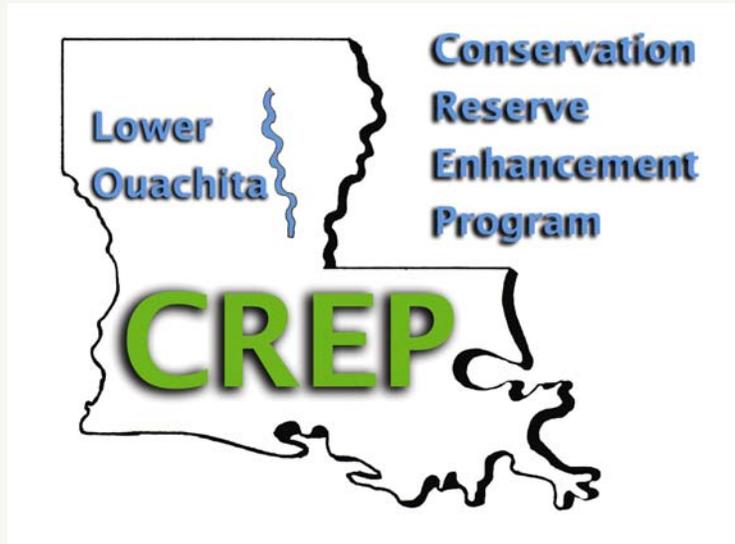


Louisiana CREP 1 2005 Annual Report



*“Helping Landowners and
Residents Protect
Natural Resources”*

Introduction



USDA's Farm Service Agency Administrator, James R. Little, on behalf of USDA's Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns, along with Louisiana's Commissioner of Agriculture, Bob Odom signed an agreement authorizing the Louisiana Lower Ouachita River Basin "Macon Ridge" Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (LA CREP I). The signing ceremony was held in Monroe, Louisiana at the Black Bayou National Wildlife Refuge on April 22, 2006 - Earthday. Eighty six (86) people, representing various government agencies, businesses, organizations, and private landowners within the project area, attended the ceremony to show their support for the project.

The LA CREP I is a cooperative conservation effort between the USDA - Farm Service Agency, USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service, Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Ducks Unlimited, United States Business Council for Sustainable Development, Black Bear Conservation Committee, Louisiana Association of Conservation Districts, and other nongovernmental supporting partners.

Two watersheds make up the LA CREP I, located in the Northeastern portion of the State of Louisiana. These are the Bouef River and Bayou Macon Watersheds, both located within the Lower Ouachita River Basin. Two Louisiana Parishes are located within the project area, Richland and West Carroll, with portions of acreage in seven additional Louisiana Parishes located within the project area. These are Caldwell, Catahoula, East Carroll, Franklin, Madison, Morehouse, and Ouachita. The area, as a whole, includes 1,663,881 acres. The goals of the project are to enroll 50,000 acres of marginal cropland into 14 – 15 year CRP contracts to assist in reducing non-point pollution in these two watersheds while helping to reduce some of the hypoxia issues within the Gulf of Mexico.

Federal and State Contributions During Fiscal Year 2005

Even though the timeframe was short between the approval of the project and the end of Fiscal Year 2005, the Sign-Up Period was very strong. A total of **\$125,955** in federal dollars were spent on Signing Incentive Payments (SIP), while State contributions for preparations for contract development, outreach activities, trainings and other program development needs totaled **\$2,121,194.62**. The State of Louisiana has now met **3%** of their total obligations (Match) for the overall project for FY 2005.

Federal Contributions

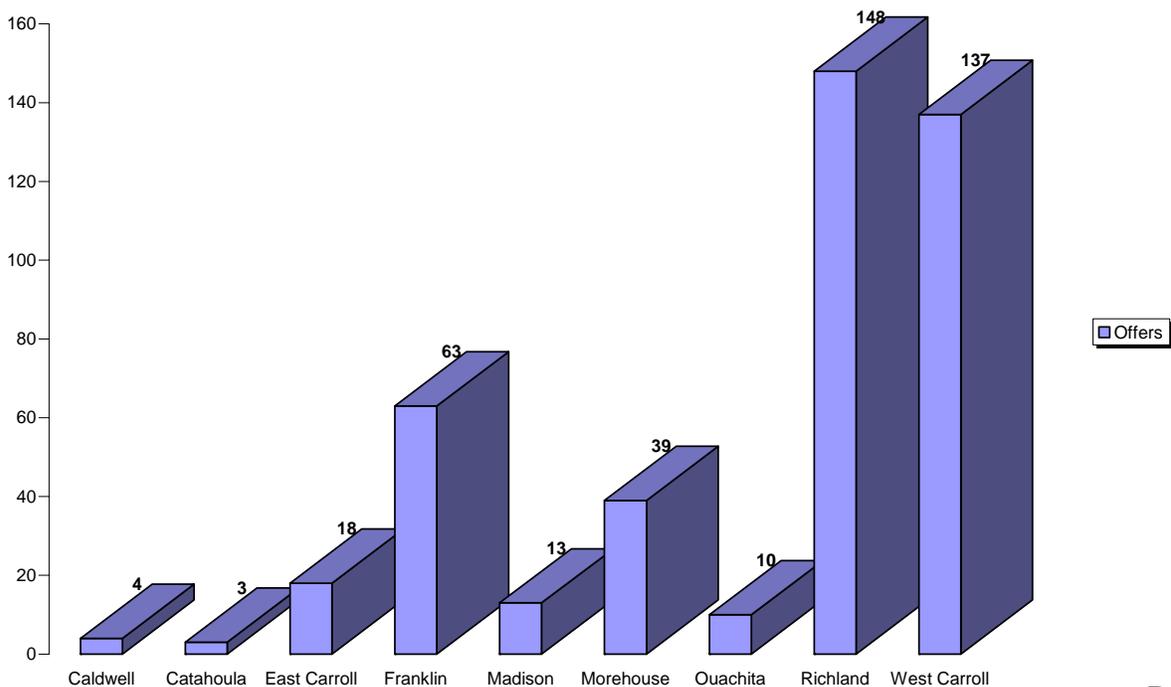
Organization/ Agency	Annual	Cumulative
USDA/FSA		
Signing Incentive Payment	\$125,955	\$125,955
Total Federal Contributions	\$125,955	\$125,955

