

The Conservation Security Program

CSP

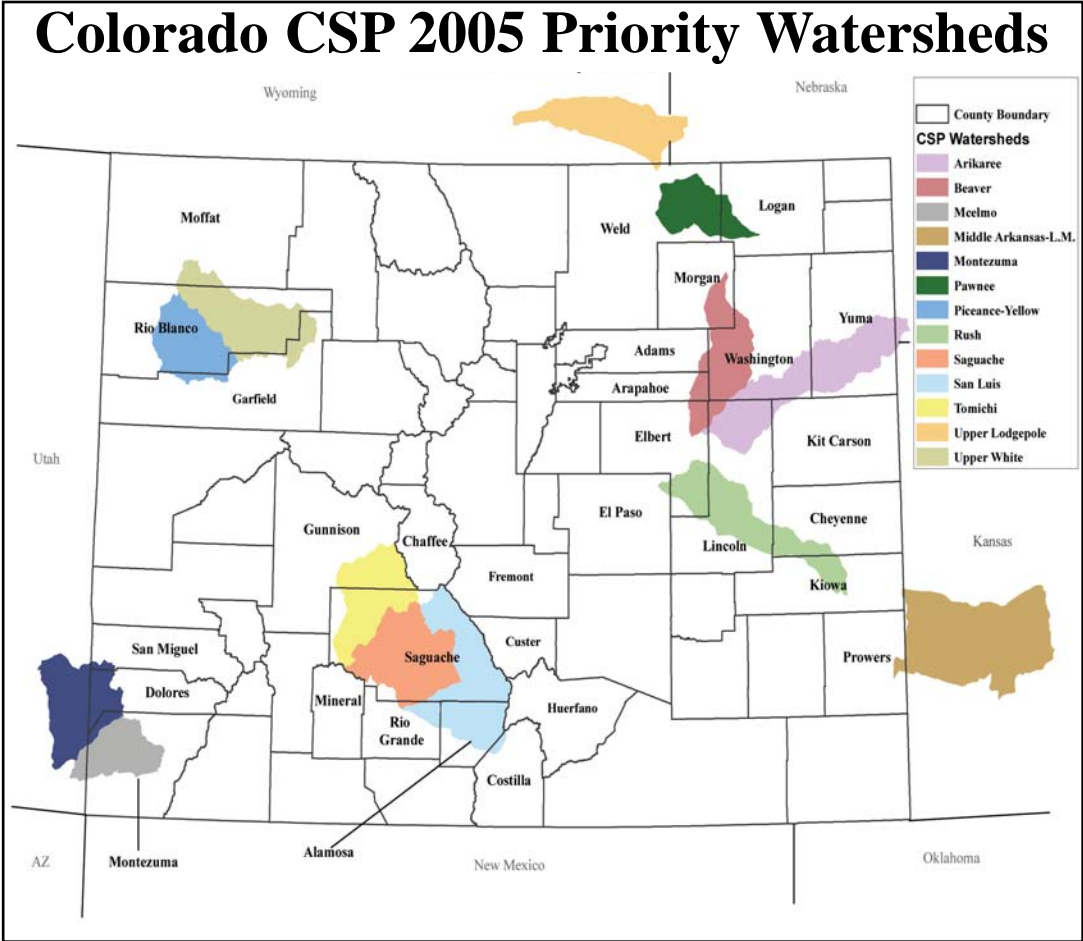
in Colorado



Rewarding the Best...Motivating the Rest

If you live within the CSP Watersheds you may be eligible for CSP in Colorado

We know our customer's time is most valuable, so we encourage every landowner who thinks they may want to enroll into CSP to first visit our website located at www.co.nrcs.usda.gov



The Conservation Security Program (CSP) is a voluntary program authorized by the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, commonly referred to as the 2002 Farm Bill. CSP provides financial and technical assistance to promote the conservation and improvement of soil, water, air, energy, plant and animal life, and other conservation purposes on **Tribal and private working lands**. Working lands include **cropland, grassland, improved pasture, and range land**, as well as **forested land** that is an incidental part of an agricultural operation. The program provides equitable access to benefits for all producers, regardless of the size of the operation, crops produced, or geographic location. *The CSP rewards the best conservation stewards with financial payments and technical assistance and encourages others to implement conservation practices on working agricultural lands.*

If the majority of your privately owned property or tribal land is not within one of the Colorado identified CSP watersheds, you are not eligible for 2005 CSP funding. However, each year, for the next eight years, new watersheds will be identified for further opportunities for enrollment into the program.

CSP is a voluntary conservation program that supports ongoing stewardship of private agricultural lands by providing payments for maintaining and enhancing natural resources. CSP identifies and rewards those farmers and ranchers who are meeting the highest standards of conservation and environmental management on their operations.

In addition, CSP creates powerful incentives for other producers to meet those same standards of conservation performance. In short, CSP rewards the best and motivates the rest. Through these rewards and incentives, CSP builds a foundation of natural resource conservation that will provide benefits to the public for generations to come.

Benefits

Through CSP, the conservation benefits gained will help farms and ranches be more economically and environmentally sustainable and will increase the natural resource benefits for all Americans.

How CSP Works

- ❶ The CSP sign-up will be offered in selected priority watersheds across the Nation.
- ❷ Producers complete a self-assessment to determine eligibility.
- ❸ Eligible producers within these watersheds submit an application.

- ❹ Based on the application, description of conservation activities, and a follow-up interview, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will determine which program tier and enrollment category are available for the applicant.

NRCS will provide the necessary materials for producers to complete the benchmark inventory.

Basic Eligibility

Both the producer and the producer's operation must first meet these basic eligibility criteria:

- ◆ The land must be privately owned or tribal land with the majority of the land located within a selected priority watershed.
- ◆ The applicant must be in compliance with highly erodible land and wetland provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985, have an active interest in the agricultural operation, and show control of the land for the life of the contract.
- ◆ The applicant must share in the risk of producing any crop or livestock and be entitled to a share in the crop or livestock marketed from the operation.

All applicants must meet the following minimum tier eligibility and contract requirements, plus any additional requirements in the sign-up announcement.

- ◆ **For Tier I**, the producer must have addressed water quality and soil quality to meet the minimum treatment requirements on part of the agricultural operation prior to acceptance into CSP.
- ◆ **For Tier II**, the producer must have addressed water quality and soil quality to meet the minimum treatment requirements on the entire agricultural operation prior to acceptance and agree to address one additional resource concern by the end of the contract period.
- ◆ **For Tier III**, the producer must have addressed all resource concerns to a resource management system level that meets the Field Office Technical Guide standards on the entire agricultural

operation before acceptance into the program and agree to additional enhancement activities outlined in the sign-up announcement.

Soil quality practices might include crop rotation, cover crops, conservation tillage, prescribed grazing, and adequate wind barriers.

Water quality practices might include filter strips, grassed waterways, managed access to streams, nutrient and pest management, prescribed grazing, and irrigation water management.

Contract Payments

CSP contract payments include one or more of the following:

- An annual stewardship component for the existing base level conservation treatment.
- An annual existing practice component for maintaining existing conservation practices.
- A one-time new practice component for additional needed practices.
- An enhancement component for exceptional conservation effort and additional conservation practices or activities that provide increased resource benefits beyond the prescribed level.

Total payments are determined by the tier of participation:

- **For Tier I**, contracts are for 5 years; maximum payment is \$20,000 annually.
- **For Tier II**, contracts are for 5-10 years; maximum payment is \$35,000 annually.
- **For Tier III**, contracts are for 5-10 years, maximum payment is \$45,000 annually.