

## USDA Extends Sign-Up for Conservation Stewardship Program to Jan. 27

WASHINGTON, January 11, 2012 – USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Chief Dave White today announced that the cut-off date for the current Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) ranking period has been extended to January 27, 2012. Producers who maintain a high level of conservation on their land and agree to adopt higher levels of stewardship are eligible for CSP payments.

“We want to make sure that people who want to be considered for CSP during this first ranking period have the time they need to complete their applications,” White said. “CSP is a very popular program and I encourage interested producers to apply at their local NRCS office as soon as they can.”

CSP is offered in all 50 states, tribal lands and the Pacific and Caribbean areas through continuous sign-ups. Administered by NRCS, CSP provides many conservation benefits including improved water and soil quality, enhanced wildlife habitat and conservation activities that address the effects of climate change.

Producers are encouraged to apply for CSP throughout the year to be considered for current and future application ranking periods. Those who apply by January 27, 2012, may be eligible for current available funding. Eligible lands include cropland, pastureland, rangeland and nonindustrial forestland.

A CSP self-screening checklist is available to help producers determine if CSP is suitable for their operation. The checklist highlights basic information about CSP eligibility requirements, contracts obligations and potential payments. It is available from local NRCS offices and at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp>.

Learn more about CSP and other NRCS programs at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs>.

Find your local USDA Service Center at <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=MS&agency=NRCS>.

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