

New USDA TV Feature January 4, 2012: Conservation Programs Present and Future

Written by USDA Communications Office
Wednesday, 04 January 2012 15:43

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Conservation Programs Present and Future

INTRO: Conservation programs are the backbone of U-S-D-A's efforts to address environmental concerns. The

U-S-D-A's Bob Ellison has more on the importance of these programs and their role in solving future challenges. (1:55)

U-S-D-A'S NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE PROGRAMS HELP PRODUCERS AND OTHER LANDOWNERS PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT. N-R-C-S CHIEF DAVE WHITE SAYS DECREASED SUPPORT FOR THOSE PROGRAMS WOULD HAMPER THAT EFFORT.

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Dave White, Chief, NRCS: If we lacked the financial wherewithal to assist producers it would be severely damaging for private land conservation in the United States. We believe that the fate of the environment will be determined by the men and women who own and operate that land and the millions of individual decisions they make every single day. And the better informed they are, the more help we can give them, the better chance we have of keeping our land productive into the future.

AND WHITE SAYS THOSE LANDOWNERS WHO HELP PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT NEED TO KNOW THEY WON'T BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS.

White: I think we've got to change the whole regulatory mindset to working with people to do the right thing and in return for that, they don't have to fear regulation. Somebody coming in and telling them what they are going to do. Because frankly all the conservation in the world is not going to do you any good if our farmers and ranchers and woodland owners cannot stay in business.

WHITE SAYS N-R-C-S PROGRAMS WILL BE ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IN ADDRESSING LONG TERM ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES.

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White: I think the biggest challenge we as a nation face in the coming decade is going to be water. Water quality is going to be huge. Equal to that is the issue of water quantity. So one of the key things in order to address water quality, water quantity is the health and resilience of our soils and we're going to make a major effort to try to improve that.

N-R-C-S PROGRAMS CURRENTLY AFFECT MORE THAN TWENTY SEVEN POINT SEVEN MILLION ACRES IN THE UNITED STATES. FOR THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, I'M BOB ELLISON.