



Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program – Delaware

OVERVIEW

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), and the state of Delaware are partners in implementing a voluntary Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) to improve the water quality of certain streams and increase wildlife habitat.

This voluntary program encourages farmers to enroll in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) in contracts of 10- to 15-years duration to remove lands from agricultural production. CRP is a CCC program implemented through FSA.

Project areas are the coastal plains in the Chesapeake, Delaware and Inland Bay basins.

PROGRAM GOALS

Delaware CREP goals are to:

- Reduce nutrient and sediment loadings in impaired streams;
- Improve water temperature and levels of dissolved oxygen, which are necessary to support biology and wildlife and;
- Increase upland wildlife habitat and create wildlife corridors.

ELIGIBLE PRACTICES

The Delaware CREP is authorized to enroll up to 10,000 acres devoted to the following CRP practices:

- Hardwood Trees (CP3A)
- Wildlife Habitat (CP4D)
- Shallow Water Areas for Wildlife (CP9)
- Grass Filter Strips (CP21)
- Riparian Buffers (CP22)
- Wetland Restoration (CP23)
- Wetland Restoration Non-Flood Plain (CP23A)

Placement of practices, excluding CP9, must adjoin impaired streams or contributing drainage ditches in designated project areas.

PAYMENTS AND INCENTIVES

CCC will pay 50 percent of the reimbursable costs of establishing conservation practices. The state of Delaware will pay an additional 37.5 percent.

Annual rental payments will be based on the soil rental rate as calculated by FSA.

The base rental payments will be enhanced by incentive payments made by CCC and the state of Delaware as percentages of the soil rental value, equal to the following:

1. An additional 130 percent incentive for land established to riparian buffers, hardwood trees and wetland restoration, not to exceed \$225 per acre. For these practices FSA contributes 73 percent of the additional incentive and Delaware contributes the other 27 percent of the additional incentive, OR
2. An additional 50 percent for land established to wildlife habitat, grassed filter strips and shallow water areas, not to exceed \$165 per acre. For these practices FSA contributes 64 percent of the additional incentive and Delaware contributes the other 36 percent of the additional incentive.

The state's cost-share and incentive payment will be calculated for the length of the contract and paid in its first year.

ELIGIBILITY

CREP applications must satisfy the basic eligibility criteria for CRP.

Participants must agree to establish and maintain eligible practices under a 10- to 15-year contract.

Land must have been cropped four of the previous six years (2008-2013) and be physically and legally capable of being cropped. Marginal pastureland is also eligible provided it is suitable for use as a riparian buffer planted to trees.

SIGN-UP INFORMATION

CREP enrollment began June 7, 1999, and operates on a continuous year-round basis. Interested parties are encouraged to contact the nearest USDA Service Center. The telephone number for each Delaware Service Center is:

- Kent County - (302) 741-2600 Ext 2
- New Castle County - (302) 832-3100 Ext 2
- Sussex County - (302) 856-3990 Ext 2

MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the Delaware CREP, contact your local USDA Service Center, Farm Service Agency (FSA) office, or Soil and Water Conservation District office.

Additional information is also available on FSA's web site at www.fsa.usda.gov

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