



# MN CREP Training: 2018 Adjustments

June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018 \*



This PowerPoint contains edits made after the 6/28/18 Teleconference to reflect revisions to the RIM General Program Guidance document and Batching Period Deadlines



<b><u>AGENDA</u></b>	<b><u>MINUTES</u></b>
Welcome	5
CCRP and Impact on CREP	10
SWCD Engagement Meetings and Input Process	10
Rates and Payment Calculations	35
Updated Program Guidance and Roundout Details	45
Determining Extent of Restorable Wetlands	20
Questions & Answers	20

# CCRP



- CCRP Signup now occurring
- New Soil Rental Rates (SRR's) as of June 4, 2018
- 100% of SRR instead of 120% of SRR
- SIP, PIP not available
- Able to accept offers through August 17th



# CCRP and Impact on CREP

- CCRP: Signup now occurring
  - CREP: Signup continues
- CCRP: New Soil Rental Rates (SRR's) as of June 4, 2018
  - CREP: New SRR's are in effect for CREP, as well
- CCRP: 100% of SRR instead of 120% of SRR
  - CREP: Still uses 160% of SRR
- CCRP: SIP, PIP not available
  - CREP: SIP and PIP are still available
- CCRP: Able to accept offers through August 17th
  - CREP: Able to accept offers through August 17th



# Last CREP Batching Periods of Federal Fiscal Year \*



Edited after 6/28/18 Teleconference

- <sup>1</sup>July 15<sup>TH</sup>: All CP's
- <sup>2</sup>August 1<sup>ST</sup>: All CP's
- <sup>2</sup>August 20<sup>TH</sup>: All CP's

<sup>1</sup>This should be considered the soft deadline for applications that include a reenrollment into CRP as part of CREP, to ensure the greatest opportunity to meet FSA's 9/30/18 deadline for CRP-1 approval.

<sup>2</sup>BWSR strongly recommends starting the cultural resources review process and CRP planning as soon as possible, even before applications are submitted into the CREP application module.



CCRP and Impact on CREP, Batching Periods



# Questions?

# CREP Update Input/Engagement Meetings



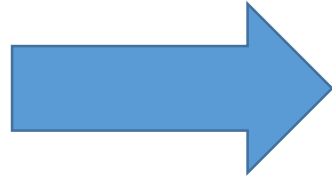
- 4 Locations within CREP Area
- Heard input from local staff on what's working/what needs adjustments

# CREP Update Input/Engagement Meetings



- Common Points:
  - Increase payment rates
  - More of the total payment should be paid up front
  - Allow more non-cropland to be included in the easement
  - More CRP practices to be eligible under CREP
  - Allow existing CRP acres to be eligible
  - Simplify the payment calculation process
  - Opposition to perpetual easements







Board Resolution # 18- 37

## MN Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (MN CREP) 2018 Adjustments

Gerald Van Amburg  
Gerald Van Amburg, Chair

Board of Water and Soil Resources

Date: 6-27-2018

Attachment: MN Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (MN CREP) 2018 Adjustments



# Rates and Payment Calculations

- Common Points:

- ✓ • Increase payment rates
- ✓ • More of the total payment should be paid up front
- Allow more non-cropland to be included in the easement
- More CRP practices to be eligible under CREP
- Allow existing CRP acres to be eligible
- ✓ • Simplify the payment calculation process
- ✓ • Opposition to perpetual easements

*Let's dive in!*





# Rates and Payment Calculations

- 2018 MN CREP Landowner Payment Rates
  - Uses new values released January 2018 by the UofM
- Sent via email morning of June 28th

<b>2018 MN CREP Landowner Payment Rates</b> <i>June 2018</i> <i>MN Land Economics website data released Jan 2018</i> <i>Metro counties located at the end of this document</i>		<b>2018 MN CREP Cropland Rate</b>	<b>2018 RIM-only CREP Crop Rate</b>	<b>2018 RIM-only CREP Noncrop Rate</b>
<b>County</b>	<b>Township/City</b>			
Clay	Glyndon city	\$ 4,244.85	\$ 3,784.17	\$ 2,193.72
Clay	Glyndon twp	\$ 4,913.35	\$ 4,380.12	\$ 2,539.20
Clay	Goose Prairie twp	\$ 4,161.02	\$ 3,709.44	\$ 2,150.40



