



Natural Resources Conservation Service

United States Department of Agriculture

- [Topics](#)
- [Technical Resources](#)
- [Careers](#)
- [Land Use](#)
- [Soils](#)
- [National Centers](#)
- [Water](#)
- [Air](#)
- [Plants & Animals](#)
- [Energy](#)
- [Climate Change](#)
- [People](#)
- [Conservation Client](#)
- [About NRCS](#)

Enter Keyword, Phrase, or Text to Search the site

- [Browse By Audience](#)
- [A-Z Index](#)
- [Farm Bill](#)
- [Landscape Initiatives](#)
- [Financial Assistance](#)
- [Technical Assistance](#)
- [Easements](#)
- [Landscape Planning](#)
- [Alphabetical Listing & Archive](#)

You are Here:

- [Home](#)
- [Programs](#)
- [Newsroom](#)
- [Financial Assistance](#)
- [Emergency Watershed Protection Program](#)
- [Media Resources](#)
- [Stay Connected](#)

- [Blog](#)
- [Loading Tree...](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

Emergency Watershed Protection Program

The Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP) was established by Congress to respond to emergencies created by natural disasters. The EWP Program is designed to help people and conserve natural resources by relieving imminent hazards to life and property caused by floods, fires, drought, windstorms, and other natural occurrences. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) administers the EWP Program; EWP-Recovery, and EWP-Floodplain Easement (FPE).

Who is Eligible?

EWP - Recovery

The EWP Program is a recovery effort program aimed at relieving imminent hazards to life and property caused by floods, fires, windstorms, and other natural occurrences.

Public and private landowners are eligible for assistance, but must be represented by a project sponsor that must be a legal subdivision of the State, such as a city, county, township or conservation district, and Native

EWP - FPE

Privately-owned lands or lands owned by local and state governments may be eligible for participation in EWP-FPE. To be eligible, lands must meet one of the following criteria:

- Lands that have been damaged by flooding at least once within the previous calendar year or have been subject to flood damage at least twice within the previous 10 years

American Tribes or Tribal governments.

NRCS may pay up to 75 percent of the construction cost of emergency measures. The remaining 25 percent must come from local sources and can be in the form of cash or in-kind services.

- Other lands within the floodplain are eligible, provided the lands would contribute to the restoration of the flood storage and flow, provide for control of erosion, or that would improve the practical management of the floodplain easement
- Lands that would be inundated or adversely impacted as a result of a dam breach

What Practice Measures Are There?

EWP – Recovery

EWP work is not limited to any one set of measures. It is designed for installation of recovery measures to safeguard lives and property as a result of a natural disaster. NRCS completes a Damage Survey Report (DSR) which provides a case-by-case investigation of the work necessary to repair or protect a site.

Watershed impairments that the EWP Program addresses are debris-clogged stream channels, undermined and unstable streambanks, jeopardized water control structures and public infrastructures, wind-borne debris removal, and damaged upland sites stripped of protective vegetation by fire or drought.

EWP – FPE

EWP-FPE easements are restored to the extent practicable to the natural environment and may include both structural and nonstructural practices to restore the flood storage and flow, erosion control, and improve the practical management of the easement.

Structures, including buildings, within the floodplain easement must be demolished and removed, or relocated outside the 100-year floodplain or dam breach inundation area.

How Do I Request Assistance?

EWP – Recovery: If your land has suffered severe damage that may qualify for the EWP Program, you should contact your local sponsoring authorities and request assistance. Additional information regarding EWP-Recovery eligibility and availability, please [visit the EWP-Recovery page](#).

EWP – FPE: Landowners interested in enrolling their land in a permanent EWP-FPE easement should contact their local USDA Service Center for more information. EWP-FPE is not available in all areas at all times and is most commonly available to landowners in areas recently impacted by a natural disaster such as widespread flooding. For more information regarding program eligibility and availability, please [visit the EWP-FPE page](#).

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