

# Conservation Reserve Program

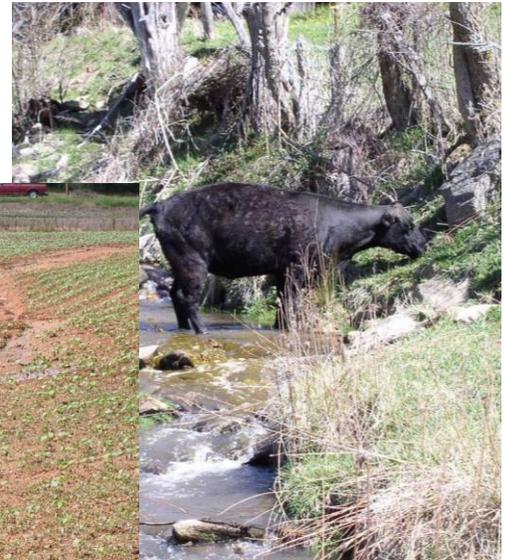
The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a voluntary conservation program for private landowners which targets removing highly erodible cropland from production and improving habitat for declining wildlife species on cropland and pastureland. CRP offers financial and technical assistance for the establishment and management of permanent vegetation to stabilize soil, improve water quality, and improve wildlife habitat.



CCRP Opportunity



General CRP Opportunity



CREP Opportunity

CRP is the basis for three different yet similar programs: Continuous CRP (CCRP), General CRP, and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). All of these CRP programs require a minimum contract length of 10 years. Also, they each have a level of cost share for establishment of vegetation and provide an annual rental payment for maintaining vegetation on the enrolled acreage.

General CRP is a competitive program administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA). Sign-ups for general CRP are announced periodically and at the discretion of USDA as directed by Farm Bill legislation. Fields offered for enrollment must be designated as highly erodible, and entire fields may be offered. Landowners or producers must submit an offer to be ranked. The acceptance on an offer is based on an Environmental Benefit Index which takes many factors into consideration including field location and vegetation to be established. General CRP provides 50% cost assistance for vegetation establishment, 50% cost assistance with management practices, and annual rental payment based on soil type.

CCRP is a non-competitive program administered by the FSA. Landowners or producers can sign-up for CCRP anytime during the year as long as there are acres allocated in the state for the desired practice.

CCRP was developed to address specific environmental concerns in a more direct fashion than general CRP. For example, declining habitats, such as wetlands and early succession, can be enhanced on crop and pastureland using CCRP to establish and manage appropriate vegetation. Water quality and aquatic habitats can be protected by establishing permanent vegetation in riparian buffer zones which are currently cropped or grazed. CCRP provides \$100 per acre sign on bonus, 50% cost assistance for vegetation establishment, a 40% establishment incentive payment, 50% assistance with management practices, and an annual rental payment based on soil type.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a non-competitive program administered by the FSA with additional funding from the North Carolina Division of Soil and Water. Landowners or producers can sign-up for CREP anytime during the year as long as there are allocations in the state for the desired practice. CREP was developed to address water quality concerns in selected watersheds within North Carolina. Practices such as riparian buffers and wetland restoration are the primary tools funded to meet CREP's objective. CREP is available in much of the state including all river basins from the Yadkin basin to the coast. Contract lengths through the CREP program range from 10 years to permanent easements, and cost share payments are dependent on contract length. Annual rental payments are paid for at least 10 years and are higher compared to other CRP programs. CREP has many options to fit landowners' objectives and protect water quality. Consult a CREP specialist prior to sign-up.

Typical practices which improve wildlife habitat that can be funded by CRP include:



CCRP Funded Native Warm Season Grass Buffer



General CRP Conversion of Highly Erodible Cropland



CREP funded Riparian Buffer



CCRP Funded Longleaf Pine Ecosystem Restoration

For additional information on CRP or CCRP contact your local Farm Service Agency office.

<http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=nc&agency=fsa>

For information on CREP contact a program specialist.

<http://www.enr.state.nc.us/dswc/pages/crep.html>

*Free technical guidance and information related to managing CRP for wildlife is available from Wildlife Commission staff. Please call the Wildlife Resources Commission, Division of Wildlife Management at 919-707-0050 if you have questions or need assistance. Prepared by John Isenhour, NCWRC Technical Assistance Biologist, [john.isenhour@nc.usda.gov](mailto:john.isenhour@nc.usda.gov)*