

Kentucky's Technical Field Work with the Division of Conservation

Our Partnership with Kentucky's NRCS



History



- Through the past, the KY DOC Field Staff served solely as a link between the District Boards/District Staff and the State Office.
 - Our roles involved attending monthly Board meetings, auditing the financial records for the district, and serving as a source of information for the districts.
- All technical field work for all State Cost Share programs was conducted by the NRCS District and Regional staff
 - Through cutbacks in hiring and attrition, it was becoming a task to get site visits completed through our Federal NRCS partners—and consequently some SCS applications were not being serviced

History



- Consequently, with fewer and fewer SCS applications being serviced and awarded, the SCS funding pool was becoming stagnate from the lack of activity
- We needed a plan—A Good Plan— and we needed it quick

History



- Spring 2018
 - A new partnership was planned which would allow for DOC personnel to begin training and work toward becoming “Field & Office Technicians” for the purpose of servicing SCS applications and also helping the NRCS Staff with their technical field and office work.
 - Through this new program, each partner would commit \$200,000.00 per year for 5 years.
 - The DOC staff would record their hours of NRCS/SCS work and would be paid from this 50/50 funded source of money.

50/50 Funding Activities included:

- Training sessions; Cost Share for Equine Practices, Ky Interagency Coordination Tool (KICT) Endangered species, Historical & Cultural sites, floodplain, Practices for Organic Farming
- Landowner Site visits (determining SCS, NRCS, or local cost share opportunities)
- Highly Erodible Soils determinations
- Land Judging Contest set up for FFA Contests
- Soil Pit preparation for Envirothon Contests
- SCS Landowner application planning, processing, and implementing
- Presentations for Extension Services and County Cattleman's Association Meetings

NRCS Advantages

- More Technicians for completing the Federal and State Program paperwork
- More Field Staff for site visits with landowners and cooperators
- Sharing the work load in highly productive areas
- More BMPs available through the SCS practices and guidelines
- Better working relations with State Staff

SCS Advantages

- A new funding source for meeting DOC payroll
- More SCS applications processed and serviced
- Greater availability of services to our District Board of Supervisors and Land Owners
- Field Work opportunities for DOC staff
- Better working relations with Federal Staff

Comparison of Data Prior to Field Work

Dec. 31, 2018 State Cost Share Data

- 541 Applications
- \$4,051,130 in requests
- 403 Applications Approved
- \$2,468,051 Approved
- 71 of 120 Counties participated

May 31, 2019 State Cost Share Data

- 784 Applications
- Nearly \$6,000,000 in requests
- 723 Applications Approved
- \$4,530,847 Approved
- 88 of 120 Counties participated

2019 Data 7 counties that had no approvals in 2 previous years had approvals

*Huge increases: Henry Co. had 1 in the past 5 years-had 15, Shelby Co. had 8 in the past 5 years-had 21, and Woodford Co. had 9 in the past 5 years-had 17.

Summary

- As the NRCS workload increases (at a much higher rate than can be serviced by the current level of personnel), and the level of state cost share activity continues to rise, the amount of field time devoted to servicing our customers will also increase dramatically.
- Not only will DOC personnel's involvement in technical field work be deemed important, it will be totally essential in carrying out the monthly requirements associated in managing our state cost share program.
- Additionally, a well trained state field staff will also be beneficial as additional resource assets for our NRCS partners in meeting their customer needs and deadlines.

Questions



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