State Contributions

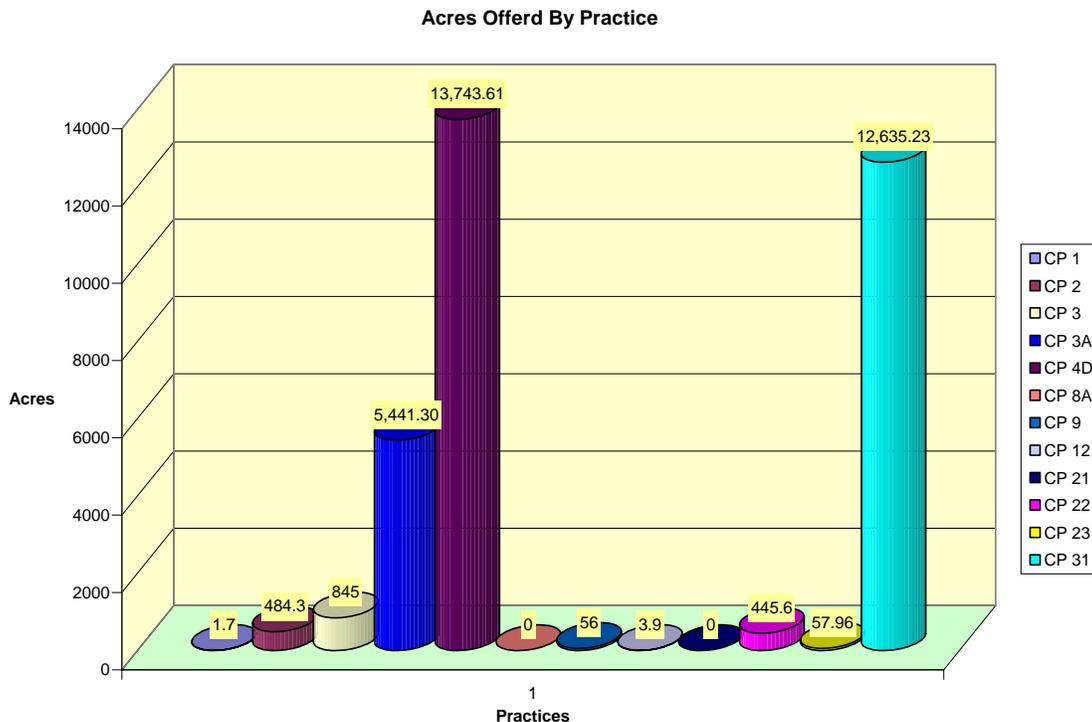
Organization/Agency	Annual	Cumulative
United States Business Council for Sustainable Development	\$9,529.62	\$9,529.62
Black Bear Conservation Committee	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
Louisiana Ducks Unlimited		
Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry Office of Forestry	\$146,416.00	\$146,416.00
Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry Office of Soil and Water Conservation	\$392,500.00	\$392,500.00
Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences	\$1,551,416.00	\$1,551,416.00
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries	\$20,833.00	\$20,833.00
Total State Contributions	\$2,123,194.62	\$2,123,194.62

Number of Offers for Enrollment during FY 2005 by Parish

Offers By Parish



Number of Acres Offered for Enrollment during FY 2005 by Practice



Training Sessions Held to Assist Personnel in Implementing LA CREP

FSA provided training in May 2005 to Parish Office employees before program sign-up began, instructing them on the various procedures and forms required for the LA CREP I Sign-up, and explained the roles each "Partner in Conservation" played in program development.

Natural Resources Conservation Service, along with the Farm Service Agency, and Louisiana Department of Forestry provided training to agency personnel for developing plans and contracts for the different practices that were to be offered within the LA CREP area.



LA CREP I - Workshops

With assistance from our "Partners in Conservation," a LA CREP workshop, including an outreach program was conducted. The workshop was held in August 2005 at the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Hardwood Seedling Nursery in Monroe, Louisiana. Landowners in attendance numbered 63, along with technical experts from various agencies.



We discussed timelines, program requirements, seedling quality, site preparation, planting techniques, available species that are adapted to this area, and other various topics related to the establishment and development of the practices available within the LA CREP I area. The group viewed an informative LA CREP I Power Point presentation. In addition, LA CREP I brochures and other handouts were provided to the group to assist landowners in becoming knowledgeable of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program along with other conservation programs in general. NRCS assisted by providing a "vendor listing" of native grass dealers for the participants, as well as tree planters. Listed also were the various services provided by the vendors.

Geographic Information System

The Conservation Partners have developed a Geographic Information System database to geo-reference the tracts of land entered into the LA CREP I project. The following map shows satellite imagery of the land area located within the two watersheds that make up the LA CREP I project area. All LA CREP I contracts will be digitized and placed in this database for viewing and future reference material for other projects.

