



## Conservation Reserve Program - New York City Enhancement Program

### Background

USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), New York City, and New York State have agreed on a plan to implement a Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program in the Catskill and Delaware watersheds of the New York City drinking water supply system.

These watersheds furnish most of the 1.34 billion gallons of water used daily by the New York City system, which serves 8 million city residents and another 1 million residents of Westchester, Orange, and Ulster Counties. The Catskill/Delaware reservoir system has a surface area of about 1 million acres.

The New York City Enhancement Program hopes to reduce soil erosion by 36,000 tons per year, reducing levels of sediment, nutrients, and pathogens. This will help New York City avoid construction of a water filtration plant costing an estimated \$6 billion. The project will also provide valuable habitat for endangered wildlife and native cold water fish.

### Program Targets

Acreage enrollment targets are:

- (1) Riparian buffers, 2,000 acres;
- (2) Highly erodible cropland with an erodibility index greater than or equal to 8.

### Program Responsibilities

CCC and New York City each will pay 50 percent of the reimbursable costs of conservation practices, for a total of 100 percent. New York City will also provide technical support to all applicants.

In addition to annual rental rates and maintenance incentive payments under the CRP contract at normal local CRP rates, CCC will make a special incentive payment in an amount equal to:

- (1) 100 percent of the established county rental rate, for land to be established to riparian buffers, not to exceed \$150 per acre;
- (2) 100 percent of the established county rental rate, for land qualifying on the basis of erodibility, not to exceed \$100 per acre.

### Eligible Practices

Eligible CRP practices for lands qualifying on the basis of erodibility will be:

- CP 1 (Planting of Tame Grasses)
- CP 2 (Establishment of Native Grasses)
- CP 3 (Tree Planting)
- CP 4 (Wildlife Habitat)

Eligible CRP practices for lands qualifying as riparian buffers will be:

- CP 21 (Filter Strip)
- CP 22 (Riparian Buffer)
- CP 23 (Wetland Restoration)

Producers may also offer eligible acreage for general or continuous CRP sign-up.

CRP is a CCC program implemented through the Farm Service Agency.

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