

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program Disenrolled Contract Assistance Guidelines

Approved December 5, 2024

1. Addendum Background

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) in Washington is intended to alleviate some agriculture-related impacts on water quality and salmon habitat. USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) is the program lead. The Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) provides a portion of cost share, maintenance, and technical assistance, leveraged with signing incentives, cost share, and annual rental payments provided by FSA, as authorized by the Food Security Act of 1985.

An audit by FSA between May 2023 and October 2024 resulted in many participants having their contracts canceled by FSA due to ineligibility, their annual rental payment acres reduced, or participants were offered a choice to voluntarily opt out of the program entirely. SCC obtained proviso language in the 2024 Legislative session that allows SCC to compensate contract holders an additional year of lost rent, even though FSA may no longer hold a contract. The proviso funding is provided solely to provide assistance to Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) participants who had acres reduced or voluntarily canceled due to an FSA audit conducted from May 2023 – October 2024.

Assistance is limited to: one-time payment for one year's lost FSA contract annual rental payment.

2. Addendum Rules

Eligibility

- Participant must have been a CREP participant with FSA during May 2023 – October 2024.
- Participants must be included in FSA documentation provided to SCC showing voluntary reduction in acres or termination of contract or involuntary cancellation due to eligibility issues. Contracts involuntarily canceled (canceled by FSA) due to compliance issues or non-responsiveness are not eligible.
- Buffers must provide riparian habitat or hydrologically connected wetland enhancements in salmon-bearing streams as determined by the **Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife**.

Eligible Costs

- One-time annual rent payment. One-time payment in the amount of one year's lost rental payment for existing contracts that had reduced acres due to the audit or for

previous contracts that were voluntarily canceled by the participants as a result of the FSA audit.

Ineligible costs

- Maintenance costs
- Education and outreach
- Training
- Equipment
- Overhead
- CREP technical assistance
- Field crews used for maintenance and cost share implementation, except in accordance with CREP maintenance policy
- Materials and/or supplies
- Equipment and supplies for implementation and maintenance
- Travel

For a full overview of the programmatic rules and step-by-step instructions, view the [Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program Conservation District Implementation Guide](#).

3. Cost Share Policy

- Maximum cost share **per** landowner **per** fiscal year across all SCC programs is \$100,000.
- All best management practices (BMPs) must meet NRCS standards and specifications.

4. Funding Criteria

Required

- All proposed practices must be entered in the Conservation Practice Data System (CPDS), and a new funding type, *CREP Disenrolled Contract Assistance*, selected in the funding grid.
- The funding is granted on a one-time basis (upon approval - June 30, 2026). Therefore, all costs must be incurred by June 30, 2026. The proviso is for contracts that expired within a specific time frame and costs must be incurred by the end of FY26. Unused funds must be returned.
- Returning Funds – Please submit a [Returned Funds Form](#).

5. Funding Process

Applications shall be submitted via CPDS on the existing project funding tab. For lost rental payments, a new funding program called *CREP Disenrolled Contract Assistance* will be selected.

- Update the contract number to match the FSA number in CPDS (required).

- *CREP Disenrolled Contract Assistance* will be added to the existing program drop-down and will be selected to add to the project funding grid.
- *CREP Disenrolled Contract Assistance* will trigger the *Submit Auth* button consistent with other CREP program funding requests.
- *CREP Disenrolled Contract Assistance* funding request will then be submitted for approval, consistent with the existing request format.
- Notes in the funding request must include the site assessment form score, and the form must be uploaded to CPDS.

Supporting documentation for award:

- Completed site assessment form uploaded to CPDS.
- Participant record of cancellation/acreage reduction and amount of rental payment reduced uploaded to CPDS, if available.

6. Vouchering Process:

Monthly grant vouchers are required.

Supporting documentation for vouchers:

- Copy of the issued check to the landowner.
 - Refer to the **Grant and Contract Procedure Manual** for vouchering and cost share rules.

7. Full text of the proviso language:

Sec. 3015. 2023 c 474 s 3080 (uncodified) is amended to read as follows:

FOR THE STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

2023-25 Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

(40000023)

The appropriations in this section are subject to the following conditions and limitations: The state conservation commission may expend the state building construction account and natural climate solutions account —state appropriation in this section as grants to private land owners who were enrolled in the conservation reserve enhancement program, and whose acreage meets state program goals of providing riparian habitat or hydrologically connected wetland enhancements in salmon-bearing streams as determined by the Washington state department of fish and wildlife, but are now disenrolled due to a contract termination by the United States department of agriculture (USDA) farm service agency, or who voluntary terminated their enrollment as a result of the USDA farm service agency audit.