

# Conservation Security Program

Fact Sheet

Minnesota, 2008

## Conservation Security Program Overview

The Conservation Security Program (CSP) was authorized by the 2002 Farm Bill to reward farmers and ranchers who are implementing conservation on America's working lands. Working lands include cropland, grassland, improved pasture, range land, orchards, and vineyards, as well as forested land that is an incidental part of an operation. CSP is a voluntary program based on conservation accomplishments that recognize the contributions of the best land stewards and encourages them to do more. The program is available to all producers regardless of size of operation or crops produced.

## Basic Eligibility

The producer and the producer's operation **MUST** meet the basic eligibility criteria:

- The land must be privately owned or Tribal land; and the majority of the land must be located within the selected watershed.
- The applicant must be in compliance with highly erodible and wetland compliance provisions of the Food Security act of 1985, have an active interest in the operation, and have control of the land for the life of the contract. Landlords who cash rent their land are not eligible to apply for CSP.
- Applicants must have addressed water quality and soil quality to meet the minimum treatment requirements on the land being entered into a CSP contract. Applicants may choose to enroll one field or their entire agricultural operation into a CSP contract, provided the land meets eligibility requirements.

## Minnesota 2008 CSP Watershed

CSP is being offered in one watershed in Minnesota in 2008. Only those producers who have a majority of their land in this watershed are eligible to apply for CSP this fiscal year. The watershed is the Thief Watershed. A map showing the watershed is available at your USDA Service Center or online at <http://www.mn.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/csp/csp.html>.

Watershed	Thief
Cropland	122,000
Pasture	16,900
Forest	276,300
Developed	8,500
Water	19,500
Other	160,400
Total	603,600
Number of Farms	560

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## How to Apply

To apply for CSP, applicants must first complete the CSP self-assessment workbook either online at [www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/CSP](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/CSP) or by picking up a copy at their local USDA Service Center. This workbook will help producers to determine whether they meet the basic eligibility requirements; to document their stewardship work including the conservation practices currently installed on their farm or ranch; and to prepare a benchmark inventory documenting conservation treatments they may have applied in previous years.

Applicants determined to be eligible must submit the completed workbook and CSP application to their local USDA Service Center during the sign-up period from **April 18, 2008 to May 16, 2008**.

A follow up interview will be scheduled with the applicant. Based on the application, description of conservation activities and the interview, the NRCS will determine eligibility and enrollment tier and category for the applicant.

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## CSP Payments

CSP contract payments will include one or more of the following payment components:

- An annual stewardship payment for the existing base level of conservation treatment
- An annual existing practice payment for the maintenance of existing conservation practices
- An enhancement payment for additional conservation practices or activities above and beyond those needed for basic eligibility, which provide increased resource benefits beyond the prescribed level. A list of enhancement activities will be available at the time of sign-up at your local USDA Service Center.

CSP payments are made annually for the life of the contract, as long as all of the conservation practices are maintained. CSP contracts can be 5 to 10 years in length, depending on the level of enrollment.

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## For More CSP Information

Visit your local USDA Service Center, listed in your local directory under U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), or online at: <http://www.mn.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/csp/csp.html>.



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
United States Department of Agriculture

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## Minnesota's 2008 Conservation Security Program (CSP) Watersheds

