



Riparian and Wetland Program Update 2017 Spring Workshops

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Riparian & Wetland Program

Funding for the R&W Program does not presently go to every county every year, but is directed to projects on a case-by-case basis ...

Riparian & Wetland Program

- Program started in 1994
- 64 Approved RWPPs by 2002
- 259 projects submitted 1994 - 2003
- 259 R&W contracts approved 2004 - 2017 for total cost-share of \$1,342,522



Riparian & Wetland Program

R&W dollars are currently spent on:

- Riparian forest buffers
- Occasional wetland projects
- Educational projects

R&W Future goals:

- RWPPs – Riparian and Wetland Protection Plans
- Diversify the program



RWPPs - Riparian & Wetland Protection Plans

- Developed in 1990s or early 2000s
- Many conservation districts created a plan to address local resource concerns
- Included in the plans:
 - Description of values / resources (i.e. habitat, wildlife) associated with wetlands and riparian areas
 - Goals of the District related to RW areas
 - Riparian and Wetland types
 - Potential BMPs
 - Plan implementation strategy
 - Evaluation and monitoring plans



Riparian & Wetland Program

Protecting eroding riparian areas with tree plantings and KFS maintenance contracts



Riparian & Wetland Program

- Wetland projects on a case-by-case basis
- Cost share goes to earthwork, pipe if necessary, vegetation plantings
- DOC also funds information / education projects (i.e. Playa Lakes Symposium)

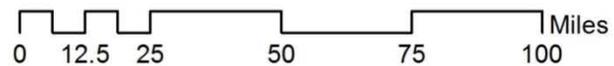
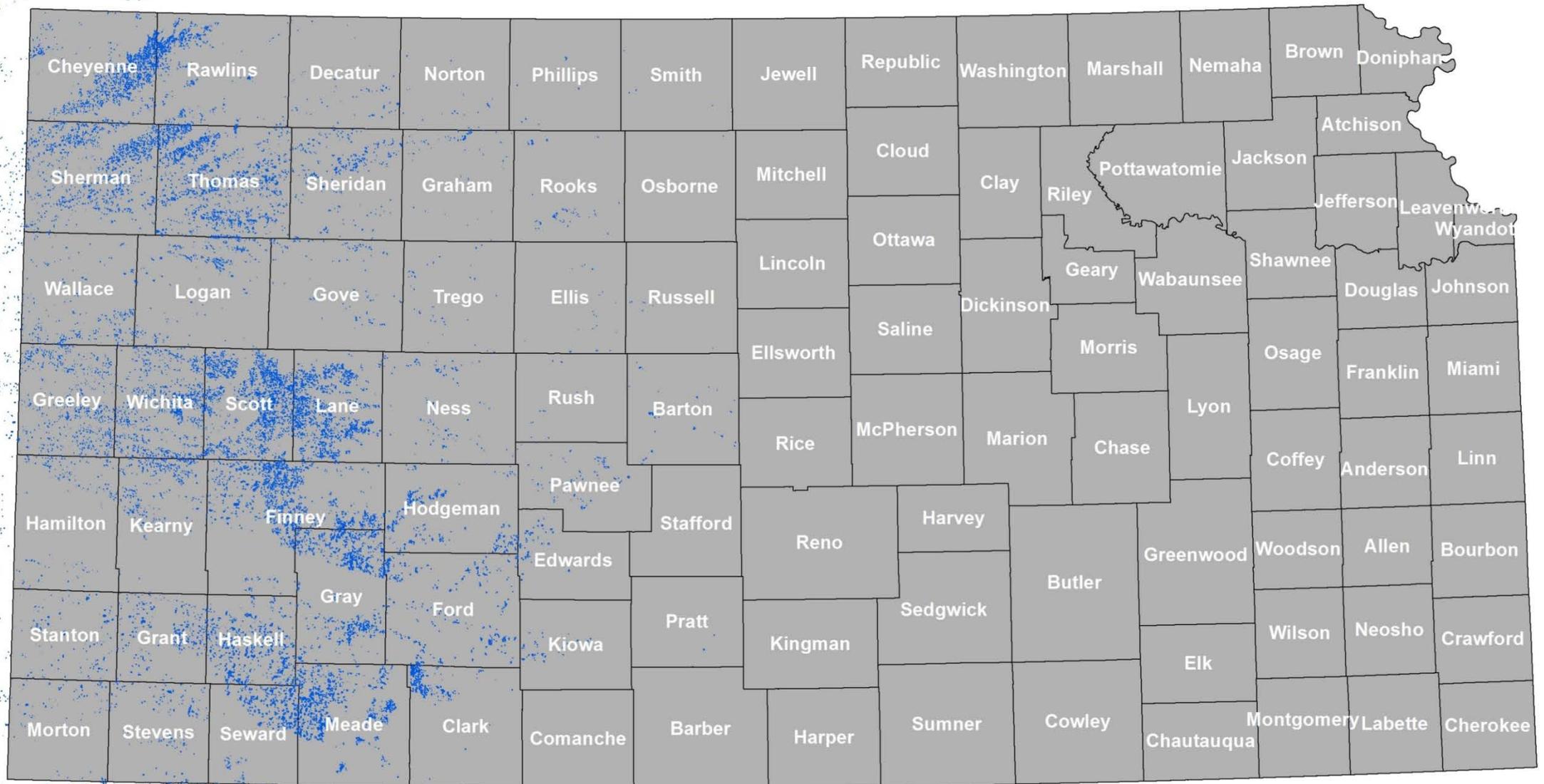


