

# Chapter 12

## Voluntary Incentive Programs

### USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Programs

#### Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) provides technical and financial assistance to eligible farmers and ranchers to address soil, water, and related natural resource concerns on their lands in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner. The program provides assistance to farmers and ranchers in complying with Federal, State, and tribal environmental laws, and encourages environmental enhancement. The program is funded through the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC). CRP is administered by the Farm Service Agency, with NRCS providing technical land eligibility determinations, conservation planning and practice implementation. For more information about CRP visit <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/crp/>.

#### Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

This program addresses locally identified problems with natural resources. High priority is given to assistance where agricultural improvements will help meet water quality objectives. EQIP offers contracts that provide incentive payments and cost sharing for conservation practices, such as manure management systems, pest management, erosion control, and other practices to improve and maintain the health of natural resources. For more information about EQIP visit <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/>.

#### Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP)

Section 382 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996, Public Law 104-127, amended the Emergency Watershed Program (EWP) to provide for the purchase of floodplain easements as an emergency measure. Since 1996, NRCS has purchased floodplain easements on lands that qualify for EWP assistance. Floodplain easements restore, protect, maintain, and enhance the functions of the floodplain; conserve natural values including fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, flood water retention, ground water recharge, and open space; reduce long-term federal disaster assistance; and safeguard lives and property from floods, drought, and the products of erosion. For more information about EWP visit <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/ewp/>.

#### Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)

Participating landowners can establish conservation easements of either permanent or 30-year duration or can enter restoration cost-share agreements where no easement is involved. In exchange for establishing a permanent easement, the landowner receives payment up to the agricultural value of the land and 100 percent of the restoration costs for restoring the wetland. The 30-year easement payment is 75 percent of what would be provided for a permanent easement on the same site and 75 percent of the restoration cost. The voluntary agreements are for a minimum 10-year duration and provide for 75 percent of the cost of restoring the involved wetlands. Easements set limits on how the lands may be used in the future. Restoration cost-share agreements establish wetland protection and restoration as the primary land use for the duration of the agreement. In all instances, landowners continue to control access to their land. For more information about WRP visit <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/wrp/>.

#### Conservation Security Program (CSP)

CSP is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to promote the conservation and improvement of soil, water, air, energy, plant and animal life, and other conservation purposes on Tribal and

private working lands. Working lands include cropland, grassland and improved pasture, as well as, forested land that is an incidental part of an agriculture operation. In 2008, two 8-digit HUC in the state participated in this program one of which is the Little Pee Dee River watershed.

## NC Division of Soil and Water Conservation Programs

### North Carolina Agriculture Cost Share Program (NC ACSP)

Nonpoint source pollution is a significant source of stressors that lead to stream degradation. The approach taken in North Carolina for addressing agriculture's contribution to the nonpoint source water pollution problem is to primarily encourage voluntary participation by the agricultural community. This approach is supported by financial incentives, technical and educational assistance, research, and regulatory programs.

**TABLE 12-1: ACSP PROJECT EXPENDITURES IN THE LUMBER BASIN BETWEEN 2002 AND 2006**

8-DIGIT HUC	EROSION REDUCTION/NUTRIENT LOSS REDUCTION IN FIELDS		STREAM PROTECTION FROM ANIMALS		PROPER ANIMAL WASTE MANAGEMENT	
	TOTAL IMPLEMENTED	COST	TOTAL IMPLEMENTED	COST	TOTAL IMPLEMENTED	COST
03040203	8843 acres	\$714,908	6320 feet	\$4,266	27 units	\$176,627
	6 units	\$26,902	--	--	--	--
03040204	5664 acres	\$279,728	--	--	8 units	\$53,214
	490 feet	\$958	--	--	--	--
	1 unit	\$14,137	--	--	--	--
03040206	1570 acres	\$245,640	35540 feet	\$32,347	6 units	\$23,422
	2 units	\$2,979	40 units	\$10,547	--	--
03040208	273 acres	\$46,674	--	--	1 unit	\$24,888
<b>TOTAL</b>	--	\$1,316,831	--	\$47,160	42 units	\$278,151

Financial incentives are provided through North Carolina's Agriculture Cost Share Program. The Division of Soil and Water Conservation (DSWC) within the DENR administers this program. It has been applauded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and has received wide support from the general public as well as the state's agricultural community. Table 12-1 shows the number of projects implemented and in the Lumber Basin and the dollar amount invested. Table 12-2 shows the water quality benefits realized from that investment. For more information about the NC ACSP visit <http://www.enr.state.nc.us/DSWC/pages/agcostshareprogram.html>.

