



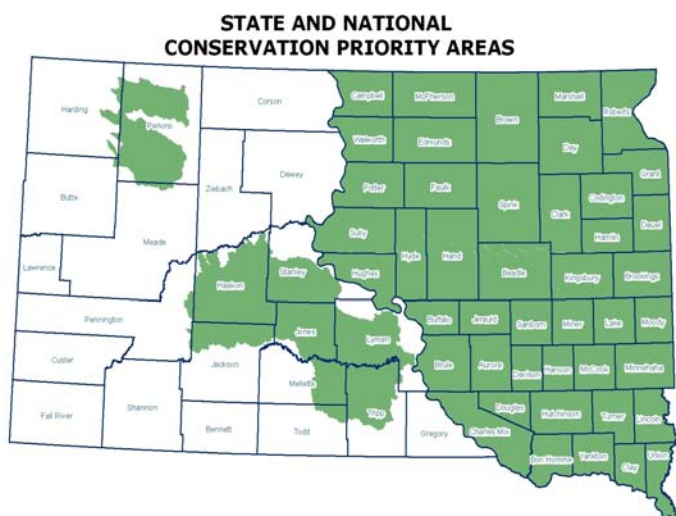
Landowners Matter

General CRP Sign-up 39 Aug 2-27th

It's been nearly five years since the last general sign-up for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Take advantage of this program by applying at your local USDA Farm Service Agency office this August 2nd – 27th. Whether you have a field with trouble wet spots or low yielding areas, erosion issues or simply want to increase wildlife habitat on your farm, CRP may provide you with a practice to address these issues.

To be eligible for CRP, a producer must have owned or operated the land for at least 12 months prior to the close of the CRP sign-up period. Land must be cropland which has been planted or considered planted to an agricultural commodity four of the previous six crop years from 2002 to 2007. In addition, cropland must meet one of the following criteria:

- Have a weighted average erosion index of 8 or higher or
- Be expiring CRP acreage or
- Located in a national or state CRP conservation priority area (see map below)



HOW TO MAXIMIZE YOUR GENERAL CRP OFFER:

Choose a higher diversity mix of native species to get the maximum 50 points.

CP25 (rare and declining habitat), CP4D (5 species native mix for wildlife habitat), or CP2 (native 5 species mix) score 50 points. CP25 may cost more, but also gains an additional 25 points for enduring benefits and 5 points for carbon sequestration.

Establish pollinator friendly habitat.

Producers can plant 9 species of pollinator-friendly shrubs, legumes, and wildflowers, with three in bloom for each of spring, summer, and fall on 1 acre or 10% of the offer, whichever is larger, and gain 20 points.

Upgrade existing cover.

Expired or expiring CRP land with an existing stand of a single species of grass can gain 20 points if the producer converts 51 percent or more of it to a mixed stand of native species.

Consider offering only the portions of your fields with the highest erodibility index value.

Soils that easily erode score more points.

If necessary, consider accepting less than the maximum rental rate.

Producers can receive up to 25 points for bidding up to 15% below the maximum per acre rental rate.

Biologists with Pheasants Forever and South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks can help producers find a CRP practice and conservation plan which will increase eligibility for the program and provide the best fit for the producer's operation. They can also help the producer identify other sources of cost share assistance and incentives.

FREQUENTLY ASKED CRP QUESTIONS

Q: If I sign my land up for CRP, how long is the contract?

A: CRP contracts may be for a period of 10 to 15 years.

Q: What type of payments will I receive if I enroll my land into CRP?

A: CRP program participants will receive annual rental payments. Rates are established for each type of soil in a county. The per-acre rental rates will be based on the three predominant soils within the offered area. Program participants will also receive cost share to establish cover and perform mid contract management.

Q: Do I have to allow public access to my CRP?

A: No. The producer retains the right to control public access. Additional incentives and payments are available through the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department if a producer is interested in allowing public access to their CRP.

Q: I am located in a State or National Conservation Priority Area (CPA). Do I receive additional points for this?

A: No. Producers do not receive additional points for being located in the CPA. However, there are wildlife, water quality and air quality zones within CPA's that provide additional points. Also, cropland within a CPA does not have to meet the Erosion Index of 8 or greater.

