



Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program – Indiana

OVERVIEW

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the State of Indiana are partners in implementing a voluntary Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) to enroll up to 26,250 acres in all or a portion of Adams, Allen, Bartholomew, Benton, Boone, Brown, Carroll, Cass, Clay, Daviess, Decatur, Delaware, Dubois, Fountain, Fulton, Gibson, Grant, Green, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Henry, Howard, Huntington, Jay, Jackson, Jennings, Johnson, Jasper, Knox, Kosciusko, Lawrence, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Martin, Miami, Monroe, Morgan, Montgomery, Noble, Orange, Owen, Parke, Pike, Posey, Pulaski, Randolph, Rush, Shelby, Starke, Sullivan, Tipton, Tippecanoe, Vanderburgh, Vermillion, Vigo, Wabash, Warren, Warrick, Washington, Wells, White and Whitley counties. The Indiana CREP is intended to improve water quality, reduce soil erosion, reduce the amount of sediment, phosphorous and other pollutants entering waterbodies and improve wildlife habitat through the establishment of riparian buffers, filter strips, native grasses and trees and the restoration of wetlands.

BACKGROUND

CREP is part of the USDA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). CRP is a federally funded voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive land is not farmed or ranched, but instead used for conservation benefits. CRP participants establish permanent, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees (known as “covers”) to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat. In return, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. CRP is authorized by the Food Security Act of 1985 and was reauthorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014.

With CREP, high-priority conservation goals are identified by the state, and then federal funds are supplemented with non-federal funds to achieve those goals.

Through the Indiana CREP, federal and state resources are made available to voluntarily enroll in CRP for 14-year to 15-year contracts. Participants remove cropland and marginal pastureland from agricultural production and convert the land to native grasses, trees and other vegetation or restore wetlands. This will improve water quality, reduce soil erosion, reduce the amount of sediment, phosphorous and other pollutants entering waterbodies and improve wildlife habitat.

GOALS

The goals of the Indiana CREP are to:

- Protect a minimum of 3,000 linear miles of watercourses with buffer practices;
- Reduce sediments, nutrients and agricultural chemicals entering watercourses;
- Restore and protect wetlands; and
- Improve habitat terrestrial and aquatic wildlife.

ELIGIBLE CONSERVATION PRACTICES

The following specific CRP conservation practices are available:

- CP2, Establishment of Permanent Native Grasses;
- CP3A, Hardwood Tree Planting;
- CP4D, Permanent Wildlife Habitat, Non-Easement;
- CP21, Filter Strips;
- CP22, Riparian Buffer;
- CP23, Wetland Restoration;
- CP23A, Wetland Restoration, Non-Floodplain; and
- CP31, Bottomland Timber Establishment.

ENROLLMENT AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Enrollment for the Indiana CREP is on a continuous basis. To be eligible, land must be located in the project area and be either cropland or marginal pastureland. Cropland must meet cropping history criteria and be physically and legally capable of being planted in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity. Marginal pastureland is also eligible for enrollment provided it is suitable for use as a riparian buffer planted to trees.

PAYMENTS

Under the Indiana CREP, eligible participants may receive the following payments:

- A cost-share payment of up to 50 percent of the eligible reimbursable cost to install the approved conservation practice.
- A one-time practice incentive payment (PIP) for installing practices CP21, CP22, CP23, CP23A and CP31. The PIP is equal to 40 percent of the total eligible cost of installing the practice. Example: Producer’s total eligible reimbursable cost for installing the practice is \$2,000. The PIP would be \$800 ($\$2,000 \times .40$).
- A one-time signing incentive payment (SIP) of \$100 per acre for installing practices CP21, CP22 and CP31; and \$150 per acre for installing practices CP23 and CP23A. Example: 10 acres enrolled to be devoted to practice CP21 result in a \$1,000 ($10 \text{ acres} \times \100) SIP. This payment is made after the contract has been signed and approved.
- An annual rental payment consisting of:
 - o A base soil rental rate, determined by (1) for cropland, the three predominant soils of the eligible land offered; or (2) for marginal pastureland, the posted marginal pastureland rate for the county;
 - o An incentive, as a percentage of the base soil rental rate, of 40 percent; and
 - o A maintenance payment, determined by the practice offered.

In addition, the State of Indiana provides the following payments:

- A one-time incentive payment of \$400 per acre for CP3A, CP22 and CP31;
- A one-time incentive payment of \$950 per acre for newly enrolled CP23 and CP23A;
- A one-time incentive payment of \$100 per acre for CP2, CP4D and CP21; and
- A one-time incentive payment of \$400 per acre for re-enrolled CP23 and CP23A.

EXAMPLES

A Benton County producer elects to enroll 10 acres of land to be devoted to a filter strip (practice CP21) in a 15-year contract. The base soil rental rate for the land is \$224 per acre. The incentive payment is \$90 per acre ($\$224 \times .40$). The annual maintenance payment is \$10 per acre. The producer’s annual rental rate will be \$324 per acre ($\$224 + \$90 + \10) for a total annual payment of \$3,240 ($\$324 \times 10 \text{ acres}$). The producer will receive \$48,600 in annual rental payments over the 15-year term of the CRP contract. In addition, the producer will receive a one-time SIP of \$1,000 ($10 \text{ acres} \times \100). The producer will receive cost-share payments equal to 50 percent of the eligible reimbursable costs to install the filter strip, plus a PIP equal to 40 percent of the cost of the eligible reimbursable costs to install the filter strip. In addition, the State of Indiana will pay the producer a one-time incentive payment equal to \$1,000.

A Decatur County producer elects to enroll 20 acres of land to restore a wetland (practice CP23) in a 15-year contract. The base soil rental rate for the land is \$223 per acre. The incentive payment is \$90 per acre ($\$223 \times .40$). The producer’s annual rental rate will be \$313 per acre ($\$223 + \90) for a total annual payment of \$6,260 ($\$313 \times 20 \text{ acres}$). The producer will receive \$93,900 in annual rental payments over the 15-year term of the CRP contract. The producer will receive cost-share payments equal to 50 percent of the eligible reimbursable costs to restore the wetland, plus a PIP equal to 40 percent of the cost. In addition, the State of Indiana will pay the producer a one-time incentive payment equal to \$19,000.

Note: The preceding are examples only.

ENROLLMENT OPTIONS

CREP is another option under CRP that farmers and ranchers may select to enhance their land. Eligible producers may still enroll in CRP through general or continuous signup; however, the Indiana CREP provides additional benefits not available through the general and/or continuous signup. Under the Indiana CREP, producers receive higher incentive payments and longer contract lengths that increase the total amount of payments received.

HAYING AND GRAZING

Haying and grazing are not allowed during the CRP contract period unless authorized by USDA. Contact your local FSA office for more information about authorized haying and grazing activities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

This fact sheet is provided for informational purposes only; other restrictions or requirements may apply. For more information on CREP, contact your local FSA office. To find your local FSA county office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>. To learn more about FSA conservation programs, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation.

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