

A Landowner's Guide to the 2015 CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM

Sign-Up: December 1, 2015 – February 26, 2016



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) uses a formula with six factors to rank landowners who offer their land into the general Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Nationwide, only landowners with the highest scores are accepted.

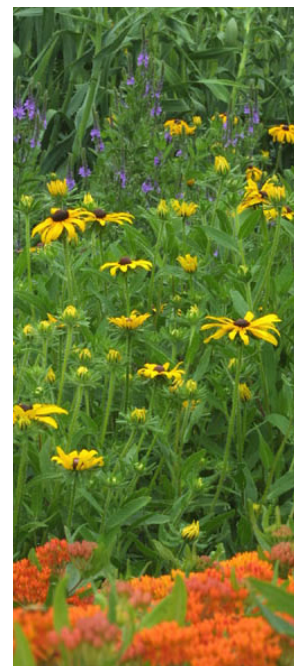
The summary table on the reverse of this document shows how different factors affect your points. You can improve your score by choosing the right areas to enroll, planting for wildlife or air quality benefits, or by submitting bids that reduce costs to the USDA.

USDA uses a complex formula because landowners are ranked nationwide, so ask your local USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) office or DNR forester or biologist for help. Knowing your options and doing homework before walking in the door greatly helps. Contracts are for 10 to 15 years.



IS YOUR LAND SHADED ON THE MAP?

If so, you may be eligible for extra points in this general signup!



RESOURCES:

Locate your FSA Service Center: www.fsa.usda.gov/ia

Go to the Iowa DNR's Conservation Reserve Program webpage: www.iowadnr.gov/crp



SIX FACTORS DETERMINE ELIGIBILITY

As the landowner, you decide what wildlife habitat to plant on factor 1. This decision can maximize your points on factors 4 and 5. The only other area where a landowner can influence points is factor 6.

Points for priority areas and factors 2 and 3 are determined by where the land is located, thus a landowner cannot change these points except partial field enrollments can increase factor 3 scores (ask the USDA FSA or Natural Resources Conservation Service office or DNR staff).



FACTORS & CHOICES		Points Per Option	Maximum Points
1	WILDLIFE COVER Choose plants to maximize wildlife habitat (<i>choose 1</i>)		50
	• Seed brome/orchard grass <i>or</i>	10	
	• Seed 5 prairie grasses and 10 flowers (plus bonus points under factors 4 and 5) <i>or</i>	50	
	• Plant 3 mast-producing hardwood trees (plus bonus points under factors 4 and 5)	50	
	Additional Points (<i>choose 1</i>)		5 or 20
	• Plant a food plot on CRP offer <i>or</i>	5	
• Improve 51 percent of seeding on existing CRP (only applies to re-enrolling existing CRP) <i>or</i>	20		
	• Establish pollinator habitat	20	
2	WATER QUALITY Choose soils with the least potential to leach chemicals and nutrients for the most points		70
3	SOIL EROSION Soils that are highly erodible get the most points		100
4	OTHER ENDURING BENEFITS Seeding that provides other benefits get points (<i>choose 1</i>)		50
	• Seed hardwood trees <i>or</i>	50	
	• Seed 5 prairie grasses and 10 flowers	25	
5	AIR QUALITY Seedings that improve air quality (<i>choose 1</i>)		10
	• Seed hardwood trees <i>or</i>	10	
	• Seed 5 prairie grasses and 10 flowers	5	
6	COST Accepting less than the maximum rental rate		Up to 25
PRIORITY AREA: USDA staff will make this determination for the landowner. Landowners whose land lies in a CRP priority area get an automatic 60 points.			60