# Rates and Payment Calculations

- 2018 MN CREP Landowner Payment Rates
- Sent via email morning of June 28th

<b>2018 MN CREP Landowner Payment Rates</b> <i>June 2018</i> <i>MN Land Economics website data released Jan 2018</i> <i>Metro counties located at the end of this document</i>		3	4 <i>NEW!</i>	5
1 County	2 Township/City	2018 MN CREP Cropland Rate	2018 RIM-only CREP Crop Rate	2018 RIM-only CREP Noncrop Rate
Clay	Glyndon city	\$ 4,244.85	\$ 3,784.17	\$ 2,193.72
Clay	Glyndon twp	\$ 4,913.35	\$ 4,380.12	\$ 2,539.20
Clay	Goose Prairie twp	\$ 4,161.02	\$ 3,709.44	\$ 2,150.40



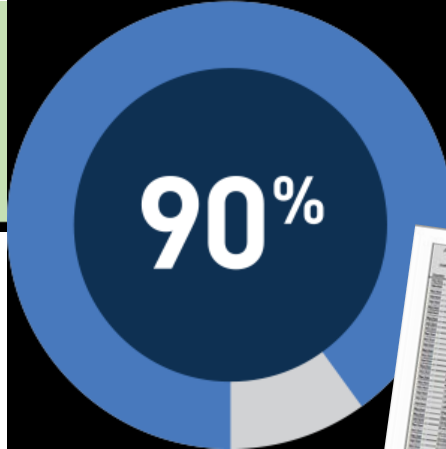
2017 RIM Crop  
Rate (90%)



A tilted table with multiple columns and rows of data. The columns are color-coded: green, yellow, and blue. The text is too small to read, but it appears to be a detailed report or spreadsheet.

WAS:

2017 RIM Crop  
Rate (90%)



A tilted table with multiple columns and rows of data, likely representing RIM (River Inflow Management) data for various locations or time periods. The table is partially obscured by the donut chart.

WAS:

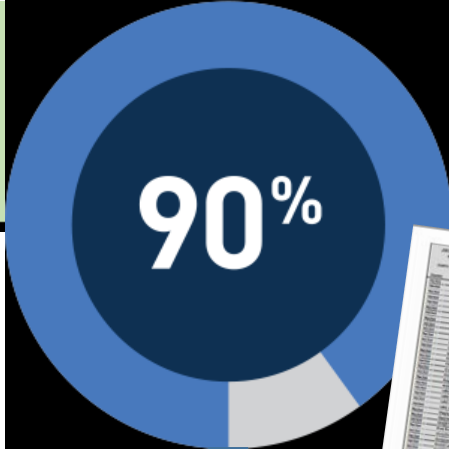








2017 RIM Crop  
Rate (90%)



90%

WAS:



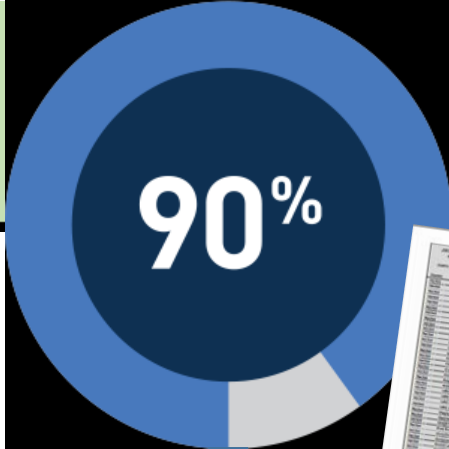
**RIM Payment Calculation**

Present Value Amount (2.3%)





2017 RIM Crop  
Rate (90%)



90%

WAS:



**RIM Payment Calculation**

Present Value Amount (2.3%)



"Here's your  
total payment  
amount"

