

# USDA Flood Recovery Assistance

August 2008

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides a variety of options for farmers, citizens and communities recovering from flood damages and heavy rains.

USDA can provide help for repairing conservation practices and damaged infrastructure as well as purchasing floodplain easements on frequently-flooded agricultural land. Following is some brief information on the programs available and some basic eligibility requirements. For more detailed information refer to [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov) or your local service center.

## Emergency Conservation Program

Offered by the Farm Service Agency this program provides assistance to landowners with farmland damaged by heavy rains, flooding and other natural disasters. ECP funds can be used for removing debris, restoring fences and conservation practices and providing water for livestock during drought. Other conservation measures may be included if approved.

**Eligibility:** For land to be eligible the natural disaster must create new conservation problems that if left untreated would impair the land, materially affect the land's productivity, are extremely costly to repair or represent unusual damage which is not likely to recur in the same area. *Preexisting conservation problems are not eligible for ECP.*

**Financial Assistance:** Participants receive financial assistance up to 75 percent of the cost to implement approved emergency practices as determined by county FSA committees.

## Emergency Watershed Protection Program

Offered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), EWP provides a variety of assistance from repairing conservation practices and infrastructure and purchasing floodplain easements. This work can include removing debris from stream channels, road culverts and bridges, reshaping and protecting eroded banks and repairing levees and structures. All projects must be sponsored by a state agency or legal subdivision of state government such as cities, counties and conservation districts.

**Eligibility:** All EWP work must reduce threats to life and property and must make sense economically and environmentally. Public and private landowners are eligible for assistance, but must be represented by a project sponsor.

EWP funds can't be used to solve problems that existed before the disaster or to improve the level of protection that existed before the disaster.

**Financial Assistance:** Participants receive financial assistance up to 75 percent cost share. The remaining percentage must be covered by a local source and may be in the form of cash or in-kind services.

**Sponsors Role:** Sponsors are responsible for providing landrights to do repair work and securing necessary permits. They must also furnish local cost share and serve as the project coordinators.

*Through EWP the federal government may also purchase floodplain easements on frequently-flooded agricultural lands. Please see your local service center office for more information.*

## Environmental Quality Incentives Program

This program is offered by NRCS. Iowa NRCS received \$4 million to provide farmers and landowners financial assistance for repairing conservation practices and structures damaged by flooding and heavy rains.

**Eligibility:** Producers must meet basic EQIP requirements and the damaged practices must have previously met NRCS standards.

**Financial Assistance:** Financial assistance is based on the estimated average repair costs. EQIP assistance will cover the majority of a producer's final repair costs.

## USDA Program and Assistance Provided

	Conservation Practices	Infrastructure	Floodplain Easements
EQIP	√		
EWP	√	√	√
ECP	√		

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