

sent 8/26/14



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mission

"to represent and empower
illinois' swcds"

To: SWCD Chairmen

From: Richard Nichols

Date: August 25, 2014

Subject: Interest in Contribution Agreement for SWCD Contract Administration for NRCS

The attached survey is for the purpose of finding out what the level of interest would be for SWCDs to enter into a contribution agreement for 50% of the cost of SWCD staff performing work activities to keep NRCS contracts up to date. In most cases the contribution agreement will provide only a portion of the current wages being paid to a staff person and will depend entirely on the number of contracts existing or generated within the SWCD or by a neighboring SWCD for which your SWCD has agreed to perform such services during the agreement period.

We would like your response as quickly as possible. In most cases there will not be sufficient time to take this to a board meeting for full board action. Completing the questionnaire will not obligate you or the SWCD to any work activities or have any bearing on future agreements.

We simply wish to gage the potential for statewide use of this particular type of contribution agreement. We have enclosed a stamped, self-addressed envelope for you to use to return the questionnaire. Please make sure it is mailed in sufficient time to reach the AISWCD office by September 12, 2014.

Thank you for your time.

If sufficient positive response is received from the SWCDs, it is likely the contract administration program will begin with the new Federal Fiscal Year which begins October 1, 2014.

SWCD Administrative Assistance to Field Offices Interest Survey

Most of you are aware of the Administrative Assistance pilot that NRCS and the AISWCD are conducting. It is hoped that we will learn enough from the pilot that we can make a few adjustments and take the program statewide. With that in mind, we would appreciate your response to the questions below as quickly as possible so we can have the surveys back and tabulated prior to the start of the 2015 federal fiscal year.

The purpose of the Administrative Assistance program will be as follows:

1. NRCS staff will have time to plan and provide technical assistance to producers
2. NRCS staff will have more time to market NRCS programs.
3. Funds provided will assist SWCD's bottom line.
4. SWCD staff will become more knowledgeable and able to assist producers with sign up for NRCS programs.
5. Strengthen the bonds between SWCDs and NRCS.

The intent of the Administrative Assistance program is to pay 50% of the cost of a SWCD employee's time to perform contract administration duties. Most of those duties will take from a few minutes up to an hour for more complex contract administration duties. Time requirements will depend largely on the activities required to take contracts from beginning to end and will vary depending on each contract's stage of completion.

Please respond to the following questions:

1. Would your SWCD be interested in participating in a 50/50 contribution agreement for contract administration assistance?
Yes. ____
No. ____
If no, please give your reasons why you would choose not to participate.
2. What kind of payment schedule would you most like to see? (Would you prefer to be paid for each contract administered, would you prefer a flat rate based on projected workload, would you prefer some other payment schedule?)
A. Please state your preference and why you would prefer that payment schedule.

B. How often would you want to be paid?
Quarterly? ____
Every six months? ____
Some other time frame? (Please be specific.) _____
3. If you marked "yes" in question 1, would you be interested in performing contract administration assistance to more than your own SWCD?
Yes. ____
No. ____

If you marked "no" in question 1, would you be okay with someone from another SWCD coming to your office to do contract administrative work?
Yes. ____
No. ____
4. What would you need that you do not have now to perform contract administrative assistance in your SWCD?

Thank you for your response. Please return this form in the envelope provided by September 10, 2014.