



Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program



Farm the Best, CREP the Rest!



Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

Overview

- **CREP** is a component of the USDA Farm Service Agency's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
- **NC CREP** Is a Partnership between USDA (FSA) & NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- **Main Objective of CREP**
 - Reduce non-point pollution associated with farming & livestock by establishing **riparian buffers** and restoring wetlands on qualifying portions of participants property





Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

Riparian Buffers = Healthier Water

- Help filter nonpoint source pollution such as: sediment, nutrients, pesticides & catch animal waste runoff
- Stabilize stream and ditch banks
- Promotes species diversity and enhances food web for mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, insects, & invertebrates
- Improves wildlife habitat by providing shelter, concealment, & travel corridors
- Provides shade which helps to moderate stream temperature





Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

Program History and Stats

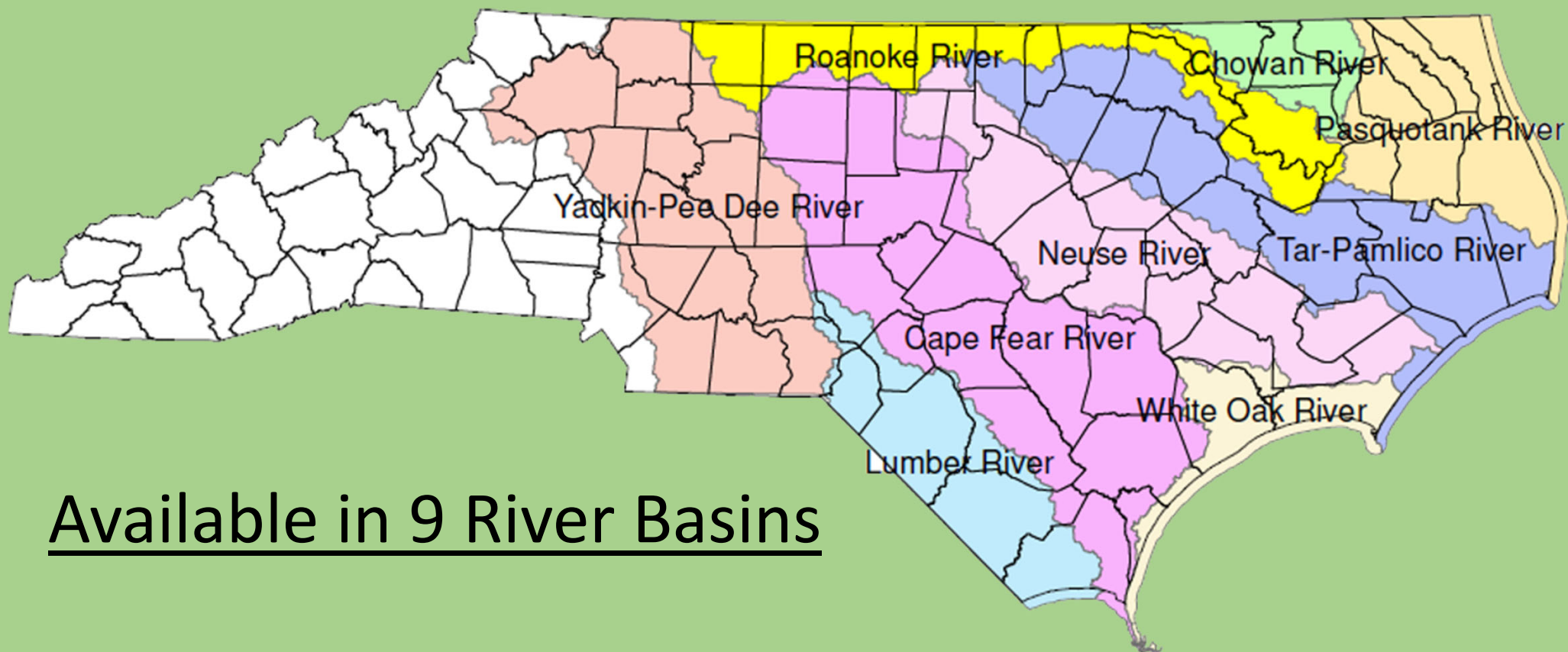
- On March 1st, 1999, the original CREP agreement was established, with the goal of enrolling 100,000 acres of environmentally sensitive farmland and marginal pastureland
- CREP is currently available in 76 of 100 NC counties and 9 river basins
- We have **1246 CREP easements** statewide protecting **~30,000 acres**
- CREP easements are for 30 year and permanent duration

