

# Flood Recovery Options for Agricultural Land



## *Where to begin*

Landowners along the Missouri River are assessing flood water damages and making decisions about their agricultural land. Flood recovery, crop insurance, permits and regulations are just some of the key issues producers will need to consider as they plan for the 2012 crop year.

The Missouri River Flood Task Force is a coalition of Federal, State, and local agencies and organizations that are coordinating Missouri River flood response efforts. As part of that effort, the Task Force is working together to provide timely and accurate flood-related information, including information for agricultural producers. This fact sheet provides information about:

- Flood recovery efforts on agricultural land;
- Crop insurance and risk management, and;
- Permits and regulation issues.

## *Flood Recovery Programs*

There are several voluntary programs available that may provide financial and/or technical assistance to producers whose agricultural land was damaged during the Missouri River flooding.\* Organized by recovery activity, the following is a brief synopsis of each program, including the agency that manages it and where to go to get more, complete information. (*\*Program assistance may be subject to funding availability.*)

## *Financial Recovery Programs:*

**Crop Insurance** - If you had insurance on the crop for 2011, you are covered for losses caused to it by the 2011 flood. Also, you will be covered for 2012 if you are unable to plant due to damages caused by the 2011 flood event if you had insurance on the crop in 2011. Contact your crop insurance agent for more information.

**Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) Program** - SURE provides assistance to producers suffering at least a 10 percent production crop loss due to natural disasters on a farm in a disaster designated county. The program is managed by the Farm Service Agency (FSA). Visit your local USDA Service Center for more information.

**Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)** - NAP provides financial assistance to producers of noninsurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters. The program is managed by the Farm Service Agency. Visit your local USDA Service Center for more information.

**Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)** - DUA provides unemployment benefits and re-employment services to individuals who have become unemployed because of major disasters. Benefits begin with the date the individual was unemployed due to the disaster incident and

can extend up to 26 weeks after the Presidential disaster declaration date. These benefits are made available to individuals not covered by other unemployment compensation programs, such as self-employed, farmers, migrant and seasonal workers, and those who have insufficient quarters to qualify for other unemployment compensation.

### *Land Clearing and Soil Restoration Programs:*

**Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)** - ECP provides emergency funding and technical assistance for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters. Removing sand and debris from fields and repairing fence are common ECP projects. The program is managed by the Farm Service Agency. Visit your local USDA Service Center for more information.

**Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA)** - CTA provides technical assistance to help land users reduce the potential damage caused by excess water, sedimentation, and other natural resource concerns on their land. Note that only technical assistance is available under this program. The program is managed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Visit your local USDA Service Center for more information.

**Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP)** - EFRP provides payments to eligible owners of nonindustrial private forest land in order to carry out emergency measures to restore land damaged by a natural disaster. The program is managed by the Farm Service Agency. Visit your local USDA Service Center for more information.

### *Stream/Drainage Channel Restoration and Levee Repair Programs:*

**Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program** - The EWP program provides technical and financial assistance to local units of government and other entities to repair waterways damaged by a natural disaster. Removing stream channel blockages, cleaning drainage ditches, and in a limited capacity, repairing breached levees are examples of potential EWP Program projects. The program is managed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Visit your local USDA Service Center for more information on program eligibility and funding.

**P.L. 84-99 Program** - The P.L. 84-99 program allows the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to repair and/or rehabilitate any qualified flood damage reduction project levee whether it is federally constructed or privately owned. All privately owned flood damage reduction projects must be accepted into USACE's P.L. 84-99 Rehabilitation and Inspection Program (RIP).

### *Long-Term or Land Retirement Programs:*

**Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)** - CRP helps producers safeguard environmentally sensitive land. Producers enrolled in CRP plant long-term, resource-conserving covers to improve the quality of water, control soil erosion, and enhance wildlife habitat. In return, participants receive a rental payment and cost-share assistance. Contract duration is between 10 and 15 years. Environmentally desirable land devoted



to certain conservation practices including wetland restoration, creation, or construction, riparian buffers, or grass filters, may be enrolled at any time under CRP continuous sign-up. The program is managed by the Farm Service Agency. Visit your local USDA Service Center for more information.

