

Newsletter



Vol 4 Summer 2022

For over 20 years, CREP has been a successful partnership between the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and the Illinois Soil and Water Districts (SWCD). 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?

We are open for new enrollment! Interested landowners should contact their local Conservation Resource Specialist, or their county Farm Service Agency, or their Soil and Water Conservation District for more information.

The new CREP Wildlife Food Plot Request and Guidelines form is here! Visit our website for more info. [Click Here](#)

SWCD Shout-Out!

SWCD CREP Re-Opening Training June 15, 2022

We want to thank all the representatives who attended the in-person and virtual training day for the CREP re-launch in your counties! It was wonderful to see so many of your faces, get to have enlightening conversations and have the chance to learn from one another. We are all here to support each other as we begin the enrollment process together. If you need to see the recording or get access to the documents for training, please email dnr.crep@illinois.gov

Yes, We're Open!



Photos of the Season

Photos credit: CRS Anne Hughes



CREP Re-Opening!!

On June 15th the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, alongside their partners at the Farm Service Agency and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, reopened this vastly popular Illinois land conservation program. The hard work of everyone involved is greatly appreciated.



IDNR Director Colleen Callahan



From left to right: Justin Ramey, Michelle Bloomquist, Robert Bedient, Grant Hammar, Charlie Meier, Colleen Callahan, EIC, ISA, Chris Miller, Anne Hughes, and Abbey Ward

Thank you to everyone who came to celebrate the grand re-opening of Illinois CREP! There was a great turn out; attendees included State and Federal legislators, and many of CREP's governmental and non-governmental partners



Critter Corner

Restoring wetlands can improve the habitat needed for nesting birds of all sizes in the late spring and early summer. Sandhill cranes need wetlands adjacent to agricultural fields and grasslands to rear their chicks.



Photo credit: CRS Anne Hughes



Photo credit: CRS Anne Hughes

Leave your fallen logs to create a diverse woodland habitat for creatures big and small. The turkeys will appreciate the insect feast inside and the salamanders will make their summer homes in the decaying wood.



The More You Know...

Planting tips: To increase your fall waterfowl hunts:

Drawing water down in wetlands in the late summer slowly exposing mudflats will allow for optimal foraging for fall migrating waterfowl

It is important to draw the water off the landscape slowly to reduce unwanted plants that grow in moist soil to out compete the wanted moist soil plants

The vegetation that grows will not only have seeds for waterfowl to eat but insects will gather in this vegetation allowing for another food resource for waterfowl

Reaching CREP goals.

[Learn more about CREP goals](#)



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.

[Look up the staff for your area](#)

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

Landowner Spotlight



Steve and Mary Anita of Marshall Co. restored a 27.5 acre farmed wetland on a tributary to Crow Creek which outlets to the Illinois River, with the CREP program and easement. It is a blend of marsh and prairie ecosystems in a major flyway for shorebirds and waterfowl.

“It is one of the most gratifying things we have done in life. I love the way sandpipers excite my wife and the way she freaks out when she hears the sandhill cranes on the marsh or sees the trumpeter swans make their final approach”

– Steve Zwicker



Photos courtesy of Steven Zwicker

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

Seasonal Considerations

- ✓ As it gets warmer, remember that conservation mowing can be done outside of the primary nesting season:

April 15th – August 1st

- ✓ Natural mosquito controllers include bats and dragonflies. Less pesticides needed when these insectivores are on the job!



Photo credit: CRS Anne Hughes



Photo credit: CRS Anne Hughes

Give the pollinators room to nest!

Bumble bees and bats need dead trees, fallen logs and rotten stumps to provide shelter during the summer months. More productive colonies equals more crops pollinated!