

# CREP

MARYLAND'S CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM



## Fact Sheet

### **What is CREP?**

Maryland's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a federal-state conservation partnership that pays landowners attractive land rental rates to voluntarily take environmentally sensitive cropland and pastureland out of production for 10 to 15 years and plant streamside buffers, protect highly erodible land or establish wetlands to protect the water quality and wildlife habitat of local streams.

### **What conservation practices are eligible for CREP?**

Farmers can plant forested streamside buffers, grassed streamside buffers or conservation cover. They may also install grassland or forest practices to protect highly erodible land, promote certain wildlife species or establish wetlands to safeguard local streams.

### **Can I re-enroll my existing CREP practices when my contract expires?**

*Yes.* Existing practices for expired CREP contracts must be re-enrolled no later than June 1 of the year after the expiration date. If the deadline is missed, the site may be enrolled as a new contract under current eligibility requirements, but only if the practice is needed and feasible. Re-enrolled contracts are eligible for Maryland's \$100 signing bonus. Contracts with the cover planted to trees must be re-enrolled before expiration because those contracts will not meet the "able to be cropped" requirement once the current contract expires.

### **Can I enroll my Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) practices in CREP?**

The same parcel of land may *not* be enrolled in CREP and CRP at the same time; however, CRP participants with expiring contracts may enroll in a new CREP contract at attractive rates and qualify for federal and state sign-up bonuses if all eligibility requirements are met.

### **How do I know if my CRP practices qualify for CREP?**

Practices on cropland that is next to a stream or highly erodible land within 1,000 feet of a stream that has been planted to an agricultural commodity, meets cropping history requirements, and is still physically and legally capable of being planted may be eligible. Marginal pastureland next to a stream may also be eligible for certain practices.

### **If I re-enroll in CREP, can I change the current conservation practice?**

*Yes.* You may change the current conservation practice, but only if it results in a higher environmental benefit as determined by the Farm Service Agency (FSA) or the soil conservation district.

### **If I currently have riparian buffers that are wider than the 100 ft. maximum average width or ditch buffers wider than the 35 ft. maximum width, may I re-enroll the original widths?**

You may re-enroll the entire acreage previously under contract.

### **I have "stacked" buffers with different contract expiration dates. The contract for the first buffer strip is about to expire. Can I re-enroll all of the strips at once?**

*No.* Each strip must be re-enrolled separately. When you re-enroll additional strips, you can request a shorter contract length so that all re-enrolled contracts expire at the same time.

### When the first contract on my “stacked” buffers expires, am I required to re-enroll?

You may choose not to re-enroll the first stacked buffer when the contract expires, but you will be required to maintain the buffer until the other contract(s) expires. Otherwise, you would be out of compliance with CREP because the outer stacked buffer would not meet the practice requirements.

### How do I re-enroll in CREP?

Sign-up for Maryland CREP is ongoing until acreage goals are met. Contact the local soil conservation district or county Farm Service Agency to enroll in the program. Additional information on CREP is available on FSA’s website: [www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=copr&topic=cep](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=copr&topic=cep).

### Maryland’s 24 Soil Conservation Districts

Allegany	301-777-1747, ext. 3	Harford	410-638-4828
Anne Arundel	410-571-6757	Howard	410-313-0680
Baltimore County	410-527-5920, ext. 3	Kent	410-778-5150, ext. 3
Calvert	410-535-1521, ext. 3	Montgomery	301-590-2855
Caroline	410-479-1202, ext. 3	Prince George’s	301-574-5162, ext. 3
Carroll	410-848-8200, ext. 3	Queen Anne’s	410-758-3136, ext. 3
Catoctin	301-695-2803, ext. 3	St. Mary’s	301-475-8402, ext. 3
Cecil	410-398-4411, ext. 3	Somerset	410-621-9310
Charles	301-638-3028	Talbot	410-822-1577, ext. 5
Dorchester	410-228-5640, ext. 3	Washington County	301-797-6821, ext. 3
Frederick	301-695-2803, ext. 3	Wicomico	410-546-4777, ext. 3
Garrett	301-501-5856, ext. 3	Worcester	410-632-5439, ext. 3



Maryland Department of Agriculture  
Maryland Department of Natural Resources  
Maryland’s Soil Conservation Districts  
USDA Farm Service Agency  
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service