NASCA Informational Webinar "Regional Conservation Partnership Program"

National Association of State Conservation Agencies

Welcome to NASCAs Webinar

- Mike Brown – NASCA Executive Director
- Ray Ledgerwood – Moderator
  Board Works by Ledgerwood
- Webinar ID: 144-954-475
- Join on the web at: www.joingotowebinar.com
- Join the audio at:
  - (562) 247-8422
  - Access code: 632-693-930
  - Pin provided on dashboard

Welcome & Opening Comments

Mike Brown

NASCA Executive Director

Logistics

- All muted lines except presenters
- Questions
  - via web – use dashboard on your computer
- Will get to as many questions as we can
- Presentation recorded
- Feedback welcome – kudos, comments, etc – email mike-brown@nascanet.org

Description

- NASCA sponsored webinar to learn from six state conservation leaders that have successfully applied for and have begun implementation of an RCPP project.
- Speakers will give an overview of their project, the RCPP pool it was funded from, partners and their role, leveraging attained, hurdles for implementation and tips on drafting and submitting an RCPP Project Application

Agenda

- Opening Comments, Agenda & Session Objective
- 1st Round Presentations
  - **New Mexico** (Debbie Hughes)
  - **Iowa** (Matthew Lechtenberg)
  - **Wisconsin** (Kyle Minks)
- Questions & Responses
- 2nd Round Presentations
  - **Oklahoma** (Shanon Phillips)
  - **Maryland** (Lindsay Thompson)
  - **Washington** (Laura Heinse)
- Questions & Responses
- Close

New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts

NEW MEXICO ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

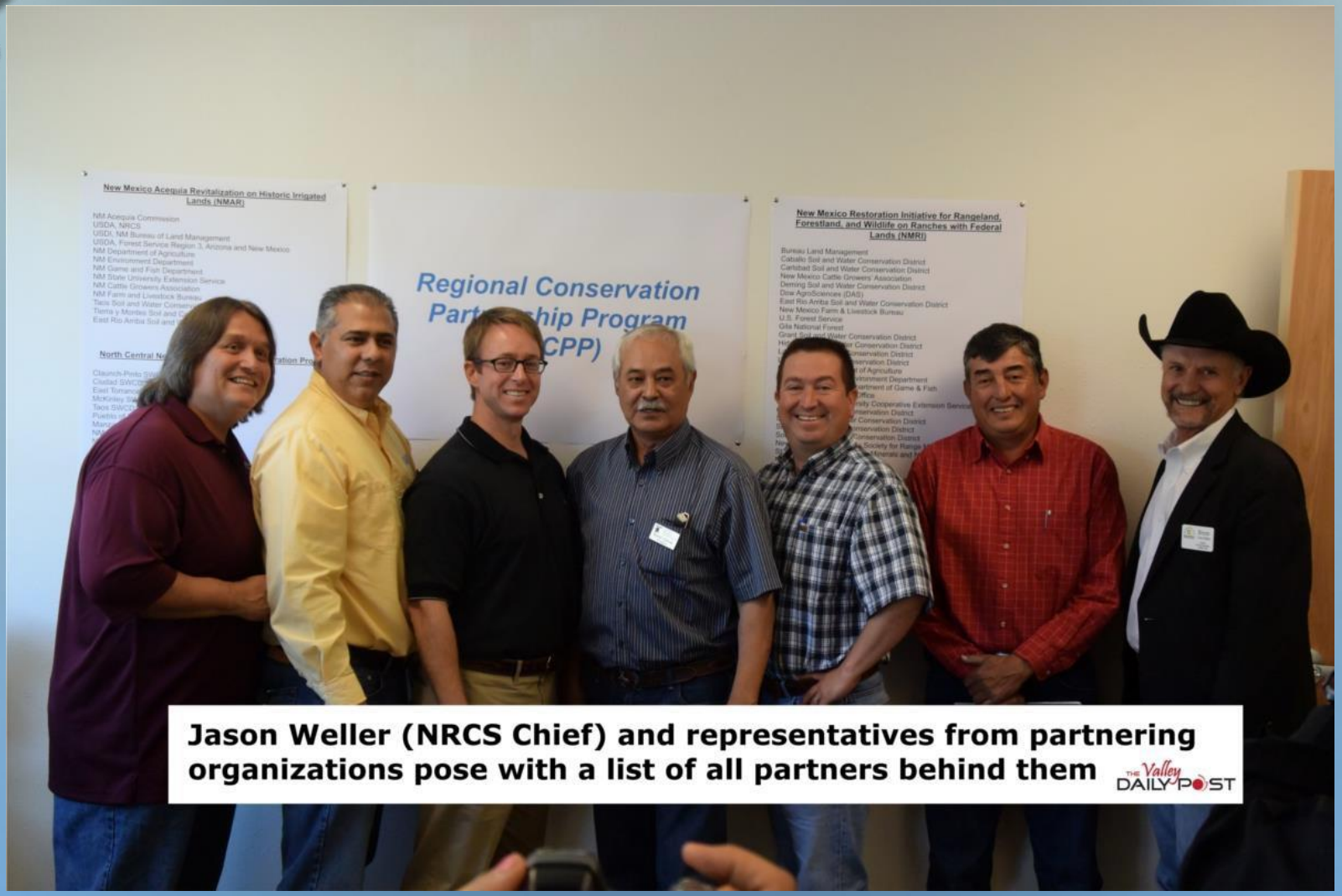
- OVERVIEW OF NM RCCP PROJECTS

- Successful in getting 4 million dollars to NM for Ranches with Federal lands Restoration RCPP
- Partnered with Canadian River SWCD for another 2 mil from RCPP
- Successful in getting 1.2 million for Acequia restoration from RCPP
- (only project administered with alternative funding agreement AFA)
- 2016 3 million for Acequia Restoration


got conservation?
got conservation?
New Mexico
Association of
NRCS

RCPP POOLS

- RESTORATION ON FEDERAL LAND RANCHES- FEDERAL POOL
- CANADIAN RIVER RESTORATION- REGIONAL POOL
- ACEQUIA RESTORATION- STATE POOL



Jason Weller (NRCS Chief) and representatives from partnering organizations pose with a list of all partners behind them

The Valley DAILY POST


NRCS
NRCS

PARTNERS AND THEIR ROLE

- STATE LEGISLATIVE FUNDING FOR TECHNICAL SERVICE PROVIDERS (TSP) $580,000
- GRANT AGREEMENT WITH BLM FOR RESTORE NM FOR 20 MILLION DOLLARS (UP TO 10% FOR ADMIN) $7 MIL BALANCE IN LAST AGREEMENT
- AGREEMENT WITH FOREST SERVICE ON PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT FOR 50,000- TO HELP FOREST SERVICE COORDINATE WITH SWCDS AND NRCS
- AGREEMENT WITH NM G & F DEPT. $50,000 TO COORDINATE WITH SWCDS
- CONTRIBUTION AGREEMENT WITH NRCS FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR FARM BILL FOR $400,000 PLUS (10% ADMIN FOR NMACD)

NEW MEXICO
"CONSERVATION PARTNERS"

NMACD has a close working relationship with NRCS, BLM, FSA, NMDA, NM G & Fand Forest Service, NMED, OSE, SW Commission, State Forestry and we are very excited about expansion of our New Mexico "Conservation Family".

