



Conservation Choices and Incentives for Landowners




Property owners who wish to conserve their land can gain assistance from multiple agencies through varying programs. These programs cover a wide range of topics from environmental restoration to formulating land management practices for the property owner to ensure continued agricultural heritage. Assistance levels vary as much as the programs do. Property owners can choose to retain ownership, retain usage over time or sell their property to an agency for conservation. 15 Conservation Programs are briefly described below with contact information provided.

The following list is based on best available information and may not include all programs. This list is provided for information only and does not necessarily reflect the policies of the Brevard County Board of Commissioners.

For Landowners with Agricultural and/or Forest lands look for the 

For Landowners with greater than 10 acres look for the 

For Landowners with 10 acres or less look for the 



Conservation Reserve Program: The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a voluntary program for agricultural landowners. Through CRP, you can receive annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term, resource conserving vegetative covers on eligible farmland. The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) makes annual rental payments based on the agriculture rental value of the land, and it provides cost-share assistance for up to 50 percent of the participant's costs in establishing approved conservation practices. Participants enroll in CRP contracts for 10 to 15 years.

For more information visit: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dafp/cepd/crp.htm>



Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program: The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a voluntary program for agricultural landowners. Unique state and federal partnerships allow you to receive incentive payments for specific conservation practices. Through the CREP, farmers can receive annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term, resource conserving vegetative covers on eligible land. This is a joint program with Florida Department of Agriculture and USDA.

For more information visit: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dafp/cepd/crep.htm>

Or to find out if you are eligible for the CRP or CREP, contact:

Kenneth Windsor
CED
(407) 847-4201
ken.windsor@fl.usda.gov



Wetlands Reserve Program: The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is a voluntary program offering landowners the opportunity to protect, restore and enhance wetlands on their property. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical and financial support to help landowners with their wetland restoration efforts. This program offers landowners an opportunity to establish long-term conservation practices and wildlife protection.

For detail information: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/wrp/>



Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program: The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program for people who want to develop and improve wildlife habitat primarily on private land. Through WHIP USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service provides both technical assistance and up to 75 percent cost-share assistance to establish and improve fish and wildlife habitat. WHIP agreements between NRCS and the participant generally last from 5 to 10 years from the date the agreement is signed. WHIP has proven to be a highly effective and widely accepted program across the country. By targeting wildlife habitat projects on all lands and aquatic areas, WHIP provides assistance to conservation minded landowners who are unable to meet the specific eligibility requirements of other USDA conservation programs.

Detailed information available at this site: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/whip/>



Environmental Quality Incentives Program: The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) was reauthorized in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Farm Bill) to provide a voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible national goals. EQIP offers financial and technical help to assist eligible participants install or implement structural and management practices on eligible agricultural land. EQIP offers contracts with a minimum term that ends one year after the implementation of the last scheduled practices and a maximum term of ten years. These contracts provide incentive payments and cost-shares to implement conservation practices.

For further information visit: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/>



Conservation Security Program: Conservation Security Program (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, prairie land, improved pasture, and rangeland, as well as forested land that is an incidental part of an agriculture operation. The program is available in all 50 States, the Caribbean Area and the Pacific Basin area. The program provides equitable access to benefits to all producers, regardless of size of operation, crops produced, or geographic location.

For more information: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/csp/>



Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program: The Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) provides matching funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farm and ranchland in agricultural uses. Working through existing programs, USDA partners with State, tribal or local governments and non-governmental organizations to acquire conservation easements or other interests in land from landowners. USDA provides up to 50 percent of the fair market easement value. To qualify, farmland must be part of a pending offer from a State, tribe, or local farmland protection program; be privately owned; have a conservation plan for highly erodible land; be large enough to sustain agricultural production; be accessible to markets for what the land produces; have adequate infrastructure and agricultural support services; and have surrounding parcels of land that can support long-term agricultural production.

For more information: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/frpp/>



Grasslands Reserve Program: The Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) is a voluntary program offering landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance grasslands on their property. The Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency and Forest Service are coordinating implementation of GRP, which helps landowners restore and protect grassland, rangeland, pastureland, shrubland and certain other lands and provides assistance for rehabilitating grasslands. The program will conserve vulnerable grasslands from conversion to cropland or other uses and conserve valuable grasslands by helping maintain viable ranching operations.

