

MN CREP expansion opens easement opportunities in 12 additional counties



An outlet structure was installed as part of a wetland restoration on this MN CREP easement in Freeborn County. Restoring the wetland reduced pressure on the county ditch system while providing water storage and wildlife habitat. **Photo Credit:** BWSR



The Clean Water Fund is among several state and federal funding sources that support MN CREP.

An amended agreement between the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and the USDA's Farm Service Agency (USDA-FSA) will make easement opportunities via the Minnesota Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (MN CREP) available in 12 more counties across the state and expand eligibility for planting native vegetation outside of wellhead protection areas.

MN CREP is a voluntary program that leverages state and federal funds to permanently protect environmentally sensitive land within targeted counties. Participating landowners enroll in the USDA-FSA-administered

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) for 14 to 15 years, and in the BWSR-administered Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve program, which taps state funds to establish perpetual conservation easements.

"MN CREP presents Minnesota landowners with a unique opportunity to preserve their legacy by dedicating marginal cropland to conservation purposes," said BWSR Executive Director John Jaschke.

"Conservation lands protected via MN CREP offer multiple benefits including enhanced habitat, improved water quality and increased floodwater storage."



An agreement signed by BWSR and the USDA-FSA launched the program in 2017. At that time, MN CREP was available in 54 western and southern Minnesota counties. The amended agreement signed in

