



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

MAY 15 2000

Protecting our Nation's Natural Resources for Future Generations

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is the Department of Agriculture's largest conservation program. With today's announcement, the Department will ensure that over 33 million acres of environmental sensitive and fragile lands will be placed into grass and trees that will improve the soil, water, and wildlife resources of our Nation.

CRP provides income to producers who voluntarily practice sound resource stewardship on these lands. Society benefits through improved water quality, safer drinking water supplies, enhanced wildlife, improved air quality, and improved soil resources. CRP continues to be one of the most cost effective means to achieve a multitude of conservation benefits.

Recently, I announced USDA's major commitment to protect the most environmentally important lands. We announced a number of changes to enhance the financial package to enroll filter strips, riparian buffers, grassed waterway, field windbreaks, and other continuous signup practices. These bands of grass and trees next to our streams and rivers are vital for ensuring a safe water supply and we will make every effort possible to work with producers to voluntarily protect these lands.

The Farm Service Agency works with State partners to address high priority resource concerns through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). Vice President Al Gore recently announced our CREP effort to further protect Lake Erie, and I signed agreements in Pennsylvania and Virginia to enroll high priority lands along streams and rivers to protect the Chesapeake Bay.

The CRP has been and will continue to be a vital tool in protecting resources on private land for this and future generations. I am very proud of the effort that producers and USDA have made to protect our Nation's resources.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dan Glickman", written over a horizontal line.

DAN GLICKMAN
Secretary