LEVERAGING ATTAINED

- OUR PARTNERS WROTE LETTERS OF SUPPORT AND ATTENDED MEETINGS
- NMACD HAS 30 RETIRED NRCS, BLM & FS CONTRACTORS WORKING FOR NMACD AND SWCDS
- SOME OF THE DISTRICTS HAVE LOCAL FUNDS TO LEVERAGE
- NMACD ADMINISTERED $4,358,093 IN 2015 WITH AN OPERATING BUDGET OF $400,000


got conservation?
got conservation?
got conservation?
USDA
NRCS
New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts
USDA
NRCS

HURDLES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

SHORT TIME FRAMES BY NRCS-priority for EQIP
LACK OF COORDINATION ON RANKING CRITERIA
LACK OF COMMUNICATION –Info Needed
NRCS and District Staff not understanding RCPP

ALTERNATIVE FUNDING AGREEMENT (AFA)
SHOVEL READY PROJECTS
NEPA- TRIBAL
COORDINATION WITH ISSC & ACEQUIA

NMACD BOARD & STAFF

TIPS ON DRAFTING AND SUBMITTING

- COORDINATE WITH STATE CONSERVATIONIST EARLY AND OFTEN
- BASE YOUR PROPOSAL ON RESOURCE NEEDS
- HIRE RETIRED NRCS STAFFER
- DIVIDE WORK TO GET IT ALL DONE IN SHORT TIME PERIOD
- MAKE SPREADSHEETS WITH FUNDING POSSIBILITIES (HAS TO BENEFIT PARTNERS AS WELL)
- MAKE A LIST OF LETTERS NEEDED FROM PARTNERS AND ASSIGN RESPONSIBILITIES TO OTHERS

FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE

HOME SWEET HOME

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) in Iowa

Iowa Dept. of Ag and Land Stewardship

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

- Opportunity to obtain additional funding to augment state and partner funding.
- Designate resources for priority practices
  - Help further advance implementation of the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy

<u>IDALS RCPP Overview:</u>

- Led 1 project in 2015
- Partnered in other proposals
  - 1 selected for funding (Cedar Rapids)
  - Couple others not selected.
- Led 2 projects in 2016 (1 not selected)
- Partnered in other proposals
  - 1 selected for funding (Charles City)
  - Couple others not selected.

Iowa Water Quality Initiative

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & LAND STEWARDSHIP

Nitrogen Practices

Phosphorus Practices

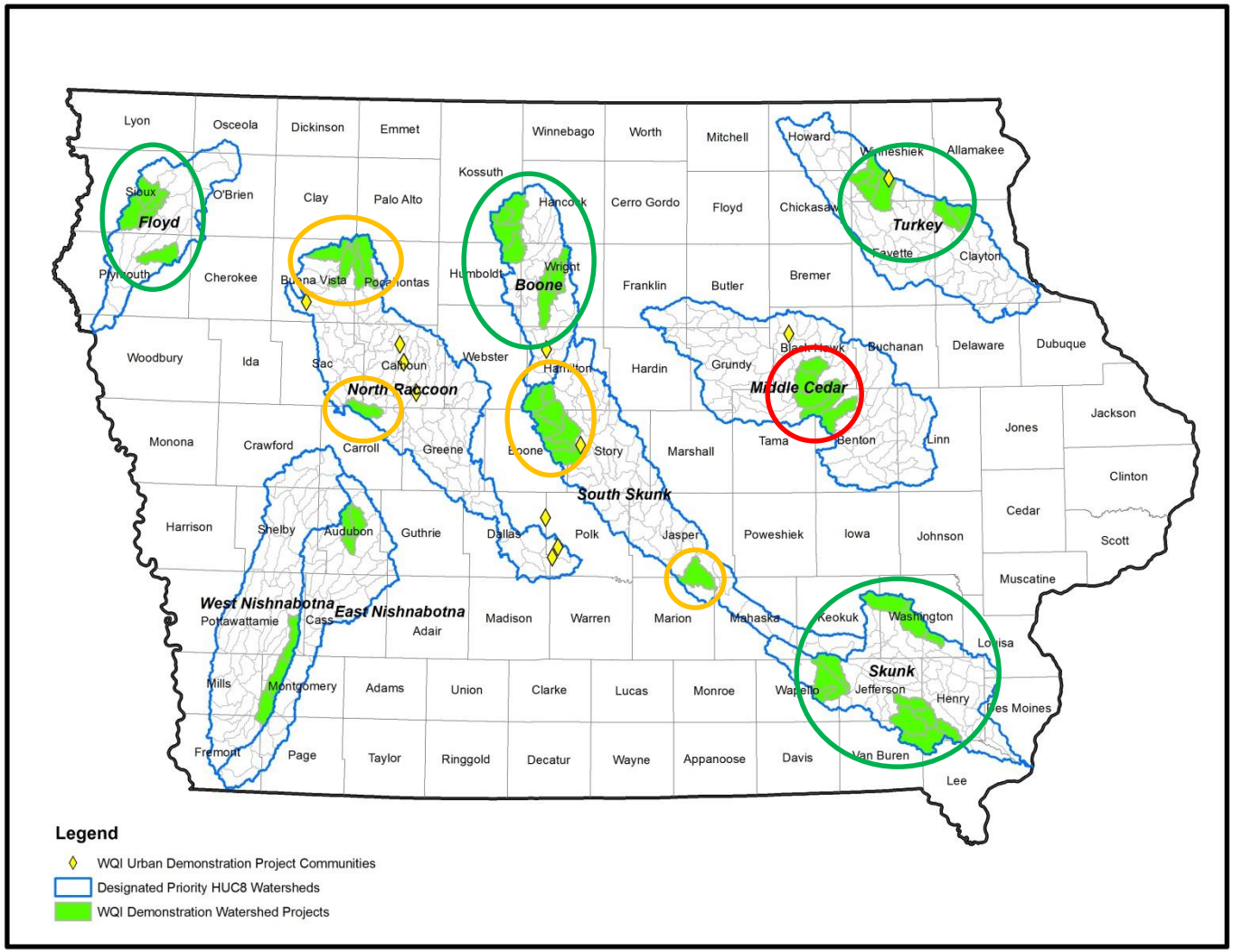
Nitrogen moves primarily as nitrate-N with water

	Practice	Comments	% Nitrate-N Reduction*	% Corn Yield Change**
			Average (SD*)	Average (SD*)
Nitrogen Management	Timing	Moving from fall to spring pre-plant application	6 (25)	4 (16)
		Spring pre-plant/sidedress 40-60 split Compared to fall-applied	5 (28)	10 (7)
		Sidedress – Compared to pre-plant application	7 (37)	0 (3)
		Sidedress – Soil test based compared to pre-plant	4 (20)	13 (22)**
	Source	Liquid swine manure compared to spring-applied fertilizer	4 (11)	0 (13)
		Poultry manure compared to spring-applied fertilizer	-3 (20)	-2 (14)
	Nitrogen Application Rate	Nitrogen rate at the MRTN (0.10 N:corn price ratio) compared to current estimated application rate. (ISU Corn Nitrogen Rate Calculator – http://extension.agron.iastate.edu/soilfertility/nrate.aspx can be used to estimate MRTN but this would change Nitrate-N concentration reduction)	10	-1
	Nitrification Inhibitor	Nitrapyrin in fall – Compared to fall-applied without Nitrapyrin	9 (19)	6 (22)
	Cover Crops	Rye	31 (29)	-6 (7)
		Oat	28 (2)	-5 (1)
	Living Mulches	e.g. Kura clover – Nitrate-N reduction from one site	41 (16)	-9 (32)
Land Use	Perennial	Energy Crops – Compared to spring-applied fertilizer	72 (23)	
		Land Retirement (CRP) – Compared to spring-applied fertilizer	85 (9)	
	Extended Rotations	At least 2 years of alfalfa in a 4 or 5 year rotation	42 (12)	7 (7)
	Grazed Pastures	No pertinent information from Iowa – assume similar to CRP	85	
Edge-of-Field	Drainage Water Mgmt.	No impact on concentration	33 (32)	
	Shallow Drainage	No impact on concentration	32 (15)	
	Wetlands	Targeted water quality	52	
	Bioreactors		43 (21)	
	Buffers	Only for water that interacts with the active zone below the buffer. This would only be a fraction of all water that makes it to a stream.	91 (20)	
	Saturated Buffers	Divert fraction of tile drainage into riparian buffer to remove Nitrate-N by denitrification.	50 (13)	

