



227 North Main Street
P.O. Box 502
Elizabeth, IL 61028
Phone: (815) 858-3418 Ext. 3
Fax: (815) 858-3694

For many years, state and federal cost-share programs have been focused on reducing soil erosion, whether it is sheet and rill or gully, on cropland to improve water quality, but the whole picture of addressing water quality issues on rural land had not been addressed until recently. The more recent Federal Government's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) has done a good job of cost-sharing practices for producers to treat all resource concerns on a tract of land for not only crop land, but for forested land and livestock operations. Meanwhile, the State's C-2000 Program and Erosion and Sediment Control Practice, Nutrient Management Plan Practice, and Water Well Decommissioning Practice continue to focus on cropland and abandoned wells.

In conservation planning, when looking at the nine-step planning process, the EQIP program provides opportunities for both developing and implementing plans for cropland, forestland, and confined livestock operations, covering steps one through nine, while the State's C-2000 program only has plan development and implementation for cropland. However, for grazing operations, both EQIP and C-2000 fall short on steps one through seven by not offering an incentive for plan development, thus making it difficult to complete steps eight and nine.

The Jo Daviess County Soil and Water Conservation District has taken the opportunity provided by the C-2000 Special Project program to fill in the short fall of the Federal and State Cost-share programs by providing \$1,000 incentives to 10 producers willing to have grazing plans written for their grazing operations. The grazing plans would be written by Jo Daviess County Soil and Water Conservation District (JDSWCD) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) employees or approved NRCS Technical Service Providers using NRCS Field Office Technical Guide standards.

Many grazing operations reside in Jo Daviess County due to the topography making livestock the most practical land use. Without this grazing plan incentive, most producers will not take the time to have written documentation of the goals, objectives, or focus for the future of their grazing operations. The grazing plans would lay out the practices a producer would need to implement for improving the efficiency of their grazing operation and ultimately making it more profitable while improving water quality. The grazing plans would also lay the groundwork for producers to apply for future EQIP or C-2000 Special Projects Cost-share, or even implement practices for their grazing operation without cost-share.

For more information about this project or other activities, please contact the Jo Daviess County Soil and Water Conservation District at:

227 North Main Street
PO Box 502
Elizabeth, Illinois 61028
(815) 858-3418