

# Wisconsin

## Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)



### Overview

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the State of Wisconsin are partners in implementing a voluntary Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) to enroll up to 100,000 acres of agricultural land in designated Lake Superior, Riparian, Northern Grassland, and Southern Grassland project areas. The purpose of the Wisconsin CREP is to improve water quality, reduce soil erosion, reduce the amount of sediment, phosphorous and other pollutants entering waterbodies and improve wildlife habitat through the establishment of riparian buffers, native and other grasses, grass waterways and the restoration of 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.

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 Wisconsin 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 grasses, trees, or other approved vegetation or restore wetlands. This will improve water quality by reducing sediment, nutrients, nitrogen and other pollutants from entering streams and rivers, and enhance wildlife habitat in the area.

### Goals

The goals of the Wisconsin CREP include:

- Reduce sediment, phosphorus, nitrogen and other pollutants entering streams and other waterbodies;
- Restore and protect wetlands; and
- Improve wildlife habitat for grassland birds and other wildlife.

### Eligible Conservation Practices

The following specific CRP conservation practices are available:

- CP1, Establishment of Permanent Introduced Grasses and Legumes\*
- CP2, Establishment of Permanent Native Grasses\*
- CP8A, Grass Waterways
- CP21, Filter Strips
- CP22, Riparian Buffer
- CP23, Wetland Restoration
- CP23A, Wetland Restoration, Non-Floodplain
- CP25, Rare and Declining Habitat
- CP29, Marginal Pastureland Wildlife Habitat Buffer
- CP30, Marginal Pastureland Wetland Buffer

\*Practices eligible in the Southern Grassland and Northern Grassland project areas only

### For More Info

CREP is one option under CRP that farmers and ranchers may select to enhance their land. Eligible producers may also enroll land in CRP through the general, continuous, or grassland signups; however, CREP may provide additional benefits not available through those signup types such as higher incentive payments and longer contract lengths that increase the total amount of rental payments received.

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

#### Wisconsin State Office

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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 the Wisconsin CREP is on a continuous basis. To be eligible, land must be located in an eligible project area and be either cropland or marginal pastureland. Land 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 a riparian buffer planted to trees.

- In the Riparian and Lake Superior project area, eligible lands within 150 feet of an eligible stream or water body may be enrolled.
- In the Northern Grassland project area, eligible land within 1000 feet of an eligible stream or water body may be enrolled. Up to 5,000 acres may be enrolled.
- In the Southern Grassland project area, highly erodible lands, as determined by FSA, within 1000 feet of an eligible stream or water body may be enrolled. Up to 10,000 acres may be enrolled.

Participants must enter into a perpetual easement or an agreement for the term of the CRP contract. The perpetual easement and agreement are between the participant and the State of Wisconsin.

## Payments

Under the Wisconsin CREP, eligible participants may receive the following payments:

- A one-time signing incentive payment (SIP) equal to \$100 per acre is paid in accordance with FSA National CRP Directives for land enrolled in CP8A, CP21, and CP22.
- A one-time practice incentive payment (PIP) equal to 40% percent of eligible reimbursable costs incurred for installation of CP8A, CP21, CP22.
- An annual rental payment consisting of:
  - ◊ A base soil rental rate, determined by the soils of the land offered
  - ◊ An incentive payment equal to the practice according to the table below, except for land enrolled or re-enrolled under infeasible-to-farm provisions:

Practice	Land Location	Incentive
CP1, CP2, CP8A, CP21, CP22, and CP29	Grassland and Riparian Project Area	35 Percent
CP23, CP23A, and CP25		60 Percent
CP8A, CP21, CP22, CP23, CP23A, CP29, and CP30	Lake Superior Basin Project Area	85 Percent

- ◊ A maintenance incentive payment for certain CP21, CP22, 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.

In addition, the State of Wisconsin provides the following payments:

- An incentive payment in an amount equal to 20 percent of the eligible reimbursable cost of installing the approved practice.
- For land enrolled in the state's perpetual easement, a one-time



payment equal to:

- ◇ 12 times the CRP base soil rental rate times the number of acres enrolled for land located in the grassland and riparian project areas; and
- ◇ 24 times the CRP base soil rental rate times the number of acres enrolled for land located in the Lake Superior project area.

- For land enrolled in the state’s agreement program, a one-time payment equal to:
  - ◇ 1.5 times the CRP base soil rental rate times the number of acres enrolled for land located in the grassland and riparian project areas; and
  - ◇ 2.5 times the CRP base soil rental rate times the number of acres enrolled for land located in the Lake Superior project area.

### 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 Wisconsin CREP provides additional benefits not available through general and/or continuous signup. Under the Wisconsin 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.

