

Name of Practice: CREP STREAM PROTECTION
VACS Program Specifications for No. CRWP-2

This document specifies terms and conditions for the Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost-Share Program's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program Stream Protection best management practice which are applicable to all contracts entered into with respect to that practice.

A. Description and Purpose

This practice provides protection by fencing along all water bodies and streams in a field to reduce erosion, sedimentation, and the pollution of water from agricultural non-point sources.

The purpose of this practice is to offer an incentive that will change land use or improve management techniques to more effectively control soil erosion, sedimentation, and nutrient loss from surface runoff to improve water quality.

B. Policies and Specifications

1. Cost-share and tax credit are authorized for:
 - i. Permanent fencing to protect eroding banks from damage by domestic livestock. Cost-sharing may be authorized for fencing as a single eligible component that stands alone as a measure that will significantly improve water quality.
 - ii. Providing access to water for livestock by installing livestock crossings that will retard sedimentation and pollution. When no other water source is feasible or exists, a controlled hardened access may be used to provide livestock access to the water. The installation of livestock crossings and controlled hardened accesses is limited to small streams. When required, permits must be obtained by the applicant from authorities before the practice will be approved.
 - iii. Exclusion fencing with minimum set back of 35 feet may receive 75% state cost-share under this practice to assure complete exclusion of livestock from all surface waters when that area is ineligible to receive FSA CREP cost-share due to an existing functional buffer.
 - iv. Fencing as a single eligible component, only if all of the following apply:
 - a) The fence is placed a minimum of 35 feet away from the stream, except as designed in areas immediately adjacent to livestock crossings and controlled hardened accesses.
 - b) There is adequate natural or planted vegetation between the fence and the stream to serve as an effective filter strip to improve water quality.
 - c) Both sides of the stream are fenced, or if livestock is restricted from both sides of the water way.

2. Cost-share and tax credit are not authorized for:
 - i. Boundary fence, if it is being used to bring new pasture into production. If the stream is the barrier currently confining the livestock, then fencing is allowed.
 - ii. Interior cross fencing that does not exclude livestock from the stream.
 - iii. Rebuilding of existing fence.
 - iv. Temporary fencing.
3. Wildlife and environmental consideration must be given when designing the practice.
4. This is a one-time incentive payment not eligible for reapplication on the same site. Lifespan requirements can be waived if damaged by flooding.
5. Soil loss rates must be computed for all practices for use in establishing priority considerations.
6. Flash grazing (allowing livestock to graze the excluded riparian area) is not allowed as a management alternative during the lifespan of this practice.
7. This practice phase is subject to NRCS Standards 342 Critical Area Planting, 382 Fence, 390 Riparian Herbaceous Cover, 575 Trails and Walkways, 578 Stream Crossing, and 472 Access Control.
8. All practice components implemented must be maintained for the lifespan of the CREP contract. By accepting either a cost-share payment or a state tax credit for this practice, the participant agrees to maintain all practice components for the specified lifespan. This practice is subject to spot check by the District throughout the lifespan of the practice and failure to maintain the practice may result in reimbursement of cost-share and/or tax credits.

C. Rate(s)

1. For all BMPs identified on approved farm conservation plans, the CREP cost-share rate is fifty percent (50%) of FSA approved eligible cost.
2. As set forth by Virginia Code, the Commonwealth currently provides a tax credit for implementation of certain agricultural best management practices as discussed in the Tax Credit Guidelines of the VACS Manual.
3. If an applicant receives cost-share, only the percent of the total cost of the project that the applicant contributed is used to determine the tax credit.

D. Technical Responsibility

Technical and administrative responsibility is assigned to qualified technical DCR and District staff in consultation, where appropriate and based on the controlling standard, with DCR, Virginia Certified Nutrient Management Planner(s), NRCS, DOF, and VCE. Individuals certifying technical need and technical practice installation shall have appropriate certifications as identified above and/or Engineering Job Approval Authority (EJAA) for the designed and installed component(s). All practices are subject to spot check procedures and any other quality control measures.

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