

# Lake Erie

## Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)



### Benefits of Conservation Buffers:

- \* Buffers provide another line of defense to filter surface water before it enters streams and water sources that contribute to nutrient loading to Lake Erie
- \* Streambanks without buffers tend to be less stable and have higher erosion rates
- \* Conservation buffers are a visual demonstration of your commitment to land stewardship

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

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program or CREP is a federal and state conservation partnership designed to address agriculture-related environmental concerns. Participants receive financial incentives from USDA to voluntarily enroll environmentally sensitive cropland or pasture-land in contracts for 15 years. In return for annual rental payments that average about \$154 per acre and financial incentives, participants convert the land to native grasses, trees and other conservation vegetation.

### BONUS PAYMENT

An additional \$200 per acre incentive will be provided for all newly enrolled filter strip and riparian area practices through August 23, 2019

Practice	USDA-FSA Rental	Bonus Payment Incentive
Hardwood tree planting	225% per acre SSR	Yes
Permanent wildlife habitat	155% per acre SSR	Yes
Buffer Strips warm season grass	175% per acre SSR	Yes
Buffer Strips—cool season grass	155% per acre SSR	Yes
Riparian buffers	225% per acre SSR	Yes
Marginal pastureland buffer	175% per acre SSR	Yes
Marginal pastureland wetland buffer	200% per acre SSR	Yes

To learn more about Lake Erie CREP and to enroll, contact your local conservation district:



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Lake Erie CREP is a partnership between:



# Lake Erie CREP Frequently Asked Questions

## ***Are newly-enrolled CREP acres eligible for bonus payments?***

Yes a bonus payment of \$200 per acre will be paid on newly enrolled acres for certain practices: CP3A, CP4D, CP21, CP22, CP29 and CP30.

## ***What is required if I receive the \$200/ac. bonus payment?***

The only requirement is that you maintain CREP acres according to USDA FSA guidelines. There are no time extensions or further requirements. The purpose of the bonus payment is intended to encourage new enrollment.

## ***What is the minimum acreage needed to receive bonus payments?***

A minimum of 0.1 acre must be enrolled to be eligible. Maximum enrollment will be based up to the provisions outlined in the current Lake Erie CREP Agreement.

## ***What about existing CREP acres that are re-enrolled, are these acres eligible for bonus payments?***

Existing CREP Acres that are re-enrolled are not eligible for bonus payments. However, if existing CREP acres are re-enrolled and the size (width) of the practice is increased at the time of re-enrollment, then the new additional acres will be eligible for a one-time bonus of \$200 per acre.

**Example:** Landowner enrolled 5 acres of a filter strip practice in FY2003, the landowner wants to re-enroll the 5 acres plus expand the width adding 1-acre for a total size of 6-acres. Under this scenario the landowner is eligible for a state bonus payment on the additional 1-acre. \$200/ac X 1 acres = \$200 in a one-time state bonus payment.

## ***To re-enroll, does the size of the practice need to be increased?***

No, a landowner is not required to increase the size of their existing contract to re-enroll CREP acreage. However, no bonus payment will be paid, if additional acreage is not enrolled.

## ***What about existing CREP enrollments with existing 5 -15 year state contract extensions, are the state CREP contract extensions eliminated?***

The state contract extension is eliminated if the land is re-enrolled into a new CREP contract. If land is not re-enrolled into CREP, the state contract extension would remain in place.

## ***What happens if a land-owner chooses not to re-enroll expiring acres into CREP?***

In this situation the state contract extension would remain in place. If the acres subject to the extension are converted to another use, SWCDs should follow the provisions outlined in the "Corrective Measures Policy or Guidance", and request that state funds be returned.

