

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

Q&A's for Signup 43

- Q1:** CP11's were only permitted to have a 10-year practice length. What is the practice length for CP11's that are expiring and will be re-offered as a 3A?
- A1:** The practice length is 10-15 years. See 2-CRP, subparagraph 66B.
- Q2:** Does the CRP cover have to be a monoculture to receive N1b points for enhancements?
- A2:** No, the cover must be primarily a monoculture. See Exhibit 26
- Q3:** An expiring CRP contract includes land that was waterbank land. Can the expiring contract be re-offered? If yes, what practice is it enrolled under and what is the soil rental rate?
- A3:** The expiring contract is eligible to be re-offered under continuous signup as practice CP30, Marginal Pastureland Wetland Buffer. The marginal pastureland rental rate should be used. Incentives do not apply.
- Q4:** Can a State entity enroll in CRP and receive payments?
- A4:** The State entity may enroll in the CRP, **no** payments may be received.
- Q5:** States are reaching their allocation limit for certain continuous signup practices, such as CP23. Should States continue to take offers for CP23?
- A5:** Yes, continue to take offers for CP23. Notice CRP-691 provided new allocations and an opportunity to submit requests for additional acres.
- Q6:** What soil should be used to calculate the maximum payment rate when the 3rd and 4th soil have the same number of acres?
- A6:** Use the soil with the higher rental rate.
- Q7:** How do I prepare GIS files for use with the COLS application?
- A7:** A: Link is provided for the updated TERRA documentation for thin client users.

<https://fsa.sc.egov.usda.gov/mgr/GIS/training/User%20Guides/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2fmgr%2fGIS%2ftraining%2fUser%20Guides%2fThin%20Client%2fTERRA&FolderCTID=&View=%7bADD4B97D%2d819B%2d43A1%2d83C8%2d525207E9CE9C%7d>

The FAQs and User Guide cover the issue of copying files from thin client to the workstation. Refer to FAQ 10 video to see exactly how to move the files for thin client.

- Q8:** How do we enter multiple offers for a tract?
- A8:** Only one offer per tract can be submitted. If an offer has been submitted but changes are needed before signup ends, users should search for the offer, and then select “Edit”. “Edit” will unsubmit the offer. Users can then edit the information or submit a different offer for the tract. Each scenario must be uniquely named. Even offers scenario names which have been deleted cannot be reused.
- Q9:** All acres are rounded to tenths in TERRA. What should we do if this causes the acreage to exceed the actual eligible acreage for the offer?
- A9:** In COLS edit the offer and reduce the largest acreage by the necessary amount. For example: actual acreage is 6.3 acres, TERRA sends first soil of 3.1 (3.11) and second soil of 3.3 (3.27) for a total of 6.4. In COLS reduce the second soil to 3.2.
- Q10:** What information can be released concerning the interest in signup 43?
- A10:** No acreage numbers may be released. However, States may provide that CRP sign up has thus far gone better than expected with no major issues reported. The volume of producers interested in enrolling in CRP appears strong, but much depends upon how many producers choose to enroll the next two weeks.
- Q11:** Will existing monoculture stands of introduced or native grasses be eligible to be offered under the EBI.
- A11:** Yes, the EBI Fact Sheet and Exhibit 26 are being clarified to provide that existing monoculture stands are eligible. Monoculture stands of CP1 – Introduced grasses will receive 10 points, and monoculture stands of native grasses will receive 20 points.
- Q12:** Will existing stands of trees that do not meet the minimum planting standard be eligible to be offered.
- A12:** Yes, we are clarifying the EBI Fact Sheet and Exhibit 26 to include that existing stands are eligible if the existing stand meets the appropriate site index, (State developed standards). Existing solid stands that meet the appropriate site index will receive 10 points, existing stands with openings will receive 50 points.
- Q13:** If an expiring CRP contract has a native grass stand that has trees that have volunteered in the stand, what practice should be used to re-enroll the expiring land? Is this eligible as CP2?
- A13:** This is a local (COC) determination concerning the compliance of the current contract. Does the land meet the CP2 standard? Does the land meet the standard of CP4D. States need to provide guidance to their county offices concerning these types of situations and what is appropriate for your area.

Example:

Field 1 – 100 acres Native Grass 50 point mix	Field 2 – 50 acres Native Grass – 20 point mix
	Field 3 – 40 acres Introduced grass – 40 point mix
	Field 4 – 10 acres Introduced grass – Monoculture Crested wheat grass – 10 point mix

Q14: What is the minimum amount of enhancement that must be done in order to receive the 20 points under N1b for enhancement?

