

# NRCS Conservation Programs in Nebraska

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# Environmental Quality Incentives Program EQIP



# Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

- The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary conservation program that helps agricultural producers in a manner that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible goals. Through EQIP, agricultural producers receive financial and technical assistance to implement structural and management conservation practices that optimize environmental benefits on working agricultural land.

# EQIP

- EQIP applications are accepted on a continuous basis, however, NRCS establishes application "cut-off" or submission deadline dates for evaluation, ranking and approval of eligible applications. EQIP is open to all eligible agricultural producers and submitted applications may be considered or evaluated in multiple funding pool opportunities.

# EQIP Eligibility

- Participant Eligibility
  - Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELIC) and Wetland Conservation (WC)
  - Average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Certification
  - Control of the land for the duration of contract
  - Legal Entity, Member Information, Signature Authority and DUNs/SAM

# EQIP Water Conservation

- Eligible Land
  - Land that has been irrigated 2 out the last 5 years.
  - Must be physically capable of being irrigated at the time of application.
  - Land enrolled in a USDA or State program where irrigation has been deferred may be eligible
  - Participant must control or own eligible land

# EQIP Water Conservation Practices

- Irrigation Water Mgt. – Practice Code 449
  - The process of determining and controlling the volume, frequency and application rate of irrigation water in a planned, efficient manner
  - Required for 3 consecutive years on all contracts for water conservation practices.
  - Three Levels; Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced.

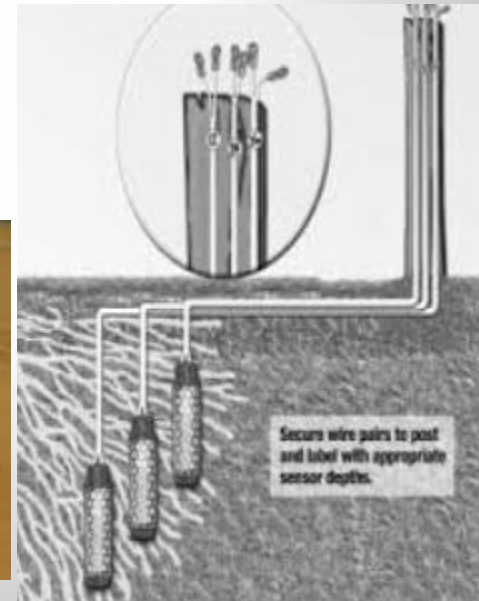
# EQIP Water Conservation Practices

- Irrigation Water Mgt. – Practice Code 449
  - Basic Technique
  - low Intensity irrigation water management system for producers using a checkbook method (crop grown, soil moisture conditions prior to irrigation, dates of irrigation start and stop, depths of irrigation applied, duration of irrigations, and amount of rainfall).
  - Incentive rate is \$2.38 per acre



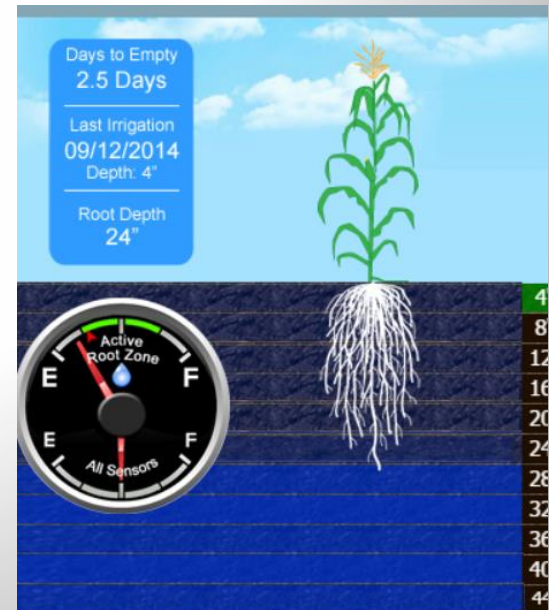
# EQIP Water Conservation Practices

- Irrigation Water Mgt. – Practice Code 449
  - IWM, Intermediate technique
  - installation of electrical soil moisture sensors such as capacitance or resistance sensors that are monitored periodically to determine soil moisture.
  - 1<sup>st</sup> year payment \$682.30 per installation
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> year \$2.63 per acre



