



Natural Resources Conservation Service
P.O. Box 2890
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CONSERVATION PROGRAMS MANUAL (CPM)
440-CPM
Circular No. 16, Part 515

March 16, 2010

Subject: CPM - Fencing Policy Clarification

Purpose. To clarify the use of fencing for fields that are exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

Effective Date. This circular is effective upon receipt.

Issue. Current policy in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) does not allow for the payment of boundary or property lines fences unless “the fence is an integral part of a conservation management system, such as a planned grazing system that facilitates improved management of grazing land, or protects certain areas from livestock when it is necessary for proper use of the area.” Clarification is needed in the use of the fencing conservation practice for land exiting the CRP.

Background.

Conservation Reserve Program.—Land enrolled in the CRP represents a substantial investment of Federal funds to protect designated highly erodible and other sensitive lands. These lands provide resource benefits, including but not limited to wildlife habitat, soil erosion control, carbon sequestration, and water filtration. There is a strong potential that, as CRP contracts expire, perennial cover will be converted to annual cropping, and some of these resource benefits will be lost.

Producers who currently own or operate CRP land may request NRCS assistance in the development of grazing or upland wildlife habitat management systems that would retain these lands in permanent cover. Specifically, NRCS assistance would entail financial or technical assistance through EQIP. NRCS conservation practices that may typically be utilized include prescribed grazing, livestock watering systems, upland wildlife habitat, permanent fencing, etc.

Policy clarification. The table in Title 440, Conservation Programs Manual, Part 515, Subpart J, is modified to clarify that fencing may be an eligible practice for EQIP financial assistance when implemented on land that is exiting CRP, and may be converted to annually cropped land. The amended table follows, and will be included in the EQIP manual when it is reissued.

/s/ Gregory K. Johnson for

CRAIG R. DERICKSON
Deputy Chief for Financial Assistance
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Attachment

Part 515 – Environmental Quality Incentives Program

Subpart J – Conservation Practice and Technical Assistance Payments

515.91 Determining Eligible Payment Schedule Costs

H. Example Cost Table

See also the guidance provided in 440-CPM, Part 515, Subpart I.

Category	Examples of Ineligible Costs	Examples of Eligible Costs
Fencing – Boundary or property line fences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To separate ownership or exclude livestock from transportation networks, residential, commercial, or industrial areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The fence is an integral part of a conservation management system, such as a planned grazing system that facilitates improved management of grazing land, or protects certain areas from livestock when it is necessary for proper use of the area.• The fence is an integral part of a grazing management system that will result in maintaining permanent cover in land exiting CRP.• The fence relates to the protection, restoration, development, or enhancement of habitat for prioritized wildlife, such as fencing a riparian area to exclude livestock.