

Conservation Reserve Program

CP-29

MARGINAL PASTURELAND WILDLIFE BUFFERS

Wildlife Habitat | Soil and Water Quality | Flood Control



Why Choose CRP? You Benefit. Land, Water and Wildlife Benefit.

Grass buffers bordering waterbodies play a critical role in enhancing water quality and restoring wildlife habitat. The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) provides farmers and landowners with practices like this to achieve many farming and conservation goals. Whatever the conservation challenge – soil conservation, water quality protection, or wildlife habitat enhancement – CRP is a proven land performance and management solution.

Why Wildlife Buffers?

For landowners and farmers with marginal pastureland adjacent to streams, wetlands, and other water body types, creating Wildlife Habitat Buffers reduces sediment, nutrient, and pesticide runoff. They also restore native plant communities that stabilize stream banks and reduce erosion. Made up of native grasses, wildflowers or shrubs, Wildlife Habitat Buffers provide shelter and food for wildlife, as well as vital nutrition for pollinators and other beneficial insects. Offered in **continuous sign-up**, CP-29:

- Improves water quality by intercepting and filtering sediment and nutrient runoff
- Provides vital habitat for wildfowl, grassland birds, pollinators and other wetland species
- Protects soil

Financial Benefits

CP-29 participants are guaranteed:

- 10-15 years of annual rental payments with an additional 20% Rental Rate Incentive
- Payments covering up to 90% of the eligible costs of establishing the buffer practice
 - 50% from a Cost-Share Payment and
 - 40% from a Practice Incentive Payment (PIP)
- Sign-up Incentive Payment (SIP) up to \$100/acre
- Maintenance Rate Incentive
- Mid-Contract Management Cost Share
- Additional incentives may be available in your state under the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)



Eligible Land

- Meets marginal pastureland eligibility requirements and is immediately adjacent to and parallel to one of the following:
 - Permanent waterbody
 - Perennial or seasonal stream
 - Sinkhole or karst area
 - Semi-permanent or seasonally flooded area
 - Wetlands
- Suitable to be devoted to a wildlife habitat buffer
- Compliant with USDA's highly erodible land and wetland provisions

Practice Requirements

- Buffer will not be less than 20' and not more 120' in width
- Buffer will begin at the top of the stream bank
- Shall consist of naturally regenerated or seeded, planted trees, and shrubs suitable for the site
- Noxious weeds and other undesirable plants, insects, and pests shall be controlled

Owner/Operator Eligibility

Participants must:

- Have owned or operated the land for more than 12 months prior to program sign-up
- Be in control of the land for the length of the contract
- Meet USDA payment eligibility provisions

Obligations

Participants will:

- Not harvest or graze the practice area
- Work with USDA-approved conservationist to develop a conservation plan
- Perform periodic management activities on the wetland and buffer according to the provided conservation plan
- Complete seeding of the practice within 12 months of the effective date of the contract

Proven Conservation Benefits

- An acre of buffer adjacent to cropland holds back 2.5 tons of soil, 6.4 pounds of nitrogen, and 1.1 pounds of phosphorus in runoff
- In 2014, CRP lowered greenhouse gas emissions by the equivalent of 43 million metric tons of CO₂ - the same benefits as taking nearly 8 million cars off the road for a year
- In prime habitat, a 4% increase in CRP vegetation is associated with a 22% increase in pheasant counts

FSA will ultimately determine participant and land eligibility.

For More Information:

Contact your local USDA, Farm Service Agency:

<http://offices.usda.gov>

Photos provided by Iowa Dept. of Agriculture-Div of Soil Conservation, NRCS Bob Nichols and Pheasants Forever Peter Berthelsen respectively