

For Immediate Release

New Conservation Security Program Signup Underway *First Signup from August 10 to September 30, 2009*

Warrenton, VA. – District Conservationist, Roger Flint announced that Fauquier farmers can now sign up for the new Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) administered by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. CSP provides incentives to encourage producers to address natural resource concerns in a comprehensive way by maintaining existing conservation practices on all of their land and undertaking additional conservation activities. Landowners who want to be considered for 2009 funding can sign up at their local NRCS office between August 10 and September 30.

Roger says the Conservation Stewardship Program is a new program in the 2008 Farm Bill. Congress revamped and renamed the former Conservation Security Program to expand its availability and increase its appeal to agricultural and forestry producers. The new CSP is available nationwide through a continuous signup with announced dates for ranking applications. Eligible lands include cropland, grassland, improved pastureland, and non-industrial forestland.

Potential applicants are encouraged to use a self-screening checklist to determine if the new program is suitable for their operation. The checklist highlights basic information about CSP eligibility requirements, contract obligations and potential payments. It is available from the local NRCS office or online on NRCS websites.

There is also a Conservation Measurement Tool (CMT) which landowners will complete with NRCS staff to estimate the level of environmental performance to be achieved by implementing various conservation measures. NRCS field staff will conduct on-site verifications of applicant's information prior to approving contracts. Rankings will be competitive based on the conservation performance estimated in the CMT.

Helping People Help the Land

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

NEWS RELEASE

The new program will offer two types of payments—an annual payment and a supplemental payment. The annual payments will be determined by estimating conservation performance improvement based on the land use type for enrolled eligible land. An additional supplemental payment is available to approved participants who adopt a resource-conserving crop rotation, such as the addition of legumes to a small grain, row crop rotation.

Contracts are for five years and must cover the eligible land in the entire operation. There is an annual payment limitation of \$40,000 and payments cannot exceed \$200,000 for all contracts entered into during any five year period.

Landowners can apply for CSP at their local USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office. For more details about the new Conservation Stewardship Program, please visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/new_csp.

#

Helping People Help the Land

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer