

Fact Sheet - Kansas Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program



Description

The Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program was created by Congress to respond to emergencies caused by natural disasters. EWP is designed to help people reduce imminent hazards to life and property threatened by natural disasters, such as excessive erosion and flooding caused by heavy rains, drought, tornadoes, and earthquakes.

The purpose of EWP is to help communities with a common problem. All projects undertaken must be sponsored by a political subdivision of the State such as a city, county, township, watershed district, or a Tribal government. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is responsible for administering the program, working through local units of government.

Types of Projects

There are two types of assistance available:

Exigency—An imminent threat to life and property exists and requires immediate federal action. Work must be completed within 10 days of accessing the site in order to protect life and property.

Non-Exigency—The threat to life and property constitutes an emergency, but does not pose an imminent threat. Non-exigency projects must be completed within 220 days after funding approval.

NRCS can pay up to 75 percent of emergency measures. The remaining 25 percent comes from local sources and can be in the form of cash, in-kind services, or a combination of both.

Criteria for Assistance

All EWP work must reduce threats to life and property. Work must be economically, socially, and environmentally defensible and sound from an engineering standpoint. EWP work must yield benefits to more than one person. All work must represent the least expensive environmentally sound alternative. All projects must be related to a sudden watershed impairment and erosion control.



Brown County EWP exigency streambank stabilization. High traffic county roadway impacted by flooding.



After the EWP exigency streambank stabilization.



Sponsor

Sponsors are responsible for providing land rights to do repair work and for securing all necessary permits. Sponsors are also responsible for furnishing the local 25% cost share for implementation of work. The work can be done either through local contracts administered by the sponsor, or the sponsor can use their own equipment and personnel. If sponsors do not have capability to do the work by either of these options, work can also be done by federal contract.

Sponsor Responsibilities

The work can be done either through federal or local contracts, as well as by the sponsor's crews. Sponsor responsibilities are defined for each project. The list of sponsor responsibilities include:

- Providing written request and application documentation to the NRCS State Conservationist
- Managing request for assistance from landowners
- Conducting outreach to underserved populations
- Participating with NRCS's damage survey report team
- Helping establish the priorities of the work
- Obtaining real property rights, including rights for relocation of fences, bridges, and items needed to complete the design
- Obtain federal, State, tribal, and local permits
- Relocation of utilities
- Providing the required local match of the costs
- Accepting the completed work
- Executing the operation and maintenance of the completed project

Types of Assistance

EWP funds cannot be used to solve problems that existed before the disaster. EWP funds cannot be used to improve the level of protection above what existed prior to the disaster. EWP cannot fund operation and maintenance work, or repair private or public transportation facilities or utilities.

EWP work cannot adversely affect downstream water rights, and EWP funds cannot be used to install measures not essential to the reduction of hazards. In addition, EWP funds cannot be used to perform work on measures installed by another federal agency.

Applying for Assistance

If your area has suffered severe damage from a natural disaster, it may qualify under the EWP program.

You are encouraged to contact your city or county official to request assistance. Sponsors should send a letter to the Kansas NRCS State Conservationist. Sponsors requests should include the nature, location, and scope of the problem needing help. From there, NRCS will guide the sponsor through the process. Maps and photos are encouraged.

For More Information

Information is available from all NRCS offices which explain eligibility requirements for the EWP program. All applications should be submitted as soon as possible after a natural disaster (within 60 days).

Kansas NRCS EWP: www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/financial_assistance/emergency_watershed_protection_program/

Kansas NRCS EWP Contact: Roger J. Masenthin, Water Resources Planning Specialist

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Dickinson County tornado non-exigency tornado debris removal.



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