# EQIP Water Conservation Practices

- Irrigation Water Mgt. – Practice Code 449
  - Advanced (Real Time) IWM
  - 2016 incentive rate \$1425.70 per probe
  - Limited to one probe per pivot



# EQIP Water Conservation Practices

- Sprinkler Systems – Practice Code 442
- Conversion from Gravity to Sprinkler
- System renovation to low pressure nozzles



# EQIP Water Conservation Practices

- Conversion from Gravity to Sprinkler
  - Eligible land must have been gravity irrigated 2 out of last 5 years.
  - Requires installation of NEW low pressure center pivot and flowmeter.
  - All Components of the system must meet NRCS specifications
  - 2016 rate is \$30.30 per linear foot

# EQIP Water Conservation Practices

- System renovation to low pressure nozzles
  - Pivot must have impact sprinklers installed on top of the mainline spans
  - Pressure at pivot point 80 psi.
  - Flowmeter must be installed if system does not have one.
  - All Components of the system must meet NRCS specifications
  - 2016 rate is \$4.07 per linear foot

# EQIP Water Conservation Practices

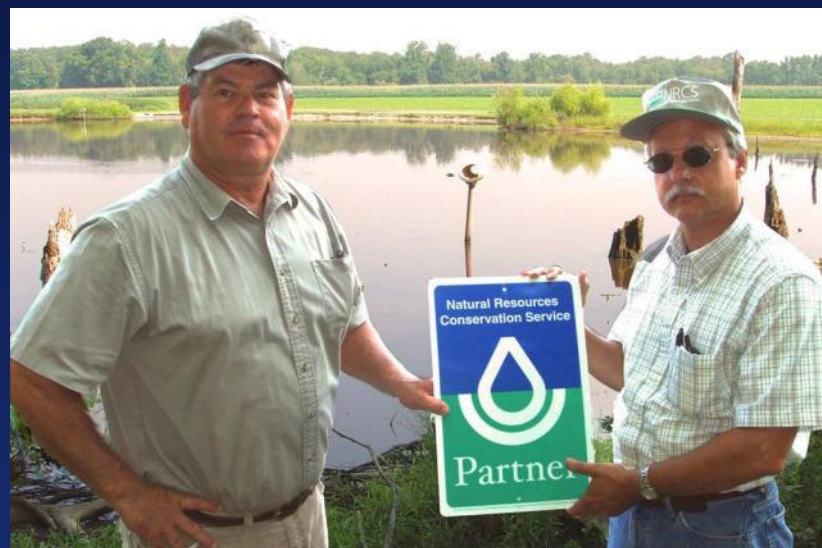
- SDI (Subsurface Drip Irrigation)
  - Eligible land – Cropland that has been irrigated 2 of the last 5 years
  - 2016 rate is \$563.56 per Acre



