

West Virginia

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)



Overview

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the State of West Virginia are partners in implementing a voluntary Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) to enroll up to 9,160 acres of agricultural land in the Kanawha River, Little Kanawha River, Monongahela River, Cheat River, Potomac River, and Ohio River watersheds in West Virginia. The purpose of the West Virginia CREP is to take actions that will help reduce the occurrence of runoff, sediment, and nutrients from agricultural enterprises into the boundaries of the designated watersheds, and which will promote improved water quality and enhanced wildlife habitats.

Background

CREP is part of the USDA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). CRP is a federally funded voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive agricultural land is not farmed or ranched, but instead used for conservation benefits. CRP participants establish permanent, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees (known as “covers”) to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat. In return, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance.

With CREP, high-priority conservation goals are identified by the state, and then federal funds are supplemented with non-federal funds to achieve those goals.

Through the West Virginia CREP, federal and state resources are made available to

program participants to voluntarily enroll in CRP 10-15 year contracts. Participants remove cropland and marginal pastureland from agricultural production and convert the land to grasses, trees, or other approved vegetation. This will improve water quality by reducing sediment, nutrients, nitrogen, and other pollutants from entering streams and rivers, and enhance wildlife habitat in the area.

Goals

The goals of the West Virginia CREP include:

- Reduce sediments, nutrients, nitrogen, and other pollutants from entering waterbodies;
- Reduce soil erosion;
- Improve water quality through wetland restoration; and
- Enhance wildlife habitat, including aquatic wildlife.

Eligible Conservation Practices

The following specific CRP conservation practices are available:

- Establishment of Permanent Introduced Grasses and Legumes (CP1)
- Establishment of Permanent Native Grasses (CP2)
- Hardwood Tree Planting (CP3A)
- Filter Strips (CP21)
- Riparian Buffer (CP22)
- Wetland Restoration (CP23)

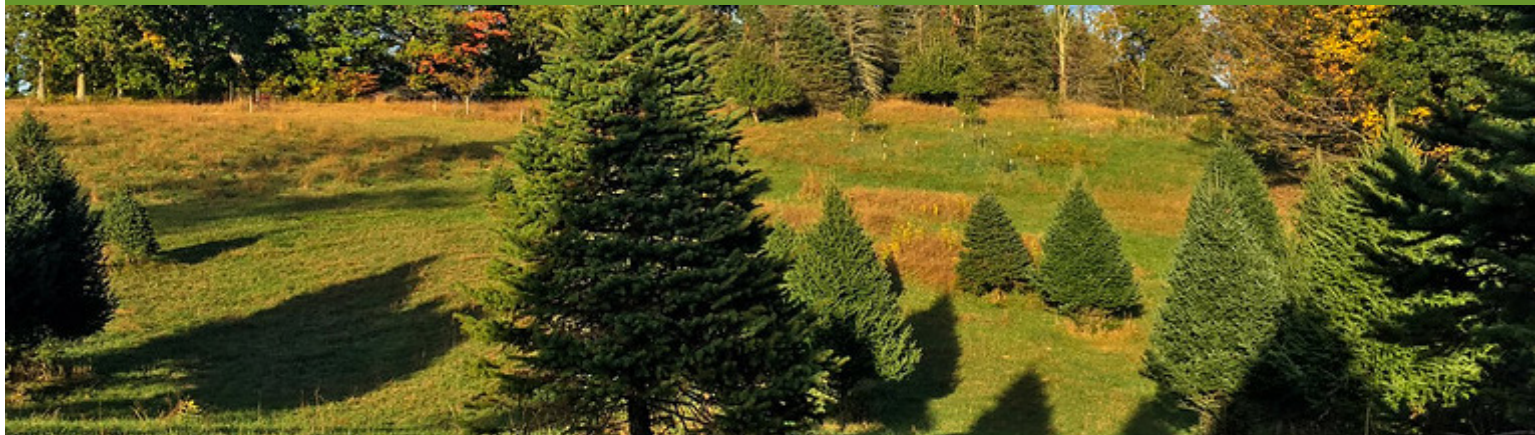
For More Information

This fact sheet is provided for informational purposes only; other restrictions or requirements may apply. Consult your local FSA office for details.

For more information, contact your local service center and USDA Farm Service Agency office: [farmers.gov/service-locator](https://www.fsa.usda.gov/service-locator).

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Enrollment and Eligibility Requirements

Enrollment in CRP through the West Virginia CREP is on a continuous basis. To be eligible, land must be located in West Virginia. Land must be located in the project area and be either cropland or marginal pastureland. Cropland must meet cropping history criteria and be physically and legally capable of being planted in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity. Marginal pastureland is also eligible for enrollment provided it is suitable for use as a riparian buffer planted to trees.

Payments

Under the West Virginia CREP, eligible participants may receive the following payments:

- A one-time signing incentive payment (SIP) is paid in accordance with FSA National CRP Directives for land as follows:
 - ◇ \$100 per acre for CP21, and CP22;
 - ◇ \$150 per acre for CP23.
- A one-time practice incentive payment (PIP) equal to 40 percent of eligible reimbursable costs incurred for installation CP21, CP22, and CP23 practices.
- An annual rental payment consisting of:
 - ◇ A base soil rental rate, determined by the soils of the land offered
 - ◇ An incentive payment equal to 100 percent, except for land enrolled or re-enrolled under infeasible-to-farm provisions
 - ◇ A maintenance incentive payment for CP21 and CP22 practices in accordance with FSA National CRP Directives
- A cost-share payment of up to 50 percent of the eligible cost to install the approved practice.
- A one-time Chesapeake Bay incentive payment (CBIP) in an amount equal to (1) \$200 per acre for land not previously enrolled in CRP; and (2) \$500 per acre for land currently enrolled in CRP that is re-enrolled. This one-time payment is available only for practice CP22, located within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, for contracts that are 14 to 15 years in duration. Example: 10 acres of land currently enrolled in CRP located within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed are re-enrolled in CRP to be devoted to practice CP22 under a 15-year contract. The one-time CBIP is \$5,000 (\$500 x 10 acres).
- In addition, the State of West Virginia provides the following payments to eligible participants:
 - ◇ A one-time lump-sum incentive payment of the base soil rental rate times the number of acres enrolled on land not previously enrolled in CRP; and
 - ◇ A one-time incentive payment in an amount equal to \$40 per acre. This one-time payment is available only for practice CP22, located within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Land must be re-enrolled or not previously enrolled in CRP contracts, that are 14 to 15 years in duration.

Enrollment Options

CREP is another option under CRP that farmers and ranchers may select to enhance their land. Eligible producers may still enroll land in CRP through general or continuous signup; however, the West Virginia CREP provides additional benefits not available through general and/or continuous signup. Under the West Virginia CREP, producers receive higher incentive payments and longer contract lengths that increase the total amount of rental payments received.

Haying and Grazing

Contact your local FSA office for more information about authorized haying and grazing activities.