



DICKINSON SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

SPIRIT LAKE, IOWA 51360 712-336-3782, EXT. 3

OCTOBER 2001

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program(CREP)

An offspring of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), CREP is a voluntary program for agricultural landowners to address water quality issues related to excess nitrogen impacting water quality in North Central Iowa. This program will target 9,000 acres and will provide financial incentive to producers to restore wetlands and install riparian buffer practices to significantly reduce the amount of nitrogen, sediment and pesticides that enter the streams and rivers of Iowa while improving wildlife habitat.

Contact the USDA Service Center at 712-336-3782 for more information.

Plant Material Centers

By Carroll Oskvig, District Conservationist

NRCS has several Plant Materials Centers in the United States including the one that serves our area in Elsberry, Missouri.

Plant Materials Centers provide vegetative solutions to conservation problems. Trees, shrubs, forbs, legumes and grasses are collected

from native stands with the intent to use them for specific erosion control, forage production, windbreak, wildlife habitat, water quality improvement or woodland production needs.

Additional testing and trials by the Center determine management techniques necessary for each species released.

Plants are field tested prior to being released for commercial production of the variety.

Some of the plant releases from the Elsberry Center include:

Sideoats Grama – Northern Iowa
Canada Wildrye – Northern Iowa
'Flame' Amur Maple
'Cave-In-Rock' Switchgrass

If you would like to participate in field testing plant materials or with plant material collections, please contact the Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District at the USDA Service Center in Spirit Lake or by calling 712-336-3782, Ext. 3.

Cost Share Programs Available

The Dickinson Soil and Water Con-

servation District offers cost-sharing to producers who install several kinds of conservation practices.

These practices include waterways, terraces, sediment basins, waterways, grade stabilization structures, diversions, farmstead windbreaks, field windbreaks and wetland restorations.

Cost-sharing ranges from 50-75%, depending on the practice and location of the practice in the county.

A \$10 per acre no-till or ridge-till incentive is available to producers who plant up to 80 acres using these tillage systems. This incentive is offered on a one-time, per person basis.

The Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District also offers permanent wetland easements located in the Iowa Great Lakes Watershed. These easement areas improve water quality and wildlife habitat by restoring wetlands and providing habitat for wildlife.

Please contact the Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District at the USDA Service Center in Spirit Lake or

District Commissioners

Mark Ingwersen, Chairperson Scott Mitchell, Secretary
Chris Hoffman, Vice Chair Orville Berg, Treasurer
Bill Northey

Assistant Commissioners

Tom Koster, Curt Smith, Keith Van Kleek

District Mission Statement

The Dickinson SWCD will serve its customers and the needs of the District's natural resources through education, promotion, and demonstration.

Contact us by e-mail at: swcd@rconnect.com

Visit the following web site for information on Dickinson County SWCD and other area offices:

www.theconservationstation.org

by calling 712-336-3782, Ext. 3 for more information on these cost-share programs.

Resource Management Planning

By Tim Terrill, Environmental Specialist

Many farmers come to the NRCS office and have a specific area of concern on their field where erosion is occurring. They address that this specific area needs to be treated. There are a variety of programs that the NRCS has to offer to spot treat erosion, but our agency takes a look at the entire field. This broader range of thinking termed Resource Management System (RMS) planning is what this office strives to accomplish. An example of RMS planning would be to recommend conservation tillage and contour farming as a way of reducing sheet and rill erosion. A change in tillage with contour farming is one of the best ways to save soil and heal gullies.

Another concern of farmers is the cost of doing RMS planning. You would logically think that doing planning for a whole field would be expensive to the landowner, but in the last year with a continuous CRP sign up incentive and an extra 40% producer incentive payment on specific practices, the cost of RMS planning has been greatly reduced. I know of one example where a landowner talked to me about an area that needed some treatment, and after I explained the new incentives, he signed up for two more waterways.

With the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) being potentially heavily funded in the next year, RMS planning will be a great benefit for the farmer as well as conservation.

The Farmable Wetlands Pilot Program

The USDA has introduced a new CRP program called the Farmable Wetlands Pilot Program. This program will allow landowners to enroll small wetland areas and adjacent buffers in the continuous signup of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Iowa is one of only six States eligible for this program. There is a maximum enrollment of 100,000 acres for Iowa. **Interested land-owners need to contact the NRCS office as soon as possible before the acreage capacity for the State is reached.**

To be eligible, the areas **must have been cropped in at least 3 of the last 10 years** and wetland area must be 5 acres or less. Wetlands in the floodplain of perennial streams will not be eligible. Wetland restoration must not impede upstream drainage.

Adjacent buffer can be three times the area of the farmable wetland or an average maximum of 150 ft. The maximum enrollment of wetland and adjacent buffer is 40 acres per tract.

The restored wetland can be farmed again after the CRP contract expires. Contract lengths can be 10 or 15 years in length. Rental rates are based on soil type and are the same as those available for filter strips and riparian buffers. A 20% incentive is added to the rental rate. A Signing Incentive Payment of \$10.00 per acre per year of contract is paid one time up front. Restoration costs are 50% cost shared with an additional 40% of eligible installation costs paid as a Practice Incentive Payment, which results in up to 90%

total cost share.

See the following example:

CRP Farmable Wetlands Pilot Program Example: Landowner wants 15-year contract on a drained/tilled wetland that has been cropped in all but wet years. Plan: Tile can be broken without affecting upstream drainage. Seed buffer to Switch grass, Big Bluestem and Indian Grass.

Wetland area 4.0 acres + buffer area 12.0 acres = 16.0 acres total

Acres	soil type	rate per acre
4.0	Okoboji	\$99.00 = \$396.00
6.0	Webster	\$129.00 = \$774.00
6.0	Nicollet	\$136.00 = <u>\$816.00</u>
	Loam	\$1986.00

divided by 16.0 acres = \$124.12 per acre

\$124.12 soil rental rate per acre
+ 24.82 20% incentive added to the base rate

+ 5.00 maintenance fee

\$153.94 payment per acre per year

**Signup Incentive payment =
16 acres x \$10.00 x 15 years =
\$2400.00 one time up front payment**

**Cost Share of Restoration
50% paid for by USDA + 40% of eligible installation costs
Practice Incentive Payment =
up to 90% total cost share**

If you have any questions or interest in this pilot program, please contact Maury Muhm at cell phone number 712-330-2562 or the USDA Service Center in Spirit Lake at 712-336-3782.

Thank you to our Volunteers:

Troylene Cooper, Clarence Call, Keith Van Kleek, Maurice Dougal, Tom Koster, Mike Rohlk, Jeanne Arp and the Newsletter Crew from RSVP. **We thank you for your help.**

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