

# WRP Program

## 1. Introduction to Program: Purpose, Goals and Objectives:

The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is the Nation's premier wetlands restoration program. It is a voluntary program that offers landowners the means and the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) manages the program as well as provides technical and financial support to help landowners that participate in WRP.

Program objectives are: 1) to purchase conservation easements from, or enter into cost-share agreements with willing owners of eligible land, 2) help eligible landowners, protect, restore, and enhance the original hydrology, native vegetation, and natural topography of eligible lands, 3) restore and protect the functions and values of wetlands in the agricultural landscape, 4) help achieve the national goal of no net loss of wetlands, and to improve the general environment of the country.

The emphasis of the WRP program is to protect, restore and enhance the functions and values of wetland ecosystems to attain: 1) first and foremost, habitat for migratory birds and wetland dependent wildlife, including threatened and endangered species, 2) protection and improvement of water quality, 3) lessen water flows due to flooding, 4) recharge of ground water, 5) protection and enhancement of open space and aesthetic quality, 6) protection of native flora and fauna contributing to the Nation's natural heritage and 7) contribute to educational and scholarship.

WRP program information, including forms, final rule, publications, etc., regarding the National WRP Program can be accessed at the following web site:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/wrp/> Additional information on WRP can be found in the Conservation Programs Manual, 440-V-CPM, Part 514, Amendment 4.

Maps, photography, and WRP success stories related to the Indiana WRP Program can be accessed at the following web site: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/wrp/states/> and then clicking on Indiana.

## 2. Fact sheets:

The following documents are attached:

Indiana Question & Answer sheet (Indiana WRP Q A .doc)

Indiana 2002 WRP Summary (02inWRPftsht.doc)

Indiana WRP- FEP Acres Map (wrp fep 2002 map.doc)

Indiana NRCS Certified Wetland Restoration Planners

## 3. Application process: Step-by-step with timeframes for actions

The following provides a general account of the steps necessary for a landowner to complete in order to enroll into the WRP program and record a WRP easement.

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1. Landowner contacts the local NRCS field office to determine eligibility of the site.
2. Site determined to be eligible landowner makes application with local NRCS office using **Application for Long Term Assistance Form AD-1153**.
3. Site is ranked by NRCS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Indiana Department of Natural Resources personnel. Landowner is encouraged to attend and provide input during the ranking process. **Indiana WRP Ranking Form** is used.
4. Ranking packet is submitted by the local NRCS office to the WRP Coordinator. Ranked sites are put on statewide ranking list. Available funds are used to fund as many of the ranked sites as possible.
5. Letter of Tentative Acceptance along with **Notification of Intent to Continue Form AD-1159** is sent to landowner indicating that the site has been funded and requesting their confirmation on continuing on with the WRP program. **Landowner has 15 calendar days to respond.**
6. Appraisal is ordered by NRCS
7. Once NRCS has appraisal back-**Option to Purchase Agreement (offer) Form AD-1157** is sent to landowner based on appraisal or State Maximum Cap whichever is lower. **Landowner has 15 calendar days to reply.**
8. NRCS requests title commitment on property.
9. Landowner requests survey to be completed providing legal description of the easement area.
10. Title commitment and survey submitted to WRP Coordinator and forwarded on to Office of General Counsel for review. Landowner responsible for providing clear title on the easement area.
11. Closing materials submitted to closing agent (title company) for recording of easement.
12. Landowner develops final restoration plan for the easement area with the local NRCS office.
13. Closing agent records **Warranty Easement Deed Form CCC-1255** with landowner. Easement payment is made by closing agent to landowner.
14. Landowner can crop property within the fiscal year (October through September) that an easement is recorded. For example, easement is recorded in November 2002-the landowner could plant a spring crop in May of 2003 and harvest the crop.

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15. Restoration plan practices should begin to be implemented within one year of recording the Warranty Easement Deed.

16. Site should be restored within three years of recording the easement.

## 4. Forms Required:

All of the following forms are attached:

Indiana WRP Ranking Worksheet (IN WRP Ranking worksheet.doc)

AD-1153 Application for Long-term Contracted Assistance Through the WRP Program (ad1153.pdf)

AD-1154 Long-Term Agreement (AD1154.pdf)

AD-1154 Attachment A General Provisions (AD1154\_WRP\_General\_Prov.pdf)

AD-1154 Attachment B WRP Special Provisions (AD1154A\_WRP\_SPEC\_PROV.pdf)

AD-1161 Application for Payment (ad1161.pdf)

AD-1157 Option Agreement to Purchase (AD1157.pdf)

AD-1157A Option Agreement to Purchase, Amendment 1 (AD1157A.pdf)

AD-1158 Subordination Agreement and Limited Lien Waiver (AD1158.pdf)

AD-1159 Notification of Intent to Continue (AD1159.pdf)

NRCS CPA 38 Request for Certified Wetland Determination (NRCSCPA0038.pdf)

NRCS LTP 13 Conservation Program Status Review (NRCSLTP0013.pdf)

CCC1255 Warranty Easement Deed for Permanent Easement (CCC1255.pdf)

CCC1255A Warranty Easement Deed for 30-Year Easements (CCC1255A.pdf)

Sample Conservation Plan developed in Customer Service Toolkit

Sample Contract Support Document developed in Customer Service Toolkit

## 5. Indiana contact information:

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