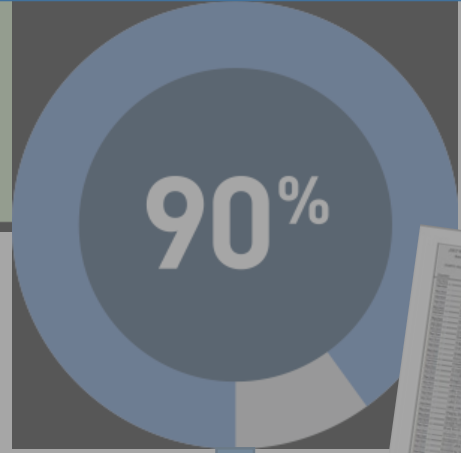




IS NOW:

WAS:

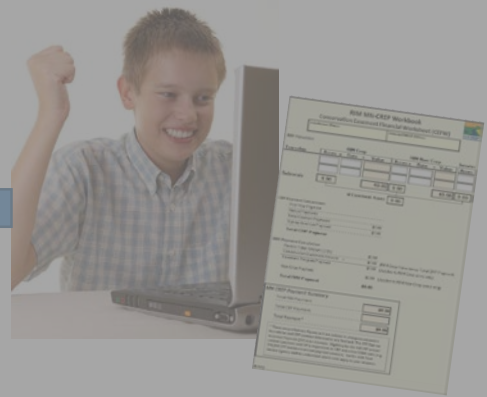
2017 RIM Crop  
Rate (90%)



90%



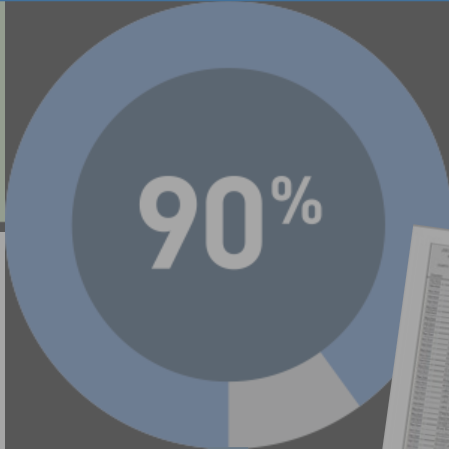
RIM Payment Calculation  
Present Value Amount (2.3%)



"Here's your  
total payment  
amount"



2017 RIM Crop  
Rate (90%)



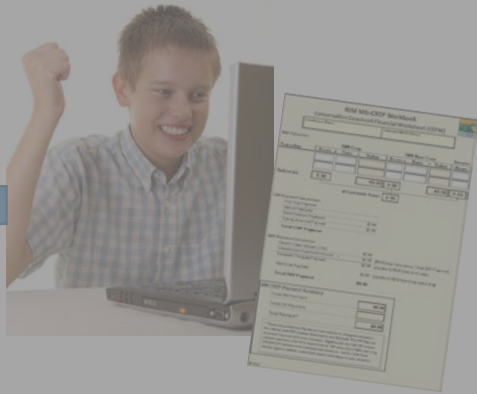
WAS:

A screenshot of a spreadsheet with multiple columns and rows of data, likely representing land parcels and their associated crop rates.



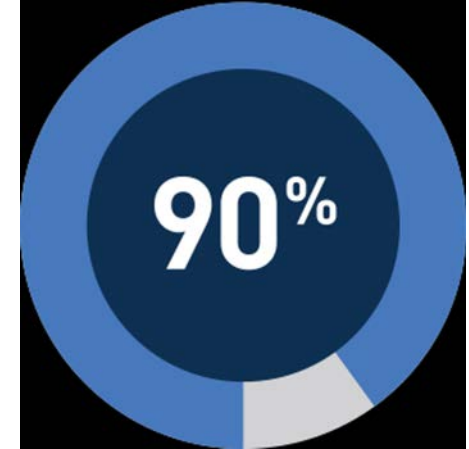
RIM Payment Calculation

Present Value Amount (2.3%)



"Here's your  
total payment  
amount"