Phosphorus moves primarily with eroded soil

	Practice	Comments	% P Load Reduction[a]	% Corn Yield Change[b]
			Average (SD[c])	Average (SD[c])
Phosphorus Management Practices	Phosphorus Application	Applying P based on crop removal – Assuming optimal STP level and P incorporation	0.6[d]	0
		Soil-Test P – No P applied until STP drops to optimum	17[e]	0
	Source of Phosphorus	Liquid swine, dairy, and poultry manure compared to commercial fertilizer – Runoff shortly after application	46 (45)	-1 (13)
		Beef manure compared to commercial fertilizer – Runoff shortly after application	46 (96)	
	Placement of Phosphorus	Broadcast incorporated within 1 week compared to no incorporation, same tillage	36 (27)	0
		With seed or knifed bands compared to surface application, no incorporation	24 (46)	0
	Cover Crops	Winter rye	29 (37	-6 (7)
	Tillage	Conservation till – chisel plowing compared to moldboard plowing	33 (49)	0 (6)
		No till compared to chisel plowing	90 (17)	-6 (8)
Land Use Change	Perennial Vegetation	Energy Crops	34 (34)	
		Land Retirement (CRP)	75	
		Grazed pastures	59 (42)	
Erosion Control and Edge-of-Field Practices	Terraces		77 (19)	
	Buffers		58 (32)	
	Control	Sedimentation basins or ponds	85	

2015 RCPP Project Focus Areas



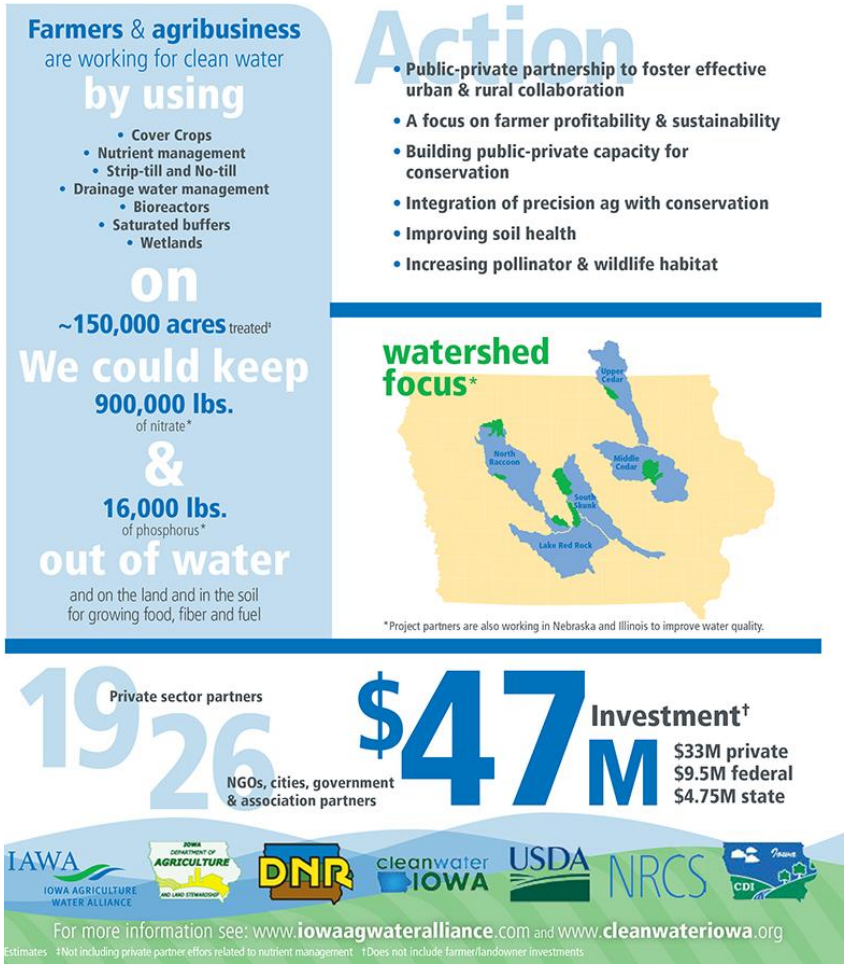
2015 RCPP Summary

- Iowa Targeted Demonstration Watershed Partnership Project (IDALS)
  - CCA pool
  - EQIP
  - Awarded $3.5M (sought $6.4M)
  - Narrowed focus area
  - ~$4.5M in partner contributions
- Middle Cedar Partnership Project (City of Cedar Rapids) – partner
  - State pool
  - EQIP + ACEP
  - Awarded $2M
  - ~$2.3M in partner contributions

2016 RCPP Proposal Focus Area

2016 RCPP Summary

- Midwest Agriculture Water Quality Partnership Project (IDALS)
  - Co-led w/ Iowa Agricultural Water Alliance (IAWA)
  - EQIP & ACEP
  - National Pool
  - 45 other partners
  - Awarded $9.5M
  - $37M in partner contributions
- Upper Cedar Urban-Rural Partnership Project (City of Charles City) – partner
  - State pool
  - $1.6M award
  - ~$1.6M partner contributions



Valued Partners

Lead Organizations

- Clean Water Iowa
- Iowa Agriculture Water Alliance
- Iowa Department of Natural Resources
- Iowa Department of Agriculture And Land Stewardship

Farmer – Led Organizations

- Iowa Pork Producers Association
- Practical Farmers of Iowa
- Iowa Soybean Association
- Iowa Soybean Association

NGOs

- Conservation Districts of Iowa
- Soil Health Partnership
- Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation
- Pheasants Forever
- The Nature Conservancy
- Environmental Defense Fund
- Field To Market
- Prairie Rivers of Iowa / Squaw Creek Watershed
- Midwest Row Crop Collaborative
- Iowa League of Cities

Supporters

- Iowa Cattleman's Association
- Iowa Farm Bureau
- Buena Vista Soil and Water Conservation District
- Pocahontas Soil and Water Conservation District

Agribusiness

- Agriculture's Clean Water Alliance
- Agronomic Technology
- AgSolver
- Hearland Co-op
- Agri Drain Corp.
- Agrium
- Central Valley Ag
- Pioneer
- Ecosystem Services Exchange
- Growmark
- Houston Engineering Inc.
- Monsanto
- Mosaic
- People's Company
- WinField
- Syngenta
- United Suppliers
- Verdesian

Public Entities

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Walnut Creek Watershed Management Authority
- Des Moines, City of
- Fourmile Creek WMA
- Iowa State University
- NRCS

Some things to think about:

Advantages for Iowa/IDALS:

- Fits well with current partnership and funding mechanisms in place
- State funding available for partner contributions
- Majority of projects operate out of local SWCD offices (also house NRCS, FSA, and IDALS employees)
- Have experience and knowledge base of administrative, technical and financial assistance process of NRCS programs.
- Iowa is covered by essentially 4 funding pools:
    - State, National and 2 CCAs (Prairie Grasslands and Mississippi River Basin)

Challenges/Realities:

- Narrow definitions of eligible funding (pro & con)
- Best to work in existing projects
    - But…Partner contributions don't count until the funding is awarded and agreement is signed
    - Can't assign future state appropriations
    - Landowner contributions not considered
    - No admin $
- Time commitment from NRCS and partners
    - Proposal development
    - Implementation
- Some duties still require NRCS employees
- Still funding through existing mechanisms (pro & con)
- Reporting/coordination among partners and other projects

Other Considerations/Tips:

- Be thoughtful on the pool applying for
  - Coordinate with other proposals
  - States typically can fund 1 or 2 projects per year
- Have more influence in how funding is used, but not complete independence.
- Partner contributions must have a strong tie to proposed funding.
- Innovate, but don't be too innovative…
- Multi-state projects have advantages, but can limit potential if attempting to push close to the maximum award amount.
- Work with state NRCS staff throughout the process.
- Partners are the key
  - Contributions
  - Implementation
  - Coordination

