



# Illinois River Watershed Cost Sharing Programs For Riparian Management

## *Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)*

The State of Arkansas Illinois River Watershed Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a partnership between USDA and the State of Arkansas. The program seeks to enroll 10,000 acres of eligible marginal pastureland and cropland in 14 to 15 year contracts within the Illinois River watershed. The project will establish or restore riparian forest buffers and wildlife habitat buffers by planting native grasses, forbs, trees, and shrubs. This CREP project area includes parts of Benton and Washington Counties. The primary goals of the project are to enhance wildlife habitat and improve water quality by filtering agricultural runoff.

### Eligible Property

- Pasture or crop land bordering a perennial stream in the watershed.

### Best Management Practices

A riparian buffer zone will be created to reduce sediment run off and improve stream bank stabilization.

- The riparian area will be planted in native warm season grasses or native hardwood trees.
- The minimum width is 50 feet up to the flood plain.

### Cost Share Incentives

- The cost share payment rate is determined for costs associated with establishment of native warm season grasses, planting hardwood trees, fencing the stream for livestock exclusion, alternative water system development, and any needed stream crossings.
- Land bordering the riparian area may be eligible for prescribed grazing cost share through NRCS when establishing a rotational grazing program.
- Low interest loans may also be available to assist land owners with conservation practice costs.

### Payment

Sign Up	\$100.00/ac
Completed Practices	\$400.00/ac (First 1000 acres enrolled)
*Rental	\$110.00/ac
*Maintenance	\$2.00/ac
1st year total	\$612.00/ac
Years 2 – 15	\$112.00/ac
Average Payment Per Year of Contract	\$145.33/ac
<b>Total Contract Payment</b>	<b>\$2,180.00/ac</b>

\* Paid at the end of each contract year

### For more information on CREP or other conservation programs in Benton & Washington Counties contact:

#### Farm Service Agency

Ted Collins  
Phone: 479-521-4520 ext. 104  
Email: [ted.collins@ar.usda.gov](mailto:ted.collins@ar.usda.gov)

#### Natural Resources Conservation Service

Mike Whitis (Benton Co.)  
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Rhonda Foster (Washington Co.)  
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#### Illinois River Watershed Partnership

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## *Cost Assistance for Grazing and Hay Lands in the Illinois River/Eucha Spavinaw Watershed*

### *Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)*

NRCS in Arkansas and Oklahoma have developed a special water quality initiative in the Illinois River Sub-Basin and the Eucha-Spavinaw Lake Watersheds in northwestern Arkansas and northeastern Oklahoma. The purpose of this project is to improve water quality while maintaining the food and fiber production of the agricultural project area.

The following Best Management Practices are available to land owners in the Illinois River/Eucha Spavinaw Watersheds.

**Prescribed Grazing:** Development of livestock grazing programs that promote rotational grazing with a minimum of 4 pastures per grazing groups, seeding legumes, soil fertility, stock piling for winter feeding, wildlife habitat, and nutrient filter strip management.

**Forage and biomass planting:** Provides assistance in establishing native warm season grasses, non-native grasses (cool & warm season perennials), and legumes.

**Forage Harvest Management:** The removal of excess phosphorus by harvesting forages through hay or green chop from pastures/hay fields. Fields that have a phosphorus loading in excess of 500 lbs of phosphate/acre qualify for funding. This is a 3-yr program with funding paid each year.

**Water Facility:** The construction of alternative watering sources for livestock such as freeze proof tanks and fountains.

**Fence:** Provides assistance in constructing barbed wire, woven wire, and electric fences. Options are also available for tree planting to establish windbreaks or shelter and livestock walkways for movement between pastures and handling facilities.

**Nutrient Management:** This program provides Best Management Practice training, Organic Transition & Certification, and cost share assistance to apply fertilizers without phosphorus.

#### **Application Process**

After making an application for EQIP cost share funding at the local NRCS office, a conservationist will visit farms to identify resource concerns and suggest practices that would help treat those issues. NRCS will then prepare a conservation plan for the farm and work with the land owner to apply for funding.

#### **For more information on EQIP or other conservation programs contact:**

**Natural Resources  
Conservation Service  
Benton County**

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