

Conservation Stewardship Program

Operation Delineation Maps to Submit with a CSP Application



Enrolling in CSP

If you are interested in applying for CSP the first step is submitting a Form NRCS CPA-1200, "Conservation Program Application" and an Operation Delineation map. Agricultural land applications compete separately from Non-Industrial Private Forestland (NIPF) operations. If you have both types of land you have the following options:

- Submit one application for NIPF
- Submit one application for Agricultural Land
- Submit two applications, one for each land type

Application Considerations:

Applicants must include their entire eligible NIPF or agricultural operation in the application. For the land to be eligible the applicant must be the operator, owner, or other tenant of an agricultural operation in the Farm Service Agency (FSA) farm records management system and maintain control of the land for the 5-year contract length. The name on the application must be consistent with how you do business at the Farm Service Agency.

To find out if you are listed as "Owner", "Operator", or "Other Tenant" you can request your Producer Farm Data Report from FSA. Ask your local field office for additional information as needed.

What is an Operation Delineation Map?

Applicants must provide a map or aerial photograph to show the land that is part of their agricultural or NIPF operation when they submit an application for CSP.

What types of maps are acceptable?

Any type of map can be provided if it has the required elements and is legible by the field office. The maps you provide will assist the field office in determining eligibility for the program and in developing your application, so accuracy is important!

Many applicants provide the Farm and Tract maps from FSA, but other maps like those from your agronomist or farm management software may have the required elements to be used.



Conservation Stewardship Program

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) helps you build on your existing conservation efforts while strengthening your operation.

Whether you are looking to improve grazing conditions, increase crop yields, or develop wildlife habitat, we can custom design a CSP plan to help you meet those goals. We can help you schedule timely planting of cover crops, develop a grazing plan that will improve your forage base, implement no-till to reduce erosion or manage forested areas in a way that benefits wildlife habitat.

If you are already taking steps to improve the condition of the land, chances are CSP can help you find new ways to meet your goals.

What should the maps identify?

Maps must identify your entire agricultural or NIPF operation. This includes all land that you will control for the proposed contract length. In addition to production areas, CSP applications must evaluate and include eligible Farmsteads (headquarters areas) and Associated Agricultural Land (land that is associated with the farm, but not in production).

The maps should contain the:

- Boundaries of the tracts and fields
- Approximate acres of each field
- The current land use of each field:

Crop - land used for the production and harvest of annual or perennial field, forage, food, fiber, horticultural, orchard, vineyard or energy crops.

Forest - land where the vegetation is predominately tree cover managed for production of wood products or non-timber forest products.

Pasture - land composed of introduced or native forage that is used for the production of livestock. Pastures are not in rotation with crops but can receive periodic renovation.

Farmstead - land used for facilities and supporting infrastructure. This includes equipment storage, farm input and output storage, handling facilities, and land used for animal housing.

Associated Agricultural Lands - land associated with the farm that is not purposefully managed for food, forage or fiber. This could include center pivot corners, odd areas, ditches and watercourses, riparian areas, field edges, seasonal and permanent wetlands and similar areas.

- Any other features or resource concerns NRCS should be aware of, like previously installed conservation practices such as grassed waterways or areas needing treatment such as gullies.

Identify land that is ineligible for enrollment:

- Land for which the applicant does not have effective control for the CSP contract term.
- Land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (contact local service center for exceptions)
- Land enrolled in an easement through the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program – Wetland Reserve Easement (ACEP-WRE) or the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)
- Land enrolled in an unexpired CSP contract
- Land where the applicant is not listed as Operator and does not have a waiver
- Land used for crop production that was not considered to be planted or devoted to crop production for 4 out of the 6 years preceding December 20, 2018.
- Newly acquired land where your management system cannot be demonstrated or documented.

Your local field office can assist you throughout this process. Highlight any areas that you are unsure of and discuss with your field staff.

What is the next step?

NRCS will announce one or more ranking periods each year to process applications. Work closely with your field office to schedule a time to fill out the Conservation Assessment Ranking Tool (CART) to see if you meet the eligibility requirements for the program and then select the new conservation activities that you'd like to implement on your operation! We look forward to working with you!



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