



United States Department of Agriculture

NRCS Air Quality Efforts

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Agenda

- NRCS National Air Quality Initiative (NAQI)
- NAQI in AZ
- NRCS Dust Control Practices

NAQI Background

- 2008 Farm Bill included provisions for the use of EQIP to assist producers with air quality resource concerns and to meet Federal, State, and local regulatory requirements
 - Authorized \$37.5 million per year
- NRCS designed the NAQI to help producers meet air quality compliance requirements and provide opportunities to install air quality conservation practices

NAQI – 2009-2014

- NRCS originally designed the program based on nonattainment areas and the number of acres of agricultural production in those counties
 - Great success in CA
 - Mixed results in other states
 - Lack of agricultural contribution to nonattainment issues
 - Focus on nonattainment left some real agricultural air quality issues unaddressed or inadequately addressed

NAQI Changes for FY15 and Beyond

- 2014 Farm Bill left language pretty much intact, but reduced authorization to \$25 million per year
- Changes to nonattainment-only approach
 - States are no longer allocated funds based on nonattainment/agricultural production formula
 - States apply for funds by submitting a “Request to Participate”

Request to Participate

- Intended priority area pool
- Geographic extent of initiative area
- Specific agricultural air quality issue to be addressed and reasons
- Existing or potential air quality regulatory requirements to be addressed, if any
- Proposed strategy to be used, including core practice standards
- Anticipated external partner participation
- Amount of funds requested

Funding Decisions

- NHQ will make funding decisions based on submitted Requests to Participate, with emphasis on:
 - Addressing nonattainment pollutants or precursors in a nonattainment area
 - Addressing an existing or potential Federal, State, or local air quality regulatory requirement related to agricultural sources
 - Involve significant partner participation

NAQI Priority Areas/Funding Pools

- National nonattainment
 - Right now, limited to CA and AZ
- Regional air quality
 - Multi-state projects
- State air quality
 - Single state projects

AZ NRCS and NAQI

- FY15 eligible counties: Cochise, Gila, Greenlee, Graham, Maricopa, Mohave, Pima, Pinal, Santa Cruz, Yuma
- 20 total contracts for approximately \$1.67 MM
 - Primarily irrigation/moisture management related practices
 - National funds = ~\$1.44 MM
 - AZ NRCS supplemented national allocation to get final total
- FY16 national allocation is \$1.35 MM

NRCS Dust-Related Practices

- High effectiveness category
 - Dust Control on Unpaved Roads and Surfaces (Code 373) *
 - Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (Code 380)
 - Residue and Tillage Management – No Till (Code 329)
 - Residue and Tillage Management – Reduced Till (Code 345)
 - Field Operations Emissions Reduction (Code 376)
 - Dust Control from Animal Activity on Open Lot Surfaces (Code 375)

* Denotes potential for use on rangeland

NRCS Dust-Related Practices

- Medium effectiveness category
 - Critical Area Planting (Code 342) *
 - Anionic Polyacrylamide (PAM) Erosion Control (Code 450) *
 - Irrigation Water Management (Code 449)
 - Conservation Cover (Code 327) *
 - Cover Crop (Code 340)
 - Conservation Crop Rotation (Code 328)

* Denotes potential for use on rangeland

NRCS Dust-Related Practices

- Medium effectiveness category
 - Cross Wind Ridges (Code 588)
 - Cross Wind Trap Strips (Code 589c) *
 - Herbaceous Wind Barriers (Code 603)
 - Hedgerow Planting (Code 422)
 - Stripcropping (Code 585)
 - Alley Cropping (Code 311)
 - Heavy Use Area Protection (Code 561) *

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NRCS Dust-Related Practices

- Medium effectiveness category
 - Mulching (Code 484) *
 - Sprinkler System (Code 442)
 - Windbreak/Shelterbelt Renovation (Code 650)
 - Prescribed Grazing (Code 528) *
 - Surface Roughening (Code 609)
- Low effectiveness category
 - Range Planting (Code 550) *

* Denotes potential for use on rangeland

Summary

- Updated NRCS NAQI provides states a better ability to address true agricultural air quality issues, not just nonattainment
 - States will have more flexibility and say in what and how to address
 - Ability to address regional issues
 - Partner participation is encouraged and prioritized
- NRCS has several practices in our toolbox to help with reducing dust

Questions?

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