlife fatalities and safety hazards – insurance companies • Write legislation that would address predation issues / balance of control on private grounds by private land owners 	<p>potential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willing to work with private land owners • Producers indicating an explosion of deer • Calf loss to coyotes this year – 21 on one ranch • Weed concerns from over grazing and ‘carry’ • Need to get ahead of wolf population issues and needs • Program called wildlife control...nuisance and dangerous issues – available • Depravation permits. • Control hunt for a month
Technical Assistance to Follow up on land owner conservation objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach with producers on wildlife, grazing • Projects to develop farm wide systems – this is what we want to do...work on watershed-farmshed basis for conservation objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Energy Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irrigated areas for switching over pumps, and energy conservation • Farmstead energy conservation projects • Windmill projects – water facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside funding

Next Steps:

- Letter to organizations and agencies asking how they will assist the LWG with projects identified – February (**by February 14th? And include an invitation to the March 17th LWG meeting**)
- Invitation to county officials
- Tour with key individuals – after legislative session
- Next meeting March 17, 2014 at 8:30 am – 3:00 pm with lunch
 - Data sets – CRP, habitat, water sources, DOT safety maps, riparian area maps, county road construction & repair, soils layer with topo -
 - Farm Bill program information related to the LWG priorities
 - Webinar link for people to visit with LWG – 10:00 am
 - Request Ray Ledgerwood to facilitate