



EWP Floodplain Buyout Option for Limited Resource (LRA) Communities

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The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) provides a reserve of Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program funds for eligible flood-prone Limited Resource Areas (LRAs).

FLOODPLAIN BUYOUT OPTION for LIMITED RESOURCE AREAS (LRAs)



The above webinar, presented on May 24th, 2023 provides information for communities and potential sponsors to learn about this funding opportunity provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. For more information, reach out to our local NRCS EWP Program Manager.

What is an LRA floodplain buyout?

Floodplain buyouts are used where structural projects to reduce threats from additional flooding are not cost-effective and/or beneficial. A property owner sells their flood-prone property to an [eligible EWP local sponsor](#). All land rights convey to the sponsor so that the property will be maintained in perpetuity as open space for the conservation of natural floodplain functions. For floodplain buyouts in LRA communities being funded by Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, NRCS will provide sponsors funding for the full fair market value and will fund the relocation and restoration costs of the buyout.

What lands are eligible?

Any land use is potentially eligible for an LRA floodplain buyout using Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding. Agricultural land, land with/without structures and communities with residential properties, are eligible if the property was damaged by flooding at least once within the previous year or at least twice within the previous 10 years. Lands adjacent to eligible flood damaged land are also eligible if the land will contribute to the floodplain function. Additionally, lands that would be impacted as a result of a dam breach are also eligible.

What is a Limited Resource Area (LRA)?

A limited resource area is defined where housing values and income are less than a state's average and unemployment is at least twice the U.S. average. NRCS has calculated LRAs at the county level (map below), however other areas may also meet the LRA criteria, as determined by NRCS.

[LRA Counties and Tribal Areas 2023 Spreadsheet](#)



Limited Resource Areas 2023 - Interactive Map

[LRA COUNTIES AND TRIBAL AREAS 2023](#)



Criteria for Assistance

All EWP work must provide protection from future flooding or soil erosion; reduce threats to life and property; restore the natural function to the watershed; and be economically and environmentally sound.

How Do I Obtain Assistance?

If your land has been damaged by flooding and meets the eligibility requirements, it may qualify for EWP assistance. To request assistance, work with a project sponsor to contact your [USDA-NRCS EWP Program Manager](#).

Sponsorship


Project sponsor must be a State or political subdivision thereof, qualified Indian tribe or tribal organization, or unit of local government. Cities, Counties, and state conservation districts are the most common sponsors of EWP projects.

 [EWP LRA Buyout Fact Sheet \(2.09 MB\)](#)

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