***Roughly 70% of our easements are 30 yr.
30% are permanent***





Territory



Available in 9 River Basins



Environmental Benefits



Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program



- Protects water quality
- Restore wetlands
- Improves wildlife & aquatic habitat
- Prevents soil loss
- Reduces nutrient inputs
- Upholds good farming practices
- Generates income from less productive farmland



Land Eligibility

- **1-year ownership**
- **Cropping history with FSA**
 - Cropped for at least 4 years 2012-2017
 - Cropland or Pastureland
- **Land must be adjacent to a qualifying water body**
 - Water source that is hydrologically connected (including agricultural ditches)
 - Roadside ditches do not qualify





Landowner Options Comparison Chart

Term	FSA Cost Share to Establish Buffer	Potential NC ACSP Cost Share to Establish Buffer	Annual Rental Payment for Establishing Buffer	Conservation Easement Option (Bonus Incentive Payment)	Enroll Existing Forested Buffer (enroll adjoining forestland)
10-Year Contract	Yes - 50%	Yes - 25%	Yes, for 10 years	No	No
15-Year Contract	Yes - 50%	Yes - 30%	Yes, for 15 years	No	No
30-Year Conservation Easement	Yes - 50%	Yes - 40%	Yes, for 15 years	Yes - \$250/acre	No
Permanent Conservation Easement	Yes - 50%	Yes - 50%	Yes, for 15 years	Yes - \$1,000/acre	Yes - \$1,000/acre

Important Notes:

#1: When 10 acres or more are enrolled in CREP, a 30 year or permanent conservation easement must be conveyed.

#2: Percentages in the chart above are based off an average cost list. The actual cost to complete each practice may vary.

#3: The NC ACSP money used for CREP projects does NOT come out of the local District Soil & Water Office's annual ACSP allocation. There is money earmarked for CREP projects.

#4: With CREP, the annual rental payment is DOUBLE the normal soil rental rate (up to a \$150 maximum per acre).

#5: When a landowner conveys a Permanent Conservation Easement to the State of NC, they could potentially enroll up to 10 acres of adjoining forestland for every 1 acre of converted ag land.



Landowner Options

- **Landowners choose which sections of the property will be enrolled**
 - Up to 300' out from the water body
 - Option to include existing buffer or standing trees for permanent easements at a ratio of 1:10
- **Conservation practices**
 - CP3: Tree Planting (shortleaf pine only)
 - CP3A: Hardwood Tree Planting (including longleaf, Atlantic white cedar, bald cypress)
 - CP21 Filter Strips
 - CP22: Riparian Buffer (only practice to include marginal pastureland)
 - CP23 Wetland Restoration
 - CP 23A Wetland Restoration Non-Floodplain
 - CP31: Bottomland Timber Establishment on Wetlands



– Surry County

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

FSA CREP Contracts & NC Deed of Conservation Easements

- **FSA** landowner signs 10- or 15-year **Contracts** with USDA (CRP-1 contact)
- **NC CREP** Landowner grants 30 year or permanent **Conservation Easement** to the State of North Carolina
 - FSA CREP Contracts are separate from NC CREP Easements.
 - NC CREP easements are signed and recorded Deeds





Landowner Options

Several contract options:

CREP without an easement

10- year or
15-year FSA contracts only!

CREP with an easement

30-year or
Permanent NC Conservation Easements (in
addition with FSA contract)

Enrolling **10 acres or more** into CREP with FSA,
requires landowner to grant State of NC
a 30-year or permanent easement!





