Ag Registry and Grants Program:

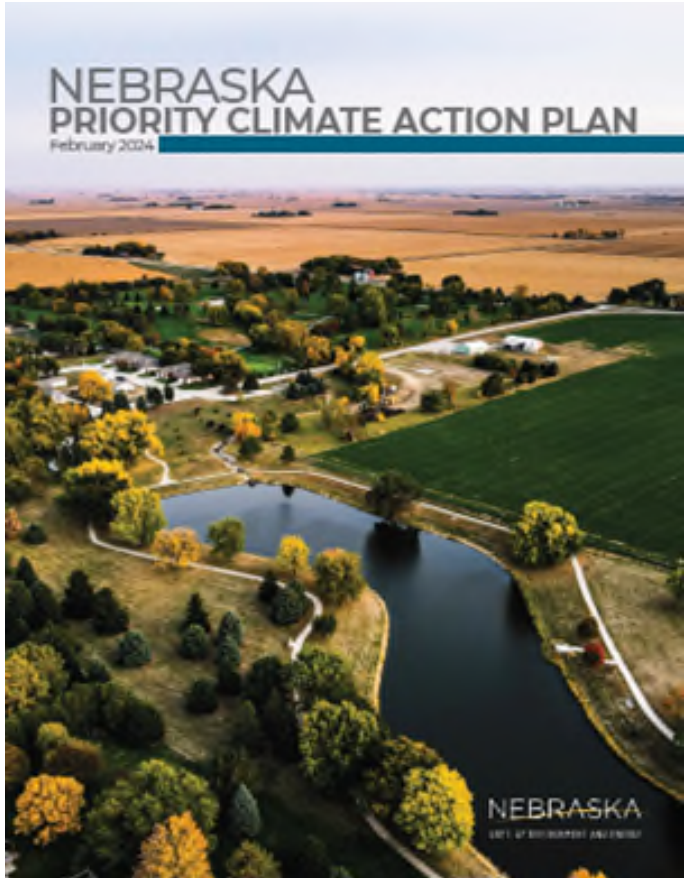
Task Force Oversight

NEBRASKA
DEPT. OF WATER, ENERGY, AND ENVIRONMENT

Agenda

- Background on ONE RED
- Ag Registry and Grants Program Overview
  - Carbon Intensity Registry
  - Regenerative Agriculture Grants
  - Precision Agriculture Grants
- Task Force Role, Expectations, and Timeframe

Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program (CPRG)



A CPRG planning grant funded the development of Nebraska's Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP) in 2023.

The plan identified 12 ***voluntary, incentive-based measures*** to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions throughout the state.

In October of 2024, the Department was awarded a $307 million implementation grant to fund eight programs drawn from Nebraska's PCAP.

ONE RED Program Categories

DWEE

People, Soil, and Nitrogen Work

- Nebraska Strategic Ag Coalition (NSAC)
- Nebraska Conservation Mentorship Network
- Nitrogen Reduction Incentive Act (NiRIA) Program
- Nebraska Soil Health Coalition (NSHC)
- Numerous field and networking events for Nebraska producers

Ag Registry and Grants Program

Aims to support Nebraska's Ag producers in adopting regenerative ag practices and precision ag technologies

Goals:

- Enhance farm sustainability by building soil health and reducing input costs
- Reduce nitrate
- Reduce emissions

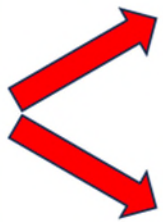
Three-Pronged Approach

Carbon Intensity Registry	$60M
Regenerative Agriculture	$17M
Precision Agriculture	$70M

CI as a Proxy for Economic and Environmental Outcomes

Lower CI Scores driven by:

- **Yield**
- **Efficient Nitrogen Utilization**
  - Lower Use
  - More efficient use
- **Soil Carbon Sequestration**
  - Reduced Tillage
  - Cover Crop Use
  - Manure or Compost Use



