

**The United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service  
and the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts  
(MASWCD)  
Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)  
Land Management (LM) Signup.**

## Background

The Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts is a voluntary opportunity for farmers and agricultural landowners to take the lead in implementing conservation practices that protect our water.

The goal of this RCPP is to advance a watershed implementation framework by accelerating the targeted implementation of conservation practices in priority areas within the five project watersheds. This will address the measurable goals established in each watershed's Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.

*Eligible land is determined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and is based on an identified resource concern. Eligible producers may apply for financial assistance on conservation activities that will address the identified resource concerns in the project area.*

## Application Period

Applications may be taken at any time. Producers must submit an RCPP application on or before **December 16, 2024** to be considered for funding.

## Application Processing

RCPP is a stand-alone program and requires its own NRCS-1200 application separate from other NRCS FA programs. All 2018 Farm Bill RCPP applications will be continuously accepted, and signup cut off dates will be publicly announced each year. For Land Management and Rental producer contracts, question 2 of the NRCS-CPA-1200 Conservation Program Application (version October 2024) should be marked “Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)”. **Write “2881 1W1P RCPP LM” in box 2a.** 2018 Farm Bill RCPP applications will be managed through Conservation Desktop. USDA Financial Assistance Eligibility will need to be determined manually with the Farm Service Agency’s Subsidiary Report

**2. Interested in participating in the following (select all that apply):**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Conservation Easement Program-Wetland Reserve Easement (ACEP-WRE) | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)                                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)   |  |

a) Program enrollment type, activity type, and/or project name, as applicable:

2888 1W1P RCPP LM

## Eligible Project Area

Producers located within the Project 1W1P Watersheds: Lake Superior North, North Fork Crow River, Red Lake River and Root River project areas are eligible to participate in the project's RCPP-LM sign-up. *The Yellow Medicine River Watershed, obligated their allocation in FY2024 and will not be available for future signups.*

For planning purposes, please reference “**RCPP 2888 Priority Areas MN**” layer in CD which can be found in: CD>Open Map tools>Layer preference> under “Ranking” category.

The conservation activity(s) identified in the application must be located within Minnesota to be eligible for financial assistance through the RCPP-LM sign-up. Eligible Counties include portions of:

(Red Lake River watershed) Clearwater, Beltrami, Marshall, Polk, Pennington, Red Lake.

(Lake Superior North watershed) Cook, Lake, St. Louis.

(North Fork Crow River) Carver, Hennepin, Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker, Pope, Stearns, Wright.

(Root River watershed) Dodge, Fillmore, Houston, Mower, Olmstead, Winona.

## Eligible Activities and Payment Rates

LM activities include NRCS-approved conservation practices and enhancements. “**FY25\_2888 RCPP LM Payment Schedule & Eligible Activities**” provides the activities eligible for RCPP LM-#2888 1W1P project and payment rates.

Project specific cost list in CD: **Minnesota RCPP18 FY2025 2888**

## Eligible Land Uses

- Crop
- Farmstead
- Forest
- Pasture
- Associated Agriculture Lands

## Eligible Resource Concerns and Resource Concern Categories

### Degraded Plant Condition

- Plant productivity
- Plant structure and composition

### Field Sediment, Nutrient, and Pathogen Loss

- Nutrients transported to groundwater
- Nutrients transported to surface water
- Sediment transported to surface water

### Soil Quality Limitations

- Compaction
- Organic matter depletion
- Soil organism habitat loss or degradation

### Storage handling of pollutants

- Nutrients transported to surface water
- Nutrients transported to groundwater

## Assessments

Planners must assess all RCPP applications using CART. **A maximum of 2 Resource Concerns/Primary Practice will be assessed. Only eligible Resource Concerns will be assessed.**

## Prioritization Worksheet

No prioritization will be used.

