
Producers and Landowners Can Now Sign Up for USDA's Grassland Conservation Reserve Program

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that agricultural producers and private landowners can now sign up for the Grassland Conservation Reserve Program (Grassland CRP). The signup runs from now through June 28, 2024. Grassland CRP, offered by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), is a voluntary working lands conservation program that enables participants to conserve grasslands and provide important conservation benefits for wildlife, soil health and carbon sequestration, all while continuing most grazing and haying practices.

"Grassland CRP is a vital conservation tool that supports two of USDA's top priorities: the wellbeing of American agriculture and the health of America's grasslands, which provide critical environmental benefits for wildlife and carbon sequestration," said Blong Xiong, FSA State Executive Director in California. "Over the past three years, we have seen historic interest in the Grassland Conservation Reserve Program with producers signing up to conserve over 6.8 million acres. This historic interest from agriculture has proven that agricultural productivity and conservation priorities are not exclusive from one another, but can coexist and, more importantly, complement and enhance one another."

More than 2.3 million acres from agricultural producers and private landowners were accepted through the 2023 Grassland CRP signup. That signup reflects the continued success and value of investments in voluntary, producer-led, working lands conservation programs. The current total participation in Grassland CRP is 8.64 million acres, which is part of the 24.8 million acres enrolled in CRP opportunities overall.

On Nov. 16, 2023, President Biden signed into law H.R. 6363, the Further Continuing Appropriations and Other Extensions Act, 2024 (Pub. L. 118-22), which generally extended the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (Pub. L. 115-334), more commonly known as the 2018 Farm Bill, through Sept. 30, 2024. This extension allows authorized programs, including CRP, to continue operating.

Landowners and producers interested in CRP should contact their local [USDA Service Center](#) to learn more or to apply for the program before the June 28 deadline.

Other CRP Options

FSA is also accepting applications for the [Continuous CRP](#) signup, which opened in January 2023. Under this enrollment, producers and landowners can enroll in CRP throughout the year. Offers are automatically accepted provided the producer and land meet the eligibility requirements and the enrollment levels do not exceed the statutory cap.

Additionally, FSA also offers financial assistance to producers and landowners enrolled in CRP to improve the health of their forests through the [Forest Management Incentive](#) (FMI), which can help participants with forest management practices, such as brush management and prescribed burning.

Producers with expiring CRP acres can use the [Transition Incentives Program](#) (TIP), which incentivizes producers who sell or enter a long-term lease with a beginning, veteran, or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher who plans to sustainably farm or ranch the land.

More Information

Signed into law in 1985, CRP is one of the largest voluntary private-lands conservation programs in the United States. It was originally intended to primarily control soil erosion and potentially stabilize commodity prices by taking marginal lands out of production. The program has evolved over the years, providing many conservation and economic benefits.

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