

NYS CREP

New York State
Conservation Reserve
Enhancement Program

UPDATE FOR SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

FEBRUARY 2004

DISTRICT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR NYS CREP

Many of you have been anxiously awaiting information on reimbursement to Districts for providing technical assistance for NYS CREP. We still don't have a final answer, but here's an update:

First, a little history... In the early stages of the CREP proposal, money was requested to reimburse Districts for technical assistance. Due to legal restrictions, these funds never became available, so there is no dedicated funding to pay Districts to implement CREP. The only potential funding source right now is NRCS's technical assistance resources. NRCS receives federal funding in their budget for their technical services for various programs, including CRP. They would like to share some of that funding to pay Districts to work on CREP. This money is limited, however, so we are awaiting information on the available budget for this year.

The type of agreement we are working on is a "contribution agreement" in which you would receive reimbursement for roughly half of your time. This would be a blanket agreement with the state, and we would make payments to Districts.

What can you do in the mean time? One perspective is that CREP is another tool to offer when it fits a farm's needs. You can work with farms on CREP, just as you might assist them with participating in other Farm Bill programs. However, if it isn't feasible for your District to provide this service without specific reimbursement, we would advise that you wait to undertake CREP projects until the reimbursement agreement is in place.

Please call us with any concerns or suggestions. Thanks for your patience!



TRAINING SESSIONS A SUCCESS!

We would like to extend a big "thank you" to all of the 80 District employees who took time out of their schedules to attend the NYS CREP training sessions last month. In all, 46 Districts were represented. It's encouraging to see so many of you interested in implementing CREP, and we appreciated all your helpful comments and suggestions.

The training sessions truly demonstrated the partnership involved in this program. In addition to the 80 District employees, 80 NRCS employees and 80 FSA employees attended.

CORRECTING THE WATERSHED LIST

As we discussed in the training sessions, we are currently in the process of correcting errors on the list of eligible hydrologic unit codes (HUCs). The eligible HUCs are listed in NY Exhibit 8 of 2-CRP NY Amendment 3 (the yellow packet). In order for a HUC to be eligible, it must contain a stream or lake segment that was included on the 1996 Priority Waterbodies List (PWL) with agriculture indicated as a pollution source. So, the whole HUC is eligible, and the segment is what makes it eligible. Please let us know if you find any errors, including:

- a 1996 PWL segment is not included in Exhibit 8
- a segment is listed, but the wrong HUC is assigned to it
- a HUC that overlaps county lines is not listed in all counties

If you would like to request that we reconsider a HUC in your county, please write a letter that includes the HUC number and the PWL segment name and send it to Paul Ray, Resource Conservationist, USDA NRCS, 441 S. Salina St., Syracuse, NY 13202. If you have any questions about this, you can contact Emily Svenson at 518-457-8886.



*For more information about NYS CREP, contact the NYS Soil & Water Conservation Committee:
518-457-8886 or emily.svenson@agmkt.state.ny.us.*