# EQIP contracts from 2015 for Water Conservation in Nebraska

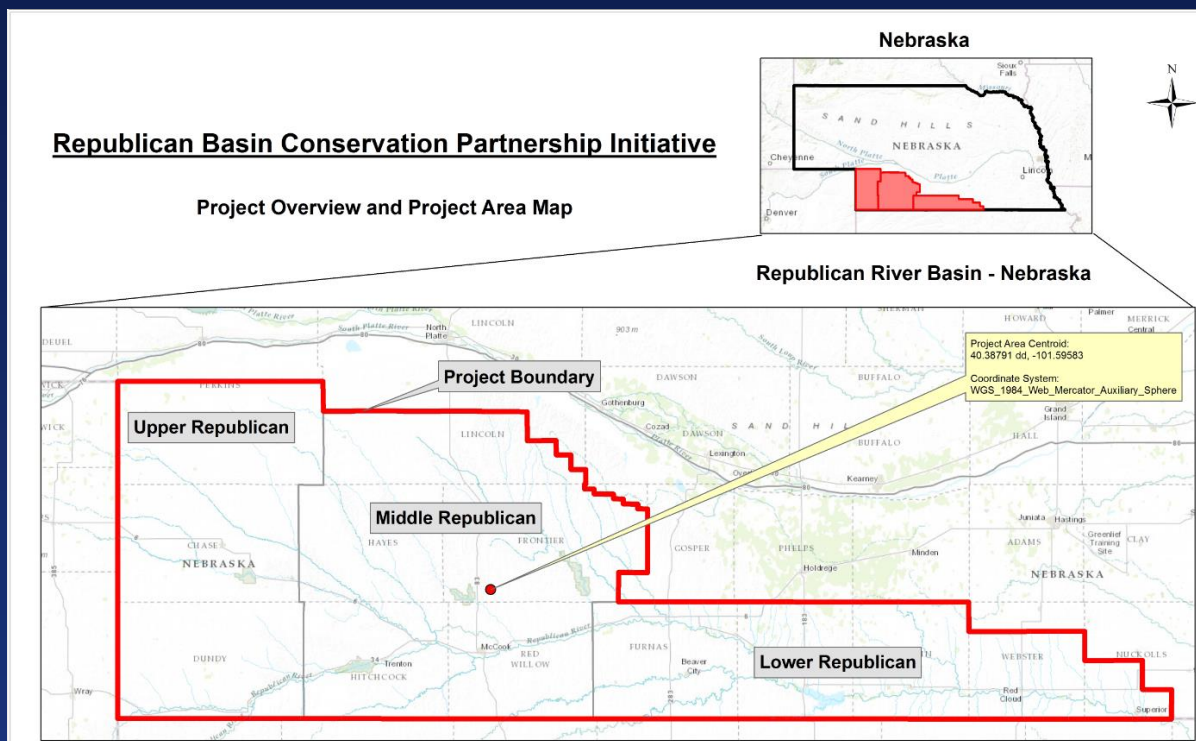
- 24 SDI systems on 1386 ac.
- 44 Sprinkler Systems on 4260 ac.
- 178 IWM plans to be applied in 2016 on 24,800 ac.

# Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)



