

06/13/06 Moran Announces Emergency Grazing Approved for Kansas Counties

MORAN ANNOUNCES EMERGENCY GRAZING APPROVED FOR KANSAS COUNTIES

Continues Fight for Drought Assistance for Kansas Producers

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran today announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has approved a Kansas Farm Service Agency request for early emergency grazing of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres in 31 Kansas counties. Lack of moisture during the winter and spring has led to significant forage shortages.

"This is a timely announcement and is good news for Kansas livestock producers," Moran said. "The early release of these CRP acres is a positive step that will help alleviate some of the problems our farmers and ranchers are facing. However, more must be done. Congress must address overall disaster assistance for areas of the country that are suffering from drought."

The drought in Kansas is extending into its fifth and sixth years. In 2005 alone, all but four counties in Kansas were declared disaster areas. Though some disaster assistance was provided in the conference report of the Emergency Supplemental, it is targeted only to producers in hurricane-devastated areas. Yesterday, Moran spoke to the House of Representatives about the effects of the multiple-year drought on farmers in the Midwest and advocated that Congress pass disaster assistance this year for areas of the country suffering from drought and other natural disasters.

"An act of God is an act of God," Moran said. "It is one thing to deny farmers across the country assistance, but to pick and choose which farmers receive assistance is unacceptable. The inadequate moisture in the Midwest accounts for no less damage than that experienced by farmers in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama."

Moran continued the fight for drought assistance in Kansas by sponsoring the Natural Disaster Relief Act to provide assistance to agricultural producers for crop and livestock losses resulting from recent, catastrophic natural disasters.

The 31 counties approved for emergency grazing of CRP acreage are Cheyenne, Clark, Comanche, Decatur, Edwards, Ellis, Ellsworth, Finney, Gove, Graham, Grant, Gray, Greeley, Hamilton, Haskell, Kearny, Lane, Lincoln, Logan, Meade, Morton, Ness, Osborne, Rawlins, Rush, Russell, Seward, Stanton, Stevens, Thomas and Trego. According to the Kansas FSA office, additional counties may be reconsidered when additional documentation is submitted.

Moran is a senior member of the House Committee on Agriculture.

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