



Restoration planning generally includes permanent or semi-permanent water features.

Rights of the United States

- Management activities to restore, protect, manage, maintain, enhance, monitor easement area
- Access: Reasonable ingress/egress over the landowners property
- Easement Management: NRCS may delegate to any entity
- All rights not specifically reserved by landowner

Prohibitions *

- Haying, mowing, seed harvest
- Plowing, burning, disking, cutting, etc.
- Dumping waste
- Harvesting of wood products
- Grazing or livestock access
- Planting any crop
- Buildings or structures
- Diverting water onto or out of easement
- Drain, dredge, fill, tamper with water control structures, etc.

** Some prohibited uses can be granted on a limited basis by NRCS to the landowner under a compatible use agreement.*

Reserved Rights of Landowner

- Control of access (prevent trespass)
- Title, and right to convey such title
- Quiet enjoyment
- Undeveloped recreational uses (hunting, fishing, etc.)
- Subsurface resources (without disturbance to the easement)



Planting oak and other hardwood seedlings helps restore bottomland forests.

Timeframe

It can take 6-10 months from the time the applicant returns the "intent to continue letter" to the easement closing and payment. Purchase offers are dependent on annual congressional allocations. It then takes one to three years to complete easement restoration.

Enrollment Options

- Permanent Easement
- 30-year Easement
- Restoration cost-share agreement.

How to Apply

Interested landowners should contact their local USDA Service Center to determine if offered land is eligible. Landowners must submit a completed application for Long Term Assistance (AD-1153), provide a copy of the land deed, and outline the boundaries of the land being offered on a map.



Shallow water areas provide herbaceous cover and open water for ducks.



Wetlands
Reserve
Program

For more information contact your local District Conservationist or call Jacob Kuhn at 859-224-7371 or visit Kentucky's Web page at <http://www.ky.nrcs.usda.gov/programs>

Picture on cover - WRP easement in Hickman County.

KY-WRP 02 February 2009



United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Wetlands Reserve Program in Kentucky

The Wetlands Reserve Program is a voluntary program offering landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property.

Helping People Help the Land

The Wetlands Reserve Program in Kentucky

WRP Program Objectives

- Purchase conservation easements from willing landowners.
- Protect, restore, and enhance wetland hydrology and wildlife habitat on eligible lands.
- Restore functions of wetlands on the agriculture landscape and contribute to no net loss of wetlands, nationwide.

Scoring and Ranking

Acceptance into the program is based on a score derived from an environmental ranking and preliminary restoration plan of offered acres. A score is enhanced by the extent of eligible acres (farmed wetlands, prior converted cropland, farmed wetland pasture), opportunity for hydrology restoration and other factors that will be explained in detail during the scoring process. A score will be dramatically reduced when ineligible (match) acres are included in the offer or when full hydrologic restoration is not possible.

What Landowners Should Consider

- Accepting decisions made on your land by others (United States Government)
- Accepting the limitations of use placed on the land for 30 years or in perpetuity
- Requirements to pay property taxes on the enrolled acreage with limited opportunities to derive income from the land

Restoration Plan

The final restoration plan is based on the preliminary plan developed as part of the environmental scoring (used for ranking) of offered acres.

Landowners are consulted during the development of the preliminary restoration plan, however NRCS determines the final restoration plan to ensure each plan meets program objectives and maintenance costs are not excessive.

WRP Objective in Kentucky

Restore Bottomland Hardwood Forest on eligible, enrolled land.

Eligible Lands

- Prior Converted Cropland (Crop fields that were once wetlands but hydrology has been substantially altered.)
- Farmed Wetlands (wetland areas that are frequently planted to crops)
- Farmed Wetland Pasture
- Other minor categories

Warranty Easement Deed

- Legal, recorded transaction
- Non-revocable, binding on all successors
- Permanent easement is forever, in perpetuity
- Landowner relinquishes all rights not specifically reserved on deed

Landowner Responsibilities

- Control of noxious plants and pests (as approved by NRCS)
- Fence maintenance (when applicable)
- Pay taxes
- Report to NRCS, any condition which may adversely affect natural values of the easement

Payment Rates/Cost-Share Arrangements

The United States government will purchase a WRP easement from a landowner based on the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal or an area-wide market analysis or survey; the amount corresponding to a geographic cap as determined by the Secretary, or the offer by the landowner.

USDA pays 100 percent of the restoration cost on all permanent easements. For 30-year easements and cost-share agreements, the landowner must pay 25 percent.

At least 70 percent of the restorable easement area is planted to hardwood bottomland forest tree species.

Approximately 20 percent of the easement area is planned as permanent or semi-permanent water such as shallow water areas, green tree reservoirs or water basins.

No more than 10 percent of the easement can be established to wetland or upland food plots, warm season grasses or other vegetative covers.