

Minnesota Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

Basic Program Overview

- CREP is a federal-state natural resource conservation program that targets environmentally sensitive land across 54 counties in southern and western Minnesota.
- CREP focuses on the state's highest priority areas for achieving nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment reductions, protection of vulnerable drinking water, and enhancement of grassland and wetland habitats.
- The CREP agreement is administered by both the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and the USDA – Farm Service Agency (FSA), and calls for 60,000 acres to be protected within the 24.2 million acre CREP area at a total cost of \$500 million.
- Approximately \$150 million of the total will be the responsibility of the State. Anticipated state sources include – Clean Water Fund, Outdoor Heritage Fund, Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund and Capital Investment (Bonding).
- \$350 million in federal funds will be used as direct payments for landowners enrolled in the program.
- Through CREP, landowners voluntarily receive financial incentives from both the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) to protect and restore marginal cropland from agricultural production utilizing buffers, wetland restoration and wellhead protection practices.
- Landowners will be able to sign up continuously for CREP at local FSA offices, beginning Spring 2017. Projects will be scored and approved for funding in batches, based on environmental benefits.
- Over the next few months, BWSR and FSA staff will finalize CREP guidance processes and train field staff.
- CREP is supported by a coalition of more than 70 local, state and national organizations and agencies.
- Additional information and updates on CREP can be found at www.bwsr.state.mn.us/crep.

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