Landowner Responsibilities

- **Establish conservation practices**
 - Landowner is responsible for site prep, tree planting, maintenance, etc.
- **Follow Conservation Plan & Forest Management Plan**
- **Do not farm, develop, mine, or do unapproved timber harvesting within the easement.**
- **Allow CREP staff access for monitoring**
 - Proof of deeded access to property





Management/Timber Harvest

- Once vegetation is established, no long-term management required.
- Timber stand improvements allowed
 - Commercial thinning
 - Selective harvesting
 - Understory burning
 - Limited Clear-Cutting allowed
(pines 35 years old, Hardwoods 65 years old)

A 50-foot no cut buffer zone along qualifying waterbodies required for all harvesting activities.





Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

Benefits to Districts

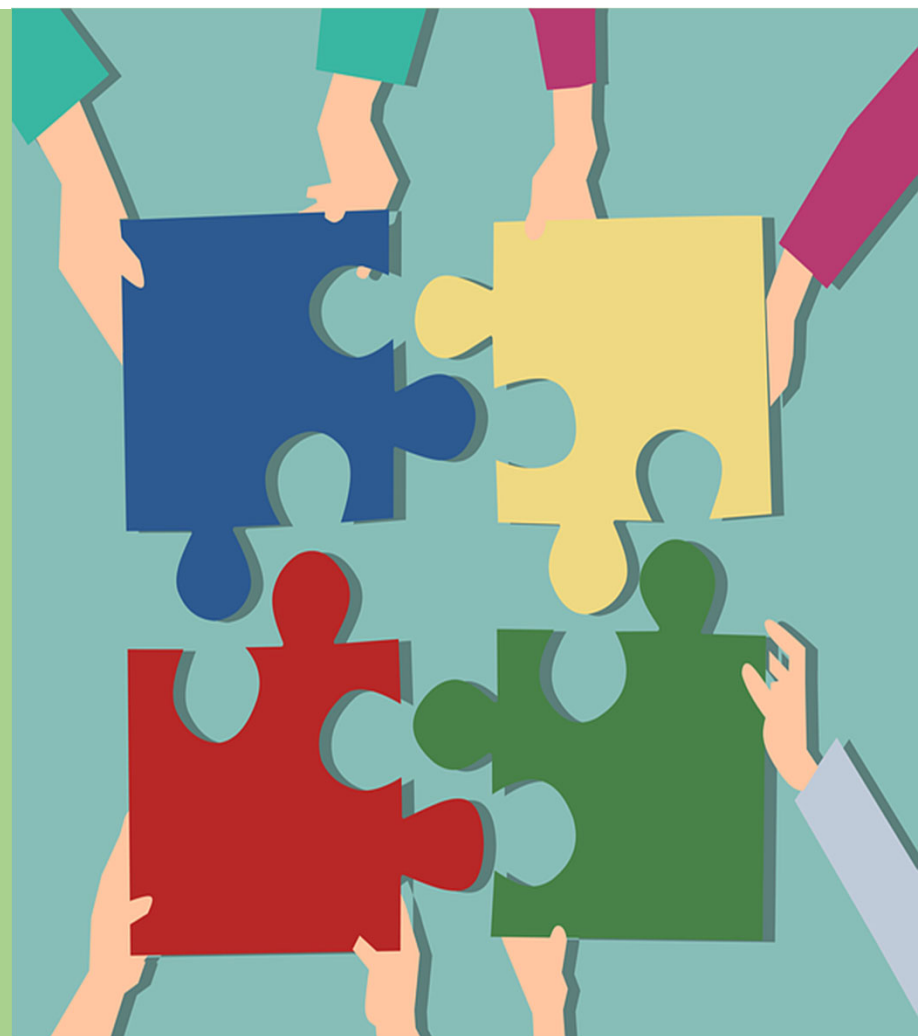
- **CREP CS funding does not come out of districts standard allocation.** Earmarked (CE) specifically for CREP
- CREP is a “Tool” to help you address resource concerns in your district. Specifically non-point pollution from farming & Livestock (sediment, erosion, & eutrophication)
- Landowner can potentially receive more money from CREP than other options. (FSA annual payments, State bonus payment, Fed and State CS, plus the potential for Existing Forest Buffer enrollment)
- NC DSWC has full-time CREP Specialist to assist you (start to finish) when implementing CREP projects in your district
- CREP’s riparian buffers are good for the environment (water quality & wildlife)





Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

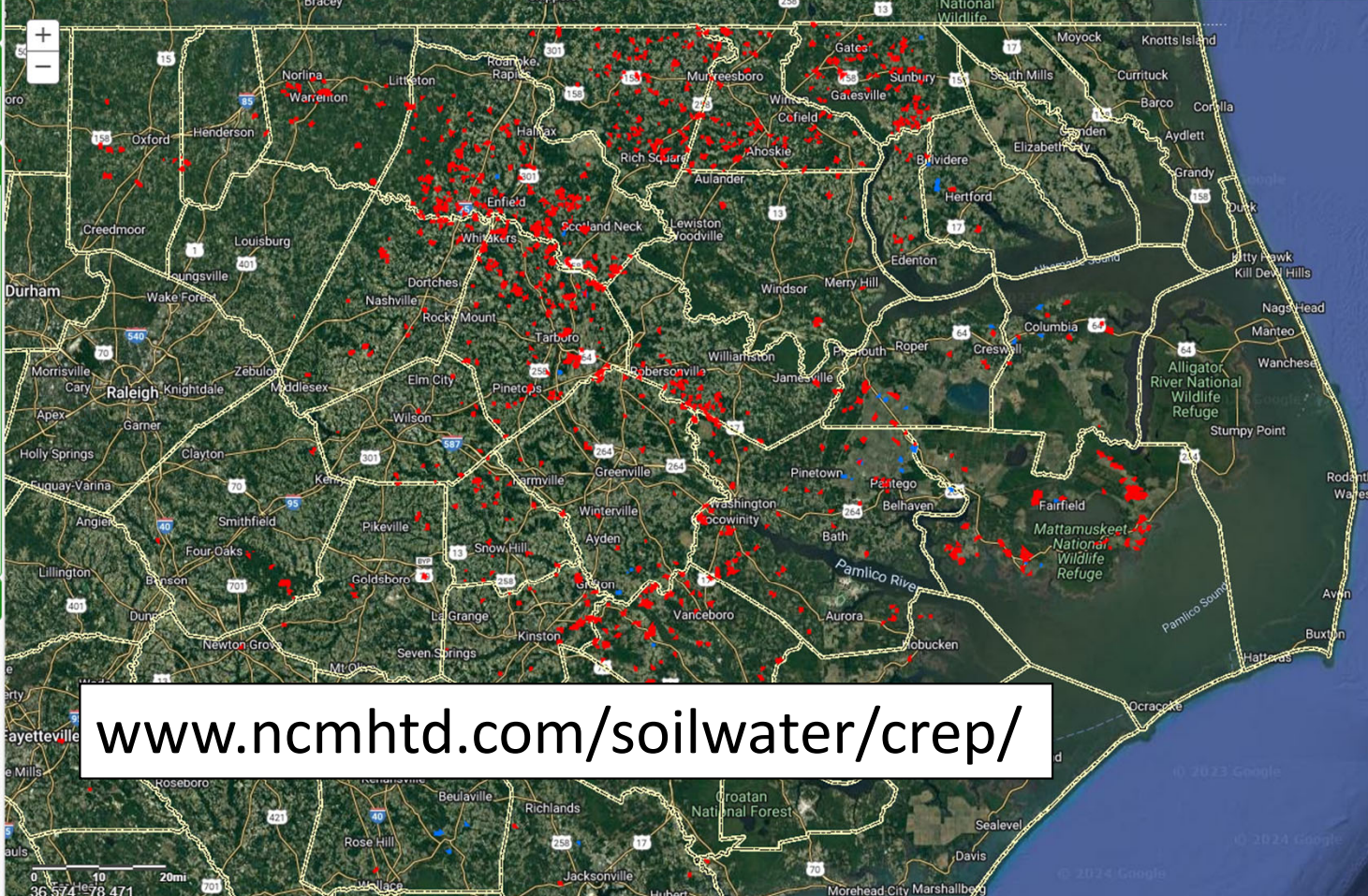
Partnering Agencies





CREP Viewer

 **NCD&CS Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program**

A map of North Carolina showing the locations of Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) easements. The easements are marked with red dots across the state. The map includes major roads, cities, and geographical features like the Pamlico River and Pamlico Sound. The interface includes a search bar, a table of contents, and a reference section with checkboxes for CREP Easements, Swine Buyout, Parcels, and County Boundary. A disclaimer is also present.

Search
Find address or place

