

Project Factsheet for: Iowa Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

Date Last Updated: 08/30/2007 09:00

Project Location Information

Location: State of Iowa

River Basin(s): Des Moines / Skunk, Iowa / Cedar, Mississippi

State(s): IA

Congressional District(s): IA-2, IA-3, IA-4, IA-5, IA-1

Status

We issued Regional Permit 34 (RP34) on September 14, 2006. Since that time, it has been used seven times to authorize CREP projects. RP34 has substantially reduced processing times for these types of projects. IDALS estimates that they will submit applications for approximately 170 more CREP projects.

Description

Nitrification removal impoundment projects are part of the Iowa Conservationa Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), and are assisted with federal funding by the USDA and the USEPA. The projects are designed to remove 40 - 90% of nitrates found in tile water from agricultural lands to improve drinking water quality and to ultimately reduce Gulf Hypoxia.

Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) is the administrator for the Iowa CREP. However, Farm Service Administration (FSA) is the lead Federal agency and therefore has primary responsibilities for compliance with federal law, e.g., the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Endangered Species Act, etc.

CREP structures (dams) are typically located on streams with drainage areas from 500 - 4000 acres. Most of the streams are regulated waters of the U.S. under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Previously, individual Department of the Army permits were required for the CREP structures in question, as no less rigorous permits were applicable to the projects. The individual permits required up to 120 days to process. However, after close coordination with FSA and IDALS, we recently completed a Regional Permit (RP) to authorize these beneficial projects in Iowa. The RP includes provisions that allow reversion of the CREP areas to their pre-project condition once all IDALS and FSA agreements have expired. The RP was completed on September 14, 2006 and allows authorization of most CREP projects in less than 30 days.

Authority

SI - Special Interest -- Section 404 Jurisdiction

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