A14: The producer would have to enhance at least 51 percent, or 5.1 acres of the 10 acre monoculture stand of crested wheat grass to receive the 20 points.

Q15: Are only the monoculture stands eligible or would a CP2, 20 point cover also be eligible for N1b enhancement points?

A15: If the CP2, 20 point stand is primarily a monoculture it is eligible to receive 20 points under N1b for the enhancement.

Q16: When issuing cost share payments, which year is being read for AGI flags?

A16: The AGI flags are reading the year of CRP-1 approval. If the CRP-1 was approved on September 1, 2009, cost share payments issued now will read the 2009 AGI flags.

- Q17:** In the General Signup 43 Summary training slides, slides 10 and 12 discuss a change that has been made to allow COLS and TERRA to round to tenths. I've heard that with MIDAS new CRP contracts will be in hundredths because Farm Records acreage will be reported in hundredths. How will this work for signup 43?
- A17:** The determination has been made that CRP will continue to measure and record acreage in tenths.
- Q18:** Does the TERRA scenario need to go back to the F: Drive for COLS to pick it up?
- A18:** Yes. COLS can **not** see drives that are not mapped to the user's workstation. Thin client TERRA output has always needed to be copied to the county office workstation or server in order for the user to browse them into COLS. See the User Guide and the thin client FAQ document.
- Q19:** How does land planted to trees in EQIP, WHIP, Conservation Stewardship Program, or the Conservation Security Program maintain its cropland status according to 3-CM, paragraph 26?
- A19:** The land loses its cropland status when the trees are planted.
- Q20:** 2-CRP, Exhibit 26, page 5, practice CP3 to receive 50 points for subfactor N1a states "Western Pines (softwoods) - Pines/softwoods existing planted at a rate of 550 to 650 per acre depending upon the site index (State-developed standards) with 10 to 20 percent openings managed to a CP4D wildlife cover." Does this mean for an existing stand, or a planted stand.
- A20:** A newly planted stand shall be planted at a rate of 550 to 650 trees per acre to receive the 50 points
- Q21:** Can TERRA be opened before signup to allow county offices to create scenarios to provide to producers in preparation for signup?
- A21:** No. Enabling TERRA before signup begins allows county offices to conduct a signup before signup 43 begins. While we understand the advantages to enabling TERRA early, conducting signup activities before signup begins is not authorized.
- Q22:** Can TERRA be enabled to provide County Offices access to signup 44 to complete an Erodibility Index evaluation in order to quickly determine eligibility for the producer?
- A22:** No. Enabling TERRA before signup begins allows county offices to conduct a signup before signup 44 begins and possibly before signup 43 begins. While we understand the advantages to enabling TERRA early, conducting signup activities before signup begins is not authorized.

Q23: Can NRCS provide interim conservation plans for pending contracts which may not have a conservation plan completed by September 30?

A23: No. Interim conservation plans are not authorized.

Q24: Can NRCS provide interim conservation plans for pending TIP contracts which may not have a conservation plan completed by September 30?

A24: No. Interim conservation plans are not authorized.

Q25: Can County Offices update only the general signup soils data table and complete the remaining data entry later?

A25: No. All soils data tables must be updated in their entirety.

Q26: What was the intent of mentioning the Job Sheets in notice CRP-706?

A26: Job Sheets for a practice are intended to help provide information to the applicant of what may be required for a specific practice. NRCS should have this information available from previous signups and should be used to help answer some producers questions.

Q27: If offered acreage has an existing cover from previous CRP participation and was not immediately re-enrolled, must it be enhanced to current cover standards to be accepted?

A27: No. Acreage in a grass practice that was previously enrolled in CRP may be re-enrolled as “existing” cover. For example, Producer A’s CRP contract expired September 30, 2010, and the offer to re-enroll the acreage was not accepted during signup 39. The producer maintained the cover and is offering the acreage during signup 43. The offer is considered an offer of “existing” CRP cover and the offer and is **not** required to meet current cover requirements to be accepted.

Note: This is a change in policy. Question 27 has been updated from the original to reflect this change.

Q28: A producer was prevented from planting 200 acres of wheat but only has 150 base acres of wheat. The producer also has 50 base acres of grain sorghum. Will the 200 acres of prevented planting of wheat be eligible for CRP purposes?