Q: I have CRP set to expire September 30, 2010, is this CRP eligible to re-enroll during this sign-up?

A: This cropland meets the cropping history requirements. The land may be offered with the existing cover. However, additional points may be obtained by changing the cover to a more diverse stand or a stand of native plants.

Q: Is haying or grazing allowed on land enrolled in this sign-up? What frequency can I hay or graze?

A: Yes. Producers can elect to participate in managed haying and grazing on specific practices. Managed haying and grazing can take place 1 out of every 5 years. Some practices may be eligible for emergency haying or grazing during designated emergency declarations. For specific details on hay-

ing and grazing contact your local FSA office.

Q: What types of activities do I have to do to meet the minimum requirements of mid contract management? How often do I have to conduct mid contract management?

A: Mid contract management must be performed once during the life of 10 year contract and twice for a 15 year contract. Activities include: light disking, heavy harrowing, prescribed burning, and mowing. Use of managed or emergency haying also qualifies.

Q: Is cost share available for establishing cover?

A: Yes, USDA will provide up to 50% cost share to establish cover on new CRP plantings.

Q: Are Signup Incentive Payments (SIPs) or Practice Incentive Payments (PIPs) available for the general sign-up on any practices?

A: No. SIPs and PIPs only apply to some Continuous CRP practices. For specific CRP details contact your local Farm Service Agency.

Q: If I apply, when will I find out if my offer will be accepted?

A: All offers are ranked based on a nationally developed ranking system. At the end of the sign-up period, the applicants with the highest ranking offers will be notified of acceptance. For specific CRP details and eligibility requirements contact your local Farm Service Agency office.

CONSERVATION PARTNER INCENTIVES

South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks Walk-In Hunting Access – SDGFP will provide a one time upfront incentive of \$1/acre/year if landowners allow public hunting access to the CRP for multiple years. This is on top of the \$6/acre annual access rental payment.

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Volunteer Hunter Program

As fall quickly approaches, many people begin to think about their favorite past-time; hunting. Whether it's sitting in a goose blind watching a flock of Canada geese work, walking a shelter-belt or cornfield for deer, or reflecting on the crop damage that occurred earlier in the year by wildlife, hunters and landowners can often use more tools for communication. The Volunteer Hunter Program (VHP) is a new tool on the GFP website that is designed to connect landowners that have an overabundance of deer, geese, turkeys, and other wildlife species with hunters that wish to access private land.



The Volunteer Hunter Access Program is a great way for landowners to get help with overabundant wildlife.

“In certain portions of the state, game populations have exceeded their population management objectives,” explained Keith Fisk, GFP wildlife damage program administrator. “Hunting remains our most effective tool for managing wildlife populations, and this program is a simple and effective way of linking

hunters with accommodating landowners.”

Traditionally, the VHP targeted only hunters willing to participate in antlerless deer harvest but now accommodates hunters of many game species (deer, antelope, geese and turkey). Hunters register on the website for counties that they have a valid hunting license for and are willing to hunt in. They can access the VHP with the same usernames and passwords they have used to apply for licenses through the GFP online licensing system. Landowners can then view and contact any registered hunters on the list.

Ideally, the program would work as follows: a landowner experienced Canada goose depredation in a soybean field earlier in the year, he reviews the list of hunters on the website, and contacts a hunter and allows or requests them to come out and participate in a hunting situation that benefits the landowner and the hunter. Currently, the August Management Take, Early Fall Canada Goose, Youth Deer, Archery Deer, Archery Antlerless Deer, and West River Deer seasons are on the website. Other seasons will be added in the near future.

“The VHP should not be used as a substitute for hunters to access private land. Landowner/hunter relations are an important tradition in South Dakota and need to be fostered

by hunters seeking private property to access”, said Fisk. “The VHP is more of a tool that allows landowners that have experienced wildlife damage, access to a list of hunters that can help reduce the wildlife in areas that the crop damage occurred.”



For more information on the Volunteer Hunter Program, visit:
<http://gfp.sd.gov/hunting/volunteer-hunter.aspx>
 or contact Keith Fisk, GFP Wildlife Damage Program Administrator at keith.fisk@state.sd.us or (605) 773-7595.



Return Service Requested



523 E Capitol