**TABLE 12-2: BENEFITS RESULTING FROM BMPs INSTALLED THROUGH NCACSP BETWEEN 2002 AND 2006**

BENEFITS	AMOUNT	UNITS
Acres Affected	21,541	Acres
Soil Saved	70,342	Tons
Nitrogen Saved	1,029,852	Pounds
Phosphorous Saved	73,922	Pounds
Waste - Nitrogen Managed	1,264,401	Pounds
Waste - Phosphorus Managed	1,261,674	Pounds

### Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, a joint effort between the USDA and the NC DSWC, was originally established in 1999 and was expanded in 2008 to include the Lumber River Basin. This program encourages agricultural land owners to convert sensitive and marginal pastureland to conservation easements. These lands are rented from the owner at a rate based on the soil rental rate as calculated by the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

A CREP conservation easement is a written agreement between a landowner and the state of North Carolina in which there is an acquired interest in the land to install conservation practices that protect natural resources. The conservation easement exists for 10-, 15-, 30 years or permanently, depending on the landowner's choice. With CREP, the landowner voluntarily limits future use of the land for activities such as crop farming and development, yet retains private ownership. As water quality becomes a bigger environmental issue, this program improves and protects water quality while restoring and enhancing riparian habitat corridors next to streams, drainage ditches, estuaries, wetlands and other watercourses. Listed below are the approved BMPs allowed by the CREP program.

- grassed filter strips
- forested riparian buffers
- hardwood tree establishment
- wetlands restoration

For more information about CREP visit <http://www.enr.state.nc.us/DSWC/pages/crep.html>.

### Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP)

The Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP) is designed to improve water quality through the installation of various best management practices (BMPs) on urban, suburban and rural lands, not directly involved in agricultural production. CCAP provides educational, technical and financial assistance to landowners through the local soil and water conservation districts. This program is open to homeowners, businesses, schools, parks, churches, and community groups. The landowner may be reimbursed up to 75 percent of the pre-established average cost of the BMP. For more information about CCAP visit [http://www.enr.state.nc.us/DSWC/pages/ccap\\_program.html](http://www.enr.state.nc.us/DSWC/pages/ccap_program.html). Listed below are the approved BMPs allowed by the CCAP program.

- Impervious Surface Conversion
- Bioretention Areas
- Backyard Wetlands
- Stream Restoration
- Permeable Pavement
- Backyard Rain Gardens
- Diversion
- Cisterns
- Grassed Swales
- Stormwater Wetlands
- Riparian Buffers
- Pet Waste Receptacles
- Critical Area Planting
- Abandoned Well Closure
- Streambank and Shoreline Protection

## NC Division of Coastal Management Programs

### Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP)

The Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) is a Federal funding program that helps states protect coastal and estuarine lands that are important for their ecological, conservation, recreational, historical or aesthetic values. The program provides state and local governments with matching funds to purchase significant coastal lands or easements from willing sellers. Lands or easements acquired with CELCP funds are protected in perpetuity so that they may be enjoyed by future generations. For more information about CELCP visit <http://dcm2.enr.state.nc.us/celcp.htm>

### Clean Marina Program

Clean Marina is a nationwide program developed by the National Marine Environmental Education Foundation, a nonprofit organization that works to clean up waterways for better recreational boating. The foundation encourages states to adapt Clean Marina principles to fit their own needs. The Clean Marina program is designed to show that marina operators can help safeguard the environment by using management and operations techniques that go

above and beyond regulatory requirements. If a marina meets criteria developed by N.C. Marine Trades Services and the Division of Coastal Management (DCM), it will be designated as a Clean Marina. Such marinas will be eligible to fly the Clean Marina flag and use the logo in their advertising. The flags will signal to boaters that a marina cares about the cleanliness of area waterways. Marinas that do not meet the standards will be able to learn about improvements needed for Clean Marina designation. Marina owners can reapply after making the necessary changes. For more information about the Clean Marina Program visit <http://dcm2.enr.state.nc.us/Marinas/clean.htm>.

### Marina Pumpout Program

The program, established as a result of the federal Clean Vessel Act of 1992, provides financial assistance to marinas and other boat-docking facilities for the installation and renovation of pumpout and dump stations in North Carolina. Using funding from the US Fish & Wildlife Service, DCM has made grants of up to \$15,000 available on a yearly basis to private and commercial marinas, gas/service docks, fish houses/seafood dealers and other boat docking facilities in the 20 coastal counties. A 25 percent match is required of the marinas. A 25 percent match also is required of local governments installing pumpouts at public docks. Since its establishment in 1995, the program has awarded more than \$200,000 in grants for 47 pumpout projects, bringing the total number of pumpout facilities available on the coast to 89. For more information about the Marine Pumpout Program visit <http://dcm2.enr.state.nc.us/Marinas/pumpout.htm>.