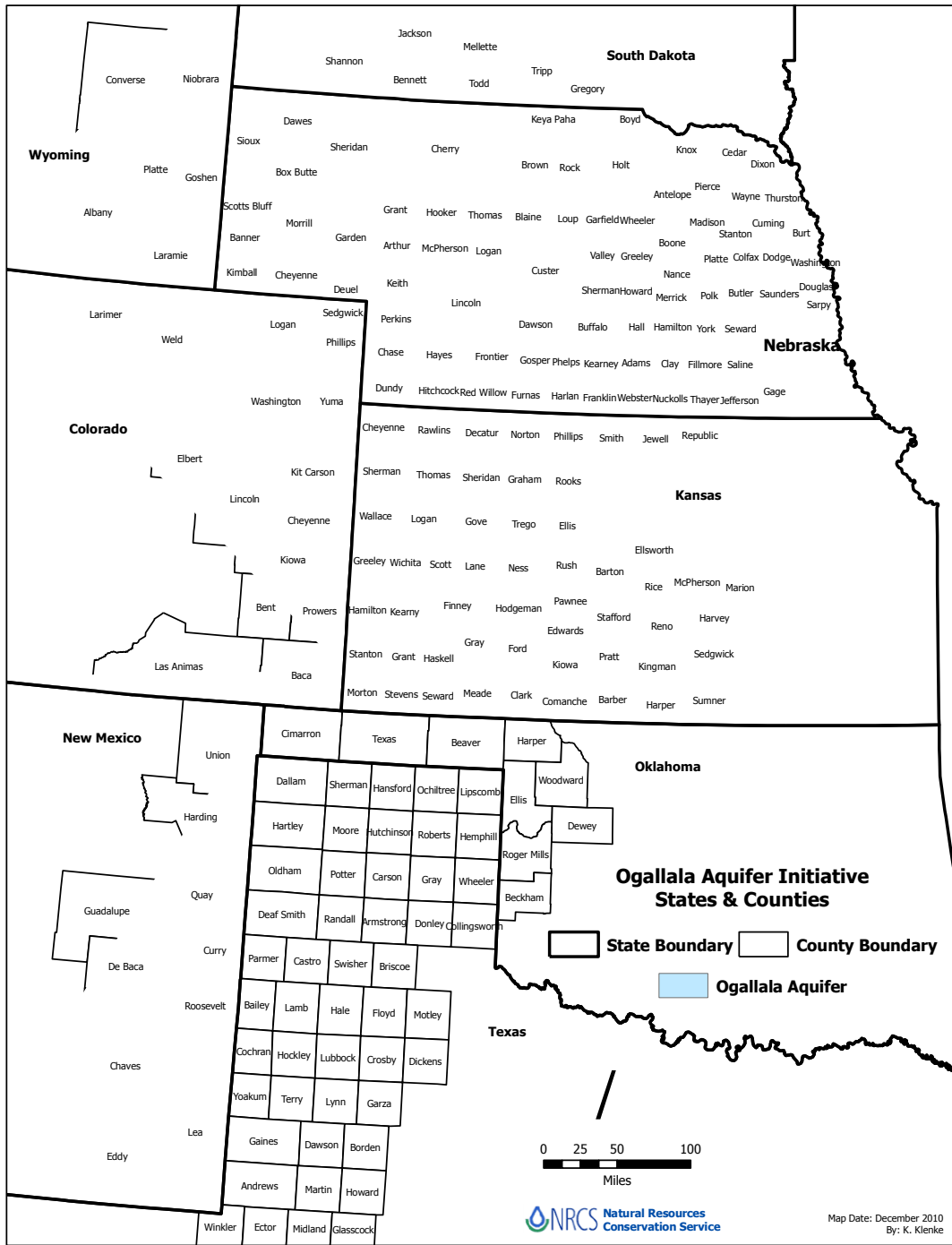


# Republican Basin Conservation Partnership

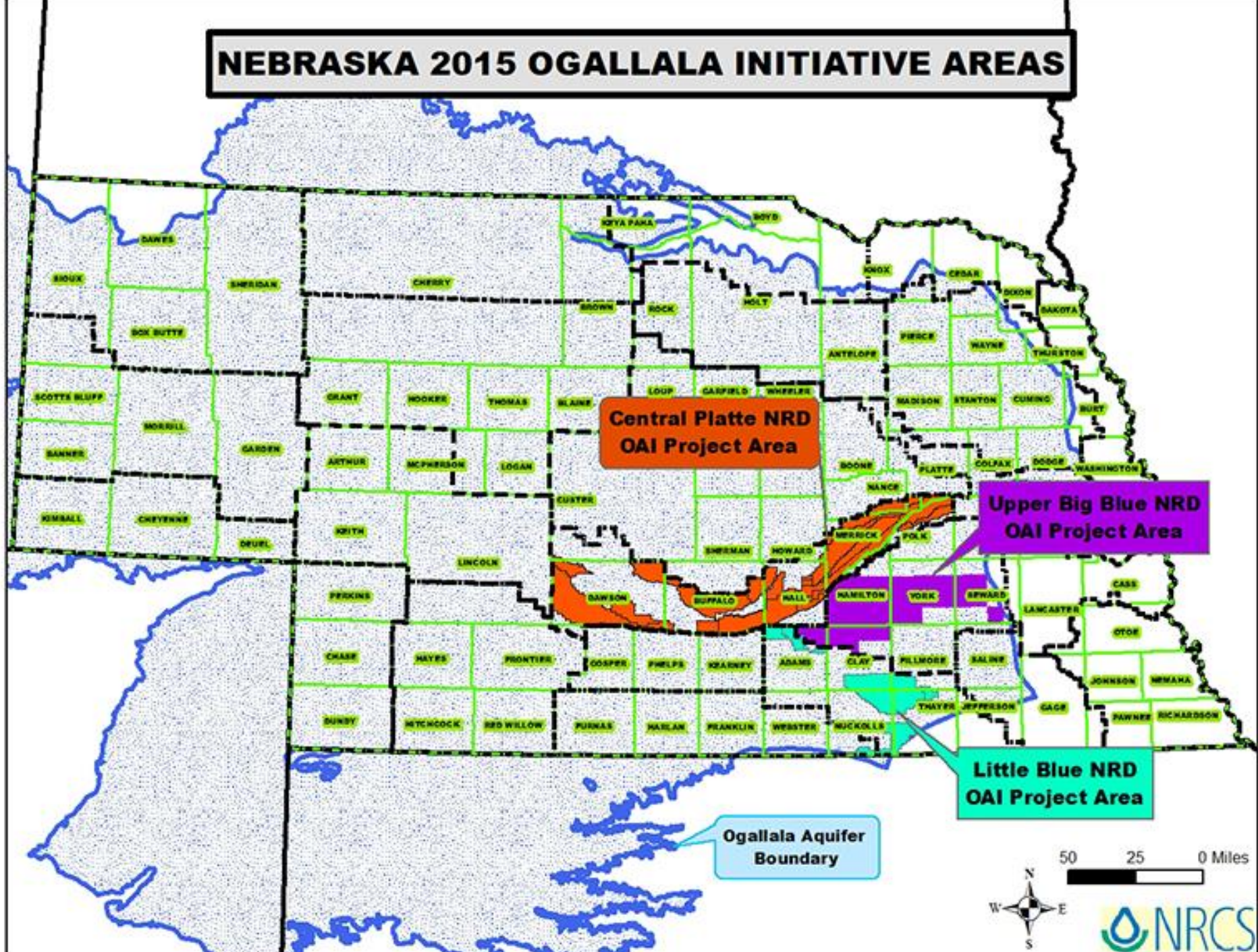


