

8/19/2003 Moran Urges USDA to Announce Conservation Program Decisions

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Farmers Forced to Delay Planting Until CRP Announcements are Made

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran today urged U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Ann Veneman to process Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contracts quickly. The sign-up period for CRP acres ended over two months ago - on June 13th.

"Our farmers have to make decisions for next year's planting, and if they do not qualify for CRP, they need to know," Moran said. "Kansas farmers have been waiting patiently for over two months for these decisions to be made."

Currently there are 2.7 million acres of CRP land in Kansas. Farmers and ranchers can voluntarily enter into long-term contracts for 10 to 15 years. The sign-up for this year's CRP began on May 5th and ended on June 13th.

CRP improves water quality by keeping sediment out of streams and waterways and is important to wildlife as it preserves the habitat of threatened and endangered species. According to the Natural Resource Conservation Service, each acre under CRP contract reduces erosion by an average of 19 tons of topsoil a year.

"CRP provides important protection for wildlife and for our valuable Kansas resources," Moran said. "But CRP eligibility decisions need to be made now so that our farmers can make timely decisions for the future of their operations."

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