

Conservation Reserve Program

CP-15A

CONTOUR GRASS STRIPS

Erosion Control | Water Quality Enhancement | Wildlife Habitat



Why Choose CRP? You Benefit. Land, Water and Wildlife Benefit.

Contour grass strips are designed to reduce erosion and improve water quality by slowing run-off and trapping sediment. The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) provides farmers and landowners with practices like this to achieve many farming and conservation goals. Whatever the conservation challenge - soil conservation, water quality protection or wildlife habitat enhancement - CRP is a proven land performance and management solution.

Why Contour Grass Strips?

For farmland that is susceptible to erosion, contour grass strips are an excellent solution. These permanent strips of vegetative cover are located on cropland and follow natural contours. Vegetation includes grasses and a mixture of grasses and legumes. These strips function as a filter for run-off and help improve surface water quality as they trap sediment, nutrients, and pesticides passing through them. Offered in **continuous sign-up**, CP-15A:

- Reduces erosion
- Improves water quality by trapping sediment and nutrients
- Creates habitat for grassland and gamebird species
- Provides pollinator habitat

Financial Benefits

CP-15A participants are guaranteed:

- 10 years of annual rental payments
- Payments covering up to 90% of the eligible costs of establishing the grass practice
 - 50% from a Cost-Share Payment and
 - 40% from a Practice Incentive Payment (PIP)
- Mid-Contract Management Cost Share
- Additional incentives may be available in your state under the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)



Eligible Land

- Planted or considered planted 4 out of 6 years between 2008 and 2013
- Capable of being planted to an agricultural commodity
- Compliant with USDA's highly erodible land and wetland provisions

Practice Requirements

- Noxious weeds and other undesirable plants, insects and pests shall be controlled
- The practice will be maintained without additional cost-share payments

Owner/Operator Eligibility

Participants must:

- Have owned or operated the land for more than 12 months prior to program sign-up
- Be in control of the land for the length of the contract
- Meet USDA payment eligibility provisions

Obligations

Participants will:

- Not harvest or graze the practice area except under certain approved conditions
- Work with USDA-approved conservationist to develop a conservation plan
- Perform periodic management activities according to the conservation plan
- Complete seeding of the practice within 12 months of the effective date of the contract

Proven Conservation Benefits

- In prime habitat, a 4% increase in CRP vegetation is associated with a 22% increase in pheasant counts
- CRP reduced nutrient losses in FY 2014 by an estimated 542 million pounds of nitrogen and 108 million pounds of phosphorus
- In 2014, CRP lowered greenhouse gas emissions by the equivalent of 43 million metric tons of CO₂ – the same benefits as taking nearly 8 million cars off the road for a year

FSA will ultimately determine participant and land eligibility.

For More Information:

Contact your local USDA, Farm Service Agency:

<http://offices.usda.gov>