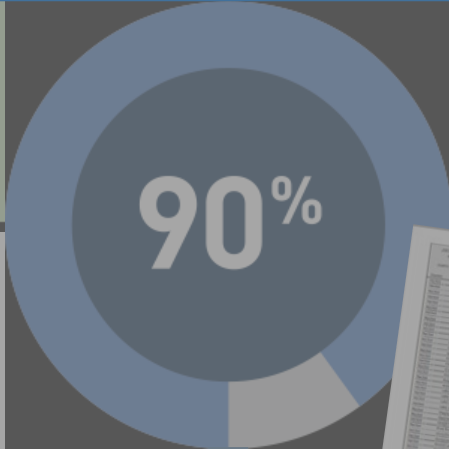
2018 MN CREP  
Cropland Rate



IS NOW:



2017 RIM Crop Rate (90%)



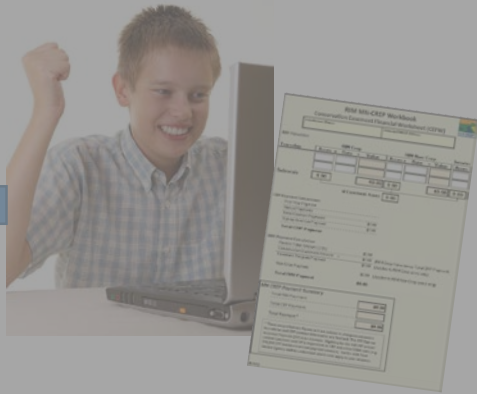
WAS:

A table with multiple columns and rows, likely representing RIM data for various land parcels. The columns include fields like 'Parcel ID', 'Acres', 'Crop Type', and 'Rate'. The rows contain numerical data for each field.



RIM Payment Calculation

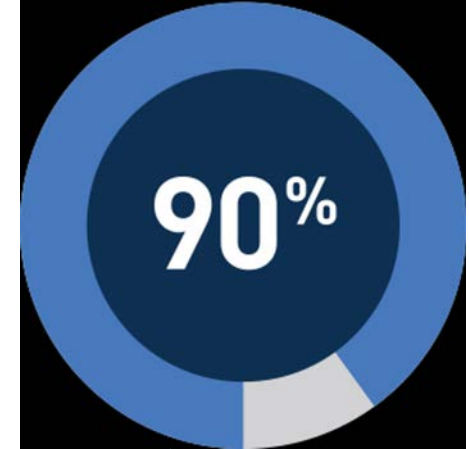
Present Value Amount (2.3%)



"Here's your total payment amount"



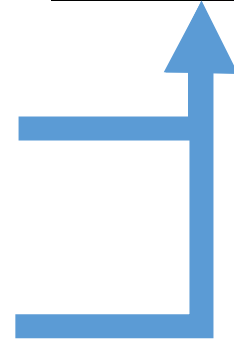
2018 MN CREP Cropland Rate



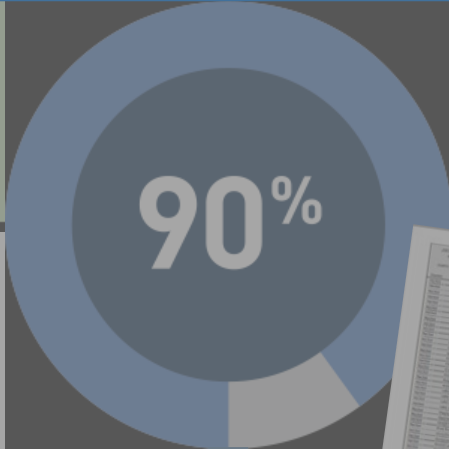
IS NOW:

Present Value (+14%)

RIM Incentive (+15%)



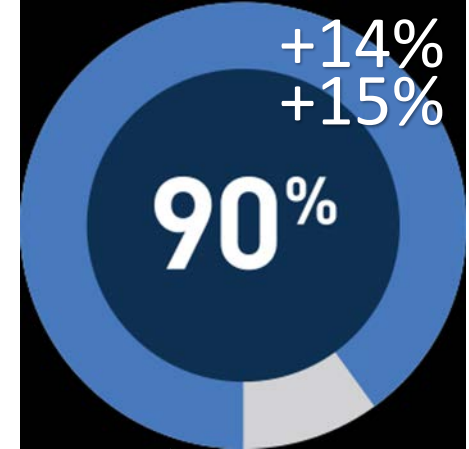
2017 RIM Crop Rate (90%)



A small image of a spreadsheet with multiple columns and rows of data, likely representing crop rate calculations.