# Ogallala Aquifer Initiative





# NEBRASKA 2015 OGALLALA INITIATIVE AREAS



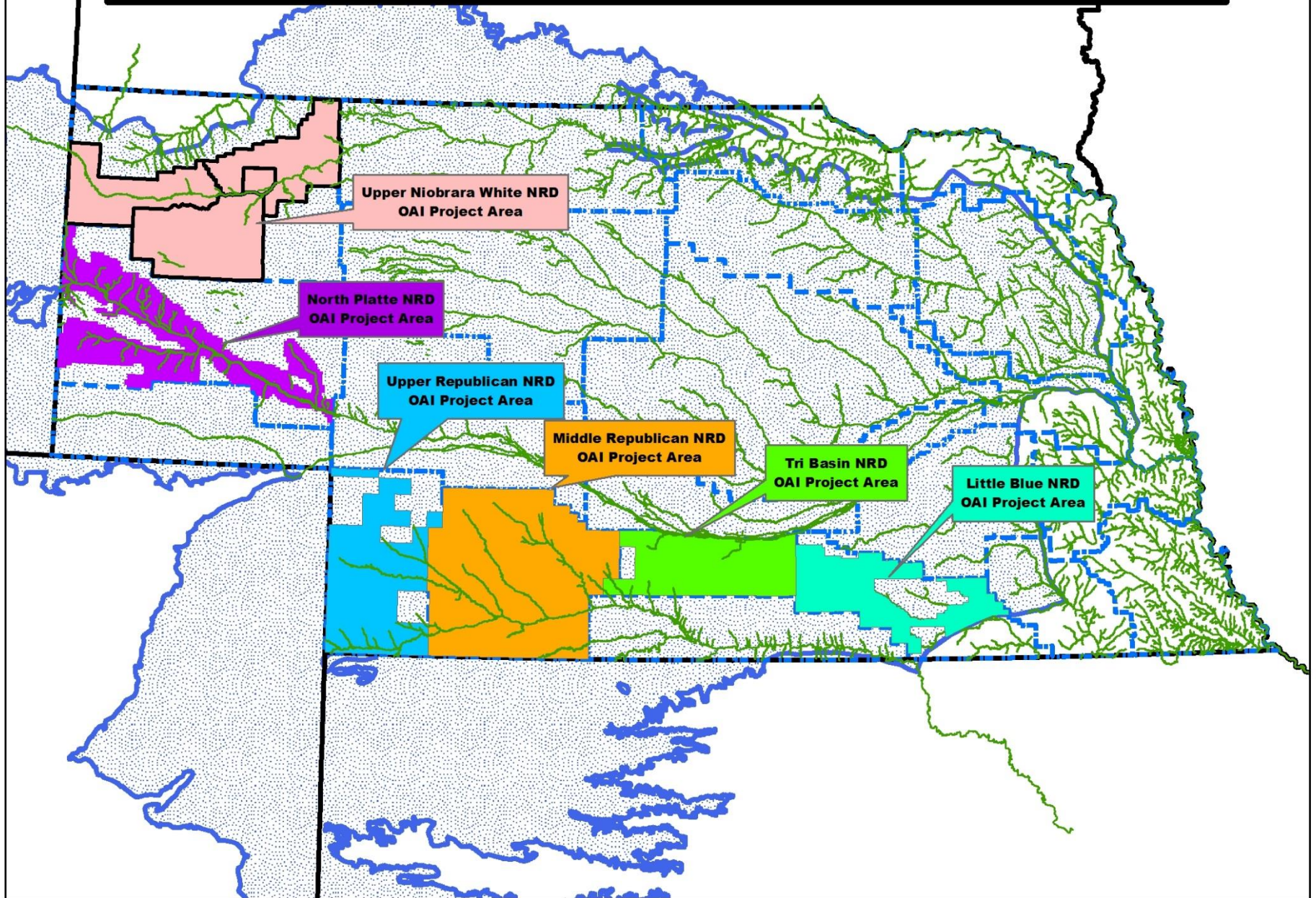
**Central Platte NRD  
OAI Project Area**