For more information visit: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/grp/>

For information or applications for GRP, FFRP, CSP, WHIP, WRP or EQIP, contact:

David Millard
District Conservationist
(321) 633-1702
dave.millard@fl.usda.gov



Forest Land Enhancement Program: The Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP) replaces the Stewardship Incentives Program (SIP) and the Forestry Incentives Program (FIP). FLEP is optional in each State and is a voluntary program for non-industrial private forest (NIPF) landowners. It provides for technical, educational, and cost-share assistance to promote sustainability of the NIPF forests.

For further information: <http://www.fs.fed.us/cooperativeforestry/programs/loa/flep.shtml>



Forest Legacy Program: The Forest Legacy Program (FLP) protects environmentally important forest threatened by conversion to non-forest uses. The program allows for the purchase of conservation easements and forestland from willing sellers to keep it in natural state. Landowners may continue to own their land or sell it to someone who wants undeveloped forestland. The State holds title to the Forest Legacy conservation easements and lands. At least 25 % of total program cost comes from nonfederal sources such as donations of part of the easement value from landowners. The USDA Forest Service State and Private Forestry branch administers the program with the states.

For more information: <http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/flp.shtml>

Or Contact: Mike Long
Division of Forestry
(850) 488-4274
longm@doacs.state.fl.us



Private Stewardship Grants Program: Private Stewardship Grants Program (PSGP) funding is available both to individual landowners and to groups and organizations that partner with landowners to submit proposals and implement projects. Lands owned or leased by organizations may be eligible for funding to the extent that proposed conservation actions go beyond measures and plans already in place or otherwise required. Applying for funding is relatively simple. A proposal need only describe the conservation efforts to be undertaken, provide a plan for how and by whom the work will be implemented, describe the land where the work will be done and explain the benefits for the targeted rare species. The cost share contributed by landowners or organizations is lower than for most federal grant programs only a \$1 of non federal grant support is needed to match \$9 of federal support and can come from many different in-kind services e.g. labor, equipment, time, material, etc.

More information on this program can be found in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website: http://www.fws.gov/endangered/grants/private_stewardship/



Partners for Fish and Wildlife: This is a voluntary program that works with private landowners to restore fish and wildlife habitats on their land. A farmer, rancher, city dweller, local agencies, private organizations, corporation, government agencies, educational institutions etc. can be a partner. Assurances offered are varied and ranges from informal advice on the design and location of potential restoration projects to design and funding of these projects. A voluntary cooperative agreement is usually developed with the landowner. Landowners can become involved by contacting the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. A biologist will contact them to discuss the needs, opportunities available and offer assistance. The Service may share or pay certain costs for projects that meet certain criteria.

For more information visit: <http://www.fws.gov/partners/>

Or contact: Jay Harrington
United States Fish and Wildlife Service
(904) 232-2580 (x120)
Jay_Harrington@fws.gov



Florida Land Owners Incentive: The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is cooperating with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to implement the Florida's Landowner Incentives Program. This program is designed to provide technical and financial support to those private landowners interested in improving habitat conditions on their properties for species at risk. To apply, interested landowners must complete a LIP application that includes the enrolled property location, boundary and proof of ownership. There are no acreage limitations and any private (non-governmental) landowner is eligible to receive up to \$20,000 in cost shares for approved habitat improvement practices. Cost-shares require a 50% non-federal match and are reimbursed based on established flat rates for each approved practice.

For further information: <http://myfwc.com/LIP/>



Conservation Easement: A conservation easement (or conservation restriction) is a legal voluntary agreement between a landowner and a private land trust (i.e. Green Horizon Land Trust or The Nature Conservancy (TNC)) or state (i.e. FDEP or SJRWMD) or local government agency (i.e. Environmentally Endangered Lands (EELs)) that permanently limits uses of the land in order to protect its conservation values. The landowners continue to own and use their land within limits, they can sell it or pass it on to heirs. Landowners may be paid a less than fee simple amount for the easement, or an agency may cost share the restoration of the natural resources on the property in turn for the easement.

For further information contact:

Ray Bunton
SJRWMD
(386)329-4335

rbunton@sjrwmd.com

Mike Knight
EELs
(321)255-4466

mknight@brevardparks.com

The Nature Conservancy

(877)812-3698

legacy@tnc.org

<http://www.nature.org/joinanddonate/giftandlegacy/docs/art14861.html>



Funding Database for Wetland Restoration: The Florida Department of Environmental Protection maintains a database search engine for technical assistance and funding opportunities for landowners within the state of Florida. Usage of the database is relatively simple. Database search results give multiple funding sources from multiple agencies and contact information.

For access to this database go to:

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/wetlands/fwric/index.htm>

