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Media Advisory

Wednesday, May 28, 2014

NRCS Launches New Farm Bill Partnership Program

What:

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service Assistant Chief, Kirk Hanlin, will be in Olympia and surrounding area on **Tuesday, June 3**, to publicize the recent announcement of the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), a new Farm Bill program that increases investment in natural resources conservation by connecting USDA funding with that of partners.

Through RCPP, partners propose conservation projects to promote soil sustainability, improve water quality, and protect wildlife and related natural resources on private lands. With participating partners investing along with the Department, USDA's \$1.2 billion in funding over the life of the five-year program will leverage \$2.4 billion for conservation.

The Columbia River Basin, which spans much of Washington, as well as other states, was designated as a Critical Conservation Area by the Secretary of Agriculture. Partners who propose projects there will receive priority funding to help deliver conservation assistance to farmers, ranchers and nonindustrial foresters to voluntary plan and target conservation within selected project areas.

Other partners are expected to offer proposals in the Puget Sound, Yakima Basin, and other areas in Washington.

NRCS will hold a tour and forum where potential partners can connect, participants can learn more about RCPP, and will hear about priority resource concerns NRCS wants to treat in the State of Washington through the program. Partners will meet on a working ranch that is a model for land stewardship and demonstrates successful partnership relations that exist to preserve, protect, and enhance this great state's natural resources.

When and Where:

Tuesday, June 3, 2014

12:30 PM – **Colvin Ranch**, 16816 Old Hwy, 99 SE, Tenino, WA 98589 (Media Event and Farm Tour)

2:30 PM – **US Forest Service Building**, 1835 Black Lake Boulevard, SW, Olympia, WA 98502 (Media Opportunity and Partner Forum)

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