



Kansas Water Right Retirement Programs
Nevada Interim Legislative Committee
on Natural Resources

May 10, 2024

KANSAS WATER RIGHT RETIREMENT PROGRAMS

The State of Kansas has two operational water right retirement programs:

- 1) Upper Arkansas River Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (UAR CREP) - a joint federal & state partnership project with USDA; and
- 2) Water Transition Assistance Program (WTAP) – a solely state driven project.

UAR CREP OVERVIEW

- CREP is an 'enhanced' version of the popular CRP program implemented through a federal & state partnership between FSA and the State of Kansas to address specialized resource concerns - specifically in this case, groundwater depletion.
- The state partner must provide at least 20% match, 10% of which must be in direct cash payments to producers.

UAR CREP OVERVIEW

- The Kansas Department of Agriculture's Division of Conservation (DOC) is the primary project coordinator.
- NRCS is the provider of technical services to FSA and producers implementing CREP CRP contracts.
- Many partners (state agencies, local conservation and groundwater management districts, and NGOs are contributing to the projects goals and objectives.

UAR CREP OVERVIEW

- The UAR CREP is a voluntary, incentive-based program allowing producers to enroll eligible irrigated acres in targeted areas for 14 to 15-year contracts with FSA.
- In return for a special FSA irrigated rental rate payment, additional cost-share opportunities for specific cost-share practices, and an upfront signing payment from DOC, the producer agrees to 1) establish an approved

UAR CREP OVERVIEW

cover (typically a native grass) on enrolled acres; and 2) permanently retire the associated state irrigation water rights on the acreage.

- To date, **172 water rights** totaling **48,683 acre-feet** of annual water appropriations have been permanently retired from **215 wells** on the **23,891 acres** enrolled in CRP through the UAR CREP.

UAR CREP OVERVIEW

2024 PAYMENT EXAMPLE

130 acre irrigated center pivot quarter in Stafford County

FSA CRP Payment with Irrigated Rental Payment Rate

130 acres X \$174 / acre = \$22,620 / year

\$22,620 X 15 years = **\$339,300**

*30 acres of dryland corners @ \$44 / acre = \$1,320 / year

\$1,320 X 15 years = **\$19,800**

DOC Signing Payment

\$23,940 X 2.025 = **\$48,478**

TOTAL = \$407,578

FSA IRRIGATED RENTAL RATE CHANGES

COUNTY	2023 Previous County Average Irrigated Rate	2024 County Average Irrigated Rate PROPOSED	2024 County Average Irrigated Rate APPROVED
Barton	173	142	200
Edwards	195	134	188
Finney	171	180	184
Ford	158	107	149
Gray	170	116	159
Hamilton	159	164	161
Kearny	164	181	185
Kiowa	146	130	181
Pawnee	188	143	187
Pratt	161	158	199
Reno	141	132	179
Rice	194	142	194
Stafford	190	119	174

UAR CREP Financial Summary

- 140 approved contracts represent \$1,818,418 in one-time state sign-up incentive payments to producers over the past 16 years.
- \$17,195,165 of direct and indirect expenditures and in-kind costs from state, local and private partners have been made in support of the project to match an estimated total of \$56,266,570 in federal costs.

WTAP OVERVIEW

- WTAP is the State of Kansas' voluntary, incentive-based water conservation program designed to manage aquifers and streams in critical need of restoration by compensating landowners for the permanent retirement of irrigation water rights.
- WTAP grants can be provided for 'partial water rights' and dryland farming is permitted after retirements.

WTAP OVERVIEW

- WTAP grants are ranked on competitive bids based on available historic consumptive water use (HCWU).
- Several project target areas have been established around the state, and maximum eligible bid rates are established for each area (\$2,750 - \$4,000 / HCWU).
- Water rights must be in good standing with KDA's Chief Engineer, Division of Water Resources.

2023 WTAP ENROLLMENT

- Please see <https://agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/division-of-conservation/water-conservation-programs> (Approved GMD No. 1 WTAP Target Area)

WTAP Enrollment Summary

- From ten annual enrollment periods, 34 irrigation wells and 5,750 irrigated acres have been voluntarily dismissed. 8,239 acre-feet of annual water appropriation rights and 2,700 acre-feet of HCWU in targeted regions have been permanently retired at an average cost to the State of Kansas of \$1,413 per acre-foot – an investment totaling \$3,902,946 in state funds.
- Additional \$1,011,393 of federal, local and NGO dollars

KANSAS WATER RIGHT RETIREMENT PROGRAMS

Subjects of Interest to the State of Nevada:

- 1) The geographic area of water right retirement projects must be very, very targeted to be effective.
- 2) The opportunity to continue farming dryland is a factor for landowners – CREP limits that with CRP.
- 3) CREP is more state agency cost effective, but comes with program bureaucracy and federal complications

QUESTIONS ?

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APPRECIATION

Thank You !!!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Steve Frost", enclosed within a white rectangular box with a thin gold border. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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