



Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program - Delaware

OVERVIEW

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), and the state of Delaware have agreed to implement 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 Bays basin areas.

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); and
- Wetland Restoration Non-Flood Plain (CP23A).

Placement of practices 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:

- 195 percent of the county rental rate for land established to riparian buffers, hardwood trees and wetland restorations, not to exceed \$150 per acre, plus a maintenance payment; or
- 132 percent of the county rental rate for land established to wildlife habitat, grassed filter strips and shallow water areas, not to exceed \$110 per acre, plus a maintenance payment.

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 the CRP.

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

Land must have been cropped 4 of the previous 6 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.

SIGNUP INFORMATION

CREP enrollment began June 7, 1999, and operates on a continuous 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
- New Castle County - (302) 832-3100
- Sussex County - (302) 856-3990.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the Delaware CREP, contact your local USDA service center, 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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- 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.*

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