WAS:

2018 MN CREP Cropland Rate



IS NOW:

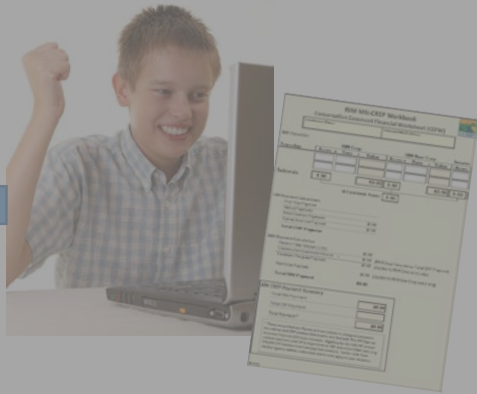
Present Value (+14%)

RIM Incentive (+15%)



RIM Payment Calculation

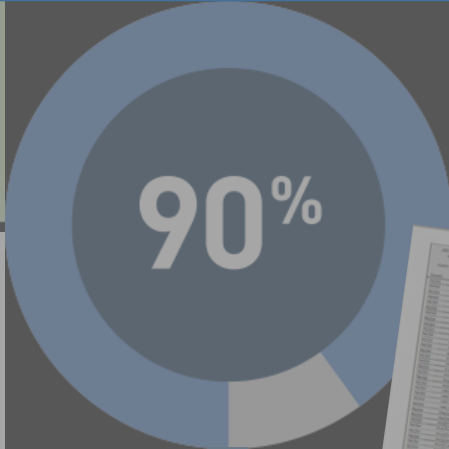
Present Value Amount (2.3%)



"Here's your total payment amount"



2017 RIM Crop Rate (90%)



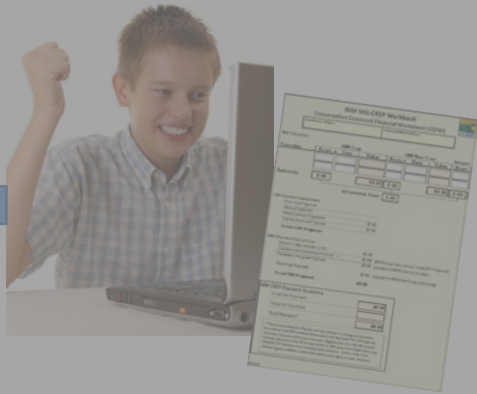
Property ID	Acres	Rate	Value
101	10	90%	900
102	10	90%	900
103	10	90%	900
104	10	90%	900
105	10	90%	900
106	10	90%	900
107	10	90%	900
108	10	90%	900
109	10	90%	900
110	10	90%	900
111	10	90%	900
112	10	90%	900
113	10	90%	900
114	10	90%	900
115	10	90%	900
116	10	90%	900
117	10	90%	900
118	10	90%	900
119	10	90%	900
120	10	90%	900
121	10	90%	900
122	10	90%	900
123	10	90%	900
124	10	90%	900
125	10	90%	900
126	10	90%	900
127	10	90%	900
128	10	90%	900
129	10	90%	900
130	10	90%	900
131	10	90%	900
132	10	90%	900
133	10	90%	900
134	10	90%	900
135	10	90%	900
136	10	90%	900
137	10	90%	900
138	10	90%	900
139	10	90%	900
140	10	90%	900
141	10	90%	900
142	10	90%	900
143	10	90%	900
144	10	90%	900
145	10	90%	900
146	10	90%	900
147	10	90%	900
148	10	90%	900
149	10	90%	900
150	10	90%	900

