USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)
Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP)
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

Environmental Quality Incentive Program

EQIP
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

EQIP offers financial and technical assistance to agriculture and forestry producers to promote agricultural production, forest management, and environmental quality as compatible goals.

Applications

Applications are taken on a continuous signup at the local NRCS Service Center.

- EQIP cost-share agreements shall be in effect for a period of 2 years, but not more than 10 years.
- At least one essential practice must be completed within 12 months of contract approval.
- All essential practices shall be completed at least 1 year prior to contract expiration.
- Contact the local USDA-NRCS field office.
- Information is also available on the web at: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/farmbill/
PERSON ELIGIBILITY

- An applicant must furnish evidence of ownership of control of the land for the duration of the cost-share agreement.
- Participant must be in compliance with HEL / WC provisions.

Adjusted Gross Income Limitation

*For conservation programs, persons or legal entities are eligible if—*

The average non-farm AGI is less than $1,000,000, or
2/3 of the average total AGI is from farming, ranching, or forestry

The limitation may be waived on a case-by-case basis if Environmentally sensitive land of special significance would be protected

EQIP Payment Limitations

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Payment Limitations

$300,000 per person over a six-year period
Tree Planting

- Maximum of 500 acres per contract.
- Cost share assistance for tree planting is available.

Practices Available For Cost Share

- Plant longleaf pine seedlings on 8x12 foot spacing or wider AND agree to prescribed burn same acres on 2 to 3 year rotation to benefit wildlife.
- Converting cropland/pastureland class III or greater into trees.
- Plant pine seedlings (longleaf, slash, loblolly, etc) in low density (8’x12’ or wider) AND establish permanent firebreaks around the stand AND establish 10% of stand in openings to benefit wildlife.

Forestry – Available statewide; the only practices that are eligible include

- PC 314 Brush Management
- PC 797 Herbaceous Weed Control
- PC 614 Tree/Shrub Establishment
- PC 490 Tree/Shrub Site Preparation
- PC 338 Prescribed Burning
- PC 391 Riparian Forest Buffer
- PC 394 Firebreaks
- PC 342 Critical Area Planting
Wildlife Habitat Incentives
Program
(WHIP)

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PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

To provide technical and financial assistance through long-term agreements to create, restore, and enhance wildlife habitat.

Assists landowners to develop and improve wildlife habitat on private or Tribal land

Eligibility Requirements

- Participant are required to be in compliance with the provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended.
- Required to complete an AD-1026 and comply with the HEL/WC provisions. (Same as EQIP)
Eligibility Requirements con’t

- Participant must complete and file form CCC-926 (Payment Eligibility Average Adjusted Gross Income Certification and meet the requirements therein). (Same as EQIP)
- Participant must have control of the land for the contract period. (Same as EQIP)

WHIP Payment Limitations

Annual payment limits to a person or legal entity of not more than $50,000

Land Eligibility

Lands that are eligible for WHIP are:
- Privately owned lands, including lands owned by non-governmental organizations.
- Nonindustrial private forest land
- Indian land
Ineligible Land

Lands that are ineligible for WHIP are:

- Publicly owned land (Federal, State, County, or local government.
- Land currently enrolled in the following:
  - Water Bank Program (WBP)
  - Emergency Watershed Program (EWP), subject to floodplain easement.
  - Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
  - Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

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Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

CSP pays farmers who are improving conservation treatment on their working lands to encourage the continuation of farming and ranching practices that benefit soil, water, and air resources
CSP Payment Limitations

A person or legal entity cannot receive CSP payments exceeding $200,000 during any five-year period.

CSP Requirements

Eligible producers must initially meet the stewardship threshold for one resource concern and be willing to achieve the threshold for at least one additional priority resource concern by the end of their five-year contract.

CSP payments will change to be paid retrospectively in the fiscal year after the improvements and activities are completed.

Florida 2010 Priority CSP Resource Concerns

- Water Quality
- Water Quantity
- Animal
- Plant
- Energy
CSP Ranking Pools

- Agricultural Land
- Nonindustrial Private Forest Land (NIPF)

CSP Sign-up Dates

- Oct 30, 2009 Deadline for the 2010-1 Batching Period.
- Second Batching Period will be announced in the first quarter on 2010.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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