

Oregon's Riparian Enhancement Initiative

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)



Overview

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the State of Oregon are partners in implementing a voluntary Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) to enroll up to 100,000 acres of agricultural land, located along any of the following: streams inhabited by fish listed under Federal law as threatened or endangered species; streams where Agricultural Water Quality Management Plans have been developed, or streams on reservation or tribal lands. The purpose of Oregon's Riparian Enhancement Initiative CREP is to restore 100 percent of the area enrolled for the riparian forest buffer practice to a properly functioning condition in terms of distribution and growth of woody plant species, filtration of nutrients and sediment from agricultural runoff, shade, and stabilization of stream banks under normal non-flood conditions. In addition, Oregon's Riparian Enhancement CREP provides a way for farmers and ranchers to voluntarily meet the water quality requirements established under federal law and under Oregon's agricultural water quality laws.

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.

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 Oregon's Riparian Enhancement CREP, federal and state resources are made available to program participants to voluntarily enroll in CRP for 10 to 15-year contracts. Participants remove cropland and marginal pastureland from agricultural production and convert the land to grasses, trees, or other approved vegetation. This will improve water quality by reducing sediment, nutrients, nitrogen, and other pollutants from entering streams and rivers, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat in the area.

Goals

The goals of Oregon's Riparian Enhancement CREP include:

- Enrollment of 100,000 acres in the Oregon CREP.
- Restoration of up to 5,000 acres of wetlands on cropland or marginal pastureland, which are either hydrologically connected to eligible streams or located in coastal estuaries.
- Targeted annual enrollment in Coastal Basins, Columbia Basin, and Interior Drainages.

Eligible Conservation Practices

The following specific CRP conservation practices are available:

- CP21, Filter Strips
- CP22, Riparian Buffer Strips
- CP23, Wetland Restoration
- CP29, Marginal Pastureland Wildlife Habitat Buffer
- CP30, Marginal Pastureland Wetland Buffer

For More Information

For more information on this project, contact your local service center and USDA Farm Service Agency office: farmers.gov/service-locator.

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This fact sheet is provided for informational purposes only; other restrictions or requirements may apply.



Enrollment and Eligibility Requirements

Enrollment in CRP through Oregon's Riparian Enhancement CREP is on a continuous basis. To be eligible, land must be located in Oregon. Land must be either cropland or marginal pastureland and must be located along an eligible stream that contains either fish listed as threatened or endangered under federal law, be located along streams where Agricultural Water Quality Management Plans have been development pursuant to Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 568.930 to 568.933, or be streams on reservation or tribal trust lands. Cropland must meet cropping history criteria according to current FSA National CRP Directives and be physically and legally capable of being planted in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity.

Payments

Under Oregon's Riparian Enhancement CREP, eligible participants may receive the following payments:

- A one-time signing incentive payment (SIP) is paid for land as follows: \$10 times the number of contract acres times 10 for CP21, CP22, CP23, CP29, and CP30 practices.
- A one-time practice incentive payment (PIP) equal to 40 percent of eligible reimbursable costs incurred for installation of CP21, CP22, CP23, CP29, and CP30 practices.
- An annual rental payment consisting of:
 - ◇ A base soil rental rate, determined by the soils of the land offered
 - ◇ An incentive payment as a percentage of the base soil rental rate as follows, except for land enrolled or re-enrolled under infeasible-to-farm provisions:
 - » 50 percent for land established as CP22, CP23, CP29, and CP30
 - » 25 percent for land established as CP21
 - ◇ A maintenance incentive payment for CP21, CP22, CP23, CP29, and CP30 practices in accordance with FSA National CRP Directives
- A cost-share payment of up to 50 percent of the eligible cost to install the approved practice.
- A Cumulative Impact Bonus (CIB) incentive payment where a total of 50 percent of the stream bank within a 5-mile stream segment is enrolled in CRP under CREP.

The payment will be a one-time incentive payment and shall equal four times the applicable base year rental rate for each acre enrolled.

In addition, the State of Oregon will provide eligible participants a cost-share payment of up to 25 percent of the practice installation cost and will provide both technical assistance and conservation planning assistance for Oregon's Riparian Enhancement CREP.

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 Oregon's Riparian Enhancement CREP provides additional benefits not available through general and/or continuous signup. Under the Oregon's Riparian Enhancement CREP, producers receive higher incentive payments and longer contract lengths that increase the total amount of rental payments received.

Haying and Grazing

Contact your local FSA office for more information about authorized haying and grazing activities.