

RCWP goes to ASCS

FAIRFAX, Va. - After a long debate, the U.S. Senate has given the administration of the Rural Clean Water Program to the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service. This was one of the issues that held up the 1980 budget for the USDA last month.

What has been in debate? The original wording of the bill setting up the RCWP called for the program to be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture and the Administrator of the Soil Conservation Service. Conservation districts were to have the coordination responsibilities at the local level.

What the conferees accepted on October 24th was for the \$50 million conservation program to be carried out by the ASCS. This bill was worded by Jamie Whitten (D-Miss.) who serves as Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee.

The House adopted this bill, along with the \$18.5 billion USDA budget with a vote of 304 to 25.

According to Robert Koch, president of the National Limestone Institute, this shows the support of U.S. Congressmen and Senators for agriculture and conservation, and the agricultural conservation program.

He stated, "In recent years, under both Democratic and Republican Administrations, the Budget Balancers (most of whom have never believed in the

ACP) and those who have wanted to turn the entire ACP over the Soil Conservation Service have formed an unholy alliance to attack the idea of so-called annual practices versus long-term or enduring or permanent practices."

"Nothing is permanent, and all conservation practices contribute to production", added Koch. "ACP was the first EPA-type program the government ever backed, and it certainly did more for Rural Clean Water on millions of farms than any program yet devised."

It was specified in the bill that this would be an experimental rural clean water program. The budget that was accepted was actually \$25 million less than what was proposed by the Senate for the RCWP originally.

The program is designed to provide funds in an effort to have greater participation in the conservation program where it is needed most. Even though there has been an ACP program for years, RCWP is set up to provide conservation programs in those areas that have not made use of the ACP.

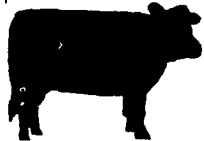
The practices that would be included in the program would be selected by local county committees, to be reviewed and approved by state committees and the Secretary of Agriculture. Conservation districts, State soil and water conservation agencies, or State water quality agencies would be

consulted by the committees for advice and assistance

One problem that Clinton Johnson, Assistant State Conservationist for SCS in Pennsylvania, pointed out was the current \$3500 annual limitation for payment to individual farmers under the ASCS guidelines. If the RCWP would have been handled by conservation districts and SCS, this maximum cost-share would have been raised to \$50,000 annually.

Johnson also stressed that the new legislation agreed to consider the previous applications received before these recent changes. He said that there had been 60 submitted nationwide, with two from Pennsylvania; Tulpehocken Creek watershed, Berks-Lebanon Counties; and, Conestoga Creek watershed, Lancaster County.

Richard Pennay, head of ASCS in Pennsylvania, told LANCASTER FARMING that to date he had not received any policy on RCWP from Washington D.C. He mentioned that he had been in the nation's capitol recently to help in developing a handbook for the program, but other than that he had no information on the experimental program.



Handles energy issues

Grangers support orderly development of nuclear facilities

LANCASTER — A reasonable examination of the energy outlook in America clearly indicates that nuclear power is essential to fill the electrical energy gap in the foreseeable future, said Grange delegates meeting here at the 113th Annual Session of the National Grange.

The Grange supports orderly development of nuclear power generators provided such development meets all reasonable safeguards. The Grange urges the federal government to set the policy, and both the Administration and Congress are asked to provide leadership and support for a safe and positive nuclear program.

Positive action is needed to simplify and shorten nuclear licensing procedures, provide for government processing and storage of nuclear fuel and the disposal of nuclear waste; also to improve safety and design construction and operation of nuclear power facilities, they said.

The Grange also supports a reasonable program for development and commercialization of the breeder reactor.

To relieve America's great dependence on foreign sources of oil, the Grange

calls for legislative and regulatory changes to provide necessary incentives for domestic producers of crude oil and natural gas to increase their production.

The Grange suggests a policy that would include the investment of corporate profits that result from increases in world oil prices into activities which would increase exploration, drilling, producing and recovery of additional domestic energy resources. The Grange also supports the phase-out of price controls on crude oil.

The Grange recommends the discontinuance of the federal allocation system for gasoline and diesel fuel but would retain Presidential authority to provide high-priority users such as agriculture, transporters of agricultural products, home heating and emergency vehicles with the necessary fuel supplies during an emergency.

The Grange supports the exploration and production of off-shore oil and gas investment in refineries by establishing a consistent policy in future pricing of domestic sources of energy. They also recommend opening public lands for oil and gas exploration and call for a way to streamline the application for and construc-

tion of energy facilities in order to cut red tape and overcome regulatory constraints

The Grange supports measures designed to provide economic assistance to low-income persons and those on small, fixed incomes to assist in paying for the high cost of energy.

In the search for practical alternatives to the energy puzzle, the Grange encourages the federal government to provide funds for technology and incentives for rapid increase in the production and distribution of biomass, alcohol, and other synthetic fuels from waste and agricultural products. Grange delegates emphasized that synthetic fuel produced should be of a type that can be used in automobiles and machinery now in existence.

The National Grange urges the federal government to expedite the issuance of permits for the construction of the Northern Tier Pipeline to distribute Alaska crude oil from Port Angeles, Washington, to Clear Brook, Minnesota, thereby shortening the route for crude oil by 5000 miles.



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