

Greene County Soil & Water Conservation District

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Agricultural land placed under a CREP perpetual easement that has been planted to native grasses and trees.



Other lands are also eligible for the easement. This property which lies along the Illinois River in Greene County has also been placed in a perpetual easement.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

The CREP or Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program uses federal and state funds to safeguard environmentally sensitive land. Landowners enrolled in the program remove lands from agricultural production and plant native grasses, trees and other vegetation to improve water quality, soil and wildlife habitat. CREP provides rental payments and other financial incentives to encourage producers to voluntarily enroll in 10 to 15 year contracts with the Federal Government. These areas would then be eligible for easement contracts through the State of Illinois for 15, 35, or permanent easements held by the Soil and Water Conservation Districts in counties where the land is located.

The Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District identified many of the environmentally sensitive areas along Apple and Macoupin Creeks in Greene County and recommended the CREP program to the owners of these areas. The SWCD staff also worked closely with the USDA Farm Services Agency and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to secure the funds for the federal 15 year CRP contract and the 15, 35, or perpetual easement contract. The District now holds 20 permanent easements totaling over 1,500 acres. The program not only addressed the needs of some of the counties most sensitive environmental areas but also brought over one million dollars of state and federal funding into the Greene County economy.

District Staff is presently conducting a one on one meeting with each contract participant to discuss issues such as ownership changes, easement right of ways and program compliance. Most contracts are currently half way through their federal contract. Once their 15 year federal contract is complete the permanent easements go into affect.

For more information on projects and activities with the Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District visit our office or give us a call today.