

Peer Review Plan

Preliminary Title: The Costs of Cover Practices in the Conservation Reserve Program

Type of Report (ERR, EIB, EB, TB, SOR, EIS) EIB

Agency: Economic Research Service [X] Influential Scientific Information
USDA [] Highly Influential Scientific Assessment

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Subject of Review: The environmental benefits of the USDA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) depend upon both the environmental sensitivity of land enrolled and the conservation covers selected for that land. The CRP's General Signup, which enrolls the majority of program acreage, uses a mix of competitive pressure from the auction format and an added incentive of cost share payment to encourage higher quality conservation covers. In this report, we examine recent General Signup offer data and new data on cost share payments to look at which cover practices CRP participants most commonly choose, how much those practices cost both the program participants and USDA, and how much participants respond to cover practice cost and ranking points when making their choices about cover practices. We use these empirical results, coupled with a simple theoretical model to project the implications of policy changes that would adjust the ranking or financial incentives to select higher quality conservation covers.

Purpose of Review: The purpose of the review is to ensure the high-quality of the economic analysis, transparent explanation of methods, objective interpretation of results, and effective communication to the intended audience.

Type of Review: [] Panel Review [X] Individual Reviewers
[] Alternative Process (Briefly Explain):

Timing of Review (Est.): Start: 12/18/2020 Completed: 04/06/2021 Withdrawn: XX/XX/XX

Number of Reviewers: [X] 3 or fewer [] 4 to 10 [] More than 10

Primary Disciplines/Types of Expertise Needed for Review: Economists

Reviewers selected by: [X] Agency [] Designated Outside Organization
Organization's Name:

Opportunities for Public Comment? [] Yes [X] No

If yes, briefly state how and when these opportunities will be provided:

How:

When:

Peer Reviewers Provided with Public Comments? [] Yes [X] No

Public Nominations Requested for Review Panel? [] Yes [X] No