

Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP)

The Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP) was set up by Congress to respond to emergencies created by natural disasters. It is designed to relieve imminent hazards to life and property caused by floods, fires, windstorms and other natural occurrences. The purpose of EWPP 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, general improvement district or conservation district. The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is responsible for administering the program.



EWP in Missouri

Federal funds for EWP assistance may cover up to 75 percent of the construction costs for most restoration measures including levee repair, logjam removal, streambank stabilization near roads, bridges and buildings and sediment removal from drainage ditches.

Who is Eligible?

Public and private landowners are eligible for assistance but must be represented by a project sponsor.

What Does the Project Sponsor Have to Do?

Sponsors are responsible for providing landrights to do repair work and securing the necessary permits. Sponsors are also responsible for furnishing the local cost share and for accomplishing the installation of work. The work can be done either through federal or local contracts.



What are the Criteria for Assistance?

All EWP work must reduce threats to life and property. Furthermore, it must be economically and environmentally defensible and sound from an engineering standpoint. EWP work must yield benefits to more than one person.

How to Apply for Assistance

If you feel that your area has suffered severe damage and may qualify under the EWP program, you are encouraged to contact your local general improvement district or county supervisor to request assistance. City and county governments, general improvement districts, conservation districts and tribal governments are the most common sponsors of EWP projects. The sponsor's application should be in the form of a letter signed by an official of the sponsoring organization. The letter should include information on the nature, location and scope of the problem for which assistance is requested. Information is available from NRCS offices to explain the eligibility requirements for the EWP program. Send applications for assistance to your local USDA Service Center, NRCS Field Office or your NRCS State Office.

Who to Contact

Marty Comstock
State Conservation Engineer
Phone: 573-876-0910
E-Mail:
marty.comstock@usda.gov

To locate the USDA Service Center nearest you, look in the phone book under "U.S. Government, Department of Agriculture," or access <http://offices.usda.gov>.



EWP Floodplain Easement

Since 1996, NRCS has purchased floodplain easements on lands that qualify for EWP assistance. Floodplain easements restore, protect, maintain and enhance the functions of the floodplain; conserve natural values including fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, flood water retention, ground water recharge and open space; reduce long-term federal disaster assistance; safeguard lives and property from floods, drought and the products of erosion.

Land Eligibility

NRCS may purchase EWP easements on any floodplain lands that have been impaired within the last 12 months or that have a history of repeated flooding (at least two times over the past 10 years).

Restoration of the Floodplain

To the extent practicable, NRCS actively restores the natural features and characteristics of the flood plain through re-creating the topographic diversity, increasing the duration of inundation and saturation and providing for re-establishment of native vegetation.

Landowner Use

Landowners retain several rights to property, including quiet enjoyment, the right to control public access and the right to underdeveloped recreational use such as hunting and fishing.

EWP