**The Farmable Wetlands Program (FWP)** – FWP restores farmable wetlands and associated buffers by improving the land’s hydrology and vegetation. Eligible producers can enroll eligible land in the FWP through the Conservation Reserve Program. The program is managed by the Farm Service Agency. Visit your local USDA Service Center for more information.

**Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)** –WRP is an easement program that offers landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property. WRP will pay willing landowners for an easement, and will restore wetland functions on the acreage. Landowners retain fee simple title to the land. The program is managed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Visit your local USDA Service Center for more information.

**EWP Program – Floodplain Easement**– EWP Program Floodplain Easements restore, protect, maintain, and enhance the functions of the floodplain, improve water quality, and provide other environmental benefits. The program pays willing landowners for an easement, and will restore the acreage to its natural floodplain functions and values. Landowners retain fee simple title to the

land. This program is managed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Visit your local USDA Service Center for more information.

**Missouri River Fish and Wildlife Recovery Program (MRRP)** - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers manages the MRRP, which includes the ability to acquire lands in fee simple title from willing sellers. Lands must meet specific criteria that determine if the area is suitable for restoring Missouri River habitat that existed prior to construction of the navigation channel and bank stabilization measures. Please contact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Omaha or Kansas City Districts for more information regarding this program.

## *Insurance and Risk Management*

Crop insurance rates may increase for land that had been flooded due to a levee breach. For the affected land, if the breach has not been fixed to prior specification, or if damaged soil (if any) has not been restored by the latter of the sales closing date or earliest planting date, it will receive the highest rate in the county. However, if the breach has been repaired to prior specification and the soil has at least the same crop yield potential as before the flood by the latter of the above mentioned dates, the land will be classified as shown on the current crop year Actuarial Map. Producers should contact their crop insurance agent for more information.





## Permits and Regulations

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 and Section 10 Permitting** - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Omaha District is pursuing permission to extend authorization to use special processing procedures for the emergency removal and discharge of accumulated sediments into the Missouri River associated with the 2011 Missouri River Basin Flood. Persons wishing to seek authorization are advised to contact the Nebraska Regulatory office (402) 896-0896. Regulatory will promptly review each application to ensure the proposed work is an emergency and is in compliance with approved emergency permit procedures and conditions before issuing an emergency permit. Landowners should keep in mind that there may be additional permit requirements and regulations to be followed when restoring agricultural land in the Missouri River Corridor.

## Technical Assistance

For technical information on flood recovery for cropland, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension (<http://flood.unl.edu/crops>) provides fact sheets and archived webinar segments on four topics:

1. Sedimentation and Debris Removal
2. Managing Post Flooding Soils
3. Cover Crops for Soil Health
4. Flooded Crops, Insurance Payments, and Lease Contracts

Answers to many management questions can also be found at your local USDA Service Center or county Extension office.

## For More Information

For more information and/or assistance, please visit the following web sites:

- Bureau of Indian Affairs - <http://www.bia.gov/>
- Farm Service Agency - <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>
- Federal Emergency Management Agency - <http://www.fema.gov/>
- Iowa Homeland Security Emergency Management - <http://www.iowahomelandsecurity.org/>
- Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation - <http://www.inhf.org/>
- Kansas Division of Emergency Management - [http://www.kansastag.gov/kdem\\_default.asp](http://www.kansastag.gov/kdem_default.asp)
- Missouri Emergency Management Agency - <http://sema.dps.mo.gov/>
- Natural Resources Conservation Service - <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>
- Nebraska Department of Agriculture - <http://www.agr.ne.gov/>
- Nebraska Department of Natural Resources - <http://www.dnr.state.ne.us/>
- Nebraska Emergency Management Agency - <http://www.nema.ne.gov>
- Nebraska Natural Resources Districts - <http://www.nrdnet.org/>
- Risk Management Agency - <http://www.rma.usda.gov>
- The Nature Conservancy - <http://www.nature.org/>
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - <http://www.nwo.usace.army.mil/>

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*The Missouri River Flood Task Force and its partnering organizations are equal opportunity providers and employers.*

<http://www.nwd.usace.army.mil/mrftf/>

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