

Emergency Watershed Protection Program

Implementing emergency measures to relieve imminent hazards to life and property created by natural disasters.

www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/ewp

HELPING PEOPLE HELP THE LAND

Emergency Watershed Protection Program

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) administers the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) program, which responds to emergencies created by natural disasters. It is not necessary for a national emergency to be declared for an area to be eligible for assistance.

The EWP Program is a recovery effort aimed at relieving imminent hazards to life and property caused by floods, fires, windstorms, and other natural occurrences. All projects undertaken, with the exception of the purchase of floodplain easements, must have a project sponsor. NRCS may bear up to 75 percent of the construction cost of emergency measures. The remaining cost must come from local sources and can be in the form of cash or in-kinds services. Funding for the program is provided through congressional appropriations.

Type of Work Authorized through EWP

EWP is designed for installation of recovery measures to safeguard lives and property as a result of a natural disaster. Threats that the EWP program addresses are termed watershed impairments. These include, but are not limited to:

- Debris-clogged stream channels
- Undermined and unstable stream banks
- Jeopardized water control structures and public infrastructures
- Wind-borne debris removal
- Damaged upland sites stripped of protective vegetation by fire or drought

The program can include purchasing floodplain easements. These easements restore, protect, maintain, and enhance the functions and values of the floodplain, including associated wetlands and riparian areas. They also conserve natural values including fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, flood water retention and ground water recharge, as well as safeguard lives and property from floods, drought, and the results of erosion.

EWP work is not limited to any one set of prescribed measures. NRCS completes a Damage Survey Report which provides a case-by-case investigation of the work necessary to repair or protect a site. NRCS will only provide funding for work that is necessary to reduce applicable threats. Should sponsors want to increase the level of protection, the sponsor will be responsible for paying 100 percent of the cost of the upgrade and additional work.

Right: An excavator completes streambank work at EWP site in Barnett Vermont.



Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program

Eligibility for EWP

Public and private landowners are eligible for assistance, but must be represented by a project sponsor.

Sponsors include legal subdivisions of the State, such as a city, county, general improvement district, conservation district, or any Native American tribe or tribal organization as defined in section 4 of the Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act.

Sponsor's Obligations

Sponsors are responsible for:

- Providing land rights to do repair work
- Securing the necessary permits
- Furnishing the local cost share
- Accomplishing the installation of work
- Performing any necessary operation and maintenance

Criteria for Assistance

All EWP work must reduce threat to life and property, be economically, environmentally, and socially defensible, and be sound from a technical standpoint.

How Do I Get Assistance?

If your land has suffered severe damage that may qualify for the EWP program, you should contact your local authorities and request assistance. City and county governments, flood and water control districts, and soil and water conservation districts are the most common sponsors of EWP projects. More information is available from NRCS offices throughout Vermont. Please see county listing with contact information to right.



Two Vermont structures that were classified as exigency sites for the EWP program.



USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Contact NRCS:

Addison County: Norm Smith
(802) 865-7895 ext. 117

Bennington County: Les Wright
(802) 775-8034 ext. 23

Caledonia County: Jake Clough
(802) 748-2641 ext. 117

Chittenden County: Norm Smith
(802) 865-7895 ext. 117

Essex County: Jake Clough
(802) 748-2641 ext. 117

Franklin County: Ann Lansberry
(802) 527-1296 ext. 116

Grand Isle County: Ann Lansberry
(802) 527-1296 ext. 116

Lamoille County: Ann Lansberry
(802) 527-1296 ext. 116

Orange County: Bill Van Fossen
(802) 295-7942 ext. 22

Orleans County: Dave Gauvin
(802) 334-6090 ext. 23

Rutland County: Les Wright
(802) 775-8034 ext. 23

Washington County: Norm Smith
(802) 865-7895 ext. 117

Windham County: Bill Van Fossen
(802) 295-7942 ext. 22

Windsor County: Bill Van Fossen
(802) 295-7942 ext. 22