



Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008

Helping People Help the Land



Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)

Reauthorizes FRPP through 2012

Changes program purposes from topsoil protection to protecting agricultural use and related conservation values by limiting nonagricultural uses

Changes the Secretary's role in the purchase of easements from acquisition of an interest to providing cost-share to eligible entities



FRPP Key Points

Removes any present or future interest in easements from the Secretary

Changes the minimum entity contribution to 25 percent of the easement acquisition price rather than 25 percent of the appraised fair market value

Allows the entity to designate the terms and conditions of its deed and to choose the appraisal methodology, subject to approval by the Secretary



FRPP Key Points

Allows the Secretary to certify eligible entities

Specifies a minimum agreement length of 5 years for certified entities

Non-certified entities shall have agreement lengths of 3-5 years



FRPP Authorized Funding

Fiscal Year	Dollar Amount
2008	\$97,000,000
2009	\$121,000,000
2010	\$150,000,000
2011	\$175,000,000
2012	\$200,000,000



Environmental Quality Incentives Program EQIP

Reauthorized until 2012

Specifically references forest management

Expanded to include energy conservation benefits associated with conservation practices



EQIP Key Points

For organic producers:

Specific section on assistance with conservation practices utilized for organic production and transition

Payments for practices with organic production benefits limited to not more than \$20,000 per year; \$80,000 in 6 years



EQIP Key Points

For limited resource, socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers or ranchers:

- ✓ Up to 90 percent cost share or at least 25 percent above the otherwise applicable rate
- ✓ Advance payments to cover up to 30% of the cost of materials to install conservation improvements



EQIP Authorized Funding

Fiscal Year	Dollar Amount
2008	\$1,200,000,000
2009	\$1,337,000,000
2010	\$1,450,000,000
2011	\$1,588,000,000
2012	\$1,750,000,000



Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)

Allows entities to write, own, and enforce easements with a 50 percent match through a cooperative agreement

Uses an easement valuation requirement similar to Wetlands Reserve Program

Requires a grazing management plan

Includes contingent right language that would limit Federal rights in entity-secured easements



Healthy Forest Reserve Program (HFRP)

Creates new conservation opportunities through increased funding

\$9,750,000 in mandatory for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2012

Enrollment options:

- ✓ Permanent easements
- ✓ 30-year easements
- ✓ 30-year contracts rather than agreements for Indian tribes

Limits funding to

- ✓ 40 percent for 10-year cost-share agreements
- ✓ 60 percent for easements



WRP Key Points

Changes easement compensation to the lowest of the following:

Fair market value of the land enrolled based on a

**Uniform Standards of Professional
Appraisal Practices appraisal, or a**

Market survey

Geographic cap established by the Secretary, or

Landowner offer

These changes will be implemented on the date of enactment



Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP)

Authorized 2009 through 2017

12,769,000 acres may be enrolled each year

Average \$18/acre nationally (FA and TA)

Acres will be allocated based on eligible acres in a state

Applicants must account for stewardship activities covering their entire agricultural operation



Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program

Provides assistance to producers to minimize nutrient and sediment loading

Special consideration and evaluation of applications in the Susquehanna, Shenandoah, Potomac and Patuxent River Basins

The funds are utilized through existing Farm Bill conservation programs and are available until expended.

FY 09: \$23 million - FY10: \$43 million - FY11: \$72 million - FY12: \$50 million.



Adjusted Gross Income Limitation

For conservation programs, persons or legal entities are eligible if—

- ✓ *The average non-farm AGI is less than \$1,000,000, unless*
- ✓ *2/3 of the average total AGI is from farming, ranching, or forestry*
- ✓ *The limitation may be waived on a case-by-case basis if:*
 - *Environmentally sensitive land of special significance would be protected*

Not in effect until FY2009



United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

For More Information, visit:

- ✓ Your local USDA Service Center
- ✓ Your local conservation district
- ✓ <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>