

WINTER/SPRING 2024

BOLLINGER COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT



OFFICE STAFF

Megan Baker, SWCD
District Technician

Beth Eeftink, SWCD
District Manager

Shane Bess, NRCS
District Conservationist

Erin Roseberry, NRCS
Resource Conservationist

LaVern Taylor, NRCS
Soil Con. Technician

Conner Oldsen, NRCS
Resource Conservationist

Alicia Sullinger, NRCS
Soil Conservationist

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Member

Notice of Election for

Bollinger County Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors Areas I & III

The Bollinger County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) will hold an election for one supervisor in two different territories in the county. Territory I includes the Union and Crooked Creek townships and Territory III includes the Lorange and Filmore townships.

The following qualified candidates will be considered for Election:

Territory I - Culley Despain and Tyler Welker

Territory III - Tammy Peters

The election will take place Feb. 1 - Feb. 20, 2024. You may vote in person from 8 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. at the USDA Service Center office located at 406 East Main Street in Marble Hill. Ballots are also available to print online at <https://mosoilandwater.land/bollinger> to submit by mail. Printed ballots must be postmarked no later than February 20th.

Each eligible land representative in the district is allowed one vote. A land representative is defined as the owner or representative authorized by power of attorney of any farm lying within an area proposed to be established, and subsequently established, as a soil and water conservation district under Chapter 278, RSMo. Each farm is entitled to representation by a land representative: provided, however that the land representative is a taxpayer of the county within which the soil and water district is located.



Disaster Assistance Available for Livestock Losses

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides assistance to you for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality caused by adverse weather, disease and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law.

For disease losses, FSA county committees can accept veterinarian certifications that livestock deaths were directly related to adverse weather and unpreventable through good animal husbandry and management.

For 2024 livestock losses, you must file a notice within 30 calendar days of when the loss is first apparent. You then must provide the following supporting documentation to your local FSA office no later than 30 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the eligible loss condition occurred.

- Proof of death documentation
- Copy of grower's contracts
- Proof of normal mortality documentation
- Livestock beginning inventory documentation

USDA has established normal mortality rates for each type and weight range of eligible livestock, i.e. Adult Beef Cow = 1.5% and Non-Adult Beef Cattle (less than 400 pounds) = 5%. These established percentages reflect losses that are considered expected or typical under "normal" conditions.

In addition to filing a notice of loss, you must also submit an application for payment by January 30, 2025.

For more information, contact the Bollinger County USDA Service Center at 573-238-2671 ext.2 or visit fsa.usda.gov.

Megan Baker Recognized as Area 3 NRCS Extra Mile Award Winner

Quarterly, NRCS recognizes employees (staff and partners), nominated by NRCS employees, that go above and beyond their everyday job duties and put forth exceptional effort. Megan Baker, District Specialist IV with the Bollinger County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD), was chosen as the third quarter extra mile award winner. The nomination letter for Megan states:

Megan Baker is such an asset to our office, going the extra mile on a daily basis. When a customer walks through the door and Megan talks with them, there is no line between SWCD and NRCS. She is there to service the customer, even if they are inquiring about federal programs, rather than state cost-share. With her many years of experience, she provides feedback and assistance with any type of workload. She's an excellent friend and teacher to everyone. Megan is always looking for ways to spend all allocated state cost-share and requests more to keep providing assistance to the customers and get conservation on the ground. Megan has gone the extra mile and has been heavily involved in disaster relief efforts to the town of Glen Allen. She did her research on NRCS programs and got the ball rolling toward implementing NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection Program to help the community recover from back-to-back natural disasters. Megan does not shy away from a challenge, and she is invaluable and appreciated more than words can ever express.



Megan Baker,
SWCD District Specialist IV

NRCS Accepting Applications for EQIP and CSP Programs

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NRCS in MISSOURI Accepting Applications from Producers, Landowners for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program

USDA is accepting applications from agricultural producers and forest landowners from MISSOURI for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), which offers producers financial and technical assistance to address resource concerns on their land.

While USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) accepts EQIP applications year-round, MISSOURI producers and landowners should apply by March 15, 2024 to be considered for funding in the current cycle. Applications received after the ranking date will automatically be considered during the next funding cycle. Funding is provided through a competitive process.