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

www.nutrientstrategy.iastate.edu

www.CleanWaterIowa.org

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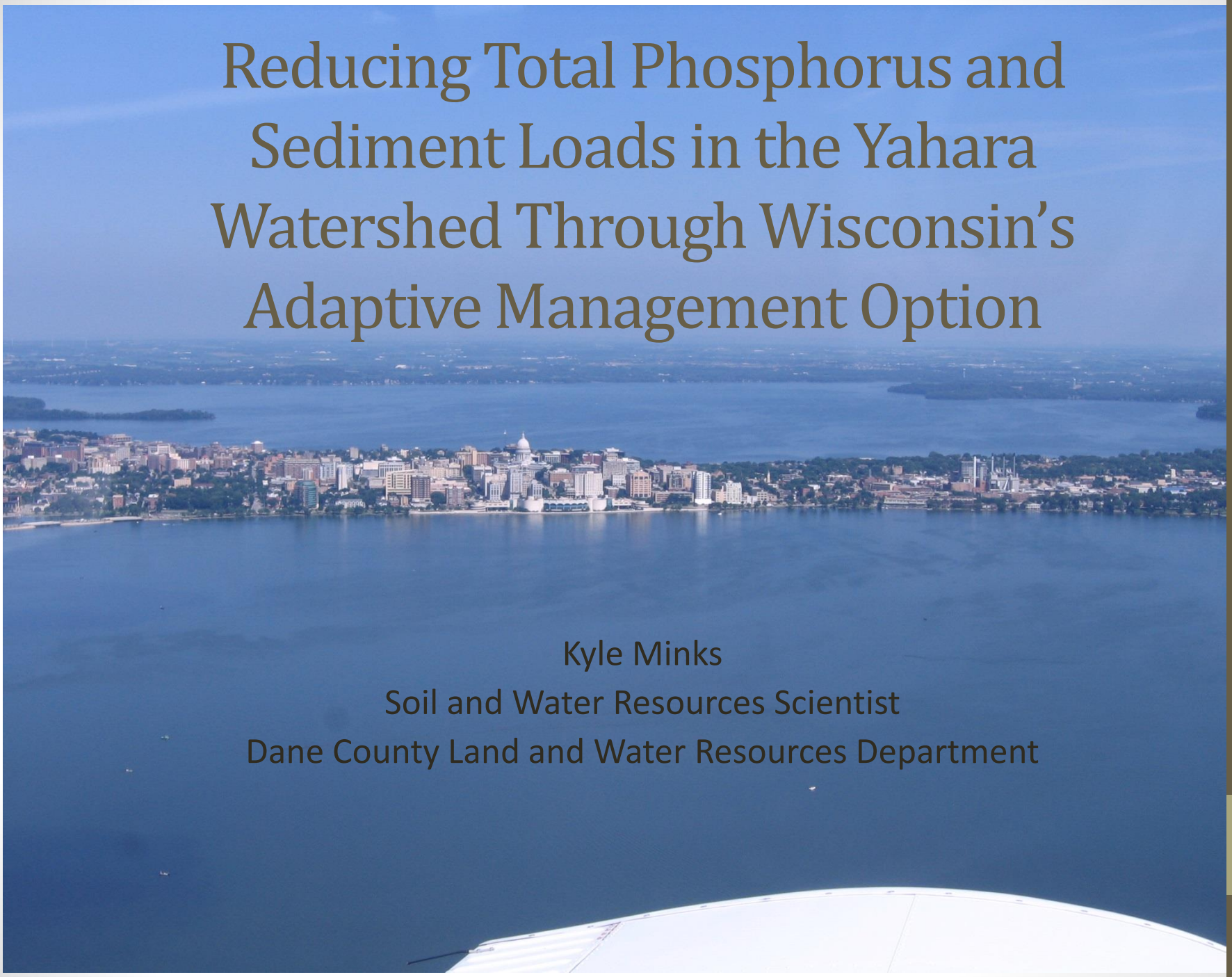
Reducing Total Phosphorus and Sediment Loads in the Yahara Watershed Through Wisconsin's Adaptive Management Option



Kyle Minks
Soil and Water Resources Scientist
Dane County Land and Water Resources Department

Forming Partnerships

Focused On

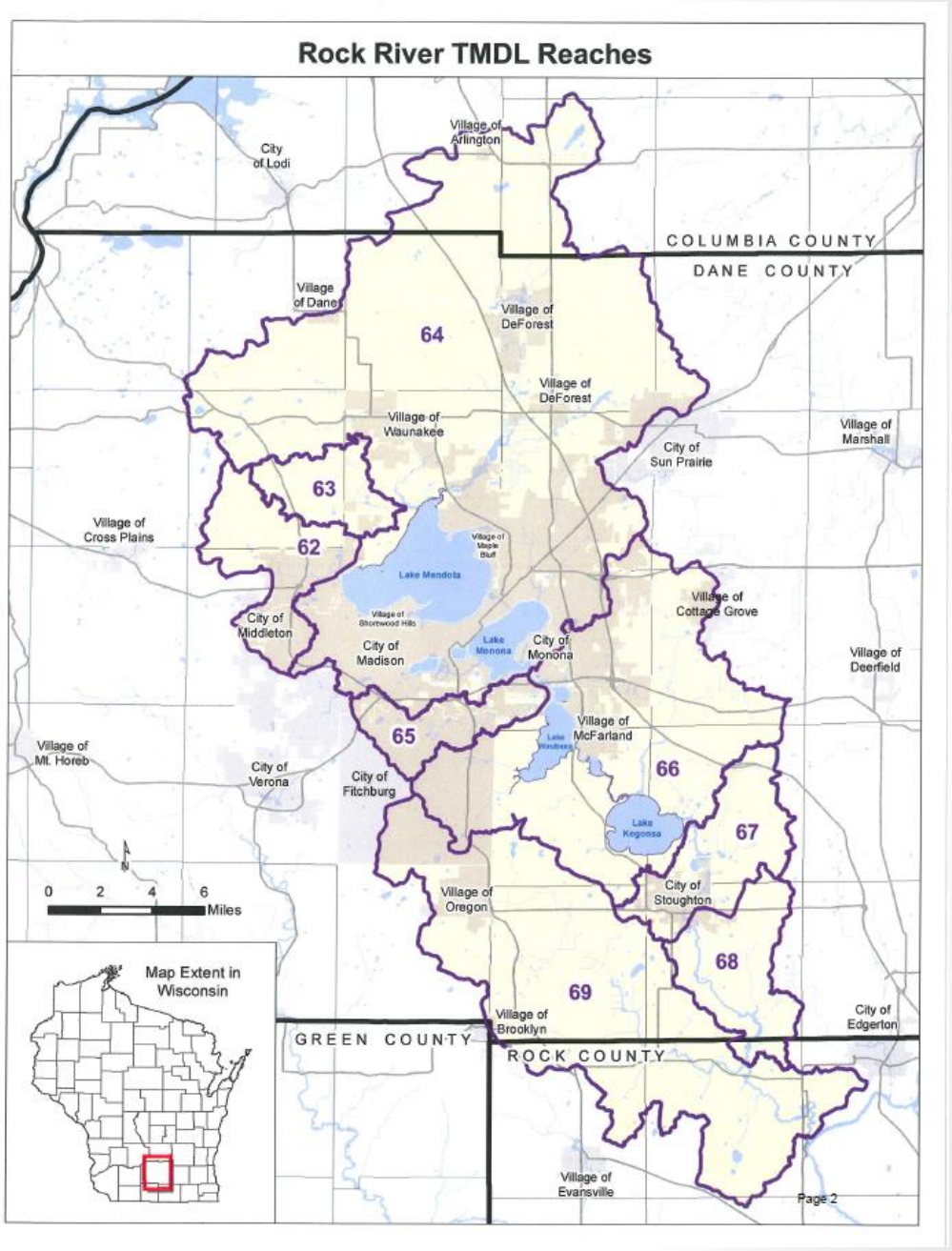
- Building off of historical relationships
  - Dane County has worked closely with all the partners
- Expanding on existing initiatives and partner efforts
  - Priority Watershed Projects, Adaptive Management, Yahara CLEAN

