

# Wetlands Reserve Program



## *What is the Wetlands Reserve Program*

The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is a voluntary program to restore, protect and enhance wetlands on private property. It is an opportunity for landowners to receive financial incentives to restore wetlands that have been drained for agriculture production or have been altered by multiple flood events.

## *The Plan*

The program offers landowners three options:

- Permanent easements
- 30-year easements
- Restoration cost-share agreements of a minimum 10- year duration

## *How WRP Works*

Landowners who choose to participate in WRP may sell a conservation easement or enter into a cost-share restoration agreement with USDA to restore and protect wetlands. The landowner voluntarily limits future use of the land, yet retains private ownership. The landowner and NRCS develop a plan for the restoration and maintenance of the wetland.

## *Landowner Eligibility*

- Ownership of the land for the last seven years
- Must be in compliance with highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions
- Must meet adjusted gross income (AGI) limitation



## *WRP Financial Assistance*

Permanent Easements: A conservation easement in perpetuity that pays up to 100 percent of the easement value and restoration costs.

30-year Easement: Easement expires after 30 years that pays up to 75 percent of the easement value and restoration costs.

10-year cost-share agreements: An agreement with no easement purchase involved. USDA pays for up to 75 percent of the restoration costs.

## *What's Eligible?*

- Land must be restorable and suitable for wetland and wildlife benefits
- Farmed wetlands
- Adjacent lands that contribute to wetland functions and value
- Upland buffer areas for ecological benefits
- Riparian areas that can be restored that link wetland areas
- Lands significantly altered by flooding

## *What Land is Not Eligible?*

- *Wetlands converted after December 1985*
- *Wetlands that are not degraded and functioning properly*
- *Land that is in public ownership*

## *Some of the Benefits:*

- *Restore, protect and enhance wetland ecosystems*
- *Protect the land from soil erosion*
- *Reduce flooding*
- *Opportunity to develop wildlife habitat including threatened and endangered species habitat*
- *Improve water quality and recharge groundwater*
- *Protect biological diversity*

## *How to Apply*

Landowners may apply by contacting the NRCS office in the county in which the land is located.

*More information is available on the web at*  
*[www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov/programs](http://www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov/programs)*



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