Table of Contents

Reference

- ☒ CREP Easements
- ☒ Swine Buyout
- ☐ Parcels
- ☒ County Boundary

Environmental

* Zoom-in to make layers demoted in grey available

Disclaimer

www.ncmhtd.com/soilwater/crep/



CONTACT US

CREP Website:

www.ncagr.gov/divisions/soil-water-conservation/programs-initiatives/crep

CREP Program Manager:

Jennifer Johnson Roach

919-707-3780

Jennifer.roach@ncagr.gov



WEST



Ben Wilkins

ben.wilkins@ncagr.gov
919-602-4317

CENTRAL



Roy Jones

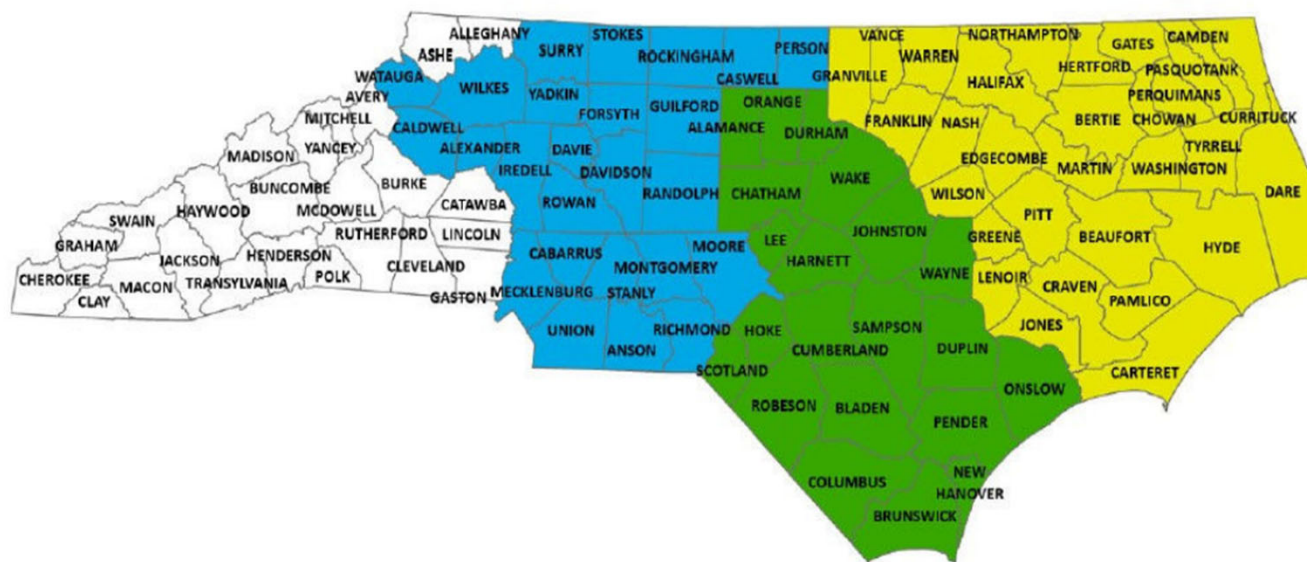
thomas.jones@ncagr.gov
919-801-9703

EAST



Krishna Tiwari

krishna.tiwari@ncagr.gov
252-351-5108



**CREP not available in counties shown in white*



Questions?