Partners

- Dane Count Land and Water Resources Department
- Madison Metropolitan Sewage District
- Yahara Watershed Improvement Network (WIN's)
- Clean Lakes Alliance
- Sand County Foundation
- UW-Madison
- Natural Resources Conservation Service

Selecting a Project Area

- Yahara River & Badfish Creek Watersheds
- 300,000 acres
  - 60% Agriculture
- Rock River TMDL – Lower Rock Basin



Developing Goals and Objectives

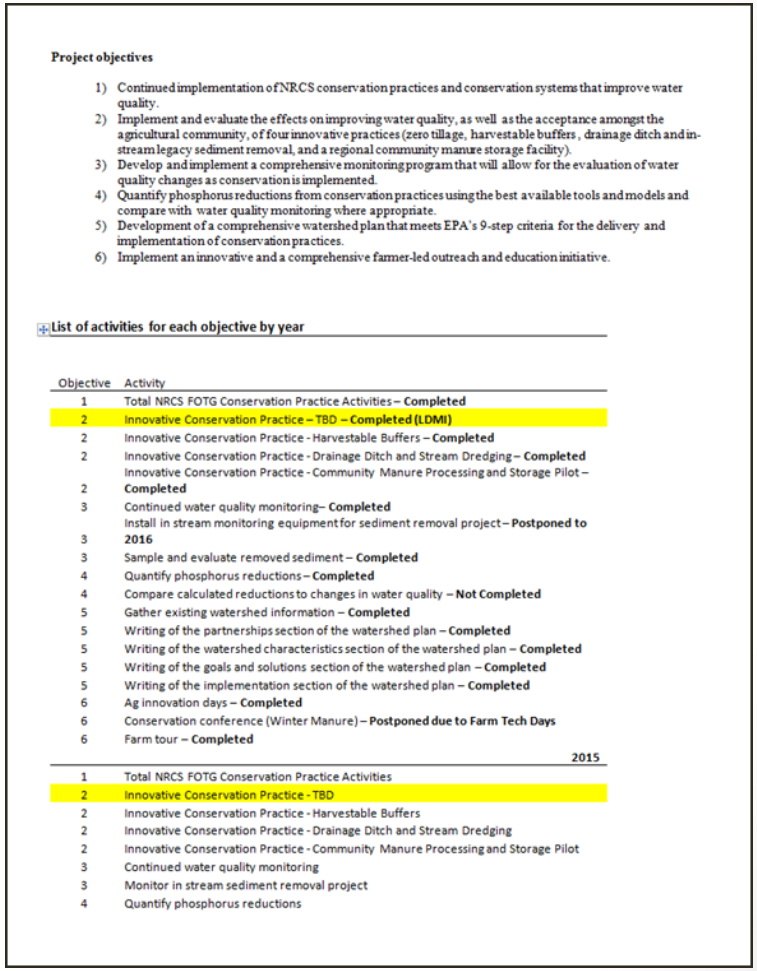
- Goals were specifically correlated to the primary resource concern
- Objectives were developed by
  - Consciously considering the resources and activities that each partner could contribute to the project
    - This aided in defining partner roles and responsibilities
  - Targeting objectives that also supported the evaluation criteria stated in the Announcement of Program Funding

Goal: Reduce sediments and phosphorus in surface waters

Objective	Partner	Reasoning
Implement NRCS conservation practices	Dane County and NRCS	RCPP Federal funding only covers practices in EQIP
Test innovative conservation practices	Dane County, UW-Madison	Highlighting the innovative component of RCPP
Comprehensive water quality monitoring	Yahara WINs, Madison Metropolitan Sewage District	Measurable metrics to capture change
Quantify phosphorus reductions	Dane County	Interim metric to capture change
EPA 9-Key Element watershed plan	Sand County Foundation, Dane County	Emphasizing planning and a targeted approach to implementation
Outreach and Education	Clean Lakes Alliance, Dane County	Engaging and informing individuals

Defining Partner Roles and Responsibilities

- Each partner provided information on applicable objectives
- Developed a list of actions each partner could preform
- Assigned a monetary value to each of the actions



Project objectives

1) Continued implementation of NRCS conservation practices and conservation systems that improve water quality.
2) Implement and evaluate the effects on improving water quality, as well as the acceptance amongst the agricultural community, of four innovative practices (zero tillage, harvestable buffers, drainage ditch and in-stream legacy sediment removal, and a regional community manure storage facility).
3) Develop and implement a comprehensive monitoring program that will allow for the evaluation of water quality changes as conservation is implemented.
4) Quantify phosphorus reductions from conservation practices using the best available tools and models and compare with water quality monitoring where appropriate.
5) Development of a comprehensive watershed plan that meets EPA's 9-step criteria for the delivery and implementation of conservation practices.
6) Implement an innovative and a comprehensive farmer-led outreach and education initiative.

List of activities for each objective by year

Objective	Activity
1	Total NRCS FOTG Conservation Practice Activities – **Completed**
2	Innovative Conservation Practice – TBD – **Completed (LDMI)**
2	Innovative Conservation Practice - Harvestable Buffers – **Completed**
2	Innovative Conservation Practice - Drainage Ditch and Stream Dredging – **Completed**
2	Innovative Conservation Practice - Community Manure Processing and Storage Pilot – **Completed**
3	Continued water quality monitoring– **Completed**
3	Install in stream monitoring equipment for sediment removal project – **Postponed to 2016**
3	Sample and evaluate removed sediment – **Completed**
4	Quantify phosphorus reductions – **Completed**
4	Compare calculated reductions to changes in water quality – **Not Completed**
5	Gather existing watershed information – **Completed**
5	Writing of the partnerships section of the watershed plan – **Completed**
5	Writing of the watershed characteristics section of the watershed plan – **Completed**
5	Writing of the goals and solutions section of the watershed plan – **Completed**
5	Writing of the implementation section of the watershed plan – **Completed**
6	Ag innovation days – **Completed**
6	Conservation conference (Winter Manure) – **Postponed due to Farm Tech Days**
6	Farm tour – **Completed**

	2015
1	Total NRCS FOTG Conservation Practice Activities
2	Innovative Conservation Practice - TBD
2	Innovative Conservation Practice - Harvestable Buffers
2	Innovative Conservation Practice - Drainage Ditch and Stream Dredging
2	Innovative Conservation Practice - Community Manure Processing and Storage Pilot
3	Continued water quality monitoring
3	Monitor in stream sediment removal project
4	Quantify phosphorus reductions

Identifying Funding

- Four funding categories
  - Federal TA
  - Federal FA
  - Non-Federal Partner TA
  - Non-Federal Partner FA
- Funding Pool
  - Critical Conservation Area
    - Mississippi River Basin

Fiscal Year	Objective	Activity	Federal Financial Assistance	Federal Technical Assistance	Non-Federal Resources (In-kind)	Non-Federal Resources (Cash)
2015	1	Total NRCS FOTG Conservation Practice Activities	$180,000	$75,000	$60,000	$300,000
2015	2	Innovative Conservation Practice - TBD			$10,000	$24,000
2015	2	Innovative Conservation Practice - Harvestable Buffers			$10,000	$27,000
2015	2	Innovative Conservation Practice - Drainage Ditch and Stream Dredging			$8,500	
2015	2	Innovative Conservation Practice - Community Manure Processing and Storage Pilot			$23,996	$23,996
2015	3	Continued water quality monitoring			$61,000	
2015	3	Install in stream monitoring equipment for sediment removal project			$10,000	$25,000
2015	3	Sample and evaluate removed sediment			$10,000	$5,000
2015	4	Quantify phosphorus reductions			$30,000	
2015	4	Compare calculated reductions to changes in water quality			$30,000	
2015	5	Gather existing watershed information				$10,000
2015	5	Writing of the partnerships section of the watershed plan				$10,000
2015	5	Writing of the watershed characteristics section of the watershed plan				$10,000
2015	5	Writing of the goals and solutions section of the watershed plan				$10,000
2015	5	Writing of the implementation section of the watershed plan				$20,000
2015	6	Ag innovation days			$17,000	
2015	6	Conservation conference (Winter Manure)			$5,500	
2015	6	Farm tour			$2,000	
		2015 Totals	**$180,000**	**$75,000**	**$277,996**	**$464,996**

