

Enhance Your Land

Rural landowners in Washington and Multnomah County want to maximize income, meet regulatory requirements, and protect the land for future generations. Understanding this, the Tualatin and West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation Districts, partner agencies and local stakeholders developed two stream buffer tree-planting programs with local needs in mind. These programs are called "**Enhanced CREP**" and "**VEGBACC**," and each offers a number of advantages and benefits unmatched by any other program.

Create a lasting legacy through conservation...

Conservation Agreements, also known as Easements, offer unique and flexible options to help rural landowners protect their lands' natural and historic resources while retaining ownership and control of many management decisions. Conservation Agreements through ECREP and VEGBACC are a way to ensure that the vegetated buffer and the ecological benefits it provides are protected.

Conservation Agreements often provide some kind of financial gain and tax relief to landowners and their heirs. Landowners are eligible to sign up land enrolled in ECREP or VEGBACC for a 20-year, 30-year or permanent easement. Landowners will receive a one time payment based upon the easement duration and price per acre. Additionally, the cost of processing the easement, including land survey and recording fees, will be paid by the SWCD.

"We are extremely pleased with the results on our site. Not only is it contributing positively to improving water quality, it's beautiful"

Bob Stark,
Owner of Egger Farms, LLC.



February 2005



November 2006

The Egger property is along McFee Creek and a seasonal tributary to McFee Creek. McFee Creek encompasses approximately 25 square miles and drains the Chehalem Mountains in the Southwest portion of the watershed. While McFee Creek is home to steelhead trout it is high in bacteria and low in oxygen levels. Prior to enrollment in ECREP, this portion of McFee Creek had limited vegetation in the riparian area and cattle were not excluded from the creek. Following enrollment in ECREP the following enhancement practices were implemented:

- Exclusion of cattle from the project area and installation of 5050 feet of fencing
- Site preparation, including the removal and control of invasive species
- Planting of 4,030 native trees and shrubs
- Project maintenance including mowing and chemical control of invasive species
- First year watering of plants to ensure successful establishment



Local
Solutions

for
Local
Needs

**ENHANCED CREP
and
VEGBACC**

Tualatin and
West Multnomah
Soil and Water
Conservation
Districts

What is Enhanced CREP?

Enhanced CREP is a local adaptation to the USDA's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). It adds a number of benefits and options to the existing CREP riparian restoration program, including:

- Increased annual payments for each acre enrolled
- Optional water rights transfers and conservation easements
- Planting and maintenance work provided by your Soil and Water Conservation District
- Free site prep and planting materials

Available to most farm landowners next to a perennial stream.

What is VEGBACC?

VEGBACC, which stands for Vegetated Buffer Areas for Conservation and Commerce, is a riparian restoration program for landowners who prefer more flexibility over higher benefits. VEGBACC offers:

- Free planting materials
- Technical assistance
- Cost-sharing for maintenance
- Continued commercial use of buffer areas *
- Flexibility to enroll in other programs without losing benefits
- Same water rights and conservation easement options as Enhanced CREP.

Available to most rural landowners next to a perennial stream.

* For example, long-term contracts to supply tree and shrub cuttings are available for landowners enrolled in VEGBACC.

Easy to Comply with SB 1010

Enhanced CREP and VEGBACC provide an easy way to comply with the local water quality management rules. After enrolling in either program, each landowner works with the SWCD to prepare a conservation plan that focuses on riparian restoration and practices that aid in compliance with the water quality management rules. Landowners can be sure that by following the plan they will be in compliance with the rules.

Favorable Tax Treatment

By enrolling in Enhanced CREP or VEGBACC, landowners may qualify for income and property tax benefits.



ENHANCED CREP and VEGBACC at-a-glance

Program	Who can enroll?	Annual payments per acre	Bonus payments?	Planting/maintenance assistance?	Length of contract	Minimum width of stream buffer area	Can landowner restrict access?
Enhanced CREP	Most farm landowners next to a perennial stream.	Irrigated crop land: \$391.00-\$394.00 Dry crop land \$103.50 - \$264* Pasture: \$171-\$174	Yes. Senior water rights Cumulative impact bonus Conservation easements	Yes. SWCD will perform and pay for all planting and maintenance work.	10-15 years**	35 feet	Yes. The landowner may prohibit public entry.
VEGBACC	Most rural landowners next to a perennial stream.	No annual payments. Planting materials are provided free of charge.	Yes. Senior water rights Cumulative impact bonus Conservation easements	Yes. At the landowner's option, SWCD will perform the maintenance work with the landowner paying \$200/acre	No minimum**	20 feet	Yes. The landowner may prohibit public entry.

* Dry crop land rates depend on soil type

** In addition to contracts, landowners have the option of providing 20, 30-year or permanent conservation easements, and water rights leases and permanent transfers also. Landowners receive additional payments when exercising these options.

Eligibility

Landowners must be along a perennial stream in the Tualatin Basin and outside the Urban Growth Boundary. The riparian area must be in a condition that would benefit from improvement.

Who Pays for These Programs?

Enhanced CREP and VEGBACC are funded and supported by USDA, the State of Oregon, TSWCD, WMSWCD, ODF, the Oregon Water Trust, and Clean Water Services.

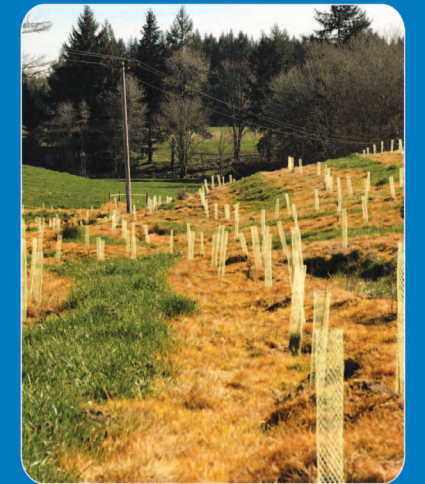
How the Payments Work

Here's an example: A landowner enrolls five acres of irrigated cropland in Enhanced CREP under a 15-year contract. The landowner also provides a 20-year conservation easement and is eligible to receive a bonus for leasing senior water rights to the state for in-stream use (15-year lease). In this example, the total 15-year benefits would be \$105,765.00.

Here's how the benefits to the landowner are calculated:

Annual Payments:	
Soil rental + practice incentive + maintenance =	\$391.00/acre
Cumulative Total \$391.00 x 5 acres x 15 years =	\$ 29,325
Value of Planting and Maintenance Services:	
Riparian planting = \$3,600/acre x 5 acres =	\$ 18,000
Maintenance = \$1,500/acre x 5 acres x 5 years =	\$ 37,500
\$300/acre x 5 acres x 10 years =	\$ 15,000
	\$ 70,500
Conservation Easement:	
\$658/acre x 5 acres =	\$ 3,190
Water Rights:	
\$20/acre x 5 acres x 15 years x 1.5 bonus factor =	\$ 2,250
One-Time Payments:	
Signing incentive = 5 acres x \$100.00 =	\$ 500
15-year Total:	\$ 105,765

Landowners with livestock may be eligible for additional benefits for fencing and livestock watering facilities.



NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Please contact:

Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District
(503) 648-3174 www.swcd.net

West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District
(503) 238-4775
www.westmultconserv.org

Besides explaining the programs, your SWCD representatives can provide benefit estimates that are tailored to your circumstances.