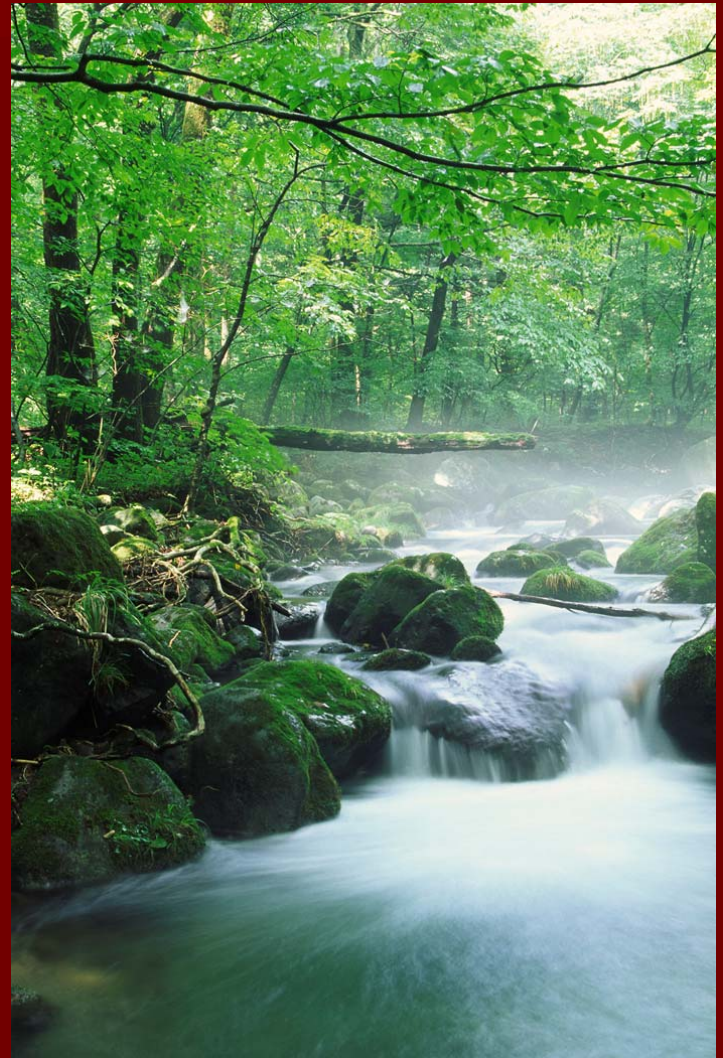


# Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)



# Objective

- CRP's objective is to cost-effectively assist owners and operators in conserving and improving the nation's natural resource base.



# Emphasis

- Protect the nation's soil, water, and wildlife resources
- Improve and preserve water quality
- Enhance fish and wildlife habitat

# Administration

- Administered by USDA Farm Service Agency
- Technical assistance provided by USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service



# Basic Agreement

- Participants on contract agree to take land out of agricultural production and establish and maintain a permanent cover for the length of the contract in return for various payments.





# Payments

- Annual Rental (\$20 - \$173 / Acre)
- Rental Incentive (0% to 85% depending on program/practice)
- Annual Maintenance (\$2 – 4\$/Acre)
- 50% Cost-share for practice installation
- Signing Incentive Payment (SIP) - \$100 per acre
- Practice Incentive Payment (PIP) – 40% of practice installation cost
- Required Management Cost-share (50% of cost)

# Program Payments

- Almost \$2 billion annually in the nation
- About \$40 million annually in Wisconsin



# National Acres Enrolled

- About 33.5 million acres enrolled nationally.
- Previously authorized for 39 million acres.
- Latest farm bill reduced authorization to 32 million acres which will be reached by 2010 FY.

# Wisconsin Enrollment

- 26,000 + contracts
- Just over 460,000 acres enrolled today
- Highest enrollment occurred in mid 1990's at 750,000 acres

# Violations

- Unauthorized haying or grazing
- Planted ag commodity
- Activity without authorization
- Non-control of weeds, pests, woody vegetation encroachment
- Not maintaining required cover
- Failure to perform management practices
- Sale of land without successor to contract...