EXAMPLE

NRCS Agreement and Reporting

- Agreement process took a couple of months
- Slight modifications to the proposal were made as a result of available funding
- Agreement identified specific deliverables to accomplish
- Reimbursement is based on providing documentation that the deliverable was completed

- NRCS provided a reporting template
  - Financials
  - Actions and objectives
  - Practices and units
- Reporting twice a year
- TA reimbursement available quarterly

Additional Suggestions

- **Engage local NRCS staff early on in the planning process**
  - *Federal RCPP funding is allocated through EQIP. Its critical that you have engaged individuals who know the ins and outs of EQIP given the frequent changes in program requirements.*
- **Follow the suggested proposal layout and include all suggested/requested tables**
- **Incorporate Ranking Criteria Guidance and Questions as best as possible into the full proposal**
- **Recommend one person be proposal drafter with partners providing review and comments**

Questions

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Questions

Use Dashboard questions area to ask questions of speakers via the web

Agenda

- 2nd Round Presentations
  - **Oklahoma** (Shanon Phillips)
  - **Maryland** (Lindsay Thompson)
  - **Washington** (Jennifer Boie)
- Questions & Responses
- Close

New Frontiers: RCPP in Oklahoma

Shanon Phillips

NACD Webinar

April, 2016

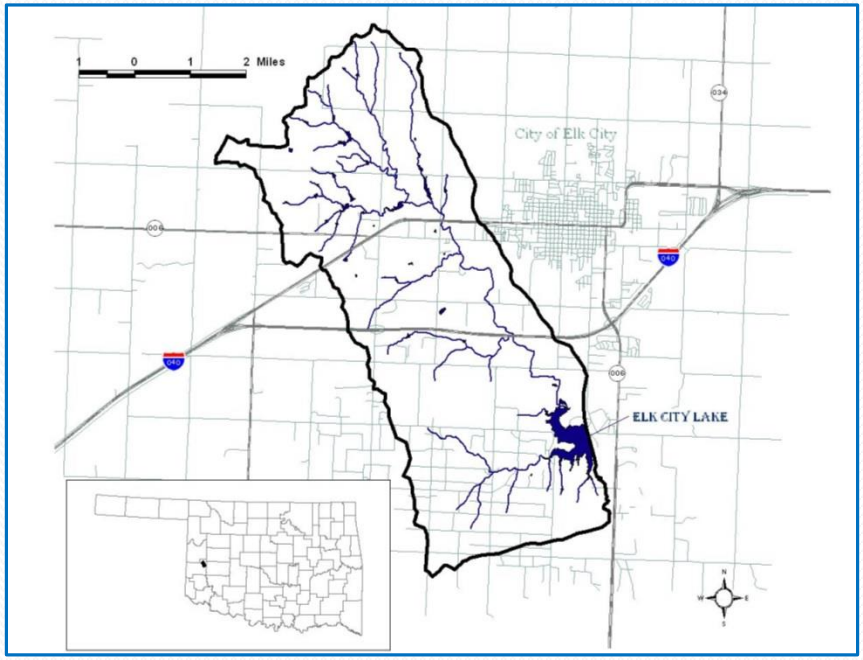
2015 Funded Proposals Submitted by OCC

- Elk City Watershed RCPP- State funding
  - Approx. $2.9 million total funding ($1.5m partner, $1.4m NRCS)

- Middle and Lower Neosho Basin RCPP- National funding
  - Approx. $8 million total funding ($4,130,120 from KS and OK, $4 m from NRCS)

Elk City Lake RCPP

- 15500 Acre Watershed in Beckham County/North Fork of Red River CD
- Elk City originally asked OCC for assistance in 2006 to address bacteria problems in the lake
- OCC developed a Watershed Plan in 2009
- In the meantime, the lake has had fish kills, bluegreen algae blooms, and turbidity concerns



Elk City Lake RCPP Partners and Roles

Partner	Roles	Funding
NRCS	Technical and Financial Assistance to producers (and partners)	$1,400,000
OCC	Technical and Financial Assistance to producers, Education and Outreach, Water Quality Monitoring, Soil Health Evaluation, Project Reporting,	$1,550,000
North Fork of Red River CD	Outreach, local leadership	
City of Elk City	Outreach, local leadership	

Elk City Lake RCPP Project Activities

- Form local Watershed Advisory Group
- Select Conservation Practices and Prioritization
- Work with local producers to develop conservation plans and implement conservation practices
- Conduct outreach and education events with watershed and nearby citizens
- Monitor water quality in West Elk Creek
- Verify carbon sequestration in select properties enrolled in the project

OCC Staff Support

- Monty Ramming- Local Project Coordinator
- Shanon Phillips- Project Administrator
- Jason Ramming- Water Quality Monitoring

Budget Breakdown

- Additional $$ **for** conservation district over 5 years
  - $24,000
- Additional $$ for conservation practices over five years
  - NRCS- $1,148,000
  - OCC-$1,000,000

Challenges

- Understanding of what RCPP “is” and “is not” has changed over time, beginning in 2014 with program announcement, and continuing through today.
- Learning that we don’t necessarily speak the same language
- Timeline:
  - Announcement – proposal due date relatively short turn-around time to fully develop a project
  - Projects awarded in 2014- first sign-ups in Dec. 2016.
  - State offices are put in the place of grant administration

Questions?

- Shanon Phillips
  - 405-522-4500 or
  - shanon.phillips@conservation.ok.gov

Broad Partnerships for Targeted Conservation

Lindsay Thompson
DE-MD Agribusiness Association
Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts

National Association of State Conservation Agencies

Delmarva Whole System Conservation – From Field to Stream

- Funding Pool: Critical Conservation Area
- Primary Partners: The Nature Conservancy and Delaware Maryland Agribusiness Association
- Focus: Fostering unique partnerships between agribusiness, conservation, academic, and government partners to address degraded water quality and habitat loss due to nutrient pollution in a targeted manner. Using the "Avoid, Trap, Control" model to address pollution potential in-field, at the edge of field, and edge-of-stream/in-stream, we hope to address the identified resource concerns. Focusing on advanced nutrient management, wetland restoration and innovative nutrient control practices on the Delmarva.

Broad Partnership

- AGRIBUSINESS/ TRADE GROUPS:
  - Growmark FS
  - Crop Production Service (Agrium Retail)
  - Willard Agri-Service
  - The Fertilizer Institute (TFI)
  - Maryland Grain Producers
  - Delaware Soybean Board
  - Delmarva Poultry Industry (DPI)
- CONSERVATION GROUPS:
  - Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF)
  - Chesapeake Conservancy (CC)
  - Ducks Unlimited (DU)
  - Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (ESLC)
  - Lower Shore Land Trust
  - National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)
- HIGHER EDUCATION:
  - University of Maryland (UMD)
  - University of Delaware Extension (UDE)
- FEDERAL AGENCIES
  - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
  - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
  - U.S. Geological Survey
  - U.S. Department of Agriculture
- STATE AGENCIES:
  - Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
  - Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA)
  - Delaware Department of Agriculture/ Nutrient Management Commission (DDA)
  - Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC)
- LOCAL GOVERNMENT
  - Worcester County (MD) Department of Planning
  - Maryland Association of Conservation Districts
  - Delaware Conservation Districts

National Association of State Conservation Agencies

Leveraging Significant Contributions

- In – kind contributions for administration and outreach
- Technical assistance match from conservations groups
- Easement funding
- Financial Assistance match from state cost share programs
- Contribution of educational materials

Accelerating Conservation Implementation in MD & DE to meet WIP Goals

- Funding Pool: Critical Conservation Area
- Fiscal Year: Applied in FY15 – unsuccessful, Funded in FY16
- Funding $4.5 million over 3 years
- Primary Partners: MD Association of Soil Conservation Districts and Delaware Association of Conservation Districts
- Focus: Helping the agricultural sectors in Maryland and Delaware meet their Watershed Implementation Plan goals through increased technical assistance capacity in the districts and additional EQIP financial assistance. Delaware is focusing on cover crops and Maryland is focusing on livestock and poultry practices on the eastern shore and in western Maryland.