WAS:



RIM Payment Calculation

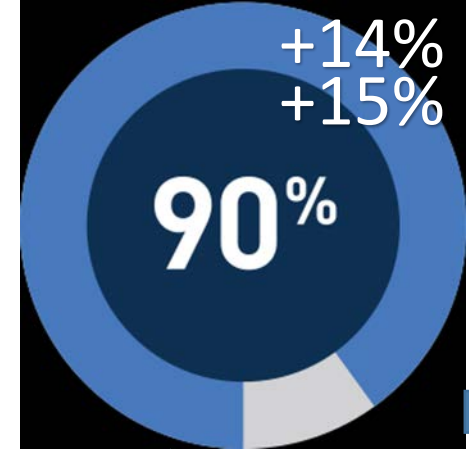
Present Value Amount (2.3%)



"Here's your total payment amount"



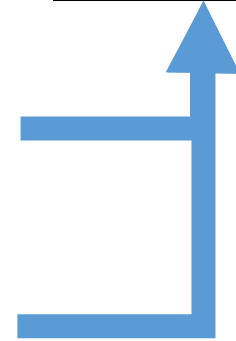
2018 MN CREP Cropland Rate



IS NOW:

Present Value (+14%)

RIM Incentive (+15%)



"Here's your total payment amount"





# Rates and Payment Calculations

- Example: \$1000/acre before is now \$1,290/acre with the adjustment.
- The MNCREP Cropland Rate includes:
  - 90% of AATV (example: \$1000)
  - Present Value estimation folded in to rate from the start (+14%, example: \$140)
  - RIM Incentive folded in to rate from the start (+15%, example: \$150)

**Landowner Payment Rates**  
June 2018  
Website data released Jan 2018  
Updated at the end of this document

Township/City	2018 MN CREP Cropland Rate
Riceland twp	\$ 7,115.77

“Here’s the amount you’re going to get per acre.”



“Now let’s see the amount paid annually vs. lump sum”



# Rates and Payment Calculations



# Questions?



# Rates and Payment Calculations

- What's changed with the Workbook?
  - Slight edits to the checklist to clarify necessary maps
  - CEFW revisions

**RIM MN-CREP Workbook**  
Conservation Easement Financial Worksheet (CEFW)

Landowner Name: \_\_\_\_\_ County/SMCR Office: \_\_\_\_\_

RIM Valuation      Township 1      Township 2 (if applicable)

	Township 1			Township 2 (if applicable)		
	Acres	Rate	Value	Acres	Rate	Value
MNCREP Cropland						
RIM-Only Crop						
RIM-Only Non-C						
Donated						
<b>Total Easement</b>	<b>0.00</b>					

**CRP Payment Calculation**

First Year Payment	
Annual Payments	\$0.00
Total Contract Payments	\$0.00
Sign-up Incentive Payment	\$0.00
<b>Total CRP Payment</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

**RIM Payment Calculation**

MNCREP Cropland Payment	\$0.00	(MNCREP Cropland Value minus Total CRP Payment)
RIM-Only Crop Payment	\$0.00	
RIM-Only Non-Crop Payment	\$0.00	
Soil Productivity Incentive Payment	\$0.00	(generally applies if CRP acres enrolled have exceptionally high soil rental rates)
<b>Total RIM Payment</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	

**MN CREP Payment Summary**

Total RIM Payment	<b>\$0.00</b>
Total CRP Payment	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Total MNCREP Payment **</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

\*\* These are preliminary figures and are subject to change as easement boundaries and CRP contract information are finalized. The CRP Sign-up Incentive Payment (SIP) is an estimate. Eligibility for the full CRP annual

# WAS:



# IS NOW:

**RIM MN-CREP Workbook**  
**Conservation Easement Financial Worksheet (CEFW)**

Landowner Name:

County/SWCD Office:

*RIM Valuation*

Township	RIM Crop			RIM Non-Crop			Donated
	Acres	x Rate	= Value	Acres	x Rate	= Value	Acres
<b>Subtotals</b>	0.00		\$0.00	0.00		\$0.00	0.00
<b>Total Easement Acres</b>				0.00			

