



Farm Service Agency

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

South Dakota James River Watershed

FACT SHEET
February 2021

Overview

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the State of South Dakota are partners in implementing a voluntary Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) to enroll up to 100,000 acres of agricultural land in Aurora, Beadle, Bon Homme, Brown, Clark, Davison, Day, Douglas, Edmunds, Faulk, Hand, Hanson, Hutchinson, Hyde, Jerauld, Kingsbury, McCook, McPherson, Marshall, Miner, Potter, Roberts, Sanborn, Spink, and Yankton counties. The South Dakota James River Watershed CREP is intended to improve water quality, reduce soil erosion, enhance wildlife habitat, and create public hunting and fishing access.

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 South Dakota James River Watershed CREP, federal and state resources are made available to program participants to voluntarily enroll in CRP for 10-year to 15-year contracts. Participants remove cropland and marginal pastureland from agricultural production and convert the land to native grasses, trees and other vegetation, or restore

wetlands. 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 South Dakota James River Watershed CREP include:

- Establishment of 15,000 acres of permanent vegetative cover adjacent to rivers and streams;
- Reduce the amount of sediment, nutrients, and nitrogen entering waterbodies;
- Reduce soil erosion;
- Produce an additional 285,000 pheasants annually;
- Contribute an additional 60,000 ducks annually;
- Open 1,000 40-acre blocks to public hunting and fishing; and
- Create 85,000 acres of permanent vegetative cover by restoring wetlands and grasslands to store water and serve as breeding habitat for migratory and resident wildlife.



USDA photo



Eligible Conservation Practices

The following specific CRP conservation practices are available:

- CP2, Establishment of Native Grasses;
- CP4D, Permanent Wildlife Habitat;
- CP21, Filter Strips;
- CP23, Wetland Restoration;
- CP23A, Wetland Restoration, Non-Floodplain;
- CP29, Marginal Pastureland Wildlife Habitat Buffer;
- CP30, Marginal Pastureland Wetland Buffer;
- CP37, Duck Nesting Habitat.

Enrollment and Eligibility Requirements

Enrollment in CRP through the South Dakota James River Watershed CREP is on a continuous basis. To be eligible, 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 an eligible wildlife habitat or wetland buffer.

Payments

Under the South Dakota James River Watershed CREP, eligible participants may receive the following payments:

- A one-time signing incentive payment (SIP) for enrolling practice CP21, CP23, CP23A, CP29, CP30, and CP37, in an amount equal to 32.5 percent of the first annual rental payment for such practice. Example: A first year annual rental payment of \$600.00 results in a \$195.00 ($\$600.00 \text{ acres} \times .325$) SIP. This payment is made soon after the contract has been approved.
- A one-time practice incentive payment (PIP) for installing practice CP21, CP23, CP23A, CP29, CP30, and CP37. The PIP is equal to 20 percent of eligible cost of installing the practice. Example: Producer's total eligible cost of installing the practice is \$2,000. The PIP would be \$400 ($\$2,000 \times .20$).

- 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, of 20 percent for all practices except CP2 and CP4D; and
 - A maintenance payment, determined by the practice offered.
- A cost-share payment of up to 50 percent of the eligible cost to install the approved practice.

In addition, the State of South Dakota provides the following payments:

- An annual payment in an amount equal to multiplying the base soil rental rate times .31.
- A cost-share payment of 20 percent of the eligible cost to install the approved practice.

Enrollment

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 South Dakota James River Watershed CREP provides additional benefits not available through general and/or continuous signup. Under the South Dakota James River Watershed 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.

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.