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**NATIONAL**



**C-FAR**

**THE NATIONAL COALITION FOR  
FOOD & AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH**

**Program:**

**LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION!**

*“Putting Buffers in Their Place”*

July 30, 2012

# **PROGRAM**

## *Welcome and Introduction*

PAUL MINEHART  
NATIONAL C-FAR REPRESENTATIVE

## *Distinguished Speaker*

DR. MIKE DOSSKEY  
U.S. FOREST SERVICE  
NATIONAL AGROFORESTRY CENTER  
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

## *Open Forum*

## *Closing*

PAUL MINEHART

NATIONAL C-FAR IS a nonprofit, nonpartisan, consensus-based and customer-led coalition that brings food, agriculture, nutrition, conservation and natural resource stakeholders together with the food and agriculture research and extension community, serving as a forum and a unified voice in support of sustaining and increasing public investment at the national level in food and agricultural research, extension, and education. For additional information, go to [www.ncfar.org](http://www.ncfar.org); or contact Tom Van Arsdall, Executive Director, at [tom@vanarsdall.com](mailto:tom@vanarsdall.com).

## ABSTRACT

Realizing the potential for vegetative buffers to improve water quality requires that they be put in the right places. Planning tools are being developed that will enable conservationists to easily identify the right places and ensure their effectiveness. Vegetative buffers are strips of grass and trees designed into agriculture landscapes to improve drinking water quality and aquatic health by trapping sediment and farm chemicals from runoff before they get into streams. They are easy to install and manage, and they are a popular component of CRP and EQIP incentive programs administered by USDA. These programs have long employed a simple model of targeting downhill side(s) of agricultural fields and along stream courses. Recent studies, however, are showing that some of these locations are much better than others for getting solid conservation returns. New tools are enabling more precise discernment of pollutant sources, runoff pathways, and buffering capabilities across landscapes. These new tools capitalize on GIS and widespread availability of spatial data on land uses, stream networks, soil properties, and topography for identifying where the right combination of conditions exist to achieve disproportionately greater impact from vegetative buffers. Furthermore, the simplicity of these tools facilitates their widespread use by field professionals. By guiding conservationists toward higher-impact locations and away from less-promising ones, the use of these new tools may substantially improve the cost-effectiveness of vegetative buffers and water quality improvement programs.

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## SPEAKER BIOGRAPHY

**Mike Dosskey, Ph.D.** is a US Forest Service research scientist with the USDA National Agroforestry Center located on the campus of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Mike has been researching for 15 yrs on how vegetative buffer practices, like riparian forest buffers and filter strips, function to improve water quality in agricultural landscapes and on translating that knowledge into planning and design tools that promote more effective application of these practices. Prior to the US Forest Service, Mike conducted environmental pollution and remediation research at the USDOE Savannah River Site nuclear reservation in South Carolina. Mike has a Ph.D. in Agriculture and Soil Science, B.S. and M.S. in Forestry, and has broad interests in environmental restoration and land planning for ecosystem services.



## **SEMINAR SERIES DESCRIPTION**

National C-FAR's Seminar Series regularly presents leading-edge researchers to address pressing issues confronting the public and Congress. National C-FAR and the Seminar Series serve as a resource to policymakers and all congressional staff.

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