## Ranking

Ranking of the applications will be done according to the ranking system posted on the MN NRCS web site for the Minnesota Department of Agriculture RCPP-LM. All rankings will be conducted in CART. The efficiency score calculated in the CART ranking must be used when a tie breaker is needed between one or more RCPP-LM applications. When using the tie breaker, NRCS will select the application with the highest efficiency score first.

### **CART Ranking Pool-2888 LM Producer FY2025**

## Funding

Available RCPP-LM #2888 1W1P funds will be allocated based on the numerical ranking system set forth on the web site. All ranking will be conducted in CART. If insufficient funds are available to fund all eligible applicants, applications will be held and may be funded with extra RCPP- LM #2888 1W1P funds if available or deferred to the next ranking period.

## Payment Limitations/Payment CAPs

Each RCPP- LM contract with a person or legal entity is limited to \$450,000 over the term of the contract, and each RCPP-LM contract with a joint operation (Farm Service Agency business type 2 or 3) or group projects may have a contract limit of up to \$900,000.

Payment caps have been set by the partner on some of the conservation activities.

Please reference below section “**CONTRACT POLICY GUIDANCE RCPP LM # 2888 1W1P**” pages 6-7 of this document for payment cap information.

## Program Ranking Questions (200 Points Max)

### **Lake Superior North:**

1. Will the application address resource concerns located in a Tier 1 priority watershed identified by the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (GIS layer – Priority = Lake Superior North)? **PTS 80**
2. Will the application address resource concern "Field sediment, nutrient and pathogen loss", "Soil quality limitations", "Degraded plant condition", or "Storage and handling of pollutants"? **PTS 40**
3. Will the application leverage additional financial assistance from the local SWCD (Cook, Lake, St. Louis)? **PTS 40**

4. Did the applicant self-certify on the application as a Historically Underserved Producer? **PTS 40**

**North Fork Crow River:**

1. Is the proposed project area located primarily ( $\geq 50\%$ ) in a priority HUC12 watershed (from GIS layer – Priority = North Fork Crow Wing River)) as identified by the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan? **PTS 115**
2. Will the application address resource concern "Field sediment, nutrient and pathogen loss" or "Soil quality limitations"? **PTS 5**
3. Will the application leverage additional financial assistance from the local SWCD (Carve, Hennepin, Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker, Pope, Stearns, Wright)? **PTS 40**
4. Did the applicant self-certify on the application as a Historically Underserved Producer? **PTS 40**

**Red Lake River:**

1. Will the application result in the implementation of practices located primarily ( $\geq 50\%$ ) within a priority area, as identified in the (GIS layer – Priority = Red Lake River)? **PTS 80**
2. Will the application address resource concern "Field sediment, nutrient and pathogen loss" or "Soil quality limitations"? **PTS 40**
3. Will the application leverage additional financial assistance from the local SWCD (Clearwater, Beltrami, Marshall, Polk, Pennington, Red Lake)? **PTS 40**
4. Did the applicant self-certify on the application as a Historically Underserved Producer? **PTS 40**

**Root River:**

1. Will this application result in the implementation of practices located primarily ( $\geq 50\%$ ) within a priority sub watershed area, as identified in the (GIS layer – Priority = Root River)? **PTS 60**
2. Will the application address resource concern "Field sediment, nutrient and pathogen loss" or "Soil quality limitations"? **PTS 60**
3. Will the application leverage additional financial assistance from the local SWCD (Dodge, Fillmore, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Winona)? **PTS 40**
4. Did the applicant self-certify on the application as a Historically Underserved Producer? **PTS 40**

**Resource Concern Ranking Questions (200 Points Max)****Lake Superior North:**

1. Is the project within 500 feet of a stream, river, or lake? **PTS 50**
2. Is the project within 500 feet of a cold-water resource/trout stream or lake? (RCPP 2888 Trout Waters LSN MN) **PTS 50**

