



### Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program – North Central Iowa

---

#### OVERVIEW

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the State of Iowa are partners in implementing a voluntary Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) to enroll up to 9,000 acres of agricultural land in Boone, Buena Vista, Butler, Calhoun, Carroll, Cerro Gordo, Cherokee, Clay, Dallas, Dickinson, Emmet, Floyd, Franklin, Greene, Grundy, Guthrie, Hamilton, Hancock, Hardin, Humboldt, Jasper, Kossuth, Madison, Marshall, Mitchell, O'Brien, Osceola, Palo Alto, Pocahontas, Polk, Sac, Story, Warren, Webster, Winnebago, Worth and Wright counties. The North Central Iowa CREP is intended to improve water quality, reduce soil erosion, reduce the amount of sediment, phosphorous and other pollutants entering waterbodies, improve wildlife habitat and restore wetlands.

#### BACKGROUND

CREP is part of the USDA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). CRP is a federally funded voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive agricultural land is not farmed or ranched, but instead used for conservation benefits. CRP participants establish permanent, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees (known as “covers”) to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat. In return, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. CRP is authorized by the Food Security Act of 1985 and was reauthorized by the Agricultural act of 2014.

With CREP, high-priority conservation goals are identified by the state, and then federal funds are supplemented with non-federal funds to achieve those goals.

Through the North Central Iowa CREP, federal and state resources are made available to program participants to voluntarily enroll in CRP

for 14-year to 15-year contracts. Participants remove cropland and marginal pastureland from agricultural production and convert the land to native grasses, trees and other vegetation or restore wetlands. This will improve water quality by reducing sediment, nutrients, nitrogen and other pollutants from entering streams and rivers, including the Lake Panorama Watershed, and enhance wildlife habitat in the area. It will also reduce water treatment costs for the city of Des Moines.

#### GOALS

The goals of the North Central Iowa CREP are to:

- Reduce the amount of sediment, nutrients, nitrogen and other pollutants entering waterbodies;
- Reduce soil erosion;
- Improve water quality through wetland restoration;
- Enhance wildlife habitat, including aquatic wildlife; and
- Increase recreational opportunities.

#### ELIGIBLE CONSERVATION PRACTICES

The following specific CRP conservation practices are available:

- CP21, Filter Strips;
- CP22, Riparian Buffer; and
- CP23, Wetland Restoration.

#### ENROLLMENT AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Enrollment for the North Central Iowa CREP is on a continuous basis. To be eligible, land must be located in the project area and be either cropland or marginal pastureland. Cropland must meet cropping history criteria and be physically and legally capable of being planted in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity. Marginal

pastureland is also eligible for enrollment provided it is suitable for use as an eligible riparian buffer.

## **PAYMENTS**

Under the North Central Iowa CREP, eligible participants may receive the following payments:

- A one-time signing incentive payment (SIP) of \$100 per acre for installing practices CP21 and CP22. Example: 10 acres enrolled to be devoted to practice CP22 result in a \$1,000 (10 acres x \$100) SIP. This payment is made soon after the contract has been signed and approved.
- A one-time practice incentive payment (PIP) for installing practice CP21, CP22 or CP23. The PIP is equal to 40 percent of eligible cost of installing the practice. Example: Producer's total eligible cost of installing the practice is \$2,000. The PIP would be \$800 ( $\$2,000 \times .40$ ).
- An annual rental payment consisting of:
  - o A base soil rental rate, determined by the three predominant soils of the land offered;
  - o An incentive payment, as a percentage of the base soil rental rate, of 50 percent for CP23 and 40 percent for CP21 and CP22; and
  - o A maintenance payment, determined by the practice offered.
- A cost-share payment of up to 50 percent of the eligible cost to install the approved practice.

In addition, the State of Iowa provides the following payments for installing practice CP23:

- A one-time lump-sum incentive payment based on a formula that considers land values, landowner time investment and the discounted value of the annual base rental payment of the CRP contract.
- A cost-share payment of 10 percent of the eligible cost to install the approved practice.

## **EXAMPLES**

A Butler County producer elects to enroll 10 acres of land to be devoted to a riparian buffer (practice CP22) in a 15-year contract. The base soil rental rate for the land is \$249 per acre. The incentive

payment is \$100 per acre ( $\$249 \times .40$ ). The annual maintenance payment is \$10 per acre. The producer's annual rental rate will be \$359 per acre ( $\$249 + \$100 + \$10$ ), for a total annual payment of \$3,590 ( $\$359 \times 10$  acres). In addition, the producer will receive a one-time SIP of \$1,000. The producer will receive cost-share payments equal to 50 percent of the eligible reimbursable costs to install the riparian buffer, plus a one-time PIP equal to 40 percent of the eligible reimbursable costs to install the riparian buffer. The producer will receive \$53,850 in annual rental payments over the 15-year term of the CRP contract.

A Boone County producer elects to enroll 15 acres of land to be devoted to a restored wetland (practice CP23) in a 15-year contract. The base soil rental rate for the land is \$256 per acre. The incentive payment is \$128 per acre ( $\$256 \times .50$ ). The producer's annual rental rate will be \$384 per acre ( $\$256 + \$128$ ) for a total annual payment of \$5,760 ( $\$384 \times 15$  acres). The producer will receive cost-share payments equal to 50 percent of the eligible reimbursable costs to install the restored wetland, plus a one-time PIP equal to 40 percent of the eligible reimbursable costs to install the restored wetland, plus cost-share payments from the State of Iowa equal to 10 percent of the eligible reimbursable costs. This results in the producer having no cost to install the practice. The producer will receive \$86,400 in annual rental payments over the 15-year term of the CRP contract, plus the producer will receive a one-time lump-sum payment from the State of Iowa based on the land value, producer's time investment and discounted value of the annual base rental payment of the CRP contract.

**Note:** The preceding are examples only.

## **ENROLLMENT OPTIONS**

CREP is another option under CRP that farmers and ranchers may select to enhance their land. Eligible producers may still enroll land in CRP through general or continuous signup; however, the North Central Iowa CREP provides additional benefits not available through general and/or continuous signup. Under the North Central Iowa CREP, producers receive higher incentive

# FACT SHEET

## CREP - North Central Iowa

January 2017

payments and longer contract lengths that increase the total amount of rental payments received.

### HAYING AND GRAZING

Haying and grazing are not allowed during the CRP contract period unless authorized by USDA. Contact your local FSA office for more information about authorized haying and grazing activities.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

This fact sheet is provided for informational purposes only; other restrictions or requirements may apply. For more information on CREP, contact your local FSA office. To find your local FSA county office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>. To learn more about FSA conservation programs, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation).

---

*In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.*

*Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.*

*To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:*

- 1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;*
- 2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or*
- 3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).*

*USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.*