

CREP Connections

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CREP offers:

- Attractive bonus payments
- Annual rental payments of \$50 to \$150 per acre
- Permanent and 30-year easement options
- Up to 100 percent cost share on most practices
- Ongoing sign-up
- Maintenance payments
- Voluntary sign-up

To enroll in CREP contact:

- Farm Service Agency (FSA)
- Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Local Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD)



CREP Offers New, Improved Benefits

A new payment structure has been approved that offers greater incentives for landowners who enroll permanent easements in CREP. The change in payment structure is one of several revisions that are part of an amendment to the agreement between the N.C. Division of Soil and Water Conservation and the USDA. Groups collaborating on the amendment included state and federal agencies, the Clean Water Management Trust Fund and other stakeholders. The amendment also includes program changes to assure more water quality benefits and to allow enrollment of existing forested buffers. The program changes will take effect when U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns signs the amendment. The agreement has already been signed by Governor Mike Easley.



In addition to the one-time state payment for CREP, participants are eligible to receive annual payments from the USDA for the first 15 years of the contract. This compensation is designed to offset the loss of productive agricultural land based on the acreage dedicated to forested buffers or vegetated buffer strips. Cost share funding from 75 to 100 percent, depending on the length of the contract, is available for planting materials, fencing, watering facilities and stream crossings.

Current CREP participants:

You may increase benefits under new rules.

Even if you have already enrolled in CREP, you still have an opportunity to benefit from the increased incentive payments. For a limited time, the division will accept applications from current participants who choose to upgrade their contract or easement length. For example, if you have a 15-year contract on your property and wish to change it to a permanent easement, then you will be paid based on the new increased payment rate. This will not extend your annual rental rate payments paid by the USDA (see above).

Funds to permit existing enrollees to receive increased incentives payments will be dependent upon a grant from the Clean Water Management Trust Fund. After all applications are received and the level of interest is determined, the grant request will be submitted. Interested landowners must submit an application by Dec. 31, 2006. Contact your local soil and water conservation district to complete an application or contact CREP Manager Natalie Jones at (252) 948-3902.

CONSERVATION PAYS!

Learn more about the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.

Call your local Soil & Water Conservation District or call:

1-252-948-3902

CREP is a voluntary program that seeks to protect land currently in agricultural production that is located along watercourses. Landowners who enroll in CREP receive incentive payments for installing best management practices that improve water quality. CREP is a joint effort of the N.C. Division of Soil and Water Conservation, N.C. Division of Forest Resources, N.C. Clean Water Management Trust Fund, and Natural Resource Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency of USDA.

N.C. Division of Soil and Water Conservation
1614 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699



CREP Success in N.C.

Thanks to the voluntary efforts of North Carolina's agricultural community, CREP is excited to report more than 23,804 acres are now enrolled in 30-year easements or permanent easements. This provides protection for over 655 stream miles. Without the efforts of landowners and local partners we would not be able to report such successes. Thank you for your contribution to conservation.

Although many miles have been protected, there is still a great deal of work to be done. Sediment and nutrients from many sources continue to cause water quality concerns. And what good is farmland without clean water? Be sure your family, friends and neighbors know about the benefits of CREP. Together we can help preserve North Carolina's working lands for future generations.



*~ Natalie Jones, CREP Manager
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