

An aerial photograph of a wetland area at sunset. The water is a deep blue, and the surrounding land is a mix of brown and orange, reflecting the low sun. Several ducks are visible in the water and on the land. The text is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font.

**Natural Resources  
Conservation Service**

**Floodplain Easement Programs**

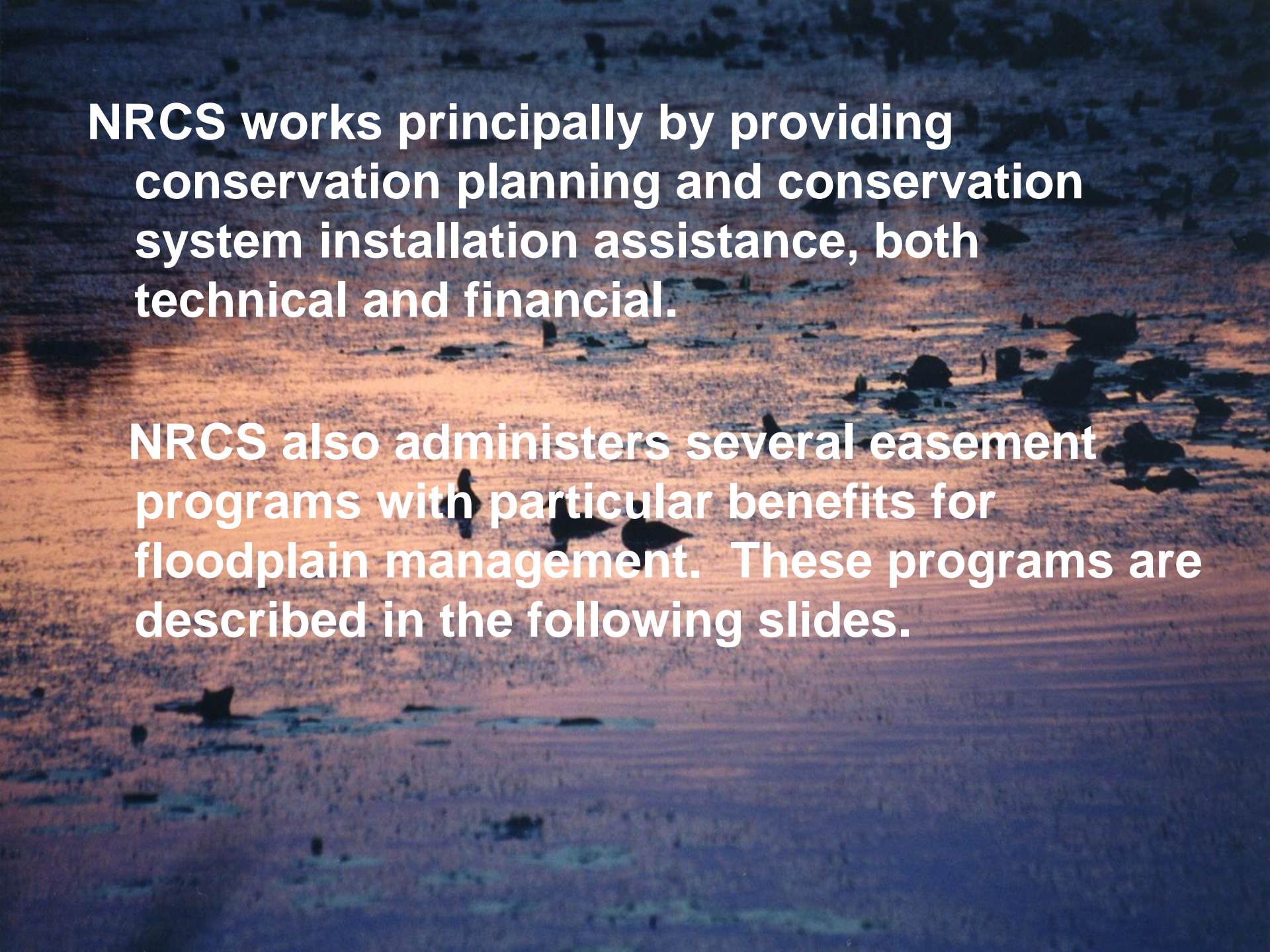
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**Des Moines, Iowa**