Broad Partnership

- Maryland Department of Agriculture
- Delaware Natural Resources and Environmental Control
- Chester River Association
- Delaware Soybean Board
- Delmarva Poultry Industry
- Maryland Farm Bureau
- Maryland Grain Producers Association
- Maryland Soybean Board
- Mid-Atlantic Farm Credit
- Mid-Shore Riverkeeper Conservancy
- All conservation districts in Delaware and Maryland

National Association of State Conservation Agencies

Lessons learned for crafting a successful proposal

- Be specific about your goals and how you plan to achieve them.
- A narrow scope of practices with high impact potential can be a positive.
- A larger geographic focus area is not necessarily better.
- Apply to the right funding pool.
- More partners isn't always better but the right group of diverse partners is.
- Communicate with your state NRCS to incorporate what they see is needs and opportunities.
- Emphasize how you plan to increase conservation implementation capacity.

For the future of RCPP

- The application process has improved over the first two rounds and is expected to continue to become more user friendly.
- Everyone is learning along the way, it should only get better.
- Need to continue to foster acceptance of the program by all stakeholders.

Strategies for Successful Contracting

- Don't be afraid to ask questions. This is a new program and be assured, other people are wondering as well.
- Constant communication with your state NRCS contact.
- Careful review to ensure your proposal is adequately and accurately reflected in the Statement of Work and deliverables expected by NRCS.

Partnerships on the Palouse

Jennifer Boie, Director
Palouse Conservation District

NASCA Webinar

April 19, 2016


Palouse Falls
www.TodaysPhoto.org
Image © 2009 Ron E. Trees

Natural Resource Challenges

- Steep, heavily cropped system
- System contributes:
  - sediment
  - residual chemicals
  - high temperature
- Pollutants are directly impacting water quality and downstream juvenile salmon

