

AN INDIAN COUNTRY FARM POLICY ROUNDTABLE

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MR. EMM: My name is Randy Emm. I'm a producer and farmer on the Walker River Indian Reservation in western Nevada. And I would like to start with the comments that -- with the words "trust lands shall be considered as limited resource lands." Now this is the main topic that we need to address here. That is the issue that needs to be understood here. And I say -- and the question is asked why. The main reason is because trust lands are not the same as other lands. You cannot go out and get the funding necessary to implement the conservation projects to, you know, get them on the ground. Now, we have had problems in the past of getting the conservation programs on the ground, and the main reason is because of the cost shares and the inability to get matching funds to do this. Now, the cost of the conservation programs, you start looking at the cost of these things, 24-inch pipeline we put in. You're looking at \$40 a foot. You go a thousand feet, and that's \$40,000.

Without adequate financing to do this, the farmer or the tribe has to come up with the money out of their back pocket. And on trust lands, again, it's hard to go and get that funding to implement these projects. And that's the primary reasons why these lands should be kind of considered as limited resources. Another issue is that most of these conservation projects are cost reimbursable, which means that the producer or the Indian tribe has to front all the money first in order to get these projects on line, again, going back to the difference between trust lands and other lands. You can go out and pretty much readily get a mortgage on fee land that you have. But trust land, you have got to go through the Bureau of Indian Affairs. And if you go through FSA, you know, you're looking at a year to two years before you can get that cycle going.

In the meantime, which comes first? The conservation program, the application, or the funding? And you can't start one without the other. So those are kind of the primary problems. Again, to kind of put the idea of that trust land should be considered as limited resource projects. Thank you.

MR. RACINE: Thank you, Randy. Next. We'll go here, and then we'll go to Richard.