USDA Announces $1.8 Billion in 2026 Conservation Program Payments

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(Washington, D.C., October 8, 2026) - The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced today it is issuing approximately $1.8 billion in Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) payments to agricultural producers and landowners for their participation in key conservation programs for 2026. These payments include Grassland CRP payments that play an important role in the Trump Administration's Ranchers First Initiative announced by USDA Secretary Brooke L. Rollins that includes sweeping actions focused on rebuilding the Great American Cattle Herd and putting America's ranchers back at the center of our nation's food supply.

This year, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) accepted offers on nearly 1 million new acres of Grassland CRP, providing ranchers with rental payments and cost share assistance to maintain rangeland and pastureland as grazing areas. After 2026 enrollment, Grassland CRP acreage is anticipated to account for more than 40% of all CRP enrolled acres.

"Under the Trump Administration we have committed to putting American farmers and ranchers first. As we continue to work to rebuild the American cattle herd, today's announcement will help continue this effort by protecting nearly one million acres of grazing land for our ranchers," **said Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins**. "This change will encourage greater growth of our cattle industry, while preserving our nation's natural resources."

"These conservation payments play a key role in helping landowners preserve and protect natural resources, while also promoting working lands conservation," **said Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation Richard Fordyce**. "Enrollment in our conservation programs has been a highly competitive process. These payments support landowners with an interest in voluntary land stewardship, helping them drive conservation efforts on their land to keep their operations moving forward while protecting our nation's natural resources and supporting rural communities across the country."

Conservation Payments

The $1.8 billion in annual rental payments are being made to agricultural producers and private landowners through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and Grassland CRP. These annual rental payments are made to eligible farmers and ranchers who establish long-term, resource-conserving vegetative covers. Additionally, annual rental payments provide a steady income stream

for participants, helping to stabilize farm income.

CRP helps reduce soil erosion, improve water quality, and increase wildlife habitat, contributing to the overall health of ecosystems. Grassland CRP is a working lands conservation program that enables participants to conserve grasslands while also continuing most grazing and haying practices.

For fiscal year 2027, a total of 26.8 million acres will be enrolled in CRP after FSA accepts offers on 2.2 million acres through Grassland, General and Continuous CRP signups for 2026.

The following states rank in the top five for CRP payments for 2026: Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, South Dakota, and Missouri.

More Information

For more information on conservation programs, producers and landowners can visit fsa.usda.gov/crp or contact their local FSA county office.

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