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Colorado NRCS Announces Strong Interest in New Conservation Stewardship Program

Lakewood, CO -- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State Conservationist Allen Green recently announced that NRCS has received 514 applications to participate in the new Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). These applications cover an estimated nearly one million acres in Colorado.

According to Tim Carney, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, NRCS, Lakewood, it took a while for producers to enroll in the CSP program. He reported an increase in interest levels during the latter stage of the initial signup period.

“There was a tremendous increase in application activity in just the last two weeks of September. It took a while for producers to learn what the new program is all about, and, once they did, a lot of them decided it was well worth the effort to apply for participation,” Carney said.

Congress capped the annual acreage enrollment nationally at 12,769,000 for each fiscal year. The final national and state-by-state numbers on acreage nationwide will be available in November 2009.

CSP provides financial and technical assistance to eligible agricultural and forestry producers to conserve and enhance soil, water, air and related natural resources on their land, and encourages producers to voluntarily implement more conservation practices and improve, maintain and manage existing ones.

Lands accepted into CSP include cropland, pastureland, rangeland and non-industrial private forestland—a new land use for the program—and agricultural land under the jurisdiction of an Indian tribe. Individual landowners/operators, legal entities, corporations and Indian tribes are eligible to apply for CSP assistance.

Those who are not approved for funding through this first sign-up will have the option to participate in the second sign-up period, which will be held from Oct. 1 through January 2010.

For more information about CSP, including eligibility requirements, the interim final rule, and to submit comments please visit www.co.nrcs.usda.gov or visit your local NRCS field office.

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