

Emergency Watershed Protection Program

The Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program Congress has authorized the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to respond to watershed disasters by directing technical and financial assistance to landowners and administering funds through the EWP. It is designed to relieve imminent hazards to life and property caused by floods, fires, windstorms, and other natural occurrences. The purpose of EWP is to help groups of people with a common problem. It is generally not an individual assistance program. All projects undertaken must be sponsored by a political subdivision of the State, such as a city, county, or conservation district.



Eligibility

Public or private landowners, land managers and land users are eligible for assistance if their watershed area has been impaired by a natural disaster. To be eligible, applicants must lack the funds or resources necessary to provide relief. To be eligible for assistance, a measure must retard runoff to prevent soil erosion or flooding; reduce threats life or property caused by a watershed emergency; and benefit more than one individual, except in an exigency situation where single beneficiaries are permitted. The EWP program is authorized outside of the 2008 Farm Bill. Farm Bill person and land eligibility criteria, such as Adjusted Gross Income and compliance with Highly Erodible Land Conservation provisions, does not apply.

Considerations

- Applicants must apply through a project sponsor.
- Emergency work is limited to the least costly means of removing the threat.
- EWP funds can't be used to solve problems that existed before the disaster; they can't be used to raise the level of protection that existed prior to the emergency; and they can't be used to work on measures installed by another federal agency.
- EWP work must be economically and environmentally defensible and sound from an engineering standpoint. It can't adversely affect downstream water rights.
- EWP funds can't be used for operation and maintenance work or to repair private or public transportation facilities or utilities.

Sponsors

Sponsors provide the legal authority to obtain land and water rights to do repair work and secure necessary permits. Sponsors also furnish local cost sharing, install the work and provide for maintenance of completed emergency measures. Local officials of city, county and state government, Indian tribes, Soil Conservation Districts, federal agencies, watershed

authorities and others may sponsor EWP projects.

Sponsors must certify that they have the legal authority to apply for federal assistance and that they have passed a motion or adopted a similar resolution to apply for the assistance. They must provide assurance that funds are not available from other sources. Sponsors appoint a representative who will work to acquire land rights, provide additional information and obtain funds for non-exigency measures that will involve cost-sharing.

Financial Assistance

NRCS may bear up to 75 percent of the construction cost of emergency measures or up to 90 percent in limited resource areas. The remaining cost-share must come from local sources and can be in the form of cash or in-kind services.

How to Apply

The sponsor's application should be in the form of a letter signed by an official of the sponsoring organization. The letter should include the nature, location, and scope of the problem for which assistance is requested. Information (and a sample application letter) is available from NRCS offices to explain the eligibility requirements for the EWP program.

What kind of work can be done?

EWP work is not limited to any one set of prescribed measures. A case by case investigation of the needed work is made by NRCS.

EWP work can include: removing debris from stream channels, road culverts, and bridges; reshaping and protecting eroded banks; correcting damaged drainage facilities; repairing levees and structures; reseeding damaged areas; and purchasing floodplain easements.

After Restoration

NRCS and its partners continue to provide assistance to landowners after completion of restoration activities.

This assistance may be in the form of reviewing restoration measures, clarifying technical and administrative aspects of the easement and project management needs, and periodic reviews to ensure compliance with the easement deed.



Deadlines for EWP Assistance for 9/22/09 Flood Event

November 22, 2009

Application for assistance submitted to NRCS

January 22, 2010

Damage Survey Reports completed (NRCS-assisted)

For More Information or to Sign Up, Contact Your Local USDA Service Center:

Bartow and Cherokee counties

Calhoun Service Center
717 South Wall Street Suite 1
Calhoun, GA 30701-2615
Telephone: (706) 629-2582

Carroll and Heard counties

Carrollton Service Center
408 North White Street
Carrollton, GA 30117-2441
Telephone: (770) 832-8942

Catoosa and Walker counties

La Fayette Service Center
208 North Duke Street, Suite C
La Fayette, GA 30728-2505
Telephone: (706) 638-2207

Chattooga County

Rome Service Center
1401 Dean St, Dean St Plaza
Rome, GA 30161
Telephone: (706) 291-5651

Coweta County

Newnan Service Center
580-B Highway 34 East
Newnan, GA 30263
Telephone: (770) 251-4283

Crawford, Peach, and Taylor counties

Byron Service Center
1030 Peach Pkwy, Suite 4
Fort Valley, GA 31030
Telephone: (478) 827-0016

Dawson County

Gainesville Service Center
734 East Crescent Drive
Gainesville, GA 30501
Telephone: (770) 536-6981

Dooly County

Cordele Service Center
110 W. Thirteenth St
Cordele, GA 31015
Telephone: (229) 268-9106

Dekalb, Gwinnett and Rockdale counties

Lawrenceville Service Center
750 South Perry St, Suite 410
Lawrenceville, GA 30045-4828
Telephone: (770) 963-9288

Houston County

Houston Service Center
801 Main St 2nd Floor
Perry, GA 31069
Telephone: (478) 987-2280

Newton County

Madison Service Center
205 East Jefferson Street
Madison, GA 30560
Telephone: (706) 342-1315

Paulding, Cobb, Douglas and Fulton counties

Marietta Service Center
678 South Cobb Drive Southeast
Marietta, GA 30060
Telephone: (706) 792-0647

Stephens County

Toccoa Service Center
1630 Clary Connector
Eastanolle, GA 30538
Telephone: (706) 779-2134

For more information, visit www.ga.nrcs.usda.gov

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