

Newsletter



OVER 20 YEARS OF
RESOURCE CONSERVATION



Vol 1 Fall 2021

For over 20 years, CREP has been a successful partnership between USDA, IDNR, and the SWCDs. The program goals are to reduce sediment & nutrient runoff, improve water quality, and create and enhance critical habitat for fish and wildlife populations on private lands within the Illinois and Kaskaskia River Watersheds. Currently, there are more than 1,300 CREP easements protecting over 90,000 acres.

What's New with CREP?

USDA and the State have signed a new agreement making it possible to bring CREP back to the landowners and producers of Illinois. IDNR, along with FSA and County Soil and Water Conservation Districts, are gearing up by hiring new staff, training, and meeting with our partners to better conserve and protect our natural resources.



SWCD Shout-Out!

Thank you to the county staff who have helped coordinate site visits to train our new field staff. IDNR CREP Program staff greatly appreciate this support. Karen (Fayette), Kara (Knox) and Sue (Christian).

Thank You to the 6 districts that volunteered for the Address Verification and Photo Review pilot program: Emily (Bond), Michelle (Hancock), Kara (Knox), Steve (Logan), Melissa (Montgomery), and Jake (Sangamon). The SWCDs working on this program have already identified ways to improve this process.

Landowner Spotlight

Thank you to the McDonald family in Christian County for allowing the CREP team to train on your beautiful property –it is a great example of building habitats for wildlife. While we were out there, we observed plenty of migratory birds and pollinator species.



Photo credit: CRS Anne Hughes

"it's good for the wildlife, good for conservation"
- Matt McDonald

Do you have a great photo from a trail cam or hunt on your CREP property? Let's see who has the biggest bucks, tallest turkeys and most photogenic pheasants. Email your pics to dnr.crep@illinois.gov

Critter Corner

This time of year, sandhill cranes are stopping over in fields and grasslands during migration.



Monarch butterflies are using grasslands, woodlands, and agricultural fields to congregate before migrating to Mexico.



Photo credit: CRS Anne Hughes



Photo credit: CRS Anne Hughes



Conservation Resource Specialists

Did you know CREP has 6 field specialists to support the program? They would be happy to visit with you on your property to address any CREP related question. [Click here to look up the staff for your area](#)

The More You Know...

Hunting aids in conservation by providing money from license sales and specialty taxes earmarked for conservation. This provides for habitat management and many outdoor conservation programs.

Illinois Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever is partnering with the Illinois Natural History Survey to help sponsor adult learn to hunt workshops.

[To learn more click here.](#)

Recently released, Illinois' third Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy (NLRs) Biennial Report describes the continued progress being made in Illinois as well as challenges to reduce nutrient losses from multiple sources to improve water quality in Illinois and downstream to reduce the hypoxic zone in the Gulf of Mexico.

[See press release here.](#)

Don't forget, you can find a ton of info and answers to frequently asked questions on [the CREP website](#).

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/conservation/CREP>

If you would like to be added to our email list or have other questions contact

DNR.CREP@illinois.gov

217 557-6498

DIY Management

Did you know?...You can manage your own CREP easement.



Photo credit: USFS



Photo credit: USFS

Is your CREP easement in Northern Illinois?

Lymantria dispar moths (formerly known as gypsy moths) can defoliate and even kill healthy oak trees. If you have seen velvet cases on your oaks, report it to INHS or IDNR, and scrape it from the tree. [More info here.](#)

Is Japanese Honeysuckle

(*Lonicera japonica*) invading your property? This invasive plant can outcompete native woodland plants if unmanaged. Fall is the best time to identify and control this invasive plant species.

[More info here.](#)



Photo credit: Brandford CA

USFWS 1013

Seasonal Considerations

- ✓ Fall is the time to treat invasives! If you're planning foliar spray applications to treat bush honeysuckle, wait until the leaves are off adjacent trees (don't worry, the honeysuckle will still be green.)
- ✓ Do you have an approved CREP food plot plan? Now would be a good time to plant winter wheat.
- ✓ Start planning your spring and fall burns for next year. Certified burn plans and permits take time to write and approve.

CREP easements make great habitat for game species. Good luck to our fall hunters out there!



Tip: Loosely pile dropped branches and logs along field edges to create wildlife habitat. Brush piles create refuge for wildlife and establish prime hunting locations for quail, turkey and deer.



Photo credit: CRS Anne Hughes