



USDA Announces More Than 1.2 Million Acres Accepted in Recent Signup for Conservation Reserve Program Grasslands

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MONTGOMERY, Ala., July 9, 2020 - The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) today announced the acceptance of more than 1.2 million acres in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Grasslands during the recent signup period that began March 16 and ended May 15. The number of acres offered during this signup period was 1.9 million acres, over 3 times the number offered during the last signup period in 2016.

Through CRP Grasslands, farmers and ranchers can protect grasslands, rangelands and pastures while retaining the right to conduct common grazing practices, such as haying, mowing or harvesting seed from the enrolled land. Timing of some activities may be restricted by the primary nesting season of birds.

"This large and unprecedented enrollment is a reflection of the popularity and importance of CRP Grasslands," said David McCurdy, State Executive Director in Alabama. "The program emphasizes support for grazing operations and plant and animal biodiversity while protecting land under the greatest threat of conversion or development."

Participants will receive an annual rental payment and may receive up to 50 percent cost-share for establishing approved conservation practices. The duration of the CRP contract is 10 or 15 years. FSA ranked offers using a number of factors, including existence of expiring CRP land, threat of conversion or development, existing grassland and predominance of native species cover and cost.

The 2018 Farm Bill set aside not fewer than 2 million acres for CRP Grassland enrollment. On Oct. 1, 2020, grassland enrollment is expected to be 2.1 million acres. CRP is one of the largest conservation programs at USDA. CRP marks its 35-year anniversary in 2020 with 21.9 million acres currently enrolled.

For more information on CRP Grasslands, contact your local FSA county office or visit fsa.usda.gov/crp. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

USDA Service Centers are open for business by phone appointment only, and field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. While program delivery staff will continue to come into the office, they will be working with producers by phone and using online tools whenever possible. All Service

Center visitors wishing to conduct business with the FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other Service Center agency are required to call their Service Center to schedule a phone appointment. More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

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