

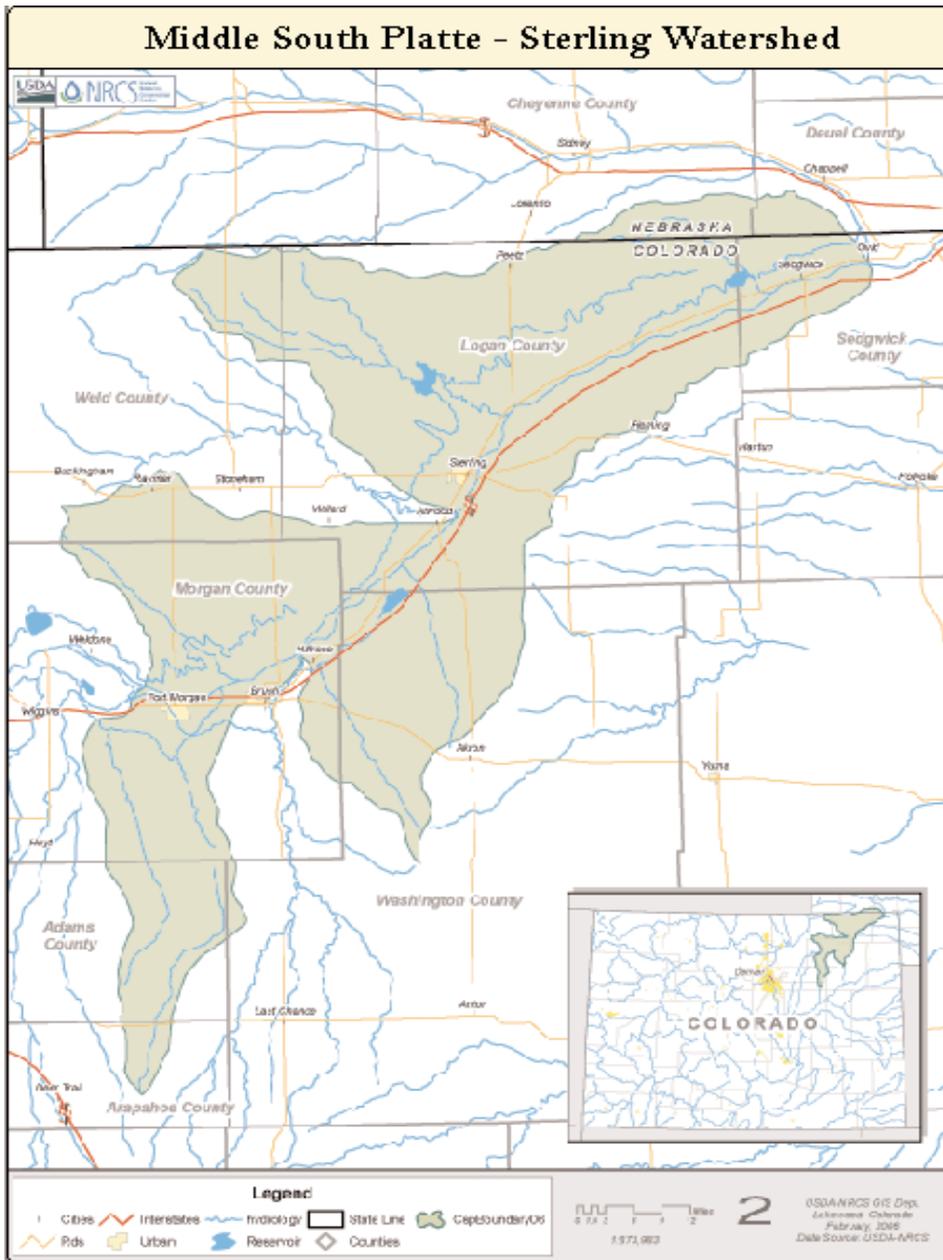


The Conservation Security Program CSP in Colorado



Rewarding the Best...Motivating the Rest

Middle S. Platte - Sterling Watershed



- ◆ The Conservation Security Program (CSP) is being offered in two watersheds within Colorado in 2006.
- ◆ The Middle South Platte - Sterling watershed has been selected as a CSP priority watershed for 2006.
- ◆ The Middle South Platte - Sterling watershed covers some 918,000 acres in the eastern portion of Colorado. The area encompasses portions of eight Colorado counties, including *Weld, Arapahoe, Sedgwick, Adams, Logan, Morgan, Washington, Elbert* and about 4% of the watershed's farmland acreage lies in southwestern Nebraska in Cheyenne and Deuel counties.
- ◆ There are an estimated 1,894,424 surface acres in the watershed.
- ◆ There are an estimated 1,544 farms in the watershed, covering 1,704,371 acres.
- ◆ Agricultural land uses in the watershed:

Irrigated Cropland	13%
Non-irrigated Cropland	22%
Non-irrigated Pasture	1%
Rangeland	64%



“We did it on our own when it needed to be done.” Bruce Hass

It's a hard life farming in the unforgiving and unpredictable conditions of the drought-prone High Plains, but the Hass' were recently enrolled into the Conservation Security Program (CSP) which is a testimony of their life-long commitment land stewardship.

How CSP Works

- ❶ The CSP sign-up is being offered in selected priority watersheds across the Nation.
- ❷ Producers complete a self-assessment to determine eligibility.
- ❸ Eligible producers within these watersheds submit an application.
- ❹ Based on the application, description of conservation activities, and a follow-up interview, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will determine which program tier and enrollment category are available for the applicant.

NRCS will provide the necessary materials for producers to complete the benchmark inventory.

Basic Eligibility

Both the producer and the producer's operation must first meet these basic eligibility criteria:

- ▶▶ The land must be privately owned or tribal land with the majority of the land located within a selected priority watershed.
- ▶▶ The applicant must be in compliance with highly erodible land and wetland provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985, have an active interest in the agricultural operation, and show control of the land for the life of the contract.
- ▶▶ The applicant must share in the risk of producing any crop or livestock and be entitled to a share in the crop or livestock marketed from the operation.

Applicants must meet the minimum Tier eligibility and contract requirements, plus any additional requirements in the sign-up announcement.

Tier I - the producer must have addressed water quality and soil quality to meet the minimum treatment requirements on part of the agricultural operation for the previous two crop years.

Tier II - the producer must have addressed water quality and soil quality to meet the minimum treatment requirements on the entire agricultural operation for the previous two crop years and agree to address one additional resource concern by the end of the contract period.

Tier III - the producer must have addressed all resource concerns on the entire operation for the previous two crop years and agree to additional enhancement activities outlined in the sign-up announcement.

Soil quality practices might include crop rotation, cover crops, conservation tillage, prescribed grazing, and adequate wind barriers.

Water quality practices might include filter strips, grassed waterways, managed access to streams, nutrient and pest management, prescribed grazing, and irrigation water management.

Basic Eligibility for Middle South Platte - Sterling CSP Watershed

1. If the majority of your ag operation is within the Middle South Platte - Sterling CSP watershed boundaries, you may be eligible for 2006 CSP funding.
2. Can you answer yes to the listed questions? 
3. Do you have the required documentation of your land stewardship (*see recommendations on website*)?
4. If you have answered yes to the above questions and you have land within the Middle South Platte - Sterling CSP watershed then, please visit your local NRCS field office for additional information and support.

So, you've got Land within the Middle S. Platte - Sterling CSP Watershed... Can you Answer Yes to These Questions?

1. Are you in compliance with Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation provisions of the Farm Bill?
2. Do you have cropland, rangeland, hayland, pastureland, vineyards and/or orchards that you wish to enroll in Conservation Security Program (CSP)?
3. Do you own or have control of the land you intend to enroll in CSP for the length of the proposed 5 to 10 year contract period?
4. Do you share in the risk of producing the crop or livestock on this farm?
5. Do you manage your nutrient usage and have records showing soil tests at least once in the past five years for the acreage where fertilizers or livestock waste have been applied and you wish to enroll in CSP?
6. Are crop and pasture fields free of active gullies?
7. Do you have at least two years of records of your pest management methods and applications for the acres you wish to enroll?
8. Do you have two years of records for your grazing management system, including:
 - ◆ number and class of livestock, including size or weight?
 - ◆ number and sizes of pastures?
 - ◆ grazing period, days in pasture?
 - ◆ location of watering facilities?
 - ◆ location of salt and mineral blocks?
9. Do you manage livestock access to water courses?

Did you answer yes to the above questions then, please visit your local NRCS field office.