Potential <u>Economic Outcomes</u>

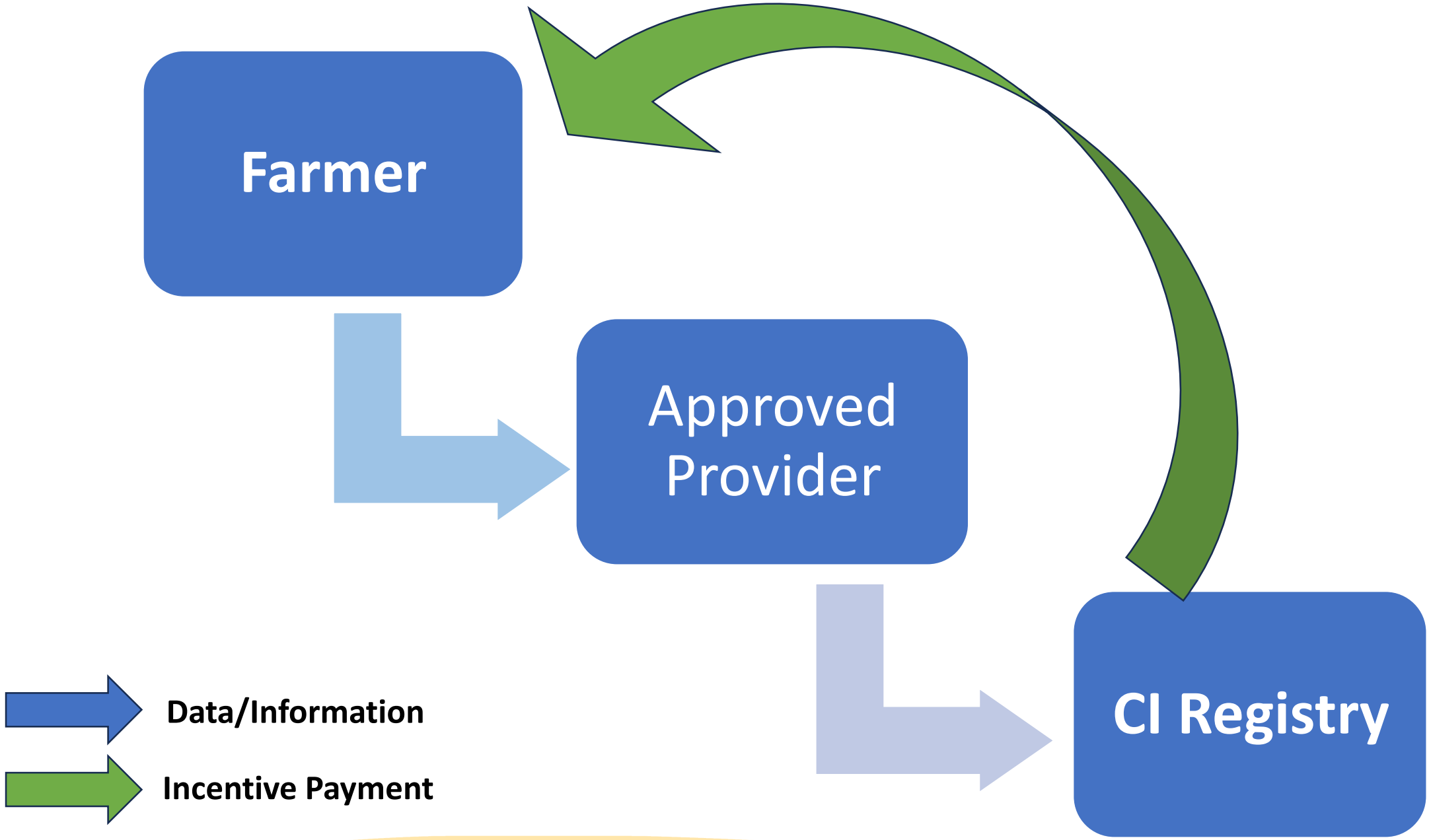
- Reduced input costs
- Soil and crop resilience – economic stability
- Access to additional markets and premiums
- Data as a second cash crop

Potential <u>Environmental Outcomes</u>

- Reduced nitrates in groundwater
- Reduced soil & nutrient loss to erosion
- More efficient water use
- Improved crop resiliency to biotic/abiotic stress

Carbon Intensity (CI) Registry ($60M)

- Carbon intensity is a measure of the amount of GHG emissions resulting from a process.
- The CI score for a crop is calculated by an Ag consultant based on inputs and practices
- The Registry will initially pay farmers to submit their CI score
- Ethanol producers will be seeking low-CI feedstocks to take advantage of the West Coast market and any federal tax credits
- The CI Score registry will provide growers with an established performance metric to track the impact of sustainable farming practices and gain premium pricing for their crops


Farmer
Approved Provider
CI Registry
Data/Information
Incentive Payment

Input Variables for CI Calculation

- Field size
- Crop yield
- Fuel and energy usage
- Fertilizer/chemical use
- Management practices (e.g., tillage, manure, cover crops)
- Soil organic carbon

