



# EMERGENCY WATERSHED PROTECTION PROGRAM

## Overview

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) administers the Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWPP) which responds to emergencies created by natural disasters. It is not necessary for a national emergency to be declared for an area to be eligible for assistance.

The EWP Program is a recovery effort aimed at relieving imminent hazards to life and property caused by floods, fires, windstorms, and other natural disasters. All projects must have a project sponsor.

NRCS may bear up to 75 percent of the eligible construction cost of emergency measures (90 percent within limited-resource areas as identified by the U.S. Census data). The remaining costs must come from local sources and can be in the form of cash or in-kind services.

## Type of Work Authorized

EWP is designed for installation of recovery measures to safeguard life and property as a result of a natural disaster. Threats that the EWP Program addresses are termed watershed impairments. These include, but are not limited to:

- debris-clogged waterways,
- unstable streambanks,
- severe erosion jeopardizing public infrastructure,
- wind-borne debris removal, and
- damaged upland sites stripped of protective vegetation by fire or drought.

The program can include purchasing floodplain easements. These easements restore, protect, maintain, and enhance the functions and values of the floodplain, including associated wetlands and riparian areas. They also conserve natural values including fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, flood water retention and ground water recharge, as well as safeguard lives and property from floods, and the results of erosion.

EWP work is not limited to any one set of prescribed measures. NRCS completes a Damage Survey Report which provides a site-by-site investigation of the work and measures necessary to protect life and property from additional flooding and soil erosion. NRCS will only provide funding for work that is necessary to reduce applicable threats. Should sponsors want to increase the level of protection, the sponsor will be responsible for paying 100 percent of the costs of the upgrade and additional work.



*Due to extreme rainfall on October 31, 2019, Lewis Creek in the Town of Bristol, Vermont, had extensive flood flows which caused bank erosion that endangered a two garage and residence.*

## Eligibility

Public and private landowners are eligible for assistance, but must be represented by a project sponsor.

Sponsors include legal subdivisions of the State, such as a city, county, general improvement district, conservation district, or any Native American tribe or tribal organization.

## Sponsor's Obligations

Sponsors are responsible for:

- providing land rights to implement repair work
- securing all necessary permits
- furnishing the local cost share
- accomplishing required works of improvement to remove the imminent threat to life and property
- performing any necessary operation and maintenance



*After EWP repairs, the streambank has been stabilized to prevent further bank erosion and danger to the buildings.*

### Criteria for Assistance

All EWP works of improvement must reduce threat to life and property; be economically, environmentally, and socially defensible; and be technically sound.

Property is defined as any artificial structure permanently affixed to the land such as, but not limited to: houses, buildings, roads, utilities, structures, dams. Standing timber, orchards, growing crops, other agronomic crops are not considered property under the EWP Program.

### How Do I Obtain Assistance?

If your land has suffered severe damage that may qualify for the EWP Program, you should contact your local NRCS office and request assistance. City, county, state governments, flood and water control districts, and soil and water conservation districts are the most common sponsors of EWP projects. More information is available from NRCS offices throughout the United States and the Caribbean and Pacific Islands areas.

### Emergency Watershed Protection Cost Share

The NRCS contribution toward the implementation of emergency measures may not exceed 75 percent of the construction cost, including work done to offset or mitigate adverse impacts as a result of the emergency measures.

However, if NRCS determines that an area qualifies as a limited resource area, the Federal contribution toward the implementation of emergency measures may not exceed 90 percent of the construction cost of such emergency measures.

NRCS may provide technical assistance as services and/ or funds to plan, design, and contract the emergency measures, subject to an agreement between NRCS and the Sponsor.

Purpose	Installation / Construction	Engineering / Technical Assistance	Real Property Rights
Emergency Watershed Protection	Not to exceed 75 percent, or 90 percent for limited resource areas	Not to exceed 100 percent	\$0

### More Information

This fact sheet is for informational purposes only; other restrictions may apply. For more information contact:

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Disaster Program	Agency	Description
Crop Insurance	RMA	Provides indemnity payments to growers who purchased crop insurance for production and quality losses related to drought and other weather hazards and other weather hazards, including losses from an inability to plant caused by an insured cause of.
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Haying & Grazing	FSA	Provides for emergency haying and grazing on certain CRP practices in a county designated as D2 or higher on the U.S. Drought Monitor, or in a county where there is at least a 40 percent loss in forage production.
Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)	FSA	Provides assistance to eligible owners of livestock, and producers of honeybees and farm-raised fish for losses due to disease (including cattle tick fever), adverse weather, or other conditions not covered by LFP and LIP.
Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)	FSA	Provides funding and technical assistance for farmers and ranchers to restore farmland damaged by natural disasters and for emergency water conservation measures in severe droughts.
Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP)	FSA	Provides funding to restore privately owned forests damaged by natural disasters. Assistance helps landowners carry out emergency measures to restore forest health on land damaged by floods, hurricanes or other natural disasters.
Farm Loans	FSA	Provides Emergency and Operating loans to help producers recover from production and physical losses due to natural disasters or livestock quarantine and can pay for farm operating and family living expenses
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)	NRCS	Provides agricultural producers with financial resources and one-on-one help to plan and implement improvements on the land including financial assistance to repair and prevent the excessive soil erosion caused or impacted by natural disasters. These practices include activities like stream bank restoration, grassed waterways and buffers. NRCS-funded conservation practices protect your land from erosion, support disaster recovery and repair and can help mitigate loss from future natural disasters.
Emergency Watershed Program (EWP)	NRCS	Offers vital recovery options for local communities to help people reduce hazards to life and property caused by floodwaters, droughts, wildfires, earthquakes, windstorms, and other natural disasters.
Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP)	FSA	Provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who have suffered grazing losses due to drought or fire on land that is native or improved pastureland with permanent vegetative cover or that is planted specifically for grazing.
Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)	FSA	Provides benefits to livestock owners and some contract growers for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality that are the direct result of an eligible adverse weather event. In addition, LIP covers attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the Federal Government or protected by Federal Law. Also, LIP provides assistance to livestock owners that must sell livestock at a reduced price because of an injury from an eligible loss condition.
Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)	FSA	Provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable and specialty crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters.
Tree Assistance Program	FSA	Provides financial cost-share assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or, where applicable, rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes, and vines lost by natural disasters. A qualifying mortality loss in excess of 15 percent (in excess of normal mortality) must be sustained to trigger assistance.

# USDA Disaster Relief Programs



USDA Service Centers	
St. Albans	802-527-1296
Morrisville	802-888-4935
Newport	802-334-6090
St. Johnsbury	802-748-2641
White River Junction	802-295-7942
Middlebury	802-388-6748
Williston	802-288-8155
Berlin	802-828-4493
Rutland	802-775-8034
White River Junction	802-369-3173
Brattleboro	802-254-9766

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