**RESOLUTION**

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| **SHORT TITLE: 2021-03 Reverse New FSA Emergency Conservation Program Rules on Fencing** |

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| **SPONSOR CD: Okanogan** |

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| **AREA:** 🞏NW 🞏SW ⌧NC 🞏SC 🞏NE 🞏SE |

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| **RESOLUTION TYPE:**  🞏 **Policy**  ⌧ **Position Statement**  🞏 **Recognition**  🞏 **Study** |

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| **RESOLUTION ACTION AGENCY** (check any option that applies):  ⌧ **WACD**  **🞏 WSCC**  **🞏 OTHER STATE AGENCY \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**  **🞏 NRCS**  **⌧ NACD**  **⌧ NON-STATE/FEDERAL PARTNER \_\_USDA-Farm Service Agency\_\_\_\_** |

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| **BACKGROUND/PROBLEM STATEMENT:**  The USDA – Farm Service Agency amended the rules regarding cost-share for fence repair and replacement in their Emergency Conservation Program. Three rule changes are causing considerable problems for producers.  Under new program rules, fences must be completely replaced while formerly producers could repair fences and utilize material that wasn’t damaged by the disaster. Often in fast moving grass fires the lowest one or two wires will be damaged to the point they lose their tensile strength, and they must be replaced. However, upper wires and steel fence posts often receive so little heat their ability to provide appropriate strength qualities remain.  Secondly, the rules no longer allow producers who lease federal or state managed lands to apply for Emergency Conservation Program assistance for projects on the public lands. This means the producer will not be able to utilize their lease after an appropriate post-disaster rest period because public agencies universally require pasture fencing to control grazing animals. Prior to the rule change, producers would be able to get paid a percentage of the cost to replace a public resource because most agencies don’t have the budget to replace these fences when they are damaged or lost due to disasters.  Finally, the rule changes removed the ability of local County Committees to adjust some rules for local conditions or specific to the disaster that occurred. The local committees now have virtually no authority for how to best utilize these programs and customize them, so they do the best for resources and communities that were devastated by disasters. The ability to adapt programs to local needs is pivotal to ensuring communities, particularly underrepresented communities have resources that make the most sense, are the most accessible, and provide the greatest opportunity to rebound from disaster. |

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| **PROPOSED RESOLUTION LANGUAGE:**  WACD and NACD work with the USDA Farm Service Agency to revert the recent Emergency Conservation Program rules to pre-2021 rules, particularly in regards to full replacement of fencing, making public lands eligible for practice installation, and giving local county committees their jurisdiction to adapt the program as needed. |

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| **TYPE OF TEXT OF RESOLUTION** (check all boxes that apply):  🞏 Technical (changes address grammar, punctuation, sentence flow and makes **NO** substantive change(s) to the existing policy.  🞏 Substantive change to existing policy. If in doubt, check the box.  ⌧ New policy. |

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| **IS THERE A BUDGET IMPLICATION TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY?**  ⌧ **NO**  🞏 **YES** (briefly explain): |