Thurston Conservation District
EST 1948

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

Thurston Conservation District, a non-regulatory agency, strives to conserve and sustain the beneficial use and protection of local natural resources through partnerships with the County's rural, agricultural, and urban communities, as well as local, state, federal, and tribal agencies. Our vision is to create healthy, functioning ecosystems in Thurston County through advocacy, education, and technical assistance efforts; thereby empowering every citizen of Thurston County to be a steward of the environment.

WHAT IS CREP?

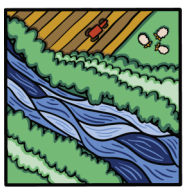
The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a voluntary program designed to benefit both farmers, farms, and fish. The program compensates farmers for growing a different crop in streamside areas of their property— native plants!

CREP is a partnership between non-regulatory state and federal agencies that was created to restore and protect critical fish habitat, as well as uplift agricultural producers. There are many benefits to improving streamside habitat. Planting native trees and shrubs alongside streams and rivers:

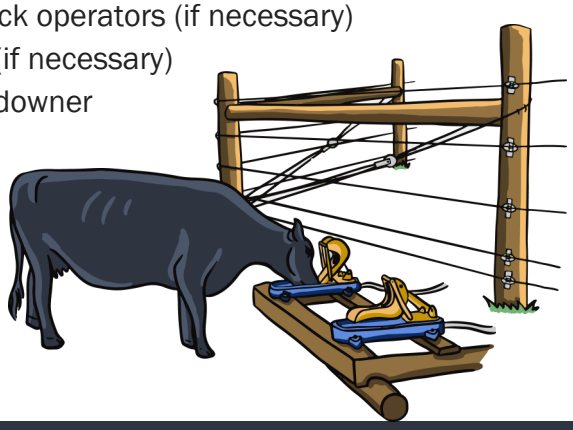
- Stabilizes stream banks and reduces erosion
- Provides habitat for wildlife
- Protects water quality
- Creates shade to lower water temperatures for fish
- Provides attractive borders for privacy and protection

CREP ENROLLMENT INCLUDES:

- Coverage of all costs associated with planting, including plants and labor
- Maintenance covered for the first five years
- Exclusion fencing for livestock operators (if necessary)
- A livestock watering facility (if necessary)
- Annual payments to the landowner



Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program



Thurston Conservation District
EST 1948

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

Frequently Asked Questions

WHICH AGENCIES PARTICIPATE IN CREP?

CREP is a partnership between non-regulatory State and Federal government agencies: Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Conservation Districts.

WHAT KIND OF PLANTS ARE USED IN THE PROJECT DESIGN?

CREP uses native plants. Native plants are well adapted to our Pacific Northwest habitat and will require less water and fertilizer than non-native plants. This allows them to establish quickly and easily. Native plants throw down deep roots, which prevent future erosion, and create beneficial habitat for wildlife.

DOES CREP PAY FOR THE PLANTS?

Yes! CREP covers all the planting costs including labor, plants, and the first five years of maintenance.

WHAT IS CONSIDERED MAINTENANCE? WHAT'S *NOT* COVERED?

While each project will have different needs, maintenance can include spot-spraying herbicide to control invasive species, mowing twice a year, replanting, watering, brush removal, wildlife protection, or additional invasive weed work. Any intentional damage to the project area will not be covered by CREP.

CAN THE LANDOWNER CHOOSE THE PLANTS?

Designing a plan is a balancing act. There will be conversations about your land-based goals and how we can best support you and your plans for your property. We always look for ways to include your preferences while ensuring the chosen plants will thrive.

WHAT IS THE LENGTH OF THE CONTRACT?

As the landowner, you will receive an annual rental payment for the length of the contract. Contracts are between 10 and 15 years—you decide!

HOW IS THE RENTAL PAYMENT DETERMINED?

The annual rental payment is variable and determined by the soil type on the property and the acreage enrolled in the program. The rental payment is paid annually and subject to change. Rates are determined by the Farm Service Agency.

HOW BIG OF AN AREA WILL BE PLANTED?

The planting area will vary from 15 to 180 feet depending on your property and the type of water body present. The boundary of CREP buffers is flexible and can be configured to meet landowner needs.

WHAT IF I HAVE LIVESTOCK THAT WATER FROM THE CREEK?

CREP will pay for a watering facility and exclusion fencing to ensure your livestock's needs are met.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO COMPLETE A PROJECT?

While timelines are variable, projects can take up to a year to complete.