



## Why is the Lake Erie CREP Important?

Most farmers in the Lake Erie watershed are good conservationists. In recent years they have adopted conservation tillage and other “Best Management Practices” to such an extent that the goal for reducing phosphorus from agricultural sources to Lake Erie has nearly been met. Average soil loss in the watershed is below the national “tolerable” soil loss level. But there is a need for even more progress. Sediment loadings into Lake Erie and tributary streams are still a problem, due in part to the fine clay nature of the soils and their erodibility.

Lake Erie CREP will compensate landowners who voluntarily take cropland and marginal pastureland out of production and establish conservation practices. During the initial years of the Lake Erie CREP, the landscape of northwest Ohio has taken on a new look, as filter strips, riparian buffers, windbreaks, and other conservation practices have become more widespread. This “new look” means less sediment and chemical runoff to ditches, streams, and Lake Erie, improved aquatic and upland wildlife habitat, and the continuation of a vibrant agricultural community and economy.

## What is the Lake Erie CREP?

In May 2000, Ohio initiated its first Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) in the Lake Erie watershed. CREP is a local, state, federal and private partnership to enroll 67,000 acres of conservation practices (buffer strips, riparian buffers, wildlife habitat, wetlands and windbreaks) on environmentally sensitive areas in the watershed. Landowners enrolling cropland and marginal pastureland along streams and ditches will receive 15 annual payments and cost share from USDA. In addition, landowners may receive state bonus payments to establish, maintain, and extend certain conservation practices.

## Key Practice Options

- Grass or tree buffer strips along ditches or streams
- Grass or tree establishment on escarpment areas
- Wildlife habitat plantings along ditches or streams
- Wetland restorations
- Field windbreaks
- Rare and declining habitat plantings in the Oak Openings areas of Fulton, Lucas, and Henry counties
- Controlled agriculture drainage water management
- Grass establishment at filter and recharge areas

A program of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the United States Department of Agriculture.



NEW AND ENHANCED

## Lake Erie CREP

Helping landowners protect the region's natural resources



**SIGN UP TODAY**



**LAKE ERIE**  
Conservation Reserve  
Enhancement Program



## LAKE ERIE WATERSHED CREP PROGRAM SUMMARY

Description	USDA-FSA Rental & Cost Share	Voluntary State Incentive Program \$500 per acre Bonus	Tree Planting \$100 per acre
Escarpment/Recharge Area for establishment of grasses	155% per acre SRR – 50% cost share	No	No
Escarpment/Recharge Area for establishment of native grasses	175% per acre SRR – 50% cost share	No	No
Hardwood tree planting	225% per acre SRR – 50% cost share	Yes	Yes
Permanent wildlife habitat	155% per acre SRR – 50% cost share	No	No
Permanent wildlife habitat - native grasses	175% per acre SRR – 50% cost share	No	No
Field windbreaks	225% per acre SRR – 50% cost share plus SIP/PIP	No	Yes
Buffer strips – warm season grass	175% per acre SRR – 50% cost share plus SIP/PIP	No	No
Buffer strips – cool season grass	155% per acre SRR – 50% cost share plus SIP/PIP	No	No
Riparian buffers	225% per acre SRR – 50% cost share plus SIP/PIP	Yes	Yes
Wetland restoration	200% per acre SRR 50% cost share plus – 25% to restore hydrology	Yes	No
Wetland restoration, non-floodplain	200% per acre SRR 50% cost share plus – 25% to restore hydrology	Yes	No
Rare & declining habitat (only in Lucas, Henry and Fulton Counties)	225% per acre SRR – 50% cost share	Yes	Yes
Marginal pastureland wildlife habitat	175% per acre SRR – 50% cost share plus SIP/PIP	No	No
Marginal pastureland wetland buffer	200% per acre SRR – 50% cost share plus SIP/PIP	Yes	No

- CRP-SIP (Signing Incentive Payment) is a one-time payment of \$10 per acre up to \$100 and the PIP (Practice Incentive Payment) is a one-time payment equal to 40% of the eligible cost-share. Incentives are subject to availability.
- Participants in CREP will enroll into CRP for a minimum of fifteen years and receive fifteen annual payments from the USDA-FSA and will receive an increased annual rental rate payment. Landowners participating in the voluntary state incentive program have an additional 15 years contract extension for a total of 30 years.
- Remaining contract years on voluntary state contracts will be administered by your local Soil and Water Conservation District.
- Additional bonus incentives are available for planting warm season grasses and restoring wetlands.
- Additional funds may be available in your local area.

### Who can sign up, and when?

Enrollment is on a continuous basis, as funding permits. Eligible land must be in the portion of the Lake Erie Watershed from the Vermilion River west to the Indiana and Michigan borders, and must meet basic eligibility criteria for USDA's Conservation Reserve Program.

Cropland must have been planted to commodity crops four of the six years 1996 through 2001 and be physically and legally capable of being cropped. Marginal pastureland can be enrolled provided it is suitable for use as a riparian buffer. Lands that have an existing CRP contract or an approved offer with a contract pending are not eligible for CREP until that contract expires.

### Where do people sign up or get information?

Individuals interested in the Lake Erie CREP should contact the soil and water conservation district office in the county where the cropland is located, or where their conservation plans are currently maintained. Information is also available in USDA county offices for the Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service.

### Soil and Water Conservation Districts in CREP Area

Allen	419/223-0040	Marion	740/387-1314
Ashland	419/281-7645	Medina	330/722-2628
Auglaize	419/738-4016	Mercer	419/586-3289
Crawford	419/562-8280	Ottawa	419/898-1595
Defiance	419/782-8751	Paulding	419/399-4771
Erie	419/626-5211	Putnam	419/523-5159
Fulton	419/337-9217	Richland	419/747-8686
Hancock	419/422-6569	Sandusky	419/334-6324
Hardin	419/673-0456	Seneca	419/447-7073
Henry	419/592-2926	Shelby	937/492-4768
Huron	419/668-4113	Van Wert	419/238-9591
Lorain	440/326-5800	Williams	419/636-2349
Lucas	419/893-1966	Wood	419/354-5517
		Wyandot	419/294-2311

### Lake Erie CREP Partners

- Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Division of Soil and Water Conservation
  - Division of Wildlife
  - Division of Forestry
- U.S. Dept of Agriculture
- Farm Service Agency
  - Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Pheasants Forever
- Ducks Unlimited
- Environmental Defense

