

**Fact Sheet****Conservation Reserve Program
Missouri Enhancement Program****Overview**

USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) and the State of Missouri have agreed to implement a Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) to reduce the risk of nutrients and sediment from farms entering the streams and reservoirs that supply rural water supplies to over 375,000 people.

The Missouri project's goal is to retire 50,000 acres of highly erodible and environmental sensitive land along streams for 83 reservoirs that supply 58 public water supplies in 36 counties. The Missouri CREP provides for voluntary agreements with farmers to convert cropland to native grasses, trees, and other vegetation, in return for rental payments and other incentives.

CREP is a joint Federal-State land retirement conservation program targeted to address local, State and nationally significant agricultural-related environmental concerns. This voluntary program uses financial incentives to encourage farmers and ranchers to enroll in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) in contracts of 10 to 15 years duration to remove lands from agricultural production. CRP is the Nation's largest private lands conservation program and is implemented through USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA).

Eligible Areas

Producers can offer land in any part of the 83 small watersheds that meets the eligibility requirements identified for the Missouri CREP.

Goals

The objectives of the Missouri CREP include:

- reducing the occurrence of pesticides in all 58 drinking water supplies by 50 percent,
- reducing the occurrence of sediment inflow into water supply reservoirs by 50 percent,
- reducing soil erosion rates to less than 5 tons per acre,
- helping agricultural producers meet nutrient reduction goals,
- providing wildlife habitat enhancement for the preservation of natural diversity of the State.

Program Cost

Generally, USDA will pay, in the aggregate, up to 75 percent of the program costs and the State of Missouri the rest. USDA will pay rental and extra incentive payments to farmers for a 15-year agreement period. In addition, USDA will pay a \$140 to \$150 per acre signing bonus for land enrolled in the project. Almost all of the costs associated with establishing the conservation practice will be paid by USDA or the State of Missouri.

USDA and Missouri will provide technical, educational, and engineering support.

Approved Conservation Practices

To serve program goals better, specific CRP conservation practices have been identified for inclusion in the program. These are:

- CP1 Introduced Grasses,
- CP2 Native Grasses,
- CP3A Hardwood Tree Planting,
- CP4D Wildlife Habitat,
- CP15A Contour Grass Strips,
- CP21 Filter Strips,
- CP22 Riparian Buffers, and
- CP23 Wetland Restoration.

Signup and Eligibility Requirements

Eligible producers will be able to enroll in 14- to 15-year CRP contracts. Producers may extend the benefits of the program through separate contracts with the State. The applicant must be able to offer otherwise eligible acreage. The applicant also must satisfy the basic eligibility criteria for CRP.

Land must be cropland that has been cropped 2 out of the past 5 years and that is physically and legally capable of being cropped. Producers enrolling the land must generally have owned or operated

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the land for at least 1 year prior to enrollment. Persons who have an existing CRP contract or an approved offer with a contract pending are not eligible for CREP until that contract expires.

Missouri CREP Payments

Participants in the Missouri CREP are eligible for six types of payments: four from FSA as well as two from the State of Missouri. These are:

- (1) a one-time FSA signing incentive payment of \$140 to \$150 per acre enrolled in riparian buffer practices or filter strips. This payment will be made soon after the contract has been signed,
- (2) cost-share assistance from FSA for installation of the conservation practices on the land that is retired,
- (3) additional cost-share assistance from the State of Missouri,
- (4) in addition to the cost-share assistance, a one-time FSA practice incentive payment equal to about 40 percent of the total cost-share assistance,
- (5) annual rental payments from FSA equal to between 115 percent to 125 percent of the dryland cash rental rate for the county, and
- (6) a one-time lump sum incentive payment from the State of Missouri equal to 150 percent of the annual rental payment.

Program Cost

Based on the full implementation of the Missouri CREP, which projects an enrollment of 50,000 acres, the expected financial Federal and State obligation will be approximately \$85 million over 15 years, with \$70 million coming from the Federal Government and \$15 million coming from the State. This does not include any costs that may be borne by producers. Missouri's share is approximately 20 percent of the total program costs, and the Federal Government share is approximately 80 percent.

Enrollment in Other Programs

Producers may enroll in the general CRP and the continuous signup CRP as well as in CREP. CREP is another option that farmers may select to enhance their land. An applicant may still enroll in the regular general CRP or continuous signup CRP. CREP provides additional benefits not available through the general and/or continuous signup. The CREP enrollment process is on a continuous basis, and payments are at a higher effective rate.

Haying and Grazing

Haying and grazing would not be permitted during the CRP contract period unless USDA permits it for emergency purposes under normal CRP rules.

For More Information

Contact the local USDA Service Center or FSA office, the County Soil and Water Conservation District, or the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Soil and Water Conservation Program. Information may also be obtained from the FSA website at: www.fsa.usda.gov and the DNR website at: www.dnr.state.mo.us

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