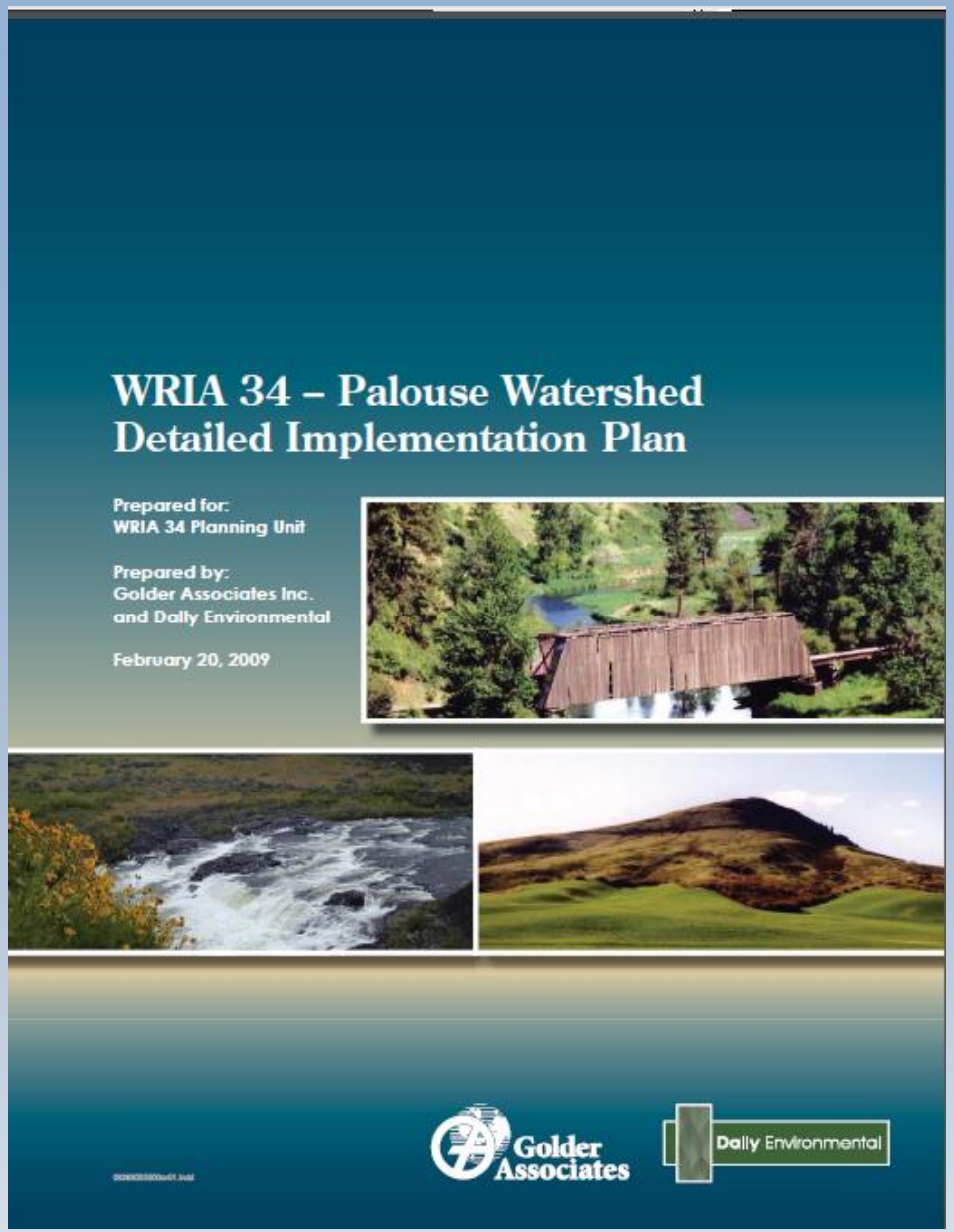
Palouse Conservation Forum

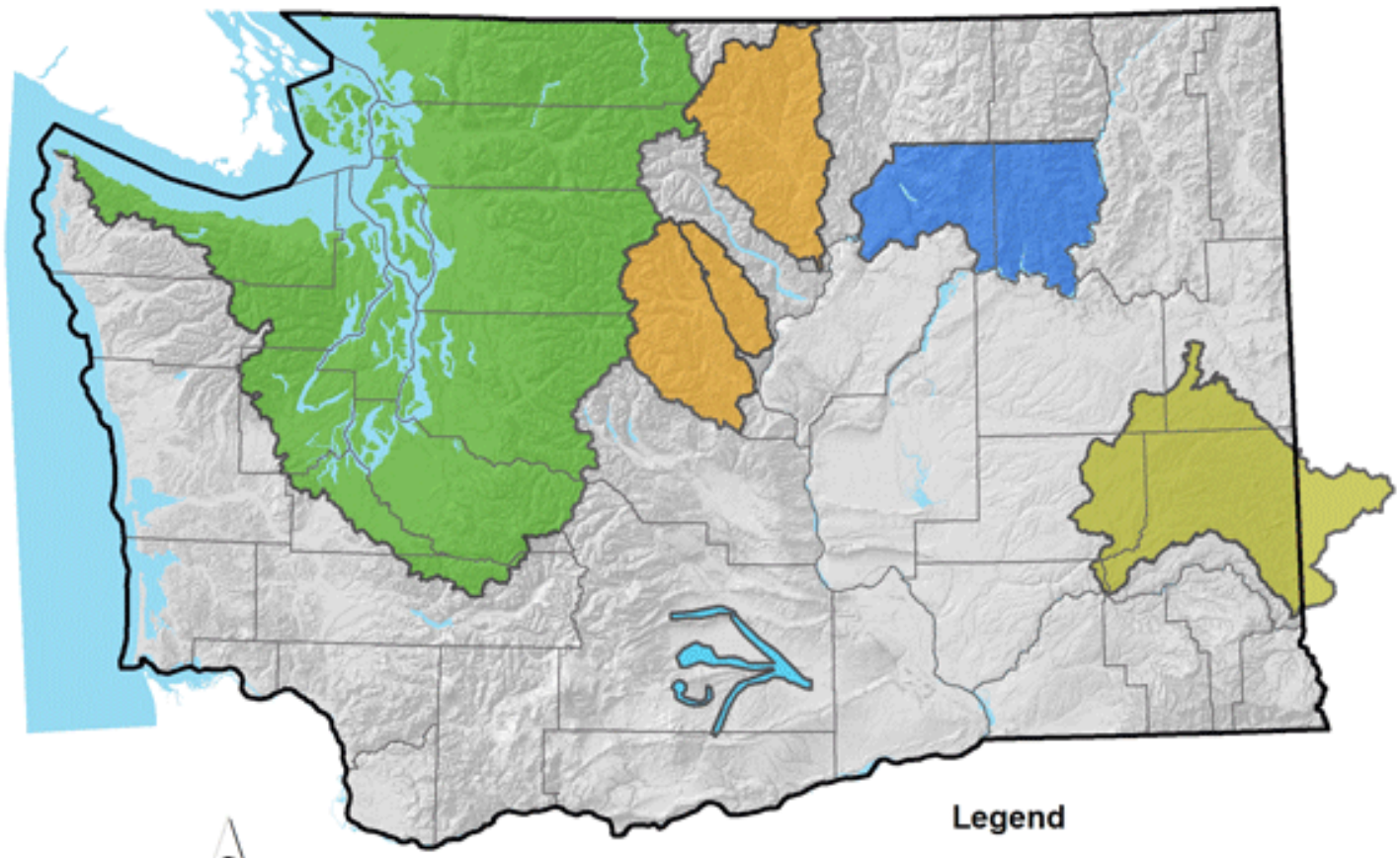
Practitioners working to implement or facilitate **voluntary** conservation on the ground

Collaborate to implement conservation projects and programs more **effectively** and **efficiently**

Scope

Building on the work of our **local citizens** by **coordinating funding** to implement the conservation actions identified through the watershed planning process





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USDA

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Washington State Office, Spokane
January 14, 2015

Legend

Washington NRCS funded project

- Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CTCR) Water Quality and Habitat Restoration Project

National Priority funded projects

- Precision Conservation for Salmon and Water Quality in Puget Sound
- Palouse River Watershed (WRIA 34) Implementation Partnership

Critical Conservation Area funded projects

- Upper Columbia Irrigation Enhancement Project
- Yakama Nation On-Reservation Lower Yakima Basin Restoration Project

Palouse River Watershed Implementation Partnership

- 8 CDs from WA and ID
- Idaho and Washington's land grant universities
- The Washington State Conservation Commission
- The Department of Ecology
- The Palouse Land Trust
- The Pacific NW Direct Seed Association
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Idaho Department of Fish and Wildlife
- The Nez Perce Tribe

Making it Happen

The most important partners we work with are the
landowners and cooperators
who work hard everyday to put conservation on the ground

Working Together

Working in partnership to **amplify** conservation efforts in the Palouse River Watershed

Working together to improve water quality, soil health, and habitat

Approach

Partners are working together to address
local conservation concerns
in the Palouse River Watershed in
Washington and Idaho through
voluntary incentive based approaches

Turning the Dial

Our partnership will provide **private landowners** the **coordination and additional funding** necessary to **turn the dial for natural resource improvements**

Objective: Agricultural Easements

Prevent the conversion of working farmlands to non-agriculture uses on **520 acres of prime farmland** through permanent agricultural conservation easements

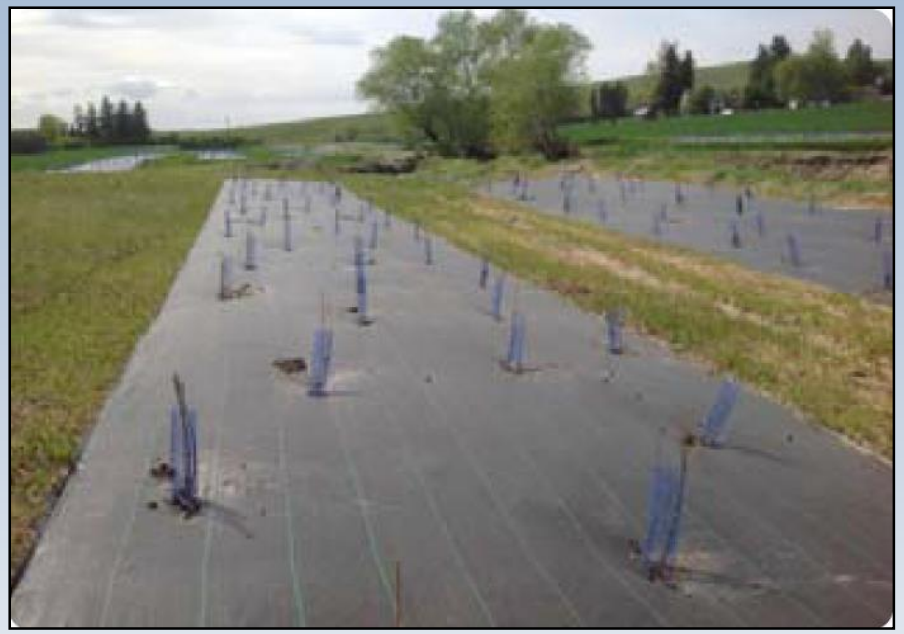
Objective:
Soil Health & Reduced Erosion

To minimize soil erosion on farm fields, partners will work with operators to enroll over 50,000 acres in **conservation tillage** designed to **reduce soil erosion by up to 95%**

Objective: Riparian Buffers

Establish **300 acres native trees and shrubs** along streams to act as a buffer to reduce sedimentation, lower water temperatures and filter out pollutants

Benefit fish and wildlife habitat, including four fish species of concern that are listed under the Endangered Species Act



Monitoring

To track the **effectiveness** of our conservation activities, the partnership will establish a watershed-wide monitoring effort which encourages **landowner involvement** in monitoring of natural resource conservation improvements

Innovation

Promotion of the **Farmed SMART** certification program through partnership with

Pacific NW Direct Seed Association

Offers farmers the opportunity to certify that their crops have been produced using a set of conservation standards

A model for all of agriculture to follow by **proactively** working with agencies and industry to achieve a conservation goal

Outcomes

An orchestrated effort resulting in greater **efficiency** of conservation delivery and implementation

The end result of increased operational efficiencies will be more funding **on the ground** for **voluntary incentive based conservation**

Local Impact

Partner contributions combined with NRCS funds bring **11 million dollars to our local economy**

The funds to landowners get **reinvested locally** and funds for technical assistance and on the ground projects provide **good jobs within our community**

Partnerships Work

The Palouse Watershed Partnership will help producers meet conservation goals by providing **voluntary incentive based alternatives** to install **win-win conservation practices** that improve producer operations, conserve natural resources, and meet water quality needs

Thank You

Photo: Alison Meyer

Questions

Use Dashboard questions area to ask questions of speakers via the web

Announcements

- Join us for additional webinars
- Visit www.nascanet.org for more information.

Closing Comments

- NASCA Executive Director Mike Brown
- email mike-brown@nascanet.org