EQIP offers agricultural producers financial and technical assistance to producers. EQIP offers conservation practices to help producers make improvements, including enhancing water and air quality, conserving ground and surface water, reducing soil erosion and sedimentation, or enhancing wildlife habitat.

If a producer's application is funded, NRCS will offer an EQIP contract for financial assistance to help address the cost of implementing conservation practices. NRCS provides financial assistance for a wide variety of conservation practices through EQIP, but availability and amount of financial assistance can vary between Missouri's.

Find eligible practices in MISSOURI and practice payment amounts <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/eqip-environmental-quality-incentives/missouri/environmental-quality>. Payment rates for conservation practices are reviewed and set each fiscal year for the Missouri.

Historically underserved producers are eligible for advance payments for all EQIP practices. This option provides historically underserved producers with funding up-front, for at least 50% of the payment rate for each practice. Historically underserved producers include producers who are beginning, socially disadvantaged, veteran, or limited resource.

NRCS in MISSOURI Announces Conservation Stewardship Program Signup

USDA is accepting applications from agricultural producers and forest landowners from MISSOURI for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). Agricultural producers and forest landowners looking to build on conservation efforts while strengthening their operation can apply for technical and financial assistance through CSP.

While USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) accepts CSP applications year-round, MISSOURI producers and landowners should apply by March 15, 2024 to be considered for funding in the current cycle.

NRCS offers CSP in all 50 States and the Pacific and Caribbean areas through continuous signups. The program provides many benefits, including increased crop yields, decreased inputs, wildlife habitat improvements and increased resilience to adverse weather. CSP is for working lands, including cropland, pastureland, rangeland, nonindustrial private forest land and agricultural land under Indian tribe jurisdiction.

Additionally, existing CSP participants may have an opportunity to renew their contracts in the first half of the fifth year of their five-year contract through a competitive application process.

Special provisions are available for historically underserved producers, which include those considered beginning, socially disadvantaged and limited resource as well as military veterans. These producers are targeted funds.

Find eligible practices in MISSOURI and practice payment amounts. <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/csp-conservation-stewardship-program/missouri/conservation-stewardship-program>. Payment rates for conservation practices are reviewed and set each fiscal year for the Missouri.

Missouri Technical Committees, composed of conservation and agricultural-related agency and organization representatives, work with NRCS to identify resource priorities and how best to address them. NRCS then sets Missouri-specific, ranking dates to evaluate applications for funding that account for producer needs, staff workload and ensure potential participants have ample opportunities to apply. Find MISSOURI's ranking dates for EQIP, CSP, and other conservation programs at nrcs.usda.gov/ranking-dates.

To apply for EQIP or CSP, contact NRCS at your local USDA Service Center. Find your local Service Center at farmers.gov/service-locator.

Cost-Share Funds Available for Animal Waste Management Buildings

The Bollinger County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) currently has cost-share funds available to be utilized towards Animal Waste Management Buildings. These buildings, commonly referred to as Winter Feeding Facilities, are constructed intending to store and manage animal waste in a manner that minimizes and prevents the degradation of soil and water resources. Winter Feeding Facilities provide landowners a dry place to feed hay and store manure, provide animals shelter during adverse weather conditions, and, most importantly, protect natural resources.

When animals forage under one of these facilities, the refused hay and deposited manure will collect under a covered roof and on top of a concrete surface and be pushed to the back of the building for the duration of winter. Storing waste in this manner prevents the discharge of pollutants into neighboring creeks, streams, and ponds. The collected manure and refused hay will then be applied to the landowner's pasture or hay ground, according to a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan. Free fertilizer!

Benefits of an Animal Waste Management Building do not stop at wintertime use. The building can also be used as a shaded area to feed hay during droughty conditions, allowing pastures rest and recover. Manure being stored under roof prevents the sloppy, muddy, compacted mess that comes with feeding hay outdoors – this further makes the loading and spreading of the manure a simpler task. Feeding hay under roof increases hay bale utilization, leading to less waste and refused forage, resulting in less bales required to make it through winter. Another great perk of an Animal Waste Management Building is how well these areas serve as a weaning pen, backgrounding and finishing areas, and first-time heifer calving pens, to name a few.