Riparian & Wetland Program

Goal: increase wetland projects and practices - including playas



Potential Playa Lakes in Kansas



Data Source: Playa Lakes Joint Venture and Kansas DASC

Kansas Water Plan:

Ogallala-High Plains Aquifer Action Items

Encourage research on the rate and volume of water moving from playas to the Ogallala High Plains Aquifer; quantify the levels of restoration needed and enumerate the average amount of water deposited annually in playas

How do playas fit in to DOC's Riparian and Wetland Program?

DOC R&W Program Objectives:

- Encourage the development of riparian and wetland protection plans in each (every) conservation district
- Create, enhance, or restore riparian and wetland areas to support their natural functions and values
- Provide information, education and awareness pertaining to the function and values of wetlands and riparian areas and how they can be restored and protected to provide natural processes



Photo provided courtesy of Playa Lakes Joint Venture

FSA Announces New CRP SAFE Practice for Playas

- Program Will Protect and Restore Playa Lakes, Increase Habitat for Migratory Birds
- A newly-established Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) SAFE practice—the Migratory Bird, Butterfly, and Pollinator Habitat practice—will allow up to 10,000 new acres in Kansas to be offered into CRP. Eligibility is strictly limited to landowners and ag producers who want to enhance existing playas or restore historic playas located in distinct priority areas established in the western one-third of Kansas.
- There are approximately 7500 playas eligible in these priority areas. Research has shown that properly functioning playas are a primary source of recharge for the Ogallala Aquifer — contributing up to 95 percent of inflow to the aquifer and improving the quality of that water — and also provide critical habitat for migrating waterfowl, cranes and shorebirds.
- This SAFE practice, CP38B, is designed to provide private landowners a market-based financial incentive for restoring playas, the most common wetlands in the region. An innovative market-based approach for sign-up will enable landowners to submit bids of up to \$300 per acre. Submitted bids are based upon landowner values in a competitive process. While the program has been approved, an enrollment period has not yet been announced. Details on signup dates and requirements will be provided in the near future.
- The program allows for a minimum playa size of 2 acres and up to a maximum tract size of 160 acres. Mid-contract management practices to keep the cover healthy will be required. This includes the option for managed harvesting of the acres and/or prescribed grazing. Contracts will be for 10-15 years. SAFE is a continuous CRP signup conservation practice, but offers will be ranked at intervals. Offers that don't make the first cut-off date, or aren't accepted during the first batch, will be carried over for consideration during the next round.
- The Migratory Bird SAFE is a grassroots, cooperative conservation effort that was jointly proposed by Playa Lakes Joint Venture and the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture, based in Nebraska. It involves several partners including FSA and NRCS, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, Ducks Unlimited, and Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams. These agencies, along with Kansas Farm Service Agency, are all available to work with producers interested in enrolling in the Migratory Bird, Butterfly, and Pollinator Habitat SAFE.

R&W Practices that Apply to Playas

- Filter Strips:
 - Shaping
 - Seedbed prep
 - Fertilizer

FILTER STRIP (Code 393)

WR, NPS, and RW

1. DEFINITION

A strip or area of vegetation for removing sediment, organic matter, and other pollutants from runoff and waste water.

2. PURPOSE

To remove sediment and other pollutants from runoff or waste water by filtration, deposition, infiltration, absorption, decomposition, and volatilization, thereby reducing pollution and protecting the environment.

3. CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

- a. Along perennial or intermittent streams, ponds, and lakes; at the lower edge of fields; or above conservation practices such as terraces or diversions.
- b. In areas requiring filter strips as part of a waste management system treating runoff or waste water.

RW Practices that Apply to Playas

- Wetland Creation:
 - Earthwork
 - Pipe

WETLAND CREATION (Code 658)

WR, NPS and RW

1. DEFINITION

A wetland that has been created on a site location which historically was not a wetland or is a wetland but the site will be converted to a wetland with a different hydrology, vegetation type, or function than naturally occurred on the site.

2. PURPOSE

To create wetlands that has wetland hydrology, hydrophytic plant communities, hydric soil conditions, and wetland functions and/or values.

3. CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice applies to sites where no natural wetland occurred or where a wetland exists, or existed, and the wetland characteristics (hydrology, vegetation, and functions) will be different from what historically occurred.

This practice is applicable only if modifying drainage and/or artificial flooding of duration and frequency to create and maintain wetland conditions during an average annual precipitation event can approximate hydrologic conditions. The wetland class/subclass will be specified.

RW Practices that Apply to Playas

- Wetland Restoration:
 - Earthwork
 - Pipe

WETLAND RESTORATION (Code 657)

WR, NPS, and RW

1. DEFINITION

A rehabilitation of a drained or degraded wetland where the soils, hydrology, vegetative community, and biological habitat are returned to the natural condition to the extent practicable.

2. PURPOSE

To restore hydric soil conditions, hydrologic conditions, hydrophytic plant communities and wetland functions that occurred on the disturbed wetland site prior to modification to the extent practicable.

3. CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

- a. This practice applies only to sites with hydric soil which were natural wetlands that have been previously degraded hydrologically and/or vegetatively.
- b. This practice is applicable only if natural hydrologic conditions can be approximated by modifying drainage and/or artificial flooding of a duration and frequency similar to natural conditions.

RW practices that apply to playas

- Wetland Enhancement:
 - Earthwork
 - Pipe

WETLAND ENHANCEMENT (Code 659)

WR, NPS and RW

1. DEFINITION

The modification or rehabilitation of an existing or degraded wetland, where specific functions and/or values are modified for the purpose of meeting specific project objectives.

2. PURPOSE

To modify the hydrologic condition, hydrophytic plant communities, and/or other biological habitat components of a wetland for the purpose of favoring specific wetland functions or values.

3. CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice applies on any degraded or existing wetland where the objective is to specifically enhance a selected wetland function(s) and/or value(s).

R&W Information and Education Projects

Potential educational projects:

- Signage at a restored playa demonstration project
- Information centers
- Field days
- Workshops
- School events



Riparian & Wetland Program

- DOC will be working to update funding / policies for playa conservation and protection
- Visit with DOC staff about developing / updating your RWPPs

