

## Benefits

WRP participants benefit by:

- Receiving financial and/or technical assistance in return for restoring wetland functions and values;
- Seeing a reduction in problems associated with farming potentially difficult areas; and
- Having incentives to develop wildlife recreational opportunities on their land.

Wetlands benefit New Jersey by providing fish and wildlife habitat; improving water quality by filtering sediments and chemicals; reducing flooding; recharging groundwater; protecting biological diversity; as well as providing opportunities for educational, scientific, and recreational activities.

## Uses of WRP Land

Participants voluntarily limit future use of the land, but retain private ownership.

On acreage subject to

a WRP easement, participants control access to the land and may lease the land for hunting, fishing, and other undeveloped recreational activities.

NRCS and the landowner jointly determine the restoration plan for the wetlands, but the landowner is required to implement the restoration plan with NRCS financial assistance.



# Wetland Reserve Program

## How to Apply

Landowners may file an application for a conservation easement or restoration agreement at any time during the year. Applications are grouped for ranking when funds are available, normally once per year. Applications are available at any USDA Service Center office or online at <http://www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/wrp>. Applicants must indicate if the application is for an easement or restoration agreement. Easement applicants must also provide a copy of the deed when applying.

Visit the NRCS New Jersey website  
for more information:

<http://www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/grp>

## For More Information or to Sign-Up, Contact Your Local USDA Service Center:

*Burlington, Camden and Ocean counties*

**Columbus Service Center (1971 Jacsonville-Jobstown Rd)**

Telephone: (609) 267 - 1639

*Mercer, Middlesex and Monmouth counties*

**Freehold Service Center (4000 Kozloski Rd)**

Telephone: (732) 462 - 0075

*Hunterdon, Somerset and Union counties*

**Frenchtown Service Center (687 Pittstown Rd, Suite 2)**

Telephone: (908) 782 - 4614

*Bergen, Morris, Passaic, Sussex and Warren counties*

**Hackettstown Service Center (Bldg #1, 101 Bilby Rd)**

Telephone: (908) 852 - 2576

*Atlantic, Cape May and Cumberland counties*

**Vineland Service Center (1318 South Main Rd, Bldg 5A)**

Telephone: (856) 205 - 1225

*Gloucester and Salem counties*

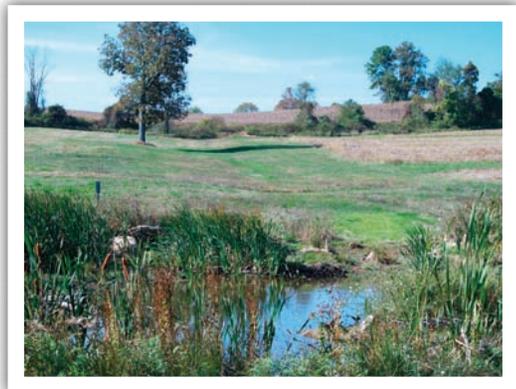
**Woodstown Service Center (51 Cheney Rd, Suite 2)**

Telephone: (856) 769 - 1126

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Natural Resources Conservation Service



**The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)** is a voluntary program that provides technical and financial assistance to eligible landowners to restore, enhance and protect wetlands on their property. The program provides an opportunity for landowners to receive financial incentives to enhance wetlands in exchange for retiring marginal land from agriculture.





## Eligibility

Land is not eligible if it is owned by any governmental entity. To offer a conservation easement, the private land must have been owned by the same individual or entity for at least 7 years prior to enrolling it in the program, except in certain circumstances. To participate in a restoration cost-share agreement, the land must have been damaged in the past through filling or draining, and must now be restorable and suitable for wildlife benefits.

Eligible land includes:

- Wetlands farmed under natural conditions
- Farmed wetlands
- Prior converted cropland
- Farmed wetland pasture
- Farmland that has become a wetland as a result of flooding
- Riparian areas which link protected wetlands
- Forested wetlands
- Pasture or production forest land where the hydrology has been significantly degraded
- Lands adjacent to protected wetlands that contribute significantly to wetland functions and values
- Previously restored wetlands that need long term protection

## Enrollment Options Include:

**Permanent Easement:** The landowner receives the lowest of the three values as an easement payment: the site values based on a market analysis, a geographic area rate cap established by the NRCS State Conservationist or the landowner offer.

The Geographic Rate Caps for New Jersey are:

- Annually tilled dry cropland pastureland or permanent hay land: \$6,000
- Specialty cropland or irrigated cropland: \$9,000 per acre
- Woodland: \$2,000 per acre



**Restoration Cost-Share Agreement:** Agreements are for a minimum 10-year period, but may be longer. USDA provides technical assistance to design, and reimburses 75 percent of the cost of establishing degraded or lost wetland habitat. During the period of the agreement, any maintenance activities may also be reimbursed at the same rate.

Restoration payments are limited to a maximum of \$50,000 per person per year. In addition, landowners must be in compliance with Highly Erodible Land and Wetland conservation provisions of the 1985 Farm Bill, as amended, on all land they farm and with the Adjusted Gross Income provisions of the 2008 Farm Bill.



## Enroll a Portion of Your Land

WRP applicants may enroll their entire land area; however, it is far more common to enroll just part of a property. There is no minimum size area required for enrollment. Participants with as little as 2 acres have enrolled to obtain the financial assistance to restore wetland areas where crop failures are common, to enhance aesthetics, wildlife viewing, or hunting opportunities. New Jersey also has had participants enroll as much as 2200 acres in an easement.

Applications must indicate the type of enrollment intended: restoration agreement or easement. After an application is received and the applicant eligibility is established, NRCS will visit the site to determine the eligible acres and complete a site assessment/ranking. Applications are ranked and there is potential funding available throughout the year.

## After Restoration, Then What?

NRCS continues to provide assistance to landowners after completion of restoration activities. This assistance may be in the form of reviewing restoration



measures, clarifying technical and administrative aspects of the easement and project management needs, and providing basic biological and engineering advice on how to achieve optimum results for wetland dependent species.

At any time, a participant may request that additional activities be evaluated to determine if they are compatible uses for the site. This request may include such items as permission to cut hay, graze livestock, or harvest wood products. Compatible uses are allowed if they are fully consistent with the protection and enhancement of wetland functions and values.