Idaho’s Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

ESPA CAMP Advisory Committee Meeting
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Presentation by:

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Water Resources

and

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CREP Background

- CREP is an enhancement of existing Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
  - Over 800,000 acres of dry farmland enrolled in CRP
  - Program participants in almost every Idaho county
- CREP combines CRP with a state match to bring program to irrigated ground
CREP Background

- Joint Federal-State program for cropland set-aside
- Authorized by Federal Farm Bill
- Many states have enacted CREP programs, most for environmental reasons
- Idaho and Nebraska were the first states to explore using CREP as a solution to water supply conflicts
- Many other western states now looking at CREP for water supply reasons
- CREP Agreement enacted by Governor Risch and U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Johanns in May of 2006
Goals of CREP:

- Set aside up to 100,000 acres of irrigated crop land to reduce consumptive water use from the ESPA by up to 200,000 acre-feet annually, for a period of 15 years
- CREP Agreement also references environmental and energy conservation benefits
Program Eligibility

- Land Must be within the “ESPA CREP Area”
- Land must have been irrigated by ground water or surface streams with no direct surface connection to the Snake River for 4 out of the 6 years from 1996-2001
- Land must have been irrigated within 24 months prior to offer submission or have been included in an IDWR-approved mitigation plan
- Land must be physically and legally capable of being irrigated in a normal manner at the time an offer is submitted
Program Eligibility

- Program participant must enter into an “Agreement not to Divert Water” with the State of Idaho
- Land must have Erodibility Index of 8 or greater or be located within a Conservation Priority Area
- No more than 25% of a county’s cropland may be in CRP/CREP programs
Financial Contributions

- The total cost over a 15-year period is estimated at:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Costs</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal Costs</td>
<td>$183 million (71%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Costs</td>
<td>$75 million (29%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$258 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Of Idaho’s contributions, $59 million are in-kind contributions for program administration, contract enforcement, water right enforcement, and monitoring and reporting of program effects.
Financial Contributions

Of Idaho’s contributions, $15.7 million is cash and includes:

- $3 million for Idaho Incentive Payments of $30/acre for eligible lands that use water from ESPA.
- $5 million for permanent water right acquisitions within the CREP area.
- $1.4 million for future IWRB water projects within CREP area that benefit the aquifer.
- $4.6 million for future ISCC grants and loans for water conservation projects within CREP area.
**IDWR Responsibilities**

- Review all CREP offers to:
  - Ensure CREP offer is covered by a valid water right
  - Determine if the CREP offer has been irrigated within the last 24 months or is part of an IDWR approved mitigation plan
  - Develop an Agreement Not to Divert for each approved contract
Agreement Not To Divert

- Provides information on curtailment of water right(s)
- List the amount of water available for diversion
- IDWR makes every attempt to curtail junior water rights if possible
As of August 10, 2007, the acres enrolled in CREP are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Acres Offered</th>
<th>IDWR-Approved Acres</th>
<th>FSA-Approved Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bingham</td>
<td>15,733.2</td>
<td>12,043.2</td>
<td>9,029.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonneville</td>
<td>274.8</td>
<td>153.8</td>
<td>153.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassia</td>
<td>3,825.8</td>
<td>2,821.8</td>
<td>2,245.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmore</td>
<td>213.1</td>
<td>213.1</td>
<td>213.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gooding</td>
<td>254.8</td>
<td>141.3</td>
<td>32.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson/Clark</td>
<td>7,029.8</td>
<td>2,652.8</td>
<td>1,473.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerome</td>
<td>3,264.8</td>
<td>2,677.1</td>
<td>730.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln/Blaine</td>
<td>2,969.7</td>
<td>1,498.7</td>
<td>287.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minidoka</td>
<td>11,555.2</td>
<td>7,052.6</td>
<td>3,589.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twin Falls</td>
<td>3,624.8</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>48,746.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>29,351.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>17,754.1</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results of IDWR CREP Analysis

- Reviewed over 305 CREP offers for approximately 41,698 acres
- Approved 219 contracts for 29,351 acres
- Returned 62 offers for revisions totaling 9,716 acres
- Determined 24 contracts for 2,631 acres were ineligible
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
Potential Changes to Increase CREP Enrollment...

- **State**
  - Water right transfers that are associated with CREP applications are now expedited – *completed*
  - Increase State incentive payment – *would require Legislative action*

- **Federal** – these would require Congressional action
  - Extend the CREP program enrollment beyond 2007 in the New Farm Bill
  - Exempt Counties from the 25% cap on cropland that may be in CRP/CREP programs
  - Exempt land from being required to have an Erodibility Index of 8 or greater.
  - Allow permanent pasture land to enroll if it meets all other criteria
Thank You

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