



*For Immediate Release*

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## **NRCS seeks sign-ups for wetlands, grasslands conservation programs**

SPOKANE, WA (May 29, 2013) – USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announced today they are accepting applications from landowners interested in the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) and Grassland Reserve Program (GRP).

**The application deadline for fiscal year 2013 funding is June 7, 2013.** All applications for 2013 consideration must be received by close of business on that day.

A new round of funding authorizes \$255 million to enroll up to 100,000 additional acres into WRP and \$47 million to enroll up to 200,000 additional acres into GRP, both nationwide.

WRP helps landowners restore and protect wetland ecosystems on private and tribal lands. They may select a permanent or 30-year easement or a restoration cost-share agreement, retaining ownership of the land once the agreement is in place. More than 11,000 private landowners participating in WRP are already protecting more than 2.6 million acres of America's wetlands.

Through GRP, landowners and managers apply for conservation easements or rental agreements that support conservation of working grazing operations, enhancement of plant and animal biodiversity, and protection of grassland under threat of conversion to other uses.

"NRCS conservation easement programs can provide a means for landowners to hold onto their land for future generations. At the same time, the public receives the benefits of cleaner water, improved wildlife populations and scenic views provided by open space," added Dave Kreft, NRCS Coordinator for the WRP and GRP programs.

Anyone interested in applying for these voluntary programs should contact their state or local NRCS office.

For more information on this and other conservation opportunities, producers are urged to contact their [USDA-NRCS Service Center Office](#). Landowners new to USDA programs are encouraged to contact their local NRCS and FSA field office as soon as

possible to ensure they have the time needed to make informed decisions and complete the application process.

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