

Funding Increase for Forestry Projects!

Deadline to Apply for This Year's Funding Is April 6, 2012

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A great opportunity exists for Kansas landowners statewide who are interested in financial assistance to manage or renovate older windbreaks, forests adjacent to streams (riparian), and woodlands. Through the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI), financial assistance is available in 2012 through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). The application deadline for this year's funding is April 6, 2012. Landowners can apply for the program at their local county U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Service Center by visiting with the staff in the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) or conservation district offices. The local USDA Service Center is listed in the telephone book under United States Government or on the internet at offices.usda.gov. More information is also available on the Kansas Web site at www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov.

Forest Stand Improvement Payments Up!

This year the program has increased payment for forest stand improvement practices ("thinning out" poorer quality trees with a chainsaw) to \$292.81 per acre. In cases where the majority of woodlands are made up of honeylocust, Osage orange, or other invasive trees or shrubs, the program pays landowners up to \$720 per acre to use heavy equipment like bulldozers to remove trees. CCPI also covers the cost to replant higher quality trees, such as oaks and black walnut, back into woodlands to bring them to the proper stocking levels.

Windbreak Renovation

Many shelterbelts and windbreaks that were planted as a result of the Dust Bowl are old and no longer provide conservation benefits. One of the more popular options under CCPI has been the renovation of these older windbreaks. Landowners with windbreaks that provide protection for livestock or crop fields are eligible. This practice pays landowners \$0.98 a linear foot to remove old tree rows that are no longer growing well and also covers the majority of costs to plant new tree rows, apply weed barrier fabric mulch, or irrigation systems.

Riparian Forest Establishment and Renovation

Since many of the trees that line our major rivers and streams are in decline due to human-caused changes to river channels and streamflows, CCPI provides funding to plant additional trees and to manage mature riparian forests. Landowners can receive \$1,214.90 per acre to plant thousands of acorns and walnuts or use seedlings and receive \$1.49 for each one planted. Funds are also available to prepare planting sites and for the follow up maintenance necessary for success.

The application deadline for this year's funding is April 6, 2012. Kansas Forest Service foresters are available to make site visits and help landowners plan their projects. The steps for applying for CCPI include (1) contacting your county NRCS Office and making an appointment to apply for the program and (2) contacting your local Kansas Forest Service district forester who can be found on the Web at <http://www.kansasforests.org/staff/rural/index.shtml> or by calling the Kansas Forest Service state office at 785-532-3300. Landowners are also invited to complete a Self-Assessment Worksheet for Forestland located on the Web at

http://www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/2012/self_assessment.html which may assist with the application process.

Kansas foresters provide one-on-one services over large multi-county districts through a variety of programs. Applying for CCPI now will ensure quality, timely services and improve the chances for successful projects. However, even if landowners miss the April 6 deadline for 2012 funding, applications will be accepted at any time of the year for 2013 funding.

The majority of windbreaks, woodlands, and forests in the United States are privately owned (95 percent in Kansas). The sustainability of these resources falls squarely on the shoulders of Kansas farmers, ranchers, and the many other landowners of our state. CCPI sends a clear message that we, as a people, believe there are public benefits from the management of Kansas forests and agroforestry resources.

In Kansas, socially disadvantaged, limited resource, and beginning farmers and ranchers will receive a higher payment rate for conservation practices related to CCPI.

Information about other NRCS conservation programs can be found at www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov/programs. Follow us on Twitter at NRCS_Kansas. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.