

## **CONSERVATION COMPLIANCE FOR FIELDS COMING OUT OF CRP**

Producers need to be aware that as CRP contracts expire and HEL (Highly Erodible Land) fields are prepared for future crop production, all such systems must meet the conservation requirements of the 1985 Food Security Act as amended.

In Iowa, a producer will be considered to have met the HEL conservation requirements if he (she) prepares the field coming out of CRP using the appropriate system listed below:

- A) For fields where the predominant HEL soil map unit is in the slope class of “C” or less:  
Grass cover may be disked once in the fall and once in the spring prior to planting a commodity crop. All tillage must be done on the contour. The grass cover will not be destroyed in areas where waterways or field borders are needed. The NRCS field office staff will provide technical assistance in identifying these areas upon request.
- B) For fields where the predominant HEL soil map unit is in the slope class “D” or steeper:  
The first commodity crop **MUST** be no-tilled into the remaining grass cover. The producer will need to prepare the CRP field in a manner that will allow no-till planting. The grass cover will not be destroyed in areas where waterways or field borders are needed. The NRCS field office staff will provide technical assistance in identifying these areas upon request.

There may be special circumstances that do not allow the producer to meet the above requirements. The producer will need to provide evidence that these circumstances exist and locate on an aerial photo where these areas are in the field.

Special circumstances may include:

- Presence of excessive gopher mounds, ant hills, or
- Areas of a field with clusters of volunteer trees.

In the case that “Special Circumstances” prevent a producer from being able to prepare and plant a CRP field in the appropriate manner as described in A or B above, the producer will be allowed to do the minimum amount of tillage that will allow the area to be planted (in no case does this mean that plowing the sod will be acceptable). It is expected that this tillage will be confined to only the area where the Special Circumstances exist. All Special Circumstances must be documented in the case file **before** the operator begins any tillage operations.

The NRCS field office staff will record which system the producer will use and have the producer sign the documentation sheet. The NRCS representative will sign the documentation sheet and place the signed sheet in the case file.

When developing the compliance plan for crop production after CRP, evaluate the potential soil loss for the crop rotation just as you would any other crop rotation (do not include any benefits or effects of the CRP grass cover in your RUSLE2 calculations).

Planned cropping systems can be approved by field office staff as long as the planned system meets the criteria described in the Iowa Amendment to NFSAM section 512.02.

## CRP TILLAGE DOCUMENTATION SHEET

**Producer's Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tract Number** \_\_\_\_\_

**Field Number(s)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Predominant Soil Type** \_\_\_\_\_

I have chosen to use the tillage system described below (circle the appropriate system).

- A) The field will be disked once in the fall and once in the spring prior to planting a commodity crop. All tillage will be done on the contour. The remaining grass cover will NOT be tilled in areas where ephemeral gully erosion control is needed.
  
- B) The first commodity crop will be no-tilled into the remaining grass cover. The grass cover will NOT be destroyed in areas where ephemeral gully erosion control is needed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Producer's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**NRCS Representative**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**