# Violation Consequences

- Always a financial consequence:

- Good Faith – Producer brings land back into compliance at own expense, suffer payment reduction up to amount of annual rental payment on contract



- Lack of Good Faith – Termination of acres in violation with full refund of all payments, interest from date of disbursement, and liquidated damages



# Specific Weed Control Requirements

- At one point, only weeds on the state noxious weed list were required to be controlled.
- As of November 28, 1990, participants were required to control other weeds that are not considered noxious, as determined by FSA.

# Specific Weed Control Requirements

- Participants are to ensure undesirable vegetation, weeds (including noxious weeds), insects, rodents, etc. that pose a threat to existing cover or adversely impact other landowners in the area are controlled.

# What Happened In 2006?

- The agency conducted a re-enrollment and extension process (REX) on all contracts that were expiring in 2007 through 2010.
- For each contract that a participant wanted to extend or re-enroll, FSA was required to inspect all acres on the contract for compliance.

# What Did FSA Find?

- Lots of weed issues on lots of CRP!
- Landowners and FSA/NRCS staff as well, did not understand weed control requirements.
- It became apparent, Wisconsin FSA needed to establish some guidelines for weed control for both participants and agency staff.

# Developing CRP Maintenance Job Sheet

- FSA worked through the Wildlife Subcommittee of the NRCS State Technical Committee.
- Other specialists in the state involved in invasive species were also included.
- Resulted in issuance of NRCS Job Sheet in April, 2008.
- Mailed to all current CRP participants and now a mandatory job sheet for all new contracts.

# WEED TREATMENT THRESHOLDS

- Group 1: No tolerance for these invasive plant species, CRP participant must attempt to eliminate these plant species when present.

# WEED TREATMENT THRESHOLDS

- Group 1:
  - Chinese lespedeza (*Lespedeza sericea*)
  - Crown vetch (*Coronilla varia*)
  - Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*)
  - Hill mustard (*Bunias orientalis*)
  - Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*)
  - Multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*)
  - Poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*)
  - Teasel: cutleaf and common (*Dipsacus laciniatus* and *fullonum*)
  - Wild chervil (*Anthriscus sylvestris*)

# WEED TREATMENT THRESHOLDS

- Group 2: Implement management actions to prevent the development of viable seed. Must maintain CRP cover at or below the following thresholds:
  - • 10% or more of the total canopy is occupied by the Group 2 listed plant species, or
  - • a patch of individual species or a combination of the Group 2 listed species exceeding one acre in size.

# WEED TREATMENT THRESHOLDS

- Group 2:
  - Common tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*)
  - Field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*)
  - Garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*)
  - Hawkweeds (*Hieracium* sp.)
  - Japanese hedge parsley (*Torilis japonica*)
  - Knapweeds (*Centaurea* sp.)
  - Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)
  - Reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*)
  - Reed grass, common (*Phragmites australis*)
  - Spurge: leafy and cypress (*Euphorbia esula* and *cyparissias*)
  - Sweet clover: white and yellow (*Melilotus alba* and *officinalis*)
  - Thistle: Canada and marsh (*Cirsium arvense* and *palustre*)
  - Thistle: musk and plumeless (*Carduus nutans* and *acanthoides*)
  - Wild parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*)

# WEED TREATMENT THRESHOLDS

- Group 3: Implement management actions to maintain the CRP cover at or below the following thresholds:
  - • 30% or more of the total canopy is occupied by any combination of Group 3 listed species, or
  - • a patch of individual species or a combination of Group 3 listed species exceeding one acre in size.

# WEED TREATMENT THRESHOLDS

- Group 3:
  - Burdock (*Arctium minus*)
  - Canada goldenrod (*Solidago Canadensis*)
  - Curly dock (*Rumex crispus*)
  - Dames rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*)
  - Giant ragweed (*Ambrosia trifida*)
  - Queen Anne's Lace (*Daucus carota*)

# WEED TREATMENT THRESHOLDS

## ■ Woody Species

Implement management actions to maintain the occurrence of woody species at or below the following thresholds:

- • less than 5% of the total canopy coverage,
- • cannot exceed 5 feet of height, or
- • any patch of woody vegetation greater than one acre in size (does not include leadplant and New Jersey tea).

# Questions?

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