

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

New York—12 Watersheds



Overview

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the State of New York are partners in implementing a voluntary Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) to enroll up to 40,000 acres of agricultural land in Albany, Allegany, Broome, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Chenango, Clinton, Columbia, Cortland, Delaware, Dutchess, Erie, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Genesee, Greene, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Livingston, Madison, Monroe, Montgomery, Niagara, Oneida, Onondaga, Ontario, Orange, Orleans, Oswego, Otsego, Putnam, Rensselaer, St. Lawrence, Saratoga, Schoharie, Schuylar, Seneca, Steuben, Suffolk, Sullivan, Tioga, Tompkins, Ulster, Warren, Washington, Wayne, Westchester, Wyoming and Yates counties.

The purpose of the New York 12 Watersheds CREP is to improve water quality, reduce soil erosion, reduce the amount of sediment, phosphorous and other pollutants from entering waterbodies, and improve wildlife.

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 New York 12 Watersheds CREP, federal and state resources are made available to program participants to voluntarily enroll in CRP for 10 to 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 New York 12 Watersheds CREP include:

- To reduce the amount of phosphorus, nitrogen, sediment, and other pollutants entering waterbodies within the project area
- To establish buffers adjacent to 4,598 stream miles and 473,457 acres of surface waters; and
- To establish conservation cover on areas that recharge drinking water supplies for cities and towns.



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, or,

USDA Farm Service Agency New York State Office
441 S. Salina St
Suite 536
Syracuse, NY 13202
(315) 477-6300



Eligible Conservation Practices

The following specific CRP conservation practices are available:

- CP1, Establishment of Permanent Introduced Grasses and Legumes
- CP2, Establishment of Permanent Native Grasses
- CP3, Tree Planting
- CP3A, Hardwood Tree Planting
- CP4B, Permanent Wildlife Habitat Corridors
- CP4D, Permanent Wildlife Habitat
- CP8A, Grass Waterway
- CP9, Shallow Water Areas for Wildlife
- CP15A, Establishment of Permanent Vegetative Cover-Contour Grass Strip
- CP21, Filter Strip
- CP22, Riparian Buffer
- CP23, Wetland Restoration
- CP23A, Wetland Restoration, Non-Floodplain
- CP29, Marginal Pastureland Wildlife Habitat Buffer
- CP30, Marginal Pastureland Wetland Buffer

Enrollment and Eligibility Requirements

Enrollment in CRP through the New York 12 Watersheds CREP is on a continuous basis. To be eligible, land must be located in New York. Land must be 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 buffer practice.

Payments

Under the New York 12 Watersheds CREP, eligible participants may receive the following payments:

- A one-time signing incentive payment (SIP) for applicable practices.
- A one-time practice incentive payment (PIP) equal to 40 percent of eligible reimbursable costs incurred for installation of CP8A, CP9, CP15A, CP21, CP22, CP23, CP23A, CP29 and CP30.
- An annual rental payment consisting of:
 - A base soil rental rate, determined by the soils of the land offered.
 - An incentive payment as a percentage of the base soil rental rate, equal to 145 percent, except for land enrolled or re-enrolled under infeasible-to-farm other provisions.
 - A maintenance incentive payment for applicable practices.
- 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 in an amount

equal to \$25 per acre for each full year of the CRP contract. This one-time payment is available only for practice CP22 and only for land located within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

In addition, the State of New York may provide cost-share payments for the installation of an approved conservation practice and a one-time incentive payment for enrollment of new land located in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed devoted to practice CP22.

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 New York – 12 Watersheds CREP provides additional benefits not available through general and/or continuous signup. Under the New York – 12 Watersheds 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.