

Minutes –Texas STAC August 5, 2010

Holiday Inn, Austin

State Conservationist Gohmert called the meeting to order. Baggett served as moderator.

Micky Woodard – FSA

ECP with Hurricane Bonnie (Rio Grande valley of TX)

CRP Signup 39 (August 2-27)

- 7.8 million acres have expired – approx 3.8 million acres can re-enroll, if offers are approved
- Exclusion of CCRP acreage from county 25% cropland limitation
- Managed Harvesting and routine grazing (1 out of 3 years)
 - Primary nesting season March 1 – June 1
 - 25% reduction in annual payment
- Initiated Public Access Provisions
- 600K acres expiring CRP is eligible to re-enroll (FY10 expirees)
- Ineligible lands: greater than 10% brush canopy
- Only factors that producer can affect that alters their EBI ranking: N1a – wildlife benefit cover; N1b – wildlife enhancements (water, food plots, etc.); N6a- Cost factor (reduced rental rate)
- Contract duration is 10 years for grass and 15 years for trees
- 50% cost-share for establishing the approved practice cover (payment cannot exceed the ag value of the land)
- All contracts will have mid-contract mgmt activities, as authorized
- CRP SU 39 – crop bases will be reduced accordingly, but they are stored and will be restored upon restoration of CRP

State Acreage for Wildlife (SAFE) Projects

- Original allocations are Mixed Grass (Lesser Prairie Chicken – 20,000 ac; Gulf Coast Prairie (mottled duck) 14,400 acres; Lower Rio Grande Thorn-Scrub – 5000 acres
- LPC: 20K acres enrolled and 17K acres pending; no applications in other two areas
- Proposed: increase LPC to 38,400 acres and leave 500 acres in other two project areas

Questions; Kirby Brown, Gene Miller and Don Wilhelm;

WILHELM: Reconvene wildlife subcommittee recommendation

Gene Miller read recommendations from Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept, since no representative from that agency was able to attend: Recommend leaving 1000 acres in each of the other two SAFE areas.

FSA will amend project proposals to make this happen; State Committee FSA will meet on Aug 23rd and consider this issue.

NRCS Report

Habiger: SEE HANDOUT.

Baggett: Review of subcommittees and technical facilitator

Report from Water Quality Subcommittee

SEE HANDOUT.

General Comments/Questions

Kirby Brown: recommended that we look at Edward Aquifer recharge and consider funding for water quantity.

David Gipson: concerned that we will dilute funding to existing resource concerns by adding new ones.

Bob McCan; what happened to their recommendation to treat flatsedge – and why was INVASIVE SPECIES Statewide Resource Concern eliminated? Answer: Statewide resource concerns are minimized to allow increased funding to county bases.

Habiger explained that all national initiatives (LPC, MBHI, EQIP Air Quality, Organic) come with their own funding and does not come from TX budget.

Farris Hightower: Allocation for funding notices be sent to STAC committee

NRCS will send FINAL FY10 Farm Bill program numbers to STAC.

Meeting adjourned at 11:45am.