

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program For Southeast Minnesota

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) combines the Federal Conservation Reserve Program with the state's Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Program. Through CREP, the state offers to purchase voluntary easements of varying durations from farmers who put cultivated farmland into permanent vegetative cover. The United States Department of Agriculture provides approximately \$4.00 in funding for every \$1.00 the state puts into CREP.

Project Area – Lower Mississippi River Basin, SE Minnesota

- All or part of 17 counties
- 7,266 square miles
- 11,500 miles of streams (736 miles designated for trout)
- Land Use – 60 percent under cultivation

Natural Resource Issues Addressed

- Exceedances of water quality standards for fecal coliform, turbidity. High levels of nitrate nitrogen in ground water and surface water.
- Loss of hay and pasture, increased row crops lead to increased nitrate leaching and soil erosion.
- Flooding problems from steep terrain and high rainfall.

Project Description

- Multi-functional vegetated buffers in four landscape locations – highly erodible land, stream corridors, drained wetlands, and groundwater protection zones.
- Managed haying and grazing allowed to maintain cover.

Total Number of Acres to be Contracted

- Highly Erodible Land 40,230 acres
- Riparian Corridors 25,000 acres
- Wetland Restoration 20,000 acres
- Groundwater Protection: 10,500 acres
- Total CREP Acreage: 95,730 acres
 - Cultivated Cropland: 2,800,000 acres