# Mission Statement

NRCS improves the health of our Nation's natural resources while sustaining and enhancing the productivity of American agriculture. We achieve this by providing voluntary assistance through strong partnerships with private landowners, managers, and communities to protect, restore, and enhance the lands and waters upon which people and the environment depend



**NRCS works principally by providing conservation planning and conservation system installation assistance, both technical and financial.**

**NRCS also administers several easement programs with particular benefits for floodplain management. These programs are described in the following slides.**

# WETLAND RESERVE PROGRAM (WRP)

The mission of the WRP program is to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands on eligible private or Tribal lands while maximizing wildlife habitat benefits.

The WRP program is the largest easement program administered by Iowa NRCS.

# **WETLANDS RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (WREP)**

**This is part of WRP. The WREP focuses WRP funds to project areas in order to achieve specific project area environmental goals.**

**Green Island, a 764.4 acre WREP easement in Scott County Iowa along the Maquoketa River, focused WREP dollars on a damaged levee district area to improve floodplain function, reduce future levee district repairs and improve wildlife habitat along the Mississippi River flyway.**

# EMERGENCY WATERSHED PROTECTION-FLOODPLAIN EASEMENTS (EWP-FPE)

The EWP-FPE goal is to reduce the recurring cost of flood damage in areas prone to flooding while restoring or protecting fish and wildlife habitat, especially wetland habitat, and the species that use these habitats such as migratory waterfowl and songbirds.

# EMERGENCY WETLANDS RESERVE PROGRAM (EWRP)

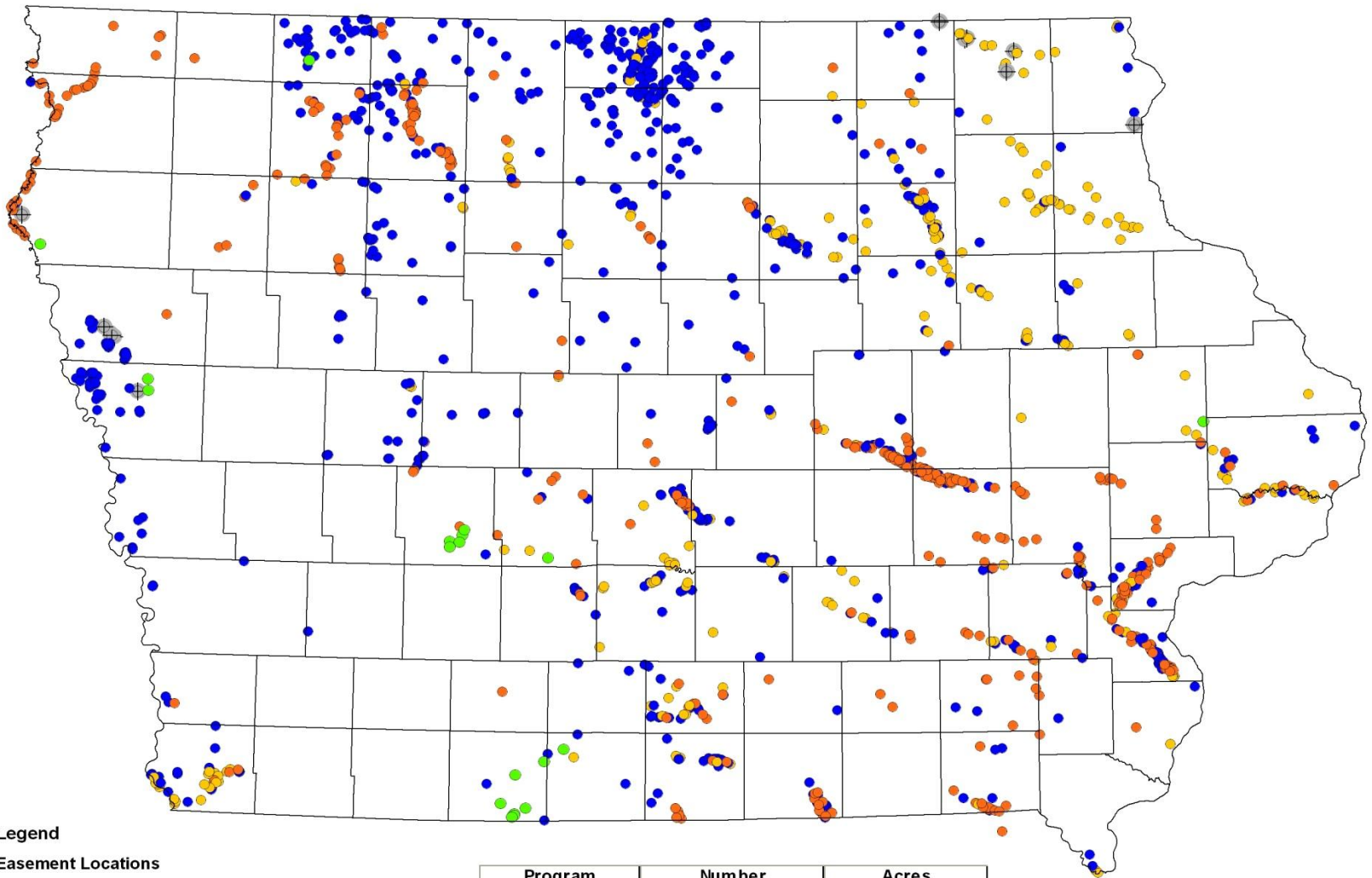
Authorized in 1993 under emergency supplemental appropriations to respond to widespread floods in the Midwest, EWRP provided payments to purchase easements and partial financial assistance to landowners who permanently restored wetlands at sites where restoration costs exceeded the land's fair market value. Land in this program is considered to be a part of the land enrolled in the Wetland Reserve Program. No new lands have been enrolled in the EWRP since the middle 1990s.

