

## **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program; SB 330**

**SB 330** establishes the Kansas Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) in statute. The CREP was first created by the 2007 Legislature and has existed since then by its authorizing language being annually included in appropriations bills.

### ***Operations***

The bill requires the Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA), Division of Conservation (Division), to administer CREP pursuant to agreements with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the purpose of implementing beneficial water quality and water quantity projects concerning targeted watersheds in the enrolled, targeted watersheds. The Division also may request assistance from other states agencies, Kansas State University, local governments, and private entities for implementation of CREP.

### ***Funding***

The bill creates the Kansas Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program Fund (Fund) in the State Treasury, which will be administered by the Division. The Division may receive and spend moneys for carrying out the provisions of the bill. Unspent moneys in the Fund will be carried over from one fiscal year to the next. Expenditures from the Fund will be for CREP implementation and will be made in accordance with appropriation acts through vouchers approved by the Secretary of Agriculture or by the Secretary's designee. The Division also may enter into cost-share contracts with landowners resulting in fulfilling specific objectives of projects approved in agreements between USDA and the State.

### ***Program Guidelines***

The bill establishes various guidelines for CREP. The guidelines include restrictions on the aggregate total number of acres allowed to be eligible and enrolled in the State and per county, and other restrictions on whole field enrollments and lands already enrolled in the federal Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Other restrictions will be established with the purpose of meeting water quantity goals, including what constitutes a water right in good standing for purposes of CREP.

### ***Reports***

The KDA will be required to submit a report at the beginning of each legislative session to the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources, which describes the program activities for each CREP administered in the State and information on any CREP established with the purpose of meeting water quantity goals. The KDA will be required to submit a report on the economic impact of each specific CREP and economic impacts to businesses located within each specific CREP to both committees every five years, beginning in 2017.