Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
CRP’s objective is to cost-effectively assist owners and operators in conserving and improving the nation’s natural resource base.
Emphasis

- Protect the nation’s soil, water, and wildlife resources
- Improve and preserve water quality
- Enhance fish and wildlife habitat
Administration

- Administered by USDA Farm Service Agency
- Technical assistance provided by USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Basic Agreement

- Participants on contract agree to take land out of agricultural production and establish and maintain a permanent cover for the length of the contract in return for various payments.
Payments

- **Annual Rental** ($20 - $173 / Acre)
- **Rental Incentive** (0% to 85% depending on program/practice)
- **Annual Maintenance** ($2 - 4$/Acre)
- **50% Cost-share** for practice installation
- **Signing Incentive Payment** (SIP) - $100 per acre
- **Practice Incentive Payment** (PIP) – 40% of practice installation cost
- **Required Management Cost-share** (50% of cost)
Program Payments

- Almost $2 billion annually in the nation
- About $40 million annually in Wisconsin
National Acres Enrolled

- About 33.5 million acres enrolled nationally.
- Previously authorized for 39 million acres.
- Latest farm bill reduced authorization to 32 million acres which will be reached by 2010 FY.
Wisconsin Enrollment

- 26,000 + contracts
- Just over 460,000 acres enrolled today
- Highest enrollment occurred in mid 1990’s at 750,000 acres
Violations

- Unauthorized haying or grazing
- Planted ag commodity
- Activity without authorization
- Non-control of weeds, pests, woody vegetation encroachment
- Not maintaining required cover
- Failure to perform management practices
- Sale of land without successor to contract...
Violation Consequences

Always a financial consequence:

- **Good Faith** – Producer brings land back into compliance at own expense, suffer payment reduction up to amount of annual rental payment on contract

- **Lack of Good Faith** – Termination of acres in violation with full refund of all payments, interest from date of disbursement, and liquidated damages
Specific Weed Control Requirements

- At one point, only weeds on the state noxious weed list were required to be controlled.

- As of November 28, 1990, participants were required to control other weeds that are not considered noxious, as determined by FSA.
Specific Weed Control Requirements

- Participants are to ensure undesirable vegetation, weeds (including noxious weeds), insects, rodents, etc. that pose a threat to existing cover or adversely impact other landowners in the area are controlled.
What Happened In 2006?

- The agency conducted a re-enrollment and extension process (REX) on all contracts that were expiring in 2007 through 2010.

- For each contract that a participant wanted to extend or re-enroll, FSA was required to inspect all acres on the contract for compliance.
What Did FSA Find?

- Lots of weed issues on lots of CRP!
- Landowners and FSA/NRCS staff as well, did not understand weed control requirements.
- It became apparent, Wisconsin FSA needed to establish some guidelines for weed control for both participants and agency staff.
Developing CRP Maintenance Job Sheet

- FSA worked through the Wildlife Subcommittee of the NRCS State Technical Committee.
- Other specialists in the state involved in invasive species were also included.
- Resulted in issuance of NRCS Job Sheet in April, 2008.
- Mailed to all current CRP participants and now a mandatory job sheet for all new contracts.
WEED TREATMENT THRESHOLDS

Group 1: No tolerance for these invasive plant species, CRP participant must attempt to eliminate these plant species when present.
WEED TREATMENT
THRESHOLDS

Group 1:

- Chinese lespedeza (Lespedeza sericea)
- Crown vetch (Coronilla varia)
- Giant hogweed (Heracleum mantegazzianum)
- Hill mustard (Bunias orientalis)
- Japanese knotweed (Polygonum cuspidatum)
- Multiflora rose (Rosa multiflora)
- Poison hemlock (Conium maculatum)
- Teasel: cutleaf and common (Dipsacus laciniatus and fullonum)
- Wild chervil (Anthriscus sylvestris)
WEED TREATMENT THRESHOLDS

Group 2: Implement management actions to prevent the development of viable seed. Must maintain CRP cover at or below the following thresholds:

- • 10% or more of the total canopy is occupied by the Group 2 listed plant species, or

- • a patch of individual species or a combination of the Group 2 listed species exceeding one acre in size.
WEED TREATMENT THRESHOLDS

Group 2:

- Common tansy (Tanacetum vulgare)
- Field bindweed (Convolvulus arvensis)
- Garlic mustard (Alliaria petiolata)
- Hawkweeds (Hieracium sp.)
- Japanese hedge parsley (Torilis japonica)
- Knapweeds (Centaurea sp.)
- Purple loosestrife (Lythrum salicaria)
- Reed canary grass (Phalaris arundinacea)
- Reed grass, common (Phragmites australis)
- Spurge: leafy and cypress (Euphorbia esula and cyparissias)
- Sweet clover: white and yellow (Melilotus alba and officinalis)
- Thistle: Canada and marsh (Cirsium arvense and palustre)
- Thistle: musk and plumeless (Carduus nutans and acanthoides)
- Wild parsnip (Pastinaca sativa)
Group 3: Implement management actions to maintain the CRP cover at or below the following thresholds:

- • 30% or more of the total canopy is occupied by any combination of Group 3 listed species, or

- • a patch of individual species or a combination of Group 3 listed species exceeding one acre in size.
WEED TREATMENT THRESHOLDS

Group 3:

- Burdock (Arctium minus)
- Canada goldenrod (Solidago Canadensis)
- Curly dock (Rumex crispus)
- Dames rocket (Hesperis matronalis)
- Giant ragweed (Ambrosia trifida)
- Queen Anne’s Lace (Daucus carota)
WEED TREATMENT THRESHOLDS

Woody Species

Implement management actions to maintain the occurrence of woody species at or below the following thresholds:

- • less than 5% of the total canopy coverage,
- • cannot exceed 5 feet of height, or
- • any patch of woody vegetation greater than one acre in size (does not include leadplant and New Jersey tea).
Questions?

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