

Delta FY 2013

Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP)

Introduction

The Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP) is a voluntary conservation initiative that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to implement agricultural water enhancement activities on agricultural land for the purposes of conserving surface and ground water and improving water quality. As part of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), AWEP operates through program contracts with producers to plan and implement conservation practices in project areas established through partnership agreements. The Secretary of Agriculture has delegated the authority for AWEP to the Chief of NRCS.

Under AWEP, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) enters into partnership agreements with eligible entities that want to promote ground and surface water conservation or improve water quality on agricultural lands.

Program Description

Each fiscal year, NRCS may make AWEP financial and technical assistance available to eligible owners and operators of agricultural lands who participate in approved AWEP project areas. Within Mississippi, only producers located within the Tunica County AWEP Proposal Area and the Mississippi Delta AWEP Proposal Area are eligible for financial and technical assistance.

As authorized by Congress, this is not a grant program to eligible partners. This is a program whereby approved, eligible partners will enter into multi-year agreements with NRCS to promote ground and surface water conservation, or improve water quality on eligible agricultural lands.

The intent of AWEP is for the Federal government to leverage investment in natural resources conservation along with services and non-Federal resources of other eligible partners. Individual producers are not eligible to submit a partnership proposal.

Producers

Owners and operators engaged in livestock or agricultural production may be eligible for the program. Eligible land includes cropland, rangeland, pasture, private non-industrial forestland, and other farm or ranch lands. Producers must submit a program application to be considered for financial assistance through AWEP.

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ELIGIBLE CONSERVATION PRACTICE INFORMATION:

The following table lists conservation practices eligible for payment under the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP):

CONSERVATION PRACTICES ELIGIBLE FOR PAYMENT

Practice Code	Name	Units
118	Irrigation Water Management Plan	No
130	Drainage Water Management Plan	No
134	Conservation Plan Supporting Transition from Irrigation to Dryland Plan-Written	No
342	Critical Area Stabilization	Ac
356	Dike	CuYd
397	Aquaculture Pond	Ac
410	Grade Stabilization Structure	Ton/CuYd/SqFt/Ea
430	Irrigation Water Conveyance, Pipeline, L	LnFt
436	Irrigation Storage Reservoir	CuYd
442	Irrigation System, Sprinkler	LnFt/Ea
443	Irrigation System, Surface and Subsurface	Ea
449*	Irrigation Water Management	Ac/Ea
464*	Irrigation Land Leveling	CuYd
484	Mulching	Ac/SqFt
533	Pumping Plant	HP/Ea/In/LnFt
554	Drainage Water Management	Ea
560*	Access Road	Ft
587	Structure for Water Control	InFt/Ft/SqFt/In
590	Nutrient Management	Ac
601	Vegetative Barriers	LnFt
607	Surface Drainage	CuYd
642	Water Well	LnFt
656	Constructed Wetland	Ac

*449 – Cost cap (\$8,090 BASE cap/ \$9,709 HU cap)

*464 – Cost cap (\$53,760 BASE cap/ \$64,400 HU cap)

*560 – Cost Cap (\$11,757 BASE cap/ \$14,116 HU cap)

There is a contract cap of \$75,000.