

Sign up for MN CREP continues despite Federal CRP Continuous Signup suspension

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St. Paul, Minn.

In October, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced a temporary suspension of enrollment in the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP). However, Minnesota landowners are still able to participate in sign-ups for the Minnesota Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (MN CREP).

The MN CREP is a partnership between the State and USDA that includes both the federal Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and state Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve easement program to create buffers, restore wetlands, and protect wellheads for drinking water. Farmers and agricultural landowners can voluntarily enroll land in the program. The program's 60,000 acres will provide water quality and habitat protection benefits in the state.

"MN CREP's attractive payment rates and ability to retire marginal cropland make it an excellent option for landowners," said Bill Penning, Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Easement Section Manager.

MN CREP applications are being accepted in the 54-county project area of southern and west central Minnesota. Interested landowners can continue to sign-up at their local USDA FSA office.

The program is just one option for landowners who wish to install conservation practices on their land. The local FSA/Natural Resources Conservation Service/Soil and Water Conservation District office can provide numerous strategic, voluntary, long-term solutions to directly address resource problems. The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) encourages eligible landowners to contact their local Soil and Water Conservation District for more information and signup assistance.

Learn more at www.bwsr.state.mn.us/crep/ or find your local SWCD at www.maswcd.org.

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BWSR is the state soil and water conservation agency, and it administers programs that prevent sediment and nutrients from entering our lakes, rivers, and streams; enhance fish and wildlife habitat; and protect wetlands. The 20-member board consists of representatives of local and state government agencies and citizens. BWSR's mission is to improve and protect Minnesota's water and soil resources by working in partnership with local organizations and private landowners.