Message

From: Bittleman, Sarah [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=68A3D7422745434FA25E6AF62815E385-BITTLEMAN, SARAH]
Sent: 3/20/2013 7:32:11 PM
To: McLerran, Dennis [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=0acf3804188e4d519d59d67b82eda2ef-McLerran, Dennis J.]; Sussman, Bob [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=e85454566bd04951a8b08dcc9df57b4c-Sussman, Bob]; O'Hara, James [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=ce40c878e4f943889ad5ef70ded8f88d-O'Hara, James]; Stoner, Nancy [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=dda7244a389640c3bac29eecef1db4a1-Stoner, Nancy]; Giles-AA, Cynthia [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=d8c601b5c9fd4d828290e285dac7cc56-Giles-AA, Cynthia]
Subject: Re: NRCS Activity Report March 2013

Thank you

From: McLerran, Dennis
Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2013 3:19:39 PM
To: Sussman, Bob; Bittleman, Sarah; O'Hara, James; Stoner, Nancy; Giles-AA, Cynthia
Subject: FW: NRCS Activity Report March 2013

Below is the monthly report from Washington NRCS. It contains a very positive framing of the recent agreement with dairies in the Yakima Valley.

Dennis

From: Randazzo, Kathy - NRCS, Spokane, WA [mailto:Kathy.Randazzo@wa.usda.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2013 10:26 AM
Cc: VanEps, Jennifer - NRCS, Spokane, WA
Subject: FW: NRCS Activity Report March 2013

Sent on behalf of Roylene Rides at the Door, STC, NRCS WA

Kathy Randazzo

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A Message from State Conservationist Roylene Rides at the Door

Those of us who grew up on or around Indian reservations are familiar with the "run and gun" basketball offense where Indian teams run so hard and fast up and down the court that they eventually exhaust their opponents. They run and shoot, run and shoot. That's not a bad tactic for short term play action, but if you are running a marathon, it's not very effective.

I believe that the NRCS field staff have been caught-up in a "run and gun" offense and are exhausted. It has become apparent to me that NRCS in Washington needs to slow down and think strategically. As a result, I have been traveling around the state and meeting with NRCS staff to get their input on our strategic thinking process. Every session has been different where employees have provided fresh ideas. During the sessions, which I have dubbed "Knights of the Roundtables," a portion of the agenda is dedicated to receiving input on the four core values that NRCS-WA will live by: Relevance, Responsibility, Respect, and Relax. Some may be surprised by the fourth value. But as I have talked with employees over the past year, it has become apparent that we need to take time to stop and appreciate the good conservation work that we do as an agency.

As an example of a great accomplishment, NRCS is pleased to say that we have been working with our partners including Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Dairy Federation, Columbia Basin Ground Water Management Area (GWMA) and conservation districts on the nitrate levels in the Yakima Valley. EPA and the dairies have reached an agreement on how they will reduce nitrates and improve water quality. Part of the agreement references NRCS practices that will be used to reduce/repair the nitrate issues. I was pleased to receive a call from the Cattleman's Association executive director who stated, "Now this is good government work." You can view the Capital Press article at the following link: http://www.capitalpress.com/dairy/djw-EPAdairies-030613-w-art.

NRCS in Washington is ready to release our new tribal resource assessment (TRA) that complements our state resource assessment. The TRA identifies resource priorities on tribal lands. We hope this information will help our partners identify where resource concerns overlap and where there are collaboration opportunities.

—Roylene

Farm Bill Programs Update
Conservation Funding Available for Farmers to Enhance Soil Health

Private landowners and tribes working to increase crop residues, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and improve soil health on their farm, may apply for conservation financial and technical assistance, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announced.

Read the Press Release

Local Working Groups
Local Working Group Meetings Going On Now!

Local working groups are subcommittees of the State Technical Advisory Committee and provide recommendations to USDA on local and state natural resource priorities and criteria for conservation activities and programs. Membership of the local working groups may include but is not limited to federal, state, county, tribal, or local government representatives.

Go to the Calendar

Soil Health
Unlock the Secrets in the Soil

Soil is a living and life-giving substance, without which we would perish. As world population and food production demands rise, keeping our soil healthy and productive is of paramount importance. So much so that we believe improving the health of our Nation's soil is one of the most important endeavors of our time.

By focusing more attention on soil health and by educating our customers and the public about the positive impact healthy soils can have on productivity and conservation, we can help our Nation's farmers and ranchers feed the world more profitably and sustainably – now and for generations to come.

View online resources

Working with Conservation Districts
Update on Cooperative Working Agreements

For many years the NRCS and Conservation Districts (CDs) have used a variety of supplemental agreements to describe roles and responsibilities and provide operational guidance for accomplishing a complementary and effective conservation partnership for local producers. Due to Farm Bill legislation changes since 1996 and other statutory and policy updates, it is appropriate that NRCS and CDs update our operational agreements. Through collaboration among NRCS, the Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD), and the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) we have developed a process and agreement format for operational agreements, which we now refer to as the Cooperative Working Agreement (CWA).

CWA is an operational agreement between NRCS and each CD. The CWA supplements the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the State of Washington and Secretary of Agriculture, and the Supplemental MOU between NRCS and each CD.

This new CWA format is comprised of a general umbrella agreement containing template material mutually agreed to and general items and appendices that address issues specific to the local situation. These appendices address topics such as space, technical issues, equipment use, and similar options.

A CWA will be developed for each NRCS field office and the local CD(s)) by July 1, 2014. A state bulletin will be forth coming this month to the NRCS-WA line officers regarding guidance and reference materials on the CWA rollout this year.

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