3. Based off the Composition from (212L Northern Superior Uplands document) will the project result in (**select one**)
  - a. 4 or more Good Capability tree species reserved or planted **PTS 50**
  - b. 3 or more Good Capability tree species reserved or planted **PTS 25**
  - c. 2 or fewer Good Capability tree species reserved or planted **PTS 0**
4. Is the project in the EQIP Impaired Watersheds NE AREA Layer? **PTS 50**

#### **North Fork Crow River:**

1. Is the proposed practice within 1000 feet of a lake or within 1000 feet of a public stream or ditch? (EQIP MRBI PWI MN 2022 Layer) **PTS 45**
2. Does the application include the practice Nutrient Management (590)? **PTS 30**
3. Does the application include at least ONE of the following practices: Residue Management - No Till (329), Cover Crop (340), Water and Sediment Control Basin (638), Terrace (600), Grade Stabilization Structure (410), or Grassed Waterway (412)? **PTS 80**
4. Is the proposed practice within 1000 feet of a waterbody that is impaired for excess nutrients? **PTS 45**

#### **Red Lake River:**

1. Are a majority (greater than 50%) of the practice(s) planned for within a priority sub-watershed (from GIS layer)? **PTS 100**
2. Will the proposed project result in the implementation of the following listed practices (**select only one**)?
  - A. Implementation of TWO or more of the listed practices: Grade Stabilization (410), Prescribed Grazing (528), Farmstead Windbreak (380), Water and Sediment Control Basin (638), and Pasture and Hay Planting (512). **[50 points]**
  - B. Implementation of ONE of the listed practices: Grade Stabilization (410), Prescribed Grazing (528), Farmstead Windbreak (380), Water and Sediment Control Basin (638), and Pasture and Hay Planting (512). **[25 points]**
  - C. None of the above. **[0 points]**
3. Will the application implement a Cover Crop (340) practice established in the late summer/early fall and left over winter with a Grade Stabilization Structure (410) or a Water and Sediment Control Basin (638) on the same land unit. **PTS 25**
4. Will the application implement Prescribed Grazing (528), Farmstead Windbreak and Renovation (380), or Pasture and Hay Planting (512)? **PTS 25**

**Root River:**

1. Does the application contain any of the following practices: Fence (382), Forage Harvest Management (511), Heavy Use Area Protection (561), Livestock Pipeline (516), Pasture and Hay Planting (512), Prescribed Grazing (528) or Watering Facility (614)? **PTS 75**
2. Is the proposed practice located within 1,000 feet from a designated impaired water body? (MPCA Impaired Waters Data Layer) **PTS 25**
3. Does this application contain any of the following practices: Grade Stabilization Structure (410), Grassed Waterway (412), Terrace (600), Water and Sediment Control Basin (638), Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580)? **PTS 75**
4. Is the proposed practice located in a Vulnerable Groundwater Area (Vulnerable Groundwater Areas 2025 MN) or will the proposed practice 340 or 590 help reduce the risk of nitrate movement into groundwater? **PTS 25**

**CONTRACT POLICY GUIDANCE RCPP LM # 2888 1W1P**

The payment limit is established **per individual/entity per year (payment cap listed below) for the following practices:**

PRACTICE	MAXIUM NUMBER OF PAYMENTS	PAYMENT CAP
314	3	\$25,000
328	3	\$25,000
329	3	\$25,000
338	3	\$25,000
<b>340</b>	<b>5</b>	\$25,000
345	3	\$25,000
379	3	\$25,000
449	3	\$25,000
484	3	\$25,000
511	3	\$25,000
528	3	\$25,000
554	3	\$25,000

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590	3	\$25,000
592	3	\$25,000
595	3	\$25,000
643	3	\$25,000
645	3	\$25,000
647	3	\$25,000

**The practice must be planned on the same reoccurring fields, if scheduled more than 1 year.**

**Point of Contact (POC) RCPP LM # 2888 1W1P**

**Michelle Legatt – RCPP Coordinator**

**Keith Kloubec – ASTC - Programs**

-Please route all questions through Area Office staff