**RIM MN-CREP Workbook**  
**Conservation Easement Financial Worksheet (CEFW)**

Landowner Name:

County/SWCD Office:

*RIM Valuation*

	Township 1			Township 2 (if applicable)		
	Acres	x Rate	= Value	Acres	x Rate	= Value
MNCREP Cropland						
RIM-Only Crop						
RIM-Only Non-Crop						
Donated						
<b>Total Easement Acres</b>	0.00					



# WAS:

# IS NOW:

**RIM MN-CREP Workbook**  
**Conservation Easement Financial Worksheet (CEFW)**

Landowner Name: \_\_\_\_\_ County/SWCD Office: \_\_\_\_\_

**RIM Valuation**

Township	RIM Crop			RIM Non-Crop			Donated
	Acres	x Rate	= Value	Acres	x Rate	= Value	
<b>Subtotals</b>	0.00		\$0.00	0.00		\$0.00	0.00
<b>Total Easement Acres</b>							0.00

**RIM MN-CREP Workbook**  
**Conservation Easement Financial Worksheet (CEFW)**

Landowner Name: \_\_\_\_\_ County/SWCD Office: \_\_\_\_\_

**RIM Valuation**

	Township 1			Township 2 (if applicable)		
	Acres	x Rate	= Value	Acres	x Rate	= Value
MNCREP Cropland						
RIM-Only Crop						
RIM-Only Non-Crop						
Donated						
<b>Total Easement Acres</b>	0.00					

New Valuation Type



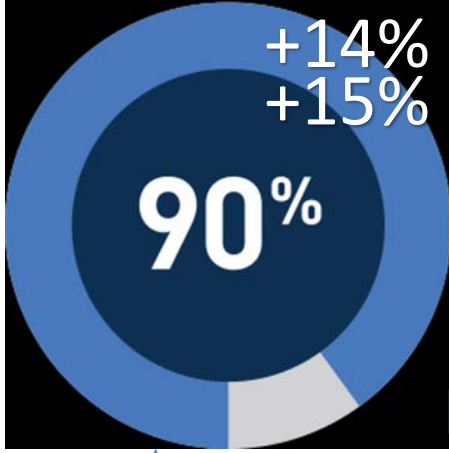
# Rates and Payment Calculations

- We've shared what's changing with the MNCREP Cropland Rate.
- What about the RIM-Only Non-Crop rate?
  - This is calculated the same way, and is 60% of the AATV
- What about this new rate, the RIM-Only Crop rate?



2018 MN CREP  
Cropland Rate

IS NOW:



Present Value  
(+14%)

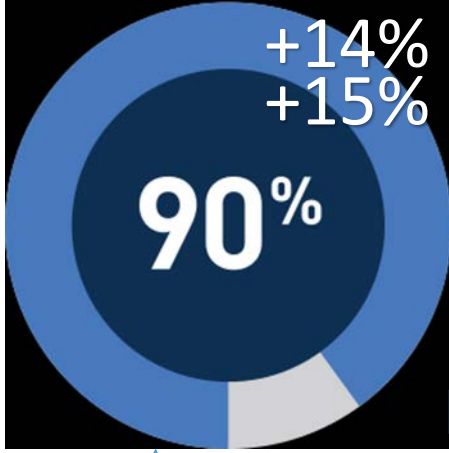
RIM Incentive  
(+15%)





2018 RIM-only  
CREP Crop Rate

IS NOW:



Present Value  
(+14%)

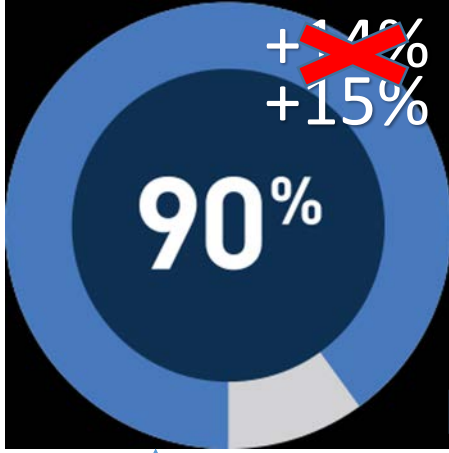
RIM Incentive  
(+15%)