**Upper Big Blue NRD  
OAI Project Area**

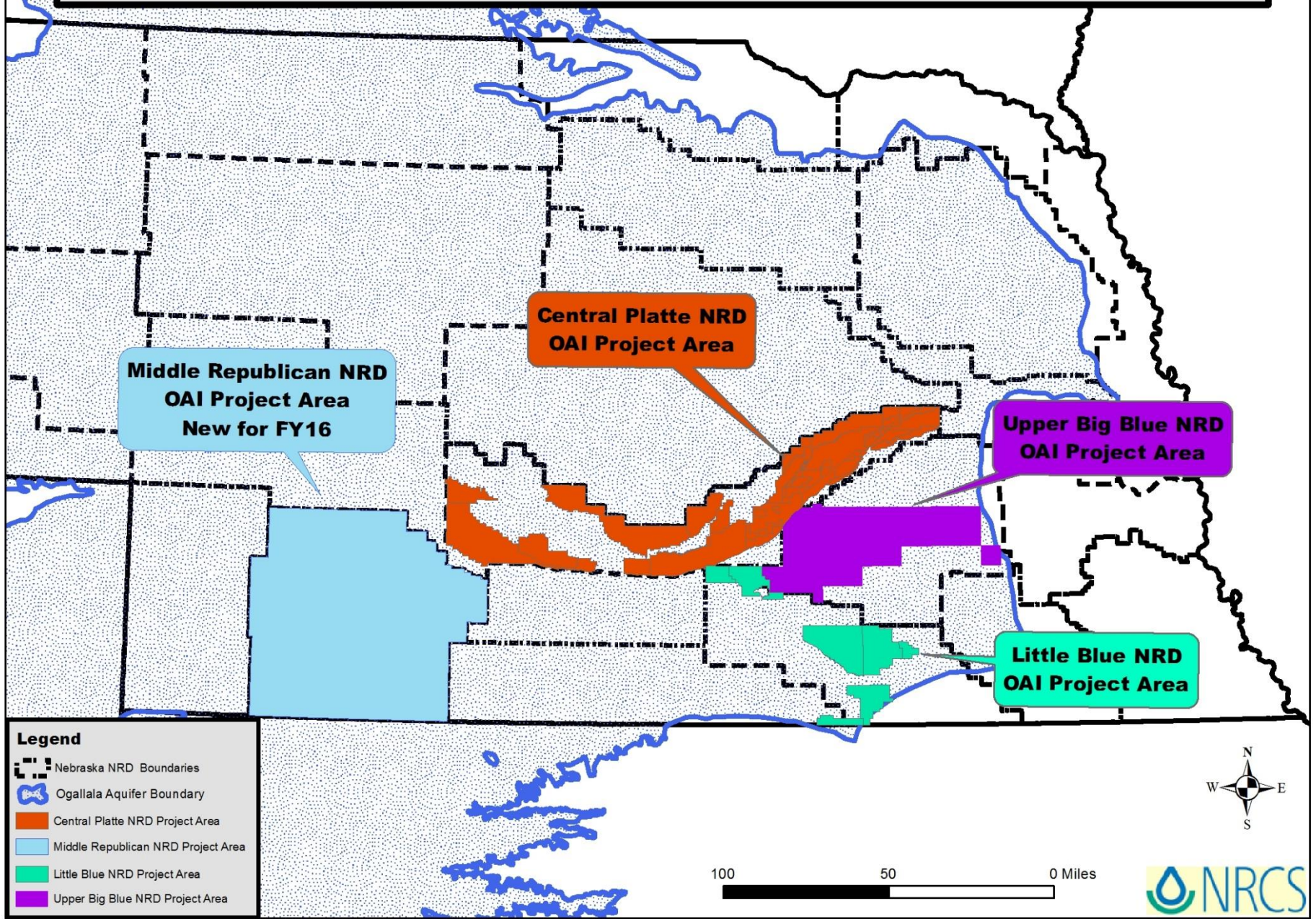
**Little Blue NRD  
OAI Project Area**

**Ogallala Aquifer  
Boundary**

# NEBRASKA 2016 OGALLALA INITIATIVE PROPOSAL AREAS



# NEBRASKA 2016 OGALLALA INITIATIVE AREAS



# Conservation Stewardship Program



## Conservation Stewardship Program - Nebraska

- The Conservation Stewardship Program helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority resources concerns. Participants earn CSP payments for conservation performance - the higher the performance, the higher the payment.

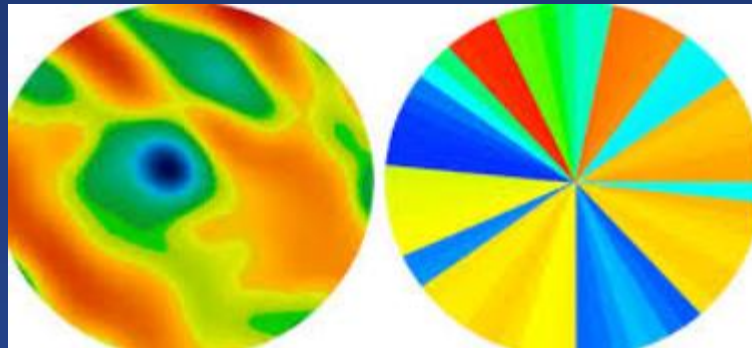


# Conservation Stewardship Program - Nebraska

- CSP provides two types of payments through five-year contracts: annual payments for installing new conservation activities and maintaining existing practices; and supplemental payments for adopting a resource-conserving crop rotation. Producers may be able to renew a contract if they have successfully fulfilled the initial contract and agree to achieve additional conservation objectives. Payments are made soon as practical after October 1 of each fiscal year for contract activities installed and maintained in the previous year.

# Conservation Stewardship Program - Nebraska

- Water Quantity Enhancement Activities
  - WQT01 – Irrigation system automation
    - This enhancement entails using GPS guided variable rate irrigation or other innovative technologies that allow irrigation water application based on variable site conditions within a field.



# Conservation Stewardship Program - Nebraska

- Water Quantity Enhancement Activities
  - WQT03 – Irrigation pumping plant evaluation
