

Introduction

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Today's Presentation

- About USDA- NRCS “our history & mission”
- Environmental Quality Incentive Program - Forestry
- Technical Assistance / Forest
- Forestry Projects – Latah Co.
- Question & Answer/ Discussion

Our History & Mission

- Started in the 1930's as a result of the dust bowl, Soil Erosion Service, Soil Conservation Service and now the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS).
- Hugh Hammond Bennett was the first Chief of the Soil Erosion Service and consider the “father of soil conservation”
- NRCS Mission – “Helping people help the land” by providing technical assistance and conservation planning & implementation .

How We Function

- We work on private lands
- Voluntary approach, we are not regulators.
- Work hand in hand with landowners with a unique and trusting relationship.
- Assistance role, not land use decision makers
- We develop conservation plans and implement conservation practices by providing assistance
- Field Office Technical Guide houses all our conservation practices with their standards and specifications.

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) – Basics

- Started in 1996 – Farm Bill Program
- Cost-share incentive program
- Provides financial assistance
- Must address a resource concern, therefore positive impacts, for the landowner and taxpayer. Forest health and wildfire protection.
- Still the landowners project.
- Program pays 50 – 75 percent help on average
- EQIP projects typically would not happen on their own
- NRCS most popular program
- ID-NRCS receives 13 -20 million dollars per year for EQIP.
- EQIP contracts are typically 3 – 5 years.

EQIP – The Process

- Sign and Application (I200) – Fall cutoff, however sign up anytime.
- Forest Management Plan Development (FMP)
- Program Eligibility
- Project/proposal cost estimates/rankings
- Contracts Awarded – Typically in the spring
- Project Implementation
- Project Completion: NRCS or TSP certifies the practices, then payment are made.
- Contract is off the books, successful completion.

- Typically funds 20 – 30 forestry contracts per year

Forest Management Plans (FMP's)

- Completed by a professional forester assisting the landowner
- It is based on your objectives
- Can be done by a TSP such as a private consultant or IDL, we have long standing partnerships in place.
- The plan provides a complete inventory of the species, condition and an overall assessment of your forest.
- It will prescribe and recommend forest improvement practices.
- This FMP document is acceptable to the County for forest exemptions.
- The plan is also required for EQIP eligibility.
- A good plan (FMP) makes a good contract.

Forest Practices

- 666 – Forest Stand Improvement. If there is a resource concern in a stand: too dense, insects, disease, post-fire, micro-burst windthrow, wrong species composition...Average cost-share rate is about \$400/ac.
- 384 – Slash Treatment – Can be pile and burn or mastication. Average Rate is about \$400/ac.
- 383 – Fuel Break – Typically around structures/homes. Thinned to higher density. Average Rate is about \$800 /ac.
- 660 Pruning - Typically pruned on the first 8 ft. Average Rate is about \$250 /ac.
- 612 Tree Planting - \$1.43 per tree

Specifications for these practices are developed by NRCS or the TSP based on our Field Office Technical Guide. Meeting the practice specification is required for certification and practice payment.

Other Possible Funding Opportunities

- Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) EQIP: More potential forestry funding available in upcoming years.
- RCPP – Regional Conservation Partnership Program
 - Outside Sponsor
 - Targeted EQIP Funds
- Joint Chiefs - Program is a partnership between NRCS and FS.

Forestry – Before Treatment



Forestry – After Treatment



Forestry– Before Treatment



Forestry—After Treatment



Conclusion / Questions???

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