# Farm and Ranch Lands Protection (FRPP) and Grassland Reserve Programs (GRP)

These programs have not been utilized in the Cedar River watershed. The FRPP is intended to help local governments and land trusts protect farmland in areas susceptible to development. The GRP is intended to discourage the conversion of grasslands to other uses.



# Iowa NRCS Recorded Easements



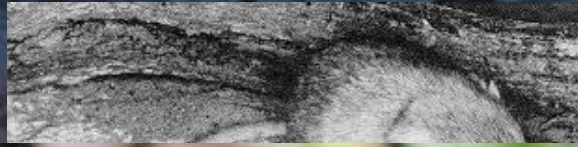
## Legend

### Easement Locations

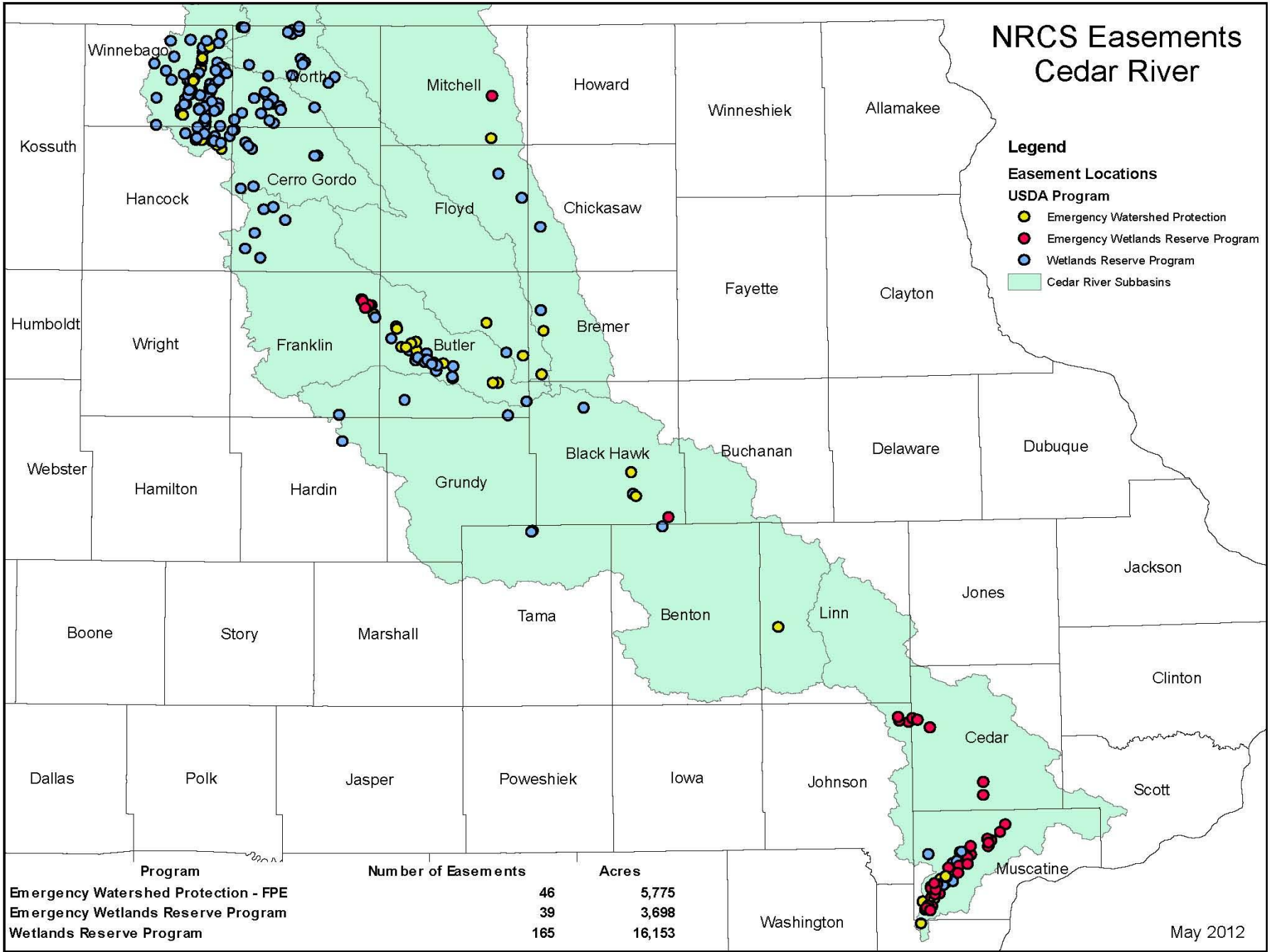
#### Program Name

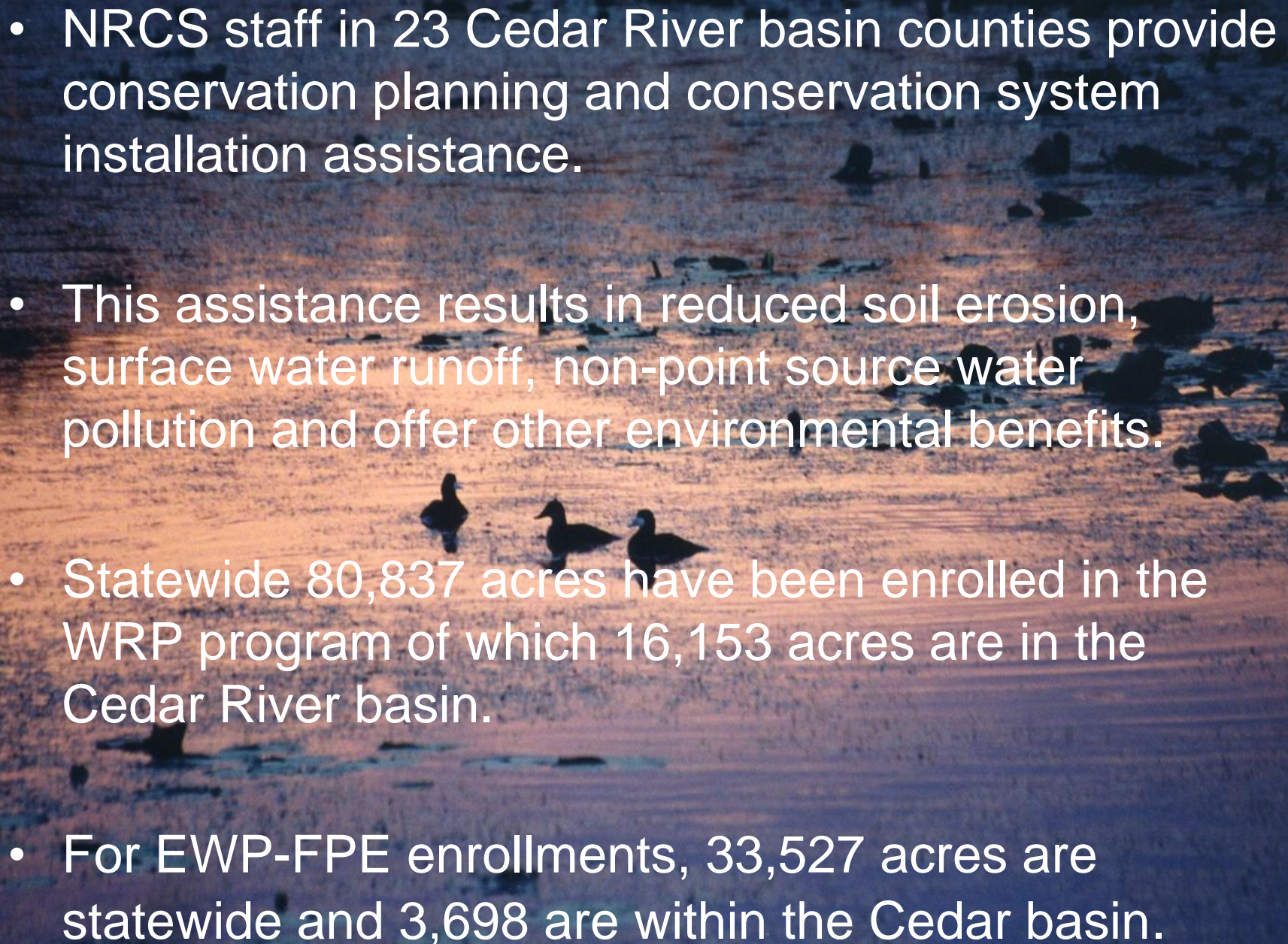
- Emergency Watershed Protection
- Emergency Wetlands Reserve Program
- ⊕ Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program
- Grassland Reserve Program
- Wetlands Reserve Program

Program	Number	Acres
EWPP-FPE	276	33,527
EWRP	402	44,877
FRPP	13	2,757
GRP	20	2,391
WRP	720	80,837