A28: The producers cropping history of 150 acres for wheat and 50 acres for grain sorghum would NOT be altered based on a claim of 200 acres of prevented planting for wheat for crop insurance purposes.

Q29: Under N1a scoring for CRP practice CP3, Southern Pines with a 10 to 20 percent opening managed as practice CP4D receive 50 points. Can the CP4D openings be greater than 20 percent?

A29: No, the openings managed to a CP4D cover may not be greater than 20 percent.

- Q30:** We have discovered a few errors on current CRP contract field boundaries in which a correction of a field boundary would increase the acreage under CRP contract. The producer wants to re-enroll the acreage with the correct contract acres. Will COLS allow the offer to be for more acreage than is on the current CRP contract when considering cropping history? For example, field 1 on the expiring CRP contract is 23.0 acres. A correction of the field boundary revealed that field 1 is 23.5 acres. The producer wishes to re-enroll the corrected 23.5 acres of field 1.
- A30:** The county office shall correct the existing CRP contract acreage before processing the offer through TERRA and COLS.
- Q31:** In a previous CRP signup, practice CP42 was limited the regard to what other practices it could be associated with. Can an offer that is only practice CP3 or CP3A also include practice CP42?
- A31:** CRP practice CP42 does not have to be offered in conjunction with any other CRP practice. It is a stand-alone practice.
- Q32:** A CRP participant wishes to re-enroll trees that are on an expiring CRP contract. Can the participant remove the trees and offer another CRP practice to earn more EBI points?
- A32:** The producer may not remove the trees to offer another CRP practice. A tree practice must be reoffered as a tree practice.
- Q33:** A producer enrolled cropland into WHIP in 2001 as a 10-year agreement. He received cost-shares for establishing native grasses. Based on the provisions of 2-CRP, subparagraph 151 C, is the producer now eligible to offer the acreage in a general signup?
- A33:** No, the acreage is not eligible. When the acreage was under WHIP contract from 2001 through 2011, it did not receive cropping history. Additionally, it does not meet the criteria to be considered Conserving Use acres.
- Q34:** In the General Signup Overview and Pre-Signup Activities training slides, Slide 31 states that Late-filed FSA-578's may be accepted according to 2-CP. Does this slide refer to provisions of 2-CP, paragraph 21?
- A34:** Yes, late-filed acreage reports may be accepted according to the provisions of 2-CP, paragraph 21.
- Q35:** According to 2-CP, paragraph 21, the county committee is required to approve late-filed FSA-578's. Should the county office accept the offer as eligible to enroll the acreage before the county committee approves the late-filed FSA-578?
- A35:** No. The county committee shall approve the late-filed acreage reports before accepting the offer as eligible. If the late-filed FSA-578 is not approved the producer does not have the cropping history necessary for a valid offer.

- Q36:** Is the following scenario concerning trees listed below true?
If CRP acreage is expiring in 2012 we will consider the offer as eligible cropland for the offer as practice CP3 or CP3A with expiring tree cover.
- A36:** Acreage planted to trees loses its cropland status when the trees are planted. For CRP contracts scheduled to expire September 30, 2012, the acreage with trees is eligible as expiring CRP and may be re-enrolled.
- Q37:** If the CRP acres planted to trees expired in 2011 or earlier and the acreage was maintained as though in CRP, is it eligible to be re-enrolled?
- A37:** No. Acreage planted to trees loses its cropland status when the trees are planted. CRP contracts with tree practices that expired September 30, 2011, or earlier, may not be re-enrolled because the acreage is no longer cropland and is not eligible for enrollment.
- Q38:** Can a participant with practice CP3 scheduled to expire September 30, 2012 clear-cut the acreage and re-enroll the acreage as practice CP42?
- A38:** No. A participant with an existing tree practice may only re-enroll the acreage as a tree practice. Acreage planted to trees loses its cropland status when the trees are planted. If the producer were to clear-cut the acreage it should be treated as an offer of non-cropland.
- Q39:** If a producer with practice CP1 scheduled to expire September 30, 2012 wants to re-enroll the acreage as practice CP3, how should the offer be entered into COLS?
- A39:** The acreage should be offered as practice CP3, trees.
- Q40:** What would the N1a and N1b scores be?
- A40:** The N1a score would be either 10 points or 50 points depending upon the trees selected and whether the producer elects to include 10 to 20 percent openings managed to a CP4D wildlife cover. Please see 2-CRP, exhibit 26, page 5. The N1b score would be 20 points if the producer converts at least 51 percent to a mixture of native species that provide wildlife habitat benefits. Please see 2-CRP, exhibit 26, page 11.
- Q41:** Because of the software issues earlier, will signup be extended?
- A41:** We do not know if signup will be extended at this time.