### NC DWQ Construction Grants and Loans Section

The Construction Grants & Loans Section is a non-regulatory section in the Division of Water Quality that administers several funding programs for publicly owned wastewater treatment facilities. Additionally, the section issues all Authorizations to Construct for the division and administers the Tax Certification process.

**TABLE 12-3: PROJECTS FUNDED BY THE CONSTRUCTION GRANTS AND LOAN SECTION OF DWQ 2002-2008**

APPLICANT	GRANT OFFERED	PROJECT	8-DIGIT HUC	DATE OFFERED
<b>GRANT PROJECTS (CLEAN WATER BOND OR SRG)</b>				
Bladenboro	\$1,729,000	WWTP Rehabilitation and Land Application System	03040203	7/23/2003
Tabor City	\$3,000,000	New Collection Lines	03040206	4/23/2007
<b>FEDERAL LOAN PROJECTS (SRF)</b>				
Oak Island	\$9,000,000	Pump Station and ICWW Force Main	03040208	1/22/2008
Oak Island	\$8,500,000	Force Main to West Brunswick WWTP	03040208	
Brunswick County	\$20,000,000	West Brunswick WWTP and Conveyance System	03040208	5/17/2004
Brunswick County	\$10,000,000	West Brunswick WWTP and Conveyance System	03040208	8/30/2004

The section administers three major funding programs that assist local governments: the federally funded Clean Water SRF Program (State Revolving Fund), the NC Clean Water Revolving Loan and Grant Program, and a federal special appropriations program known as the State and Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG) program. These programs can provide both low interest loan and grant funds for wastewater treatment projects. Table 12-3 lists all grants and loans offered in the Lumber Basin between 2002 and 2008. Additional information about the Construction Grants and Loan Section can be found at [www.nccgl.net](http://www.nccgl.net).

## NC DWQ Nonpoint Source Program (319)

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provides funds to state and tribal agencies, which are then allocated via a competitive grant process to organizations to address current or potential NPS concerns. Funds may be used to demonstrate innovative best management practices (BMPs), support education and outreach programs, establish Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for a watershed, or to restore impaired streams or other water resources.

**TABLE 12-4: 319 GRANTS FUNDED IN THE LUMBER BASIN FROM 1999-2008**

CONTRACT NUMBER	FISCAL YEAR	PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	8-DIGIT HUC	AGENCY	FUNDING
EW200024	1999	Sandhills Longleaf Pine Ecosystem Waste Management Project	Waste Management	03040203 03040204	Environmental Impact (RC&D), Inc.	\$61,667
EW02050	2001	Lake Waccamaw Nonpoint Source Management and Assessment Project	Stormwater Education	03040206	Town of Lake Waccamaw	\$166,000
EW04032	2002	Water Quality Impacts of Alternative Build-out Scenarios for Brunswick Co.	Planning	03040208 03040206	NCSU College of Design	\$183,385
EW08013	2004 2007	Lockwoods Folly Water Quality Restoration TMDL	TMDL Development	03040208	NC Coastal Federation	\$209,252

Grants are divided into two categories: Base and Incremental. Base Projects are research-oriented, demonstrative, or educational and are targeted at identifying and preventing potential NPS impacted areas in the state, where waters may be at risk of becoming impaired. Incremental projects seek to restore streams or other portions of watersheds that are already impaired. State and local governments, interstate and intrastate agencies, public and private nonprofit organizations, and educational institutions are eligible to apply for Section 319 grants. Table 12-4 lists all 319 grants awarded in the Lumber Basin between 2000 and 2008. For more information about the 319 Grant Program Visit [http://h2o.enr.state.nc.us/nps/Section\\_319\\_Grant\\_Program.htm](http://h2o.enr.state.nc.us/nps/Section_319_Grant_Program.htm).

## NC DWQ WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLANNING GRANT 205(J)

The 205(j) Grant Program is a federally funded program administered in North Carolina by the state Department of Environment and Natural Resources Division of Water Quality. Limited competitive funding is available to regional Councils of Government (COGs) for water quality management planning efforts. Table 12-5 lists all 205(J) funds awarded since 2001. For more information about 205(j) grants visit <http://h2o.enr.state.nc.us/pb/205jPlanningGrantHomePage.htm>.

**TABLE 12-5: 205(J) FUNDING AWARDED IN THE LUMBER BASIN FOR FISCAL YEARS 2001-2008**

YEAR	RECIPIENT	DISRIPTION	AMOUNT
2005	LRCOG	Assist Regional and Local Governments with Stormwater Planning	*\$9,900
2004	LRCOG	Development of a Commercial/Industrial Conservation and Reuse Strategy	\$8,250
2003	LRCOG	Development of a Plan to Restore Waters Impaired by Mercury	\$10,000
2001	LRCOG	Development of a Clean Water Action Plan	\$17,000

\*Returned