

NRCS Update for SEC Meeting

9/26/24

Chris Rose- Partnership Coordinator
775-834-0890, Christopher.rose@usda.gov

1. Recap of FY24 program spending

- CSP, CSP-IRA, EQIP were all 100% obligated in FY2024. AMA was 92 percent obligated and EQIP-IRA was 93 percent obligated.
- As mentioned in previous meetings, about \$600k in sage grouse related funding was sent back, mostly due to potential customers reaching their Farm Bill payment limits.

2. More IRA funding coming in FY25

- We are anticipating more IRA funding in FY 25 than in FY24. FY24 \$7.3M (EQIP, CSP), projected \$15M in FY25 (\$10M EQIP, CSP; \$5M ACEP)
- We are looking for additional producers to work with in order to get the additional funding spent. There are 55 conservation practices under IRA including brush and weed treatment, restoration of rare or declining natural communities (which could include the use of BDAs), and wetland restoration.
- NRCS will be receiving IRA funding through FY26 to implement conservation on the ground.

3. The new Climate Smart practice list

- The FY25 Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry Mitigation Activities list of conservation practices eligible for Inflation Reduction Act funding in fiscal year 2025 has been released.
- If you are sharing this information with partners or other organizations, make sure you have the list dated August 2024 available at <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/NRCS-CSAF-Mitigation-Activities-List.pdf>
- Changes include the removal of the mitigation categories (soil health, nitrogen management, livestock partnership, grazing and pasture; agroforestry, forestry, and wildlife habitat; restoration of disturbed lands; energy, combustion & electricity efficiency; wetlands; rice, in favor of just listing the conservation practices.
- Facilitating practices may be eligible for IRA funding if they are needed to support the primary climate smart practice. For example: Prescribed Grazing (528) may need facilitating practices such as Watering Facility (614), Stream Crossing (578), Brush Management (314), Fence (382), or Livestock Shelter Structure (576).

4. There is a challenge to government efforts to collect natural resource information on grazing lands of the arid west due to a decline in qualified private sector resources willing and able to conduct NRI. Some of this is caused by the Government increasing (up to double) the contract work quantities at a time of declining labor supply to meet that demand, some of it is increased costs and other factors post-COVID. This potentially impacts information collection in sage grouse-supported habitats where restoration efforts have taken place, and those areas where data is needed to benchmark what changes are common to both sage grouse and non-sage grouse habitats.

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5. Next STAC meeting 11/14. It will be a half day virtual meeting from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm. The agenda and other information will be posted to the STAC website as it becomes available.

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/conservation-state/nevada/technical-committee>