

FEATURE –RURAL FLOOD RECOVERY AND DAMAGE PREVENTION

INTRO: U.S. Department of Agriculture programs are helping restore areas hit by this year's storms and floods. And USDA conservation programs already in place before the Spring storms helped prevent even worse damage. The U-S-D-A's Bob Ellison has more. (1:54)

THIS YEAR'S STORMS AND FLOODING CAUSED MAJOR EROSION ACROSS THE MIDWEST. THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE IS IN THE REGION HELPING TO REPAIR DAMAGE TO FARMS AND RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE.

Michael Rodwell, Assistant Engineer for Mahaska County, Iowa: This round of flooding we've got several areas like this. We've got brush debris in box culverts and up against existing bridge barriers.

With the help of the NRCS we're planning on placing some rip rap along the existing banks to help protect the bridge abutments.

THROUGH THE EMERGENCY WATERSHED PROTECTION PROGRAM, OR E-W-P, THE N-R-C-S IS WORKING WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES TO REPAIR FLOOD DAMAGED CONSERVATION PRACTICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE. THIS INCLUDES REMOVING DEBRIS FROM STREAMS, CULVERTS AND BRIDGES, RESHAPING AND PROTECTING ERODED BANKS AND REPAIRING LEVEES.

Jeff Zimprich, USDA NRCS Asst. State Conservationist: It will stabilize its stream bed, stabilize the banks, allow the stream to actually kind of regain a more natural state. It will protect the bridge. It will protect the water supply.

MEANWHILE, OTHER N-R-C-S PROGRAMS HELPED PREVENT WORSE DAMAGE FROM THE FLOODS. FILTER STRIPS N-R-C-S HELPED INSTALL ON THIS IOWA FARM SAVED LAND AND CROPS.

Roger Ide, Union County, Iowa: That was a big help in kind of controlling the flow and keeping things from getting torn up too bad.

Paul Goldsmith, USDA NRCS: Roger has a very nice conservation system in place that does a good job of protecting his soil. That includes the use of no-till farming. The farms that were well protected such as Roger's farm here, they sustained damage because of the heavy rainfall, but they did not sustain near the damage that the farms that were not protected did.

THOSE INTERESTED ABOUT CONSERVATION PRACTICES SHOULD CONTACT THE LOCAL U-S-D-A SERVICE CENTER. FOR THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, I'M BOB ELLISON.