



USDA Seeks New Partnerships to Safeguard, Restore Wetland Ecosystems

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WASHINGTON, June 30, 2021 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing up to \$17 million for conservation partners to help protect and restore critical wetlands on agricultural lands through the Wetland Reserve Enhancement Partnership (WREP). USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is prioritizing proposals that focus on assisting historically underserved producers conserving wetlands. Proposals from partners are due **August 15, 2021**.

Restored wetlands help to improve water quality downstream, enhance wildlife habitat, reduce impacts from flooding and provide recreational benefits.

"Our goal is to support agricultural producers in their efforts to conserve natural resources on their land," said NRCS Chief Terry Cosby. "Wetland Reserve Enhancement Partnerships help partners and producers work together to protect wetland ecosystems on working lands."

Through WREP projects, eligible conservation partners protect, restore and enhance high-priority wetlands on agriculture lands. WREP enables effective integration of wetland restoration on working agricultural landscapes, providing meaningful benefits to farmers and ranchers who enroll in the program and to the communities where the wetlands exist.

Eligible partners include Tribes, state and local governments and non-government organizations. WREP partners are required to contribute a financial or technical assistance fund match.

WREP funding is for fiscal year 2022, which begins on Oct. 1, 2021.

How to Apply

Partners interested in applying should contact their [NRCS state office](#) for more information. Proposals are due by Aug. 15, 2021.

Partners looking to learn more about opportunities for WREP funding for fiscal year 2022 are encouraged to attend the WREP workshop on July 15, 2021 at 1 p.m. EST. Partners interested in attending should contact WREP Program Manager, Lisa McCauley at lisa.mccauley@usda.gov.

More Information

Funding will be provided through the Wetland Reserve Enhancement Partnership (WREP), part of the [Agricultural Conservation Easement Program](#) (ACEP), a Farm Bill conservation program. Through WREP, states, local units of governments, non-governmental organizations and American Indian tribes collaborate with NRCS through cooperative and partnership agreements.

These partners work with tribal and private landowners who voluntarily enroll eligible land into easements to protect, restore and enhance wetlands on their properties.

Wetland reserve easements enable landowners to successfully reduce impacts from flooding, recharge groundwater, enhance and protect wildlife habitat and provide outdoor recreational and educational opportunities. Partners benefit from WREP by targeting outreach and enrollment priorities supported by NRCS, including places impacted by natural disasters.

Under the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is engaged in a whole-of-government effort to combat the climate crisis and conserve and protect our nation's lands, biodiversity and natural resources including our soil, air and water. Through conservation practices and partnerships, USDA aims to enhance economic growth and create new streams of income for farmers, ranchers, producers and private foresters. Successfully meeting these challenges will require USDA and our agencies to pursue a coordinated approach alongside USDA stakeholders, including State, local and Tribal governments.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.

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