Cost Share for these facilities varies on the type and amount of animals the landowner plans to maintain. Herd size will be taken into consideration when engineering the facility. If an Animal Waste Storage Facility is of interest to you, please give us a call! We can be reached at 573-238-2671 ext. 3. We look forward to working with you!





The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) is Hosting a Landowner Prescribed Burning Class February 17, 2024

There will be a Landowner Prescribed Burning class held on Saturday, February 17, 2024, at the Missouri Department of Conservation Regional office in Cape Girardeau.

The online "Official Missouri Prescribed Burn Course" must be completed before attending this event. You can register for the online portion at <https://www.hunter-ed.com/prescribedburn/>. The online course has a \$25 charge to a third-party host (not MDC), and can be completed in approximately 2 – 4 hours. Please bring your certificate of completion to the Demonstration Field Day.

Prescribed burning can be a valuable tool for managing native plant diversity and controlling undesirable vegetation, but can be dangerous and ineffective when not used properly. This workshop will provide basic information about how to plan and execute a prescribed burn for grassland management.

At this event, the participants will learn about burn equipment, burn line installation, safe weather parameters, ignition operations, and other techniques to safely conduct a prescribed burn. A demonstration burn will be conducted if weather allows, so please dress accordingly with safety glasses, leather boots (no steel toe), leather gloves, and a long sleeve shirt and pants made of natural fibers such as cotton or wool. Water and snacks will be provided. Please bring a sack lunch with you. Demo burn will take place at Missouri Department of Conservation Southeast Regional office in Cape Girardeau, directions to location will be provided at a later date.



The Bollinger County SWCD has Cost-Share Funds Available for Pasture Vegetative Cover Establishments & Improvements

State cost-share is available for landowners that qualify for pasture vegetative cover establishments/improvements and crop conversion to grass for both of the spring and fall seeding periods. The purpose of this cost-share practice is to reduce erosion and improve water quality and forage production. Cost-share assistance is available for lime, fertilizer, eligible



seed, seeding operation and seedbed preparation. Fields must be current pasture/crop fields to qualify. Landowners interested in a pasture improvement must be able to take livestock off of the newly seeded fields to allow for the grass to establish. Other qualifying factors determine eligibility. For more information, call Beth or Megan at 573-238-2671 ext. 3.

A Few Reminders...

- **NRCS accepts EQIP and CSP sign-ups all year long. Producers and Landowners should apply by March 15, 2024 to be to be considered for funding in the current cycle. For more information or to fill out an application, call the Bollinger County NRCS at (573) 238-2671 ext. 3.**
- **SWCD & NRCS completes random spot checks on practices still under maintenance agreements. Maintenance life varies from 5 to 10 years depending on the practice.**
- **To get important dates and the most up-to-date information from the Bollinger County SWCD, visit our website at <https://mosoilandwater.land/bollinger>.**

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Stewardship Week is April 28 - May 5, 2024

In 1955, the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) began a national program to encourage Americans to focus on stewardship. From this, Stewardship Week emerged and is celebrated every spring. The definition of stewardship is "the individuals responsibility to manage his life and property with proper regard to the rights of others". This stewardship concept involves personal and social responsibility, including a duty to learn about and improve natural resources as we use them wisely, leaving a rich legacy for future generations.

Stewardship Week helps to remind us all of the power each person has to conserve natural resources and improve the world. When everyone works together with their local conservation district, that power continuously grows.

Stewardship week is held every year on the last Sunday in April through the first Sunday in May. The 2024 theme for Stewardship week is "**May the Forest Be With you Always**". The Bollinger County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) provides educational materials based on the annual theme to 4-6 grades of local schools, to participate in the districts poster contest.



If you have any questions on Stewardship Week or would like to learn more, visit www.nacdnet.org



Equipment Rental

The Bollinger County SWCD & Missouri Department of Conservation have the following equipment available for completing your farming practices:

7' No-till Drill—\$12.00/acre

10' No-till Drill—\$15.00/acre

Wildlife Food Plot (1 row) Planter

Burn Spray Trailer