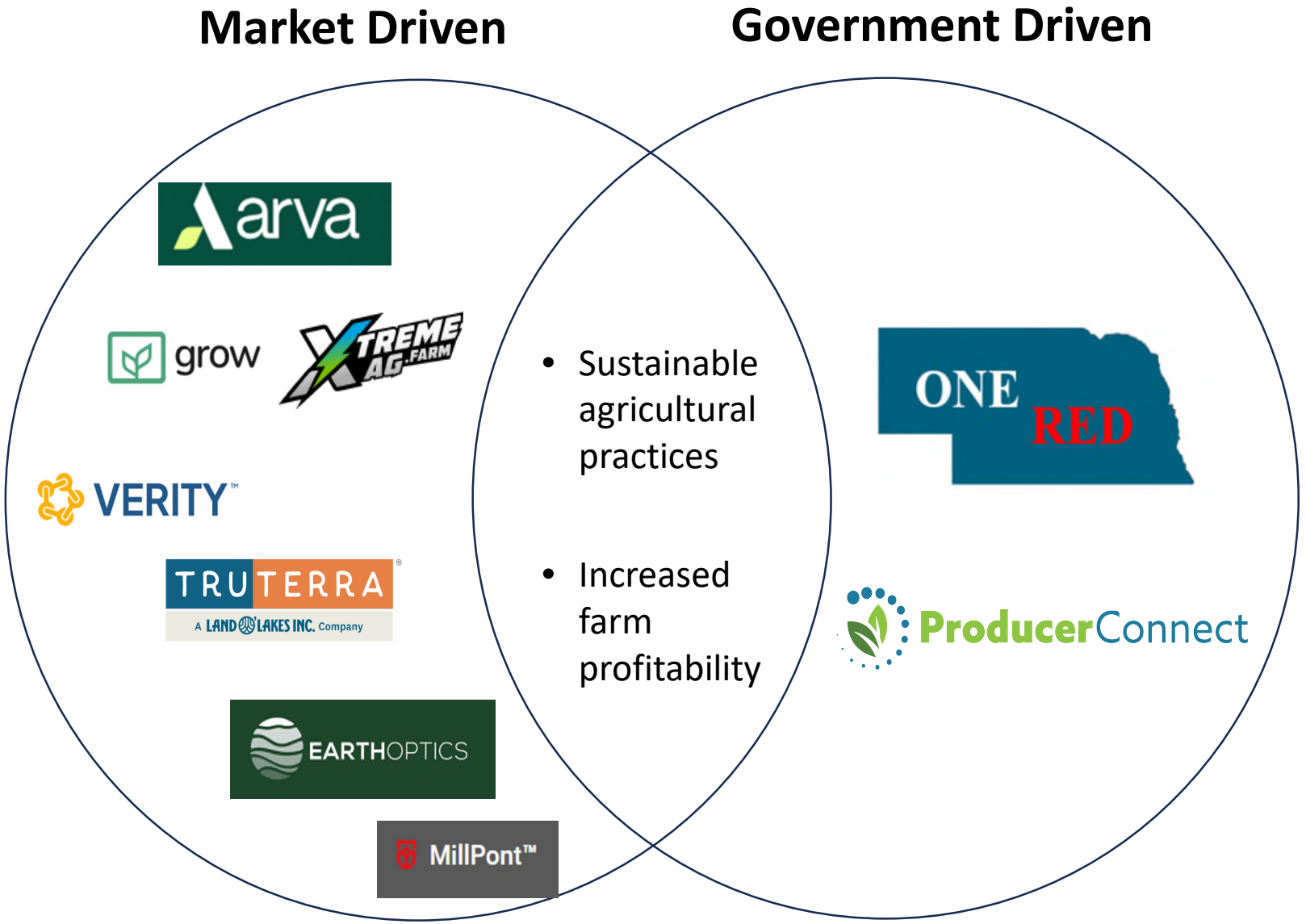
Registry

- **Independent Design & Operation**:
  The Registry will be designed and operated by an independent software vendor, selected in collaboration with DWEE and our partners.
- **Security & Isolation**:
  The system will be both physically and digitally isolated to ensure a high level of security and data protection.
- **Approved Third-Party Providers**:
  Producers will have the option to work with approved third-party providers to gather the environmental data required to calculate their carbon intensity (CI) scores.
- **Data Privacy & Security**:
  All approved providers will be held to strict standards for maintaining data privacy and security before and during the submission of data to the Registry.

Data Collection

Outputs/ Performance Measures	Outcomes / Projected Environmental or Programmatic Improvement
• # of farms logging original CI score • # of farms logging subsequent scores • # of acres represented in Registry per year • # of bushels recorded in Registry per year • Change in CI Scores within and across operations • # of operations applying/receiving grants • Total amount of grants/year • Geographic diversity of CI scores and grants • Participation rate of small/medium farms	Reduced CI of corn and soybeans Reduction in metric tons CO2e Higher profits for small/medium farms

Invested agricultural GHG reductions



Grant Programs

Regenerative Ag Grant Program

Precision Ag Grant Program

Regenerative Agriculture Grant Program ($17M)

Full or Cost-share funds to implement Regen Practices

Potential Eligible Equipment/Programs:

Equipment

- Roller-Crimper Systems
- No-till Drill and Strip-till Equipment
- Cover Crop Seeders and Interseeders

Programs

- NiRia
- Community-Based Programs to encourage adoption

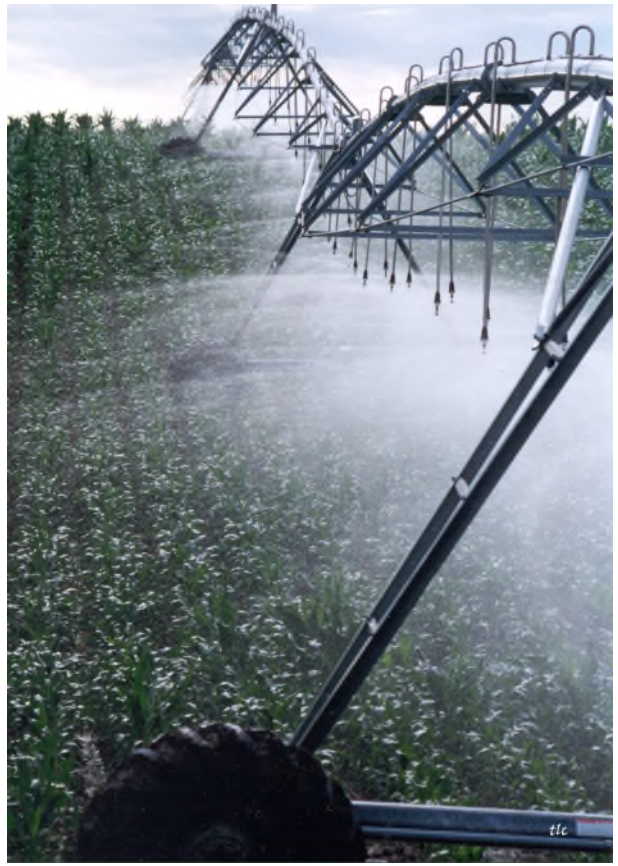
Nutrient Management Plans

Precision Agriculture Grant Program ($70 M)

Full or Cost-share funds for Precision Ag Practices

Potential Eligible Equipment:

- Subscription Costs for Crop Management Systems
- In-ground sensors
- Remote Sensing Services
- Variable Rate Technology
- Water Management and Irrigation Systems
- Fertigation Systems
- Other Precision Agriculture Equipment



How the Grant Programs Will Work

DWEE and Task Force Determine Eligibility Requirements

- Identify/prioritize programs, practices, equipment types

Application Process

- Once Launched, application open to farmers, co-ops, eligible entities
- Proposal to include:
  - Description of precision/regenerative ag projects
  - Requested technologies/practices
  - Demonstrate how the application aligns with their farm management plan.

Awardees must:

- Every grant awarded will require a carbon intensity score for the impacted crops/fields to be registered (Base-line and annually for the grant period)

Role of the Task Force (TF)

The Ag Registry and Grants Program TF will serve as a strategic advisory body.

It will function as a sounding board to ensure effective coordination and implementation of the program's three core strategies:

1) Establish a Carbon Intensity (CI) Score Registry

2) Regenerative Agriculture Grants

3) Precision Agriculture Grants

Task Force Ask

- Identifying Eligible Practices
  - Define and periodically review criteria for regenerative and precision ag practices eligible for grants.
- Aligning Policy
  - Coordinate with local, state, and federal policies to ensure consistency and maximize impact.
- Providing feedback and input on the various components of the program
  - CI Registry
  - Data Security - ensure transparency and farmer trust in data handling.

Timeline and Milestones

- Time Commitment:
  - Monthly Meetings or in alignment with other subcommittee meetings.
  - Quarterly afterwards until completion of the Grant in 2029.
- Ag Registry and Grants Program Timeline and Milestones
  - 2025-2026: Finalize registry criteria, develop grant framework, initial outreach
  - 2026–2028: Full program rollout, monitor adoption and impact, refine incentives
  - 2029: Sunset of ONE RED Task Force; delivery of final recommendations and program review

Further Information

ONE RED — *Opportunity for Nebraska: Reducing Emissions & Decarbonization*

Program website: http://dee.ne.gov/ndeqprog.nsf/onweb/cprg

The ONE RED portion of the Department website includes several pages:

- Program home page
- Priority Climate Action Plan
- Comprehensive Action Plan
- Implementation Grant
- Contact Information

Check the website frequently for information as plans & programs develop.

ONE RED

Opportunity for Nebraska:
Reducing Emissions & Decarbonization

Sarah Starostka

402-471-4371

Sarah.Starostka@Nebraska.gov

DWEE.ONERED@nebraska.gov