

Applications for funds will be accepted until Aug. 14.

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has funding available for landowners and operators to restore windbreaks. Funds and technical assistance is currently available from NRCS through their Cooperative Conservation Partnership Incentive program.

Windbreaks are one or more rows of trees or shrubs planted to provide shelter from the wind and to protect soil from erosion. They are commonly planted around the edges of fields on farms. If designed properly, windbreaks around a home can reduce the cost of heating and cooling and save energy. Other benefits include providing habitat for wildlife.

According to Nebraska NRCS Forester Constance Miller, several windbreaks in the state have suffered heavy tree loss, and are in need of renovation.

“Windbreaks that were planted to help protect cropland, farmsteads and livestock have suffered heavy tree losses due to dry conditions, disease and age. This program can help landowners reestablish trees and get these windbreaks back to providing protection from the wind and heat in the summer and capturing snow and blocking the cold in the winter,” Miller said.

Interested individuals may file an application at any time, but the ranking of applications on hand to receive funding will begin Aug. 14. The first step is to visit your local NRCS field office and complete an application.

For more information about this and the other conservation programs available through NRCS, visit your local USDA Service Center or www.ne.nrcs.usda.gov.