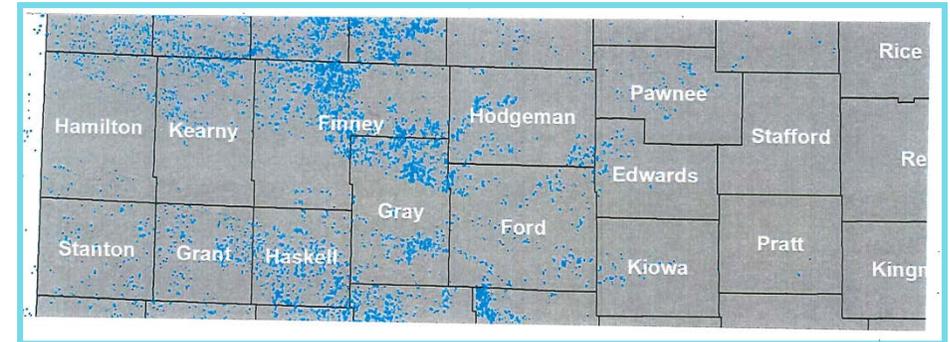
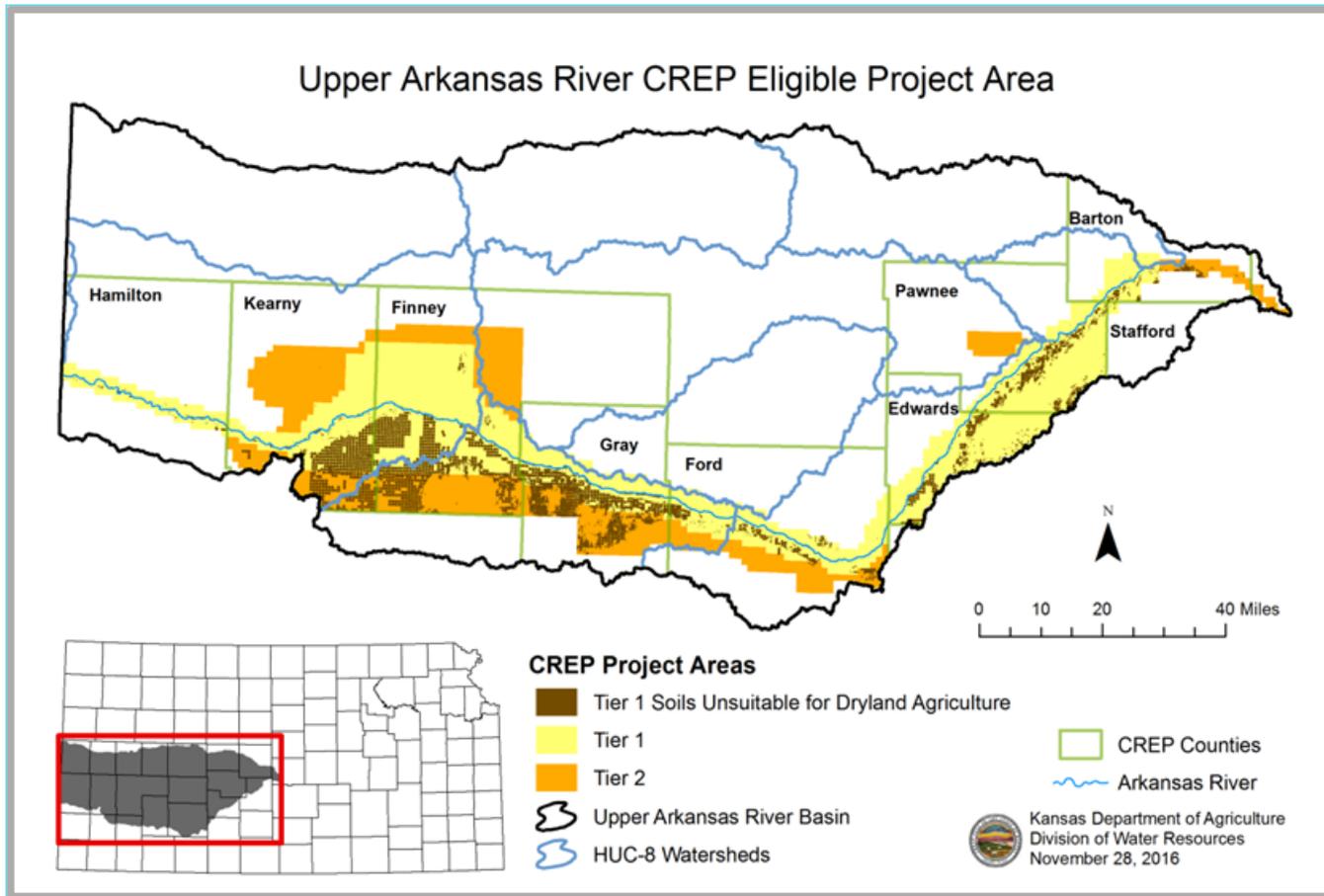
Photo courtesy of Playa Lakes Joint Venture



Upper Arkansas River Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program



The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) in Kansas is a federal / state partnership created for enhancing water conservation efforts along the Upper Arkansas River (UAR) corridor from Hamilton County to Rice County.





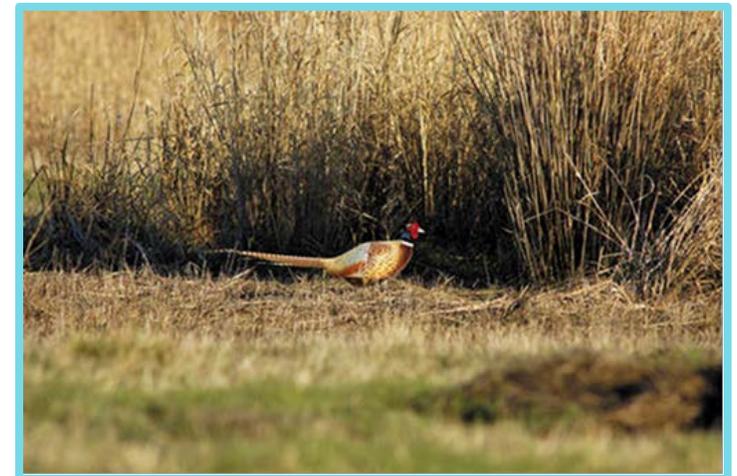
CREP is a voluntary, incentive-based program allowing producers to enroll eligible irrigated acres in targeted areas for 14–15 year contracts with FSA, permanently retire the associated state water rights on the enrolled acres, and establish an approved land cover (typically a native grass) on the same acreage. The producer receives an annual rental payment, plus additional cost share opportunities for specific conservation practices from FSA and an upfront incentive payment from DOC.

