



United States Department of Agriculture

2014

Farm Bill

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Easement Programs

**Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service**





2009-2013 WRP Activity

Fiscal Year	Acres Enrolled	Total Financial Obligation
2009	0	0
2010	22,547	\$36,258,373
2011	8102	\$13,744,145
2012	10,254	\$17,649,240
2013	4997	\$6,553,007
Total	45,900	\$74,204,765



2009-2013 GRP Activity

Fiscal Year	Contracts Funded	Total Financial Obligation
2009	14	\$3,797,944
2010	82	\$22,667,570
2011	14	\$4,294,494
2012	8	\$9,992,578
2013	0	0
Total	118	\$40,752,586



2009-2013 FRPP Activity

Fiscal Year	Contracts Funded	Total Financial Obligation
2009	2	\$2,162,000
2010	2	\$2,075,000
2011	1	\$2,898,000
2012	6	\$5,583,000
2013	1	\$4,000,000
Total	12	\$16,718,000



Impact to Existing Easement Programs

- Repealed
 - Farm & Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP)
 - Grassland Reserve Program (GRP), and
 - Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)
- Pending acquisitions remain valid
- Existing easement deeds remain valid and enforceable.
- NRCS will continue stewardship activities of previously acquired easements



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Agricultural Conservation Easement Program - ACEP

Agricultural Land Easement

Wetland Reserve Easement



Protect the agricultural use, viability, and related conservation values

FRPP



Protect grazing uses and related conservation values

GRP



Restore, protect, and enhance wetlands

WRP



ACEP

- ACEP has 2 components
 - Agricultural Land Easement (ALE)
 - Moves GRP under the FRPP guidelines
 - Assistance provided to eligible entities
 - Subject to a pending offer, and:
 - Prime farmland,
 - Historic or Archaeological Sites,
 - Further a State or local policy consistent with the program; or
 - →*Protect Grazing and Related Conservation Values*
 - Wetland Reserve Easement (WRE)
 - Primarily WRP
- § 2712 Provides NRCS temporary program administration for 270 days.



ACEP Authorized Funding

- 2014 - \$400 Million
- 2015 - \$425 Million
- 2016 - \$450 Million
- 2017 - \$500 Million
- 2018 - \$250 Million

2009-2012 – WRP, GRP & FRPP combined averaged \$775 Million/yr



ACEP-Agricultural Land Easement

- ALEs **MUST** permit a landowner to continue agricultural use.
- **ALL** ALEs must require the land be subject to an “Agricultural Land Easement Plan.”
- NRCS will announce when applications will be accepted from eligible entities.



Agricultural Land Easement – Cost-Share

- NRCS can provide 50% FMV of easement
- Entity must provide equal match but could use the landowner's charitable contribution up to 50% of the NRCS cost-share.
- Example:
 - 50% NRCS ACEP \$
 - 25% Entity Cash \$
 - 25% Landowner Charitable Contribution

Agricultural Land Easement

– Cost-Share

- §1265B. (C) – Exceptions:
 - Grasslands – “special environmental significance”, NRCS can provide 75% cost-share
 - Entity Cash Waiver – projects of special significance if the landowner is willing to contribute a value equal to the waiver.
 - Still to be determined



Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE)

- Reduces ownership requirements from 7 years to 24 months.
- NRCS will continue to purchase and hold the WRE
- Same WRP compensation and eligibility framework from the 2008 Farm Bill. (Geographic Area Rate Caps – GARC)
- Priority for enrollment continues to be based on value of the easement for protecting and enhancing habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife

Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE)

- Enrollment Options
 - ✓ Permanent Easement
 - ✓ 30-year Easement
 - ✓ 30 year contract to Indian Tribes
 - Note WRE eliminates 10 year restoration cost-share only agreements.
- NRCS is currently accepting applications
- Funding dates will be announced soon



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ACEP Subcommittee Members Request

- ALE
- WRE

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