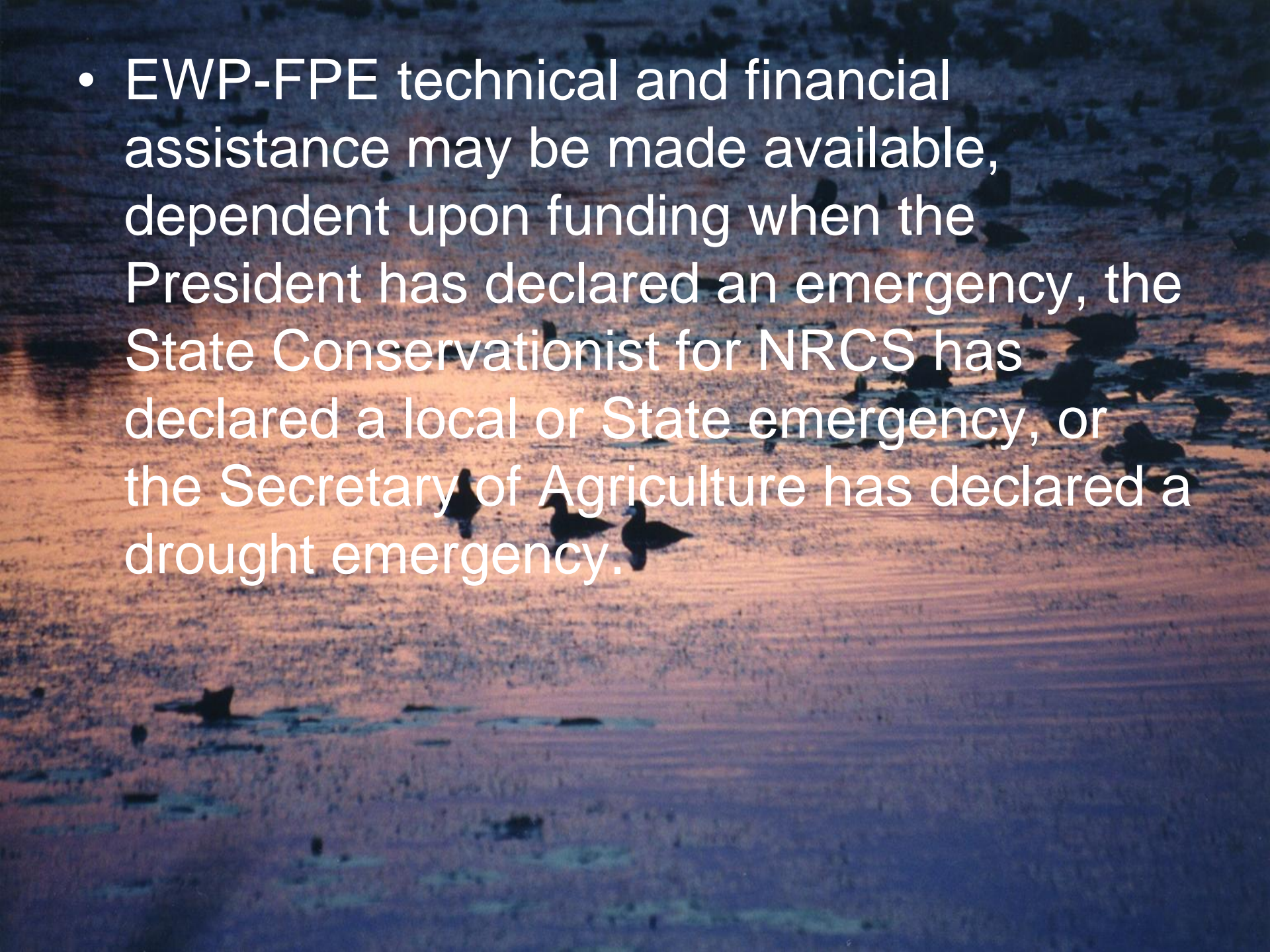
# NRCS Easements Cedar River



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- A photograph of a wetland or marsh area. In the foreground, three ducks are standing on a muddy bank. The water is calm, reflecting the sky. The background shows a vast expanse of water under a clear sky. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.
- NRCS staff in 23 Cedar River basin counties provide conservation planning and conservation system installation assistance.
  - This assistance results in reduced soil erosion, surface water runoff, non-point source water pollution and offer other environmental benefits.
  - Statewide 80,837 acres have been enrolled in the WRP program of which 16,153 acres are in the Cedar River basin.
  - For EWP-FPE enrollments, 33,527 acres are statewide and 3,698 are within the Cedar basin.

- The WRP program is administered by NRCS using funds, authorities, and facilities of the Commodity Credit Corporation. NRCS uses a ranking system that has been developed with consultation from a broad range of conservation and agricultural agencies and organizations. Special consideration is given to lands with remnant hydric plant communities, and threatened or endangered species.

- EWP-FPE technical and financial assistance may be made available, dependent upon funding when the President has declared an emergency, the State Conservationist for NRCS has declared a local or State emergency, or the Secretary of Agriculture has declared a drought emergency.



- Conservation and agricultural agencies and organizations provide input to USDA on the administration of USDA conservation programs through the State Technical Advisory Committee (STAC). Several STAC members provide specific input into the administration of the WRP and EWP-FPE programs. These members contribute expertise in wildlife management, farm policy, and floodplain management. Processes will continue to be evaluated and improved based on advances in science and changing statewide conditions.

- For more information go to:
- <http://www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov/>