Eligible cropland conservation practices approved by FSA to meet the goals and objectives for this CREP project are as follows:

- CP2 (Permanent Native Grasses and Legumes) – 27,550 acres;
- CP4D (Permanent Wildlife Habitat, Non-easement) – 400 acres;
- CP9 (Shallow Water Areas for Wildlife)* – 200 acres;
- CP21 (Filter Strips) – 100 acres;
- CP22 (Riparian Buffer) – 100 acres and;
- CP23/CP23A (Wetland Restoration) – 200 acres.

CP9 Shallow Water Areas for Wildlife - The purpose of this practice is to develop or restore shallow water areas to an average depth of 6 to 18 inches for wildlife. The shallow water area **must** provide a source of water for wildlife for the majority of the year. **Exception:** For areas west of the 100th meridian that receive less than 25 inches of annual precipitation, the shallow water area **must** provide a source of water for wildlife for a minimum of 4 months of the year. **Note:** This is not a pond development or wetland restoration practice. However, this practice may be constructed on suitable hydric and non-hydric soils.

Groundwater is the dominant source of water for all uses in the basin, and aquifer declines are a serious concern. Therefore, water conservation is the main management objective in the Upper Arkansas CREP. However, the program also provides other resource benefits including soil conservation, water quality protection, wildlife habitat enhancement, and energy savings. The majority of irrigated acres enrolled have been on highly erodible, sandhills soils that are unsuitable for dryland farming.



As of Sept. 30, 2016, a total of 109 state CREP contracts on 18,318 acres have been approved by the State of Kansas. These contracts have resulted in the permanent retirement of 37,430 acre-feet of annual water appropriation on 124 water rights from 162 wells. Both Gray and Kearny counties are now at the current enrollment cap of 7,237.5 acres each.



Any questions ???

FSA Conservation Practice Definitions:

CP2 Establishment of Permanent Native Grasses - The purpose of this practice is to establish new or maintain existing vegetative cover of native grasses on eligible cropland that will enhance environmental benefits.

CP4D Permanent Wildlife Habitat, Non easement - The purpose of this practice is to establish new or maintain existing permanent wildlife habitat cover to enhance environmental benefits for the wildlife habitat of the designated or surrounding areas.

CP9 Shallow Water Areas for Wildlife - The purpose of this practice is to develop or restore shallow water areas to an average depth of 6 to 18 inches for wildlife. The shallow water area **must** provide a source of water for wildlife for the majority of the year. **Exception:** For areas west of the 100th meridian that receive less than 25 inches of annual precipitation, the shallow water area **must** provide a source of water for wildlife for a minimum of 4 months of the year. **Note:** This is not a pond development or wetland restoration practice. However, this practice may be constructed on suitable hydric and non-hydric soils.

CP21 Filter Strips - The purpose of this practice is to remove nutrients, sediment, organic matter, pesticides, and other pollutants from surface runoff and subsurface flow by deposition, absorption, plant uptake, denitrification, and other processes, and thereby reduce pollution and protect surface water and subsurface water quality while enhancing the ecosystem of the water body.

CP22 Riparian Buffer - The purposes of this practice are to: 1) remove nutrients, sediment, organic matter, pesticides, and other pollutants from surface runoff and subsurface flow by deposition, absorption, plant uptake, denitrification, and other processes, and thereby reduce pollution and protect surface water and subsurface water quality while enhancing the ecosystem of the water body; 2) create shade to lower water temperature to improve habitat for aquatic organisms; and 3) provide a source of detritus and large woody debris for aquatic organisms and habitat for wildlife.

CP23 Wetland Restoration - The purpose of this practice is to restore the functions and values of wetland ecosystems that have been devoted to agricultural use. The level of restoration of the wetland ecosystem shall be determined by the producer in consultation with NRCS or TSP.

CP23A Wetland Restoration, Non-Floodplain - The purpose of this practice is to restore the functions and values of wetland ecosystems that have been devoted to agricultural use. The level of restoration of the wetland ecosystem shall be determined by the producer in consultation with NRCS or TSP.