Q42: A producer with expiring trees wants to re-offer the acreage. 2-CRP, exhibit 11, practice CP3 states that the area between the trees must be seeded to a CP2 50 point mix. Many tree practices were planted 20 years ago. Does this mean the offered acreage would not qualify as practice CP3 if the open areas between the tree rows are not seeded to a 50 point mix?

A42: No. Acreage offered as an existing CP3 practice may be re-offered as practice CP3. In this case, the questioner does not understand the practice requirements. 2-CRP does not require the area between the rows of trees to be planted to a 50-point mix for an existing stand of trees. 2-CRP, exhibit 11, practice CP3 states “C/S is authorized to plant approved native grass and/or shrub plantings best suited for wildlife in the area within the 10 to 20 percent openings. Open areas **must** be planted to a 50-point cover of approved native grasses and/or shrubs best suited for wildlife in the area.” If the open areas are not planted to a 50-point mix, the producer receives no cost-shares.

Q43: Are we required to take a CCC-931, AGI Certification, from everyone that signs the CRP-1, even those with zero shares?

A43: Yes. 2-CRP, subparagraph 131C requires that all producers must provide a certification of average AGI according to 1-PL or 4-PL as applicable. A CCC-526, CCC-926, or CCC-931 must be filed before the CRP-1 is approved.

Q44: 2-CRP, Exhibit 11, Page 43, CP12 Wildlife Food Plot, subparagraph E, Requirements states “Individual food plots shall not exceed 5 acres in size and shall not be immediately adjacent.” What is the maximum number of 5 acre food plots you can have per contract?

A44: County offices shall use the NRCS standards and specifications for wildlife upland habitat management (645) or wetland wildlife habitat management (644) for the desired wildlife species in order to establish the suitable plant species, plot location, and total acres devoted to food plots according to 2-CRP Exhibit 11, CP12 E – Requirements.

For example; Florida practice standard 645 states wildlife food plots shall be 1-3 acres in size, and comprise no more than 5 percent of the forest acreage. So, if a producer is offering 50 acres and wants to install wildlife food plots, the food plots can total no more than 2.5 acres (5 percent of 50), and must be between 1 and 3 acres in size.

Q45: From CRP appendix Item #15. Effective Date And Changes to Contract

“The CRP contract is effective when, as determined by CCC, it has been signed by the participants and an authorized representative of CCC...”

Once the contract is signed by participants and CED/COC, may the contract be succeeded to if there is a change in ownership?

A45: Yes. Once the CRP-1 is signed by the participants and approved by a CCC representative, new owners may succeed to the contract.

- Q46:** 2-CRP, subparagraph 401A states county offices shall complete a paid-for measurement service before approving a CRP-1. The exceptions state that measurement is not required for official acres and acreage that is re-offered and accepted. If TERRA is used to delineate the field, is that a paid-for measurement?
- A46:** Total acreage determined using TERRA is not required to have an additional paid-for measurement. Paid-for measurement is required in situations where a member of the county office staff provides staking and referencing in the field to delineate the acreage that will be under CRP contract.
- Q47:** 2-CRP provides policy that producers have until close of signup to withdraw an offer without liquidated damages being assessed. If the county office is using a register, do all producers in that county have until the end of the register to withdraw an offer without liquidated damages?
- A47:** No, only those producers on the register have until the end of the register period to withdraw an offer without liquidated damages.
- Q48:** A producer with CRP practice CP3A scheduled to expire September 30, 2012 wishes to re-offer the acreage as practice CP31. Would a SIP payment be authorized?
- A48:** No. 2-CRP, subparagraph 197A states that acreage currently enrolled into CRP is not eligible to receive a SIP payment.
- Q49:** If a producer has certifications on file for 2002 through 2007 but does not have a certification on file for 2011, are we required to get a late-filed certification for crop year 2011?
- A49:** No, 2-CRP, paragraph 151 states the acreage must be planted or considered planted to an agricultural commodity during 4 of the 6 crop years from 2002 through 2007 and that the land is legally and physically capable of being planted to an agricultural commodity in a normal manner. A late-filed 2011 certification would only be required if the producer wishes to prove the acreage was maintained as though in CRP for that year.