

Logo: USDA

Farm Service Agency
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

USDA Accepts More than 2.5 Million Acres in Grassland CRP Signup, Double Last Year's Signup

News Release | Alaska | September 10, 2021

[View PDF](#)

More than 5.3 Million Acres Enrolled through CRP Signups in 2021, Surpassing Goal

WASHINGTON, September 10, 2021 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has accepted offers for more than 2.5 million acres from agricultural producers and private landowners for enrollment through this year's Grassland Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Signup. This is double last year's enrollment and brings the total acres enrolled across all CRP signups in 2021 to more than 5.3 million acres, surpassing USDA's 4 million-acre goal. Producers and landowners submitted offers for nearly 4 million acres in Grassland CRP, the highest in the signup's history.

"This increased interest in working lands conservation serves two purposes," said Zach Ducheneaux, Administrator of USDA's Farm Service Agency. "It helps close the gap between enrollment and available acres, and it leaves room for the Administration to be innovative with the other conservation tools, such as the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, at our disposal as we work to enlist non-traditional partners in our conservation efforts."

Ducheneaux continued: "Grasslands sequester an incredible amount of carbon in their roots that is resilient even during drought and wildfire, while also providing good wildlife habitat and grazing opportunities for producers and landowners; because there is no better way to increase soil health than with thoughtful animal impact. This year, we rolled out improvements to Grassland CRP, including priority zones for elk migration and vulnerable soils, and we were pleased to see this level of interest from conservation-minded producers across the country. This is a powerful program, and we want to continue to grow interest in Grassland CRP as well as other CRP signups in the coming years."

Through Grassland CRP, producers and landowners can conserve grasslands, rangelands, and pastures, while retaining the right to conduct common grazing practices, such as haying, mowing, or harvesting seed from the enrolled land, pursuant to approved conservation plans designed to promote thoughtful use while creating and maintaining vital habitat.

Updates to Grassland CRP

FSA rolled out a number of updates to its CRP signups earlier this year. This included setting a minimum payment rate for Grassland CRP as well as establishing new national priority zones.

Producers enrolled 1.1 million acres in the two priority zones, which include the Greater Yellowstone Elk Migratory Corridor, which is focused on wildlife and includes counties in Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming, and the Historical Dust Bowl Region, which still is at great risk of high wind erosion and includes counties in Colorado, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas. The two national priority areas adjoin or include habitat ranges of the lesser prairie-chicken and sage grouse, both of which are part of larger USDA wildlife habitat initiatives. The new Grassland enrollment acres include 1.4 million acres within the range of these two species.

Download the [“What’s New” fact sheet](#) to learn more about CRP updates.

CRP and Climate Change Mitigation

Additionally, lands enrolled in CRP – including grasslands – play an important role in addressing climate change. For example, this enrollment of more than 2.5 million acres of grazing land into Grassland CRP will mitigate an additional estimated 22,000 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent.

By the Numbers

Top states for producers submitting offers included Colorado, South Dakota, Nebraska, Montana, and New Mexico.

In addition to the more than 2.5 million acres enrolled in Grassland CRP, almost 1.9 million acres in offers were accepted through the General CRP Signup and 902,000 acres were accepted so far through the Continuous Signup. Additional enrollment information on the General and Continuous signups is available in the [Aug. 23, 2021 news release](#).

The 2018 Farm Bill established a nationwide acreage limit for CRP, with the total number of acres that may be enrolled capped at 25 million acres in fiscal year (FY) 2021 and growing to 27 million by FY 2023. Currently, 20.6 million acres are enrolled. With more than 5.3 million acres accepted for enrollment, the USDA will start 2022 off with about 22.9 million acres, leaving room for further enrollment and program expansion up to the FY 2022 cap of 25.5 million.

More Information

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

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, 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 safe, 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.

Farm Service Agency:

1400 Independence Ave.
SW Washington, DC 20250

Contact:

FPAC Press Desk
FPAC.BC.Press@usda.gov