

USDA  
followup  
to  
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OCT 19 2004

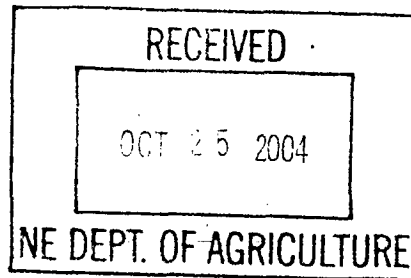
United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Farm and Foreign  
Agricultural  
Services

Farm Service  
Agency

1400 Independence  
Ave, SW  
Stop 0513  
Washington, DC  
20250-0513

State of Nebraska  
Department of Agriculture  
Bobbie Kriz-Wickham  
P. O. Box 94947  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4947



Dear Ms. Kriz-Wickham:

This is in reference to the proposal submitted to the Secretary on August 26, 2004, and a meeting with national Farm Service Agency staff on September 29. Based on the information submitted, your proposal appears to meet primary goals of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) which are to create an opportunity to target State and Federal resources in a coordinated manner, to address specific conservation and environmental objectives of the state and the nation, and to improved water quality, reduce soil erosion, enhance air quality, or develop wildlife habitat in specific geographic areas that have been adversely impacted by agricultural activities.

CREP proposals must address certain required issues such as:

- Address a resource conservation issue of State and national significant
- Demonstrate the ability to achieve significant environmental benefits in a cost-effective manner
- Present clear program goals with measurable objectives
- Provide a significant commitment, such as 20 percent, of State or non-Federal funding to achieve conservation objectives
- Provide evidence of strong producer and community support for the project
- Be consistent with the CRP statute and regulations
- Provide for interagency cooperation
- Have a monitoring and evaluation component to measure the success of the project

Prior to the commitment of resources between USDA and the State, we require that the environmental impact of the proposed action be evaluated consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The CREP partners are encouraged to provide assistance in completing this requirement.

While your proposal may meet primary goals of the CREP, we have questions which should be addressed prior to moving forward. Upon reaching agreement on revisions/changes to your proposal, a draft Memorandum of Agreement may be submitted to our office through the State FSA office. From the information submitted, the following are some of the questions and/or issues that we should discuss and resolve:

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