

FEATURE – CRP CELEBRATES 25 YEARS AS SIGN-UP DEADLINE APPROACHES

INTRO: The Conservation Reserve Program has been around for twenty-five years helping farmers protect environmentally sensitive land. The USDA's Bob Ellison has more. (1:32)

UNDER THE CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM, THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE GIVES FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO HELP PRODUCERS PROTECT HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND. USDA PERSONNEL AND FARMERS SAY PRIOR TO C-R-P SOIL EROSION WAS A BIG PROBLEM.

Juan Garcia USDA FSA: Since CRP was brought into the area it's curtailed a lot of that. Yes, we still get some dust storms but it's nothing like it used to be back then.

Randy Underwood, USDA NRCS: If you want some visible proof that CRP works just take a look around and you'll see from the grass that we are getting excellent erosion control.

FARMERS ENROLL HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND THROUGH U-S-D-A'S FARM SERVICE AGENCY. AND THEN U-S-D-A'S NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE PROVIDES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

Salvador Salinas USDA NRCS: When the time comes for that producer to begin implementing that conservation plan the NRCS will assist that producer on the land to help him or her to implement those practices.

Isaac Castro, Lynn County, TX Farmer: A lot of us farmers don't have the knowledge that they have and of course we can always go to them for their opinions just to help us out.

PRODUCERS SAY WITHOUT THE C-R-P THEY WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO PROTECT THEIR LAND FROM EROSION.

Joseph Herbert Wooden, Hopewell, VA Farmer: You didn't have enough money of your own to get it done but with CRP that's where we got all of ours fixed up by having CRP.

THIRTY ONE POINT THREE MILLION ACRES ARE CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN THE C-R-P. FOR THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, I'M BOB ELLISON

ANCHOR TAG: IN THE 25 YEARS SINCE C-R-P WAS ESTABLISHED, THE NATION HAS ENJOYED BETTER WATER QUALITY; WILDLIFE NUMBERS

HAVE INCREASED AND OUR AIR QUALITY HAS IMPROVED, SO C-R-P HAS DONE MORE THAN REDUCE SOIL EROSION. THE CURRENT GENERAL SIGN UP FOR C-R-P ENDS SOON.