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Natural Resources
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NEWS ■ For Immediate Release

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GRASSLAND RESERVE PROGRAM APPLICATION

Owners and operators of grassland including natural prairie, improved pastureland, or native rangeland now have the opportunity to enroll their lands in the Grassland Reserve Program (GRP). GRP is a voluntary program that restores or protects these lands while maintaining their use as grazing lands. GRP is one of the conservation programs of the 2002 Farm Bill and is administered by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Farm Service Agency (FSA)

Applications for GRP are now being accepted at the local USDA Service Center at either the NRCS or FSA office. The last day for submitting an application for this year's funding is July 23, 2004.

The program emphasizes support for grazing operations, plant and animal biodiversity, and grasslands under the greatest threat of conversion. The minimum amount of eligible land for enrollment is 40 acres.

Enrollment options are: Permanent and 30-year easements; 10-year, 15-year, 20-year, or 30-year rental agreements. Restoration agreements are available in conjunction with easements or rental agreements to provide cost share for needed conservation practices.

Allowable activities include common grazing practices, haying, mowing, or harvesting for seed. Fire rehabilitation and the construction of firebreaks and fences are also allowed.

(more)

Prohibited activities are the production of crops, fruit trees, and vineyards that require breaking the soil surface. Also prohibited are any other activities that would disturb the surface of the land except those permitted by an NRCS approved conservation plan.

For more information or to make an application, contact the local office of NRCS or FSA located in the USDA Service Center. Information is also available on the World Wide Web at: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/farmbill/2002/> and <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dafp/GRP/default1.htm>

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