

Best Management Practices

Landowners may use best management practices, or BMPs, such as grassed filter strips, forested riparian buffers, wetlands restoration and hardwood, longleaf and shortleaf pine and bottomland timber establishment.



Grassed Filter Strips

Filter strips are narrow buffers of grasses and/or shrubs along waterbodies in agricultural fields. Filter strips remove sediment, nutrients, and other pollutants from runoff. Protects surface and subsurface water.

Riparian Buffers

Riparian buffers are areas of native trees and shrubs along waterbodies. Serve as a barrier to nonpoint source pollution from agriculture. Buffers filter runoff, control flooding, protect property from erosion and provide essential wildlife habitat.

Hardwood & Pine Tree Establishment

This practice establishes a stand of hardwood, longleaf or shortleaf pine trees in timber plantings that will enhance environmental benefits. This practice is applied to the entire agriculture field.

Wetlands Restoration

Restoring the functions and values of wetland ecosystems that previously were in agricultural use. Wetlands filter nutrients and sediment from agricultural runoff using native plants that thrive in those conditions. Wetlands provide wildlife habitat, floodwater storage and replenish groundwater.

To Learn More Contact

- Your local Farm Service Agency (FSA)
- Your local Soil & Water Conservation District
- A CREP Specialist in your area.

CREP Specialist Territories

- Ben Wilkins: 919-602-4317
- Roy Jones: 919-801-9703
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Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program



About CREP

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is an extension of the USDA Farm Service Agency's (FSA), Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). CREP is a partnership program with USDA Farm Service Agency and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) working with the state NC Division of Soil and Water Conservation, NC Forest Service, and local soil and water Districts to address specific, more local, conservation objectives. CREP utilizes federal and state resources to achieve long-term voluntary protection of environmentally sensitive areas along waterbodies. These voluntary protection measures are accomplished through 10 and 15-year contracts or 30-year and permanent conservation easements.



Goals

The CREP program strives to protect and improve water quality with the additional benefits of restoring wetlands, enhancing wildlife habitat, and helping to reduce flood risk. This is achieved by local, state and federal conservation partners providing natural resource management through technical assistance, educational outreach and financial incentives for landowners in North Carolina's farming communities.

Eligibility

Agricultural landowners in the river basins shown below on the map are eligible for CREP. The approved area includes 76 counties in North Carolina. The local USDA-Farm Service Agency will determine landowner and land eligibility. Such requirements include one-year ownership of the property, eligible cropping history, and the field is within 300 feet of a qualifying waterbody.



About Conservation Easements

A CREP conservation easement is a written agreement between a landowner and the state of North Carolina in which there is an acquired interest in the land to install conservation practices that protect natural resources.



Landowners can choose between a conservation easement that is maintained for 30 years or permanently. With CREP, the landowner voluntarily limits future use of the land for activities such as farming and development, yet retains private ownership and use of the land for forestry, wildlife, and quiet enjoyment.



Landowner Benefits

CREP encourages farmers to place environmentally sensitive land along streams, estuaries, and other waterbodies into vegetative cover for a period of time. In return, landowners can receive federal and state cost share assistance to establish the conservation practices and receive an annual payment. Landowners that choose to enroll in a 30-year or permanent conservation easement will also receive a one-time state incentive payment.

Economic Incentives



Cost-Share Assistance: 75%-100% for the installation of eligible practices



Annual Payments: up to \$150 per acre for 15 years.



State One-Time Incentive Payment for conservation easement: \$250 per acre or \$1,000 per acre, depending on term.



Possible option to enroll existing forestland within the 100-year floodplain or within 300 feet on the opposite side of the waterbody.