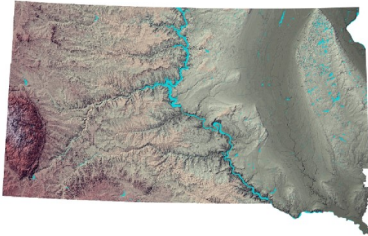


Conservation Implementation Strategies

Improved Winter Water for Lower Brule Reservation



The Conservation Implementation Strategy (CIS) is a new phased-in approach to deliver conservation programs to farmers and ranchers across South Dakota. Funding for CIS comes through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP). Funding and support from other agencies and groups can be leveraged and coordinated to focus on mutual issues of the highest priority.

For more information, go to:
<https://bit.ly/SDNRCS-CIS>

This Project At-A-Glance

Partners

Lower Brule Rural Water System

Funding for this project is provided by the EQIP Program and partners with financial and in-kind contributions.

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Background

The Lower Brule Rural Water System is one of the sponsors of the Mni Wiconi Rural Water Project. The Bureau of Reclamation oversees the Mni Wiconi Rural Water Project which collects data on water usage allocations in the watershed. During the winter season, many ranchers maintain cattle in pastures. To avoid the watering tanks from freezing, some ranchers allow the water supply to run continuously. The result is wasted treated water supply that exceeds the Lower Brule Rural Water System's water allocation.

Resource Concern/s

The primary concern is excessive and wasteful use of a treated surface water supply. Specifically, a surface water depletion concern since water use is not being used in proportion to the available supply. Energy efficiency of equipment and facilities is the other primary concern. Reduction on just six sites would result in a cost savings of approximately \$3,890 just for the month of January.

Goal

This effort will address wasted winter livestock water and wasted energy costs on the entire Mni Wiconi Rural Water System. The reduction in water usage would bring the Lower Brule Rural Water System within their allocation and allow the authorization of additional livestock taps. Additional tap connections will allow greater soil/grass health management options including water taps on cropland.

Desired Results

Documented and metered winter water use will significantly decrease with a potential savings of approximately \$30,000 per year. Adding livestock water to cropland can bring livestock back into the cropland enterprise and improve invertebrate habitat.

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