

February 2, 2004

SUBJECT: Conservation Buffer Newsletter Insert/Handout

TO: FSA State Directors
NRCS State Conservationists
FSA County Executive Directors
NRCS District Conservationists

The 2002 farm bill and resulting program rules contain some important changes that make conservation buffers an even more attractive component of the conservation systems needed to solve natural resource management problems on cropland, pasture, and rangeland. The continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP) retains its attractive financial incentives, and several new buffer practices have been added to the program. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), and other programs—all of which can be used by farmers and ranchers to install conservation buffers—are funded at the highest levels ever.

The attached pdf files feature a new information insert/handout (a color version and a black-and-white version) that outlines the potential for use of buffers to achieve many different conservation objectives. We ask that you do three things with this new information piece:

1. Use the piece as a special insert in FSA county committee newsletters.
2. Encourage use of the piece as a special insert in conservation district and RC&D council newsletters.
3. Use either the color version or the black-and-white version as a handout in our service centers, at field days and fair exhibits, etc.

The information insert/handout has numerous other potential uses. For example, it could be used for mailings to absentee landowners, to minority and limited-resource farmers and ranchers, and to other targeted groups of producers and landowners. Agricultural and conservation organizations at state and local levels also might be willing to use the insert in newsletters, direct mailings, or similar venues.

The attached pdf files can be used to reproduce the information handout economically. Limited quantities also can be obtained by calling 1-888-LANDCARE.

/s/

JAMES R. LITTLE
FSA Administrator

/s/

BRUCE I. KNIGHT
NRCS Chief