



Guidelines for Farmer Enrollment in ACWA-NRCS CCPI Project

NRCS has set aside \$800,000 in EQIP dollars over the next four years specifically for farmers to address nutrient management by testing and evaluating the use of nitrogen stabilizers in their operations. This special Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative project (CCPI) was requested from NRCS by Agriculture's Clean Water Alliance (ACWA).

ACWA's membership consists of leading ag retailers in the Raccoon River and Des Moines River watersheds. ACWA members are aware of their dual mission to help farmers improve agronomic performance in the field while supporting environmental performance beyond the field's edge.

Their purposes for this CCPI project are to:

- Provide farmers with an opportunity to experiment with stabilizers in their nutrient program by providing cost share to cover a portion of the cost of the stabilizer,
- Evaluate the adoption of stabilizers as a nitrogen management tool from a water quality perspective.

Harry Ahrenholtz, current ACWA president, says although this is a new initiative for them, members have been aware of the issues surrounding the Mississippi River Basin Watershed, such as the Gulf hypoxia, for some time.

"Agriculture's Clean Water Alliance (ACWA) has been engaged for the last 12 years with monitoring and sampling in the Raccoon and Des Moines River watersheds to determine relative nitrogen levels and trends," Ahrenholtz says. "In recent years, ACWA has elevated its activity to spearhead remedial projects, like bioreactors, to find new ways to reduce nitrogen levels in the watershed streams.

"This agreement gives us new opportunities to join with government agencies to implement and measure conservation strategies with our producers. The goal is to find ways we can contribute to a positive impact on nitrogen management."

Key points of the ACWA CCPI project:

- It is an opportunity for farmers resulting from a joint partnership between NRCS and ACWA.
- It provides cost share for farmers to evaluate the use of stabilizers in their operations.
- It is available only to farmers who farm in the designated watersheds in Dallas, Greene, Webster, Hamilton and Wright counties (maps included).
- This is the only EQIP nutrient management option at higher payment levels that allows fall application of nitrogen.
- This is a great opportunity for farmers to familiarize themselves with NRCS programming while receiving support from their local agronomist as well as other technical expertise provided by ACWA.

Contract requirements:

- Farmers can apply for the program at any time; however, NRCS will provide several cutoff dates for the ranking of applications and awarding of contracts each year.
- There is no minimum number of acres that can be enrolled; however, contract size will be limited to \$24,000/year.

- Contracts can last from 1 to 3 years.
- While payment rates will vary year to year, in 2011 farmers received \$15-\$28/acre/corn year for implementing a nutrient management plan, using nitrogen stabilizers and completing either two or four enhancement activities (variable rate application, late spring nitrate testing, in season tissue testing, end of season stalk sampling, spring application, use of cover crops, among others).
- Each contract will require a nutrient management plan be developed that outlines appropriate form, rate and timing of N, P, and K for the life of the contract and meets the NRCS 590 nutrient management plan standard.

Agronomic considerations:

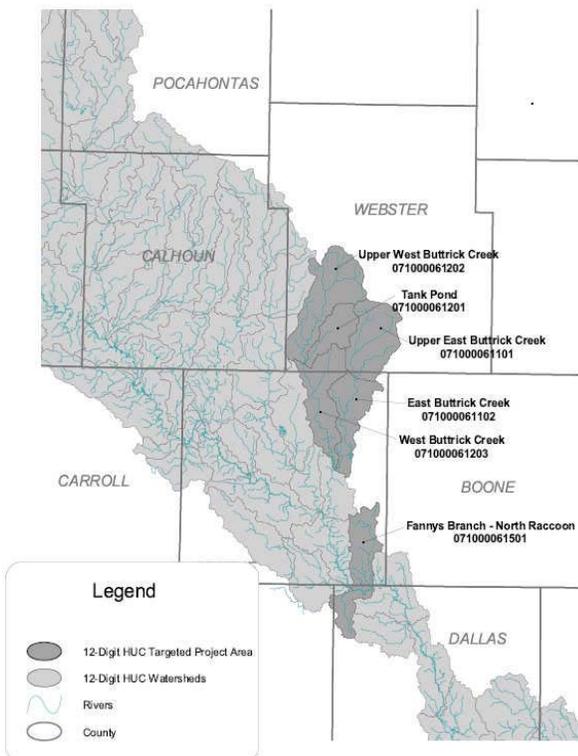
- Nitrogen stabilizers must be used with the primary nitrogen application.
- ISU recommendations (PM 1688, PM 1714) for nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium must be followed, including limiting nitrogen applications to either 150 lbs. N/acre for corn following soybeans or the rate recommended when using ISU’s Corn Nitrogen Rate Calculator Tool.
- Soil tests no older than 4 years old must be used to determine phosphorus and potassium application rates. If soil tests are older than 4 years, new tests will be required.

This program is particularly well suited for farmers who:

- Use a split application program and can use the in season testing to adjust the second or “rescue” application,
- Are already applying near the high end of the ISU recommended 100- 150 lbs N/Ac range for corn following soybeans,
- Are interested in reducing N rates and using tests for feedback,
- Want to try nitrogen stabilizers in their operation.

For more information visit www.acwa-rrws.org.

North Raccoon River MRBI-CCPI Application



Boone River MRBI-CCPI Application