    - This enhancement consists of the evaluation of the irrigation pumping plant performance and efficiency using the Nebraska Irrigation Pumping Plant Performance Criteria.



## Conservation Stewardship Program - Nebraska

- 2015 Signup
  - Ranked Applications = 716
  - Acres in Applications = 1.4M
  - Amount Requested in Applications = \$11M

# Conservation Stewardship Program - Nebraska

- 2015 Signup Cont.
  - Contracts = 234
  - Acres = 400,000
  - Annual payments = \$4M
  - 17% Beginning F/R (5% minimum required)
  - Ogallala Aquifer Initiative – 11 applications - all approved

## Conservation Stewardship Program - Nebraska

- 2016-1 Renewal
  - Available to FY2011 expiring contract holders
  - Ranked Applications = 366
  - Acres in Applications = 921,699
  - Annual Payments = \$6M

## CSP & CStP Contract Numbers

• Security	46	
• 2008 Stewardship	1407	(556 will expire 12/31/2015)
• 2014 Stewardship	1257	
» <b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2710</b>	

## CSP & CStP Contract Acres

- Active Contracts

–2002 FB	58,122
–2008 FB	2,988,570
–2014 FB	2,191,192
»TOTAL	5,237,884



# CSP & CStP Annual Payments

- Active Contracts

–CSP \$ 670,000

–CStP \$57.5 million

»**TOTAL \$58.2 million**

## Future Signups

- CSP is currently being overhauled
  - Conservation Measurement Tool (CMT) discontinued
  - Enhancements will be more closely tied to Practices. The benefits must be above the Conservation Practice Standard (CPS)
  - Separate payments for existing and additional activities
    - Base payment for maintenance of existing system
    - Regional payment schedule for additional activities
- Goal is to make program simpler and more transparent
- Rollout for 2017 general signup

# Questions?

