FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**NEWS RELEASE**

Contact: XYZ

 Phone

**MN CREP and Continuous Conservation Reserve Program: Two Options for Landowners**

**Month XX, 2019**

LOCATION, Minn. — Landowners interested in setting aside marginal cropland or protecting sensitive areas once again have two options available to them, Minnesota Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (MN CREP) and Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP). MN CREP and CCRP enrollment reopened on June 3 after a brief pause that began last fall.

“Landowners in XX County should be looking at conservation as an option.” said XXXXX, Title. “It can meet various land management goals by increasing wildlife habitat, improving water quality, or helping address the economics of less productive land. We can help people figure out what program may work best for them.”

MN CREP and CCRP applications must be received by August 23 to be considered for CRP funding this federal fiscal year. Both programs rely on the USDA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) as a starting point, with MN CREP adding a state-funded easement administered by the Board of Water and Soil Resources to the CRP contracted acres.

MN CREP is a voluntary state-federal program designed to improve water quality and habitat through permanent conservation easements. MN CREP’s program goal is to protect and restore up to 60,000 acres of marginal cropland across 54 southern and western Minnesota counties using buffer strips, wetland restoration, and drinking water wellhead area protection. Native plantings on those acres will filter water, prevent erosion and provide critical habitat for grassland dependent species. Private ownership continues and the land is permanently restored and enhanced for water quality and habitat benefits.

Landowners who enroll in CCRP enter into contracts that last up to 15 years. The USDA provides landowners with annual rental payments and cost-share assistance. CCRP pays landowners who remove sensitive lands from production and plant certain grasses, shrubs and trees that improve water quality, prevent soil erosion and increase wildlife habitat.

To learn more about the programs, stop by XXXX SWCD at XXXXXXXX or call us at XXXXXXX. Our staff can answer questions about CCRP and MN CREP and provide more detailed information about payment rates.

Visit (SWCD website) or [BWSR MN CREP for Landowners website](https://bwsr.state.mn.us/mn-crep-landowners) for more information about MN CREP.

###