2018 RIM-only  
CREP Crop Rate

IS NOW:



~~Pres. Incentive  
(+14%)~~

RIM Incentive  
(+15%)

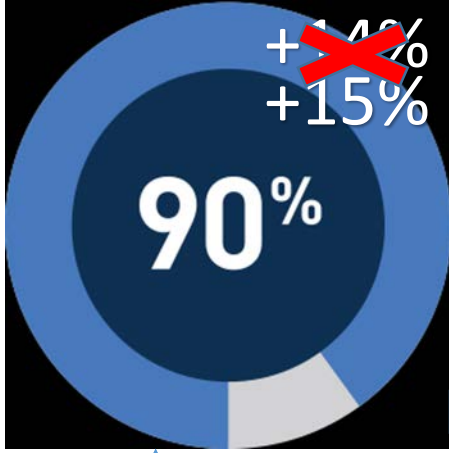






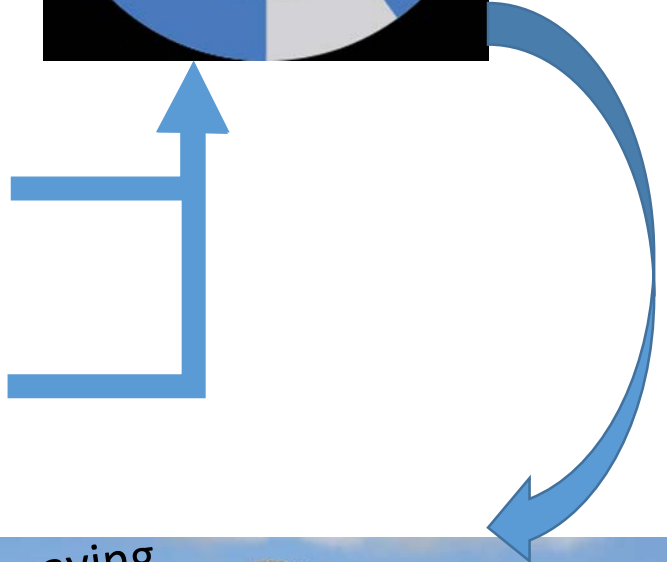
2018 RIM-only  
CREP Crop Rate

IS NOW:



~~Pres. Incentive  
(+14%)~~

RIM Incentive  
(+15%)



"I could see a guy saying  
that's a good deal."

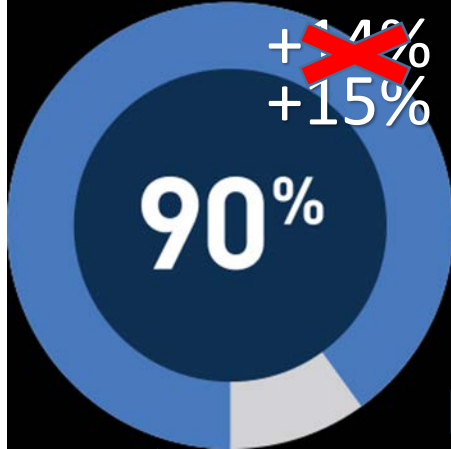


What's this rate used for?



2018 RIM-only  
CREP Crop Rate

IS NOW:



~~Pres. Incentive  
(+14%)~~

RIM Incentive  
(+15%)

"I could see a guy saying  
that's a good deal."



What's this rate used for?

We'll get into specifics later, but there are two scenarios:

1. Enrolling existing CRP (non-reenrolls)
2. Expanding from 4:1 up to 8:1 on CP-23a's



## Lands with Crop History:

**MNCREP Cropland:** Easement acres eligible for this higher payment rate must meet both CRP and RIM eligibility and crop history requirements and be enrolled in MN CREP.

**RIM-Only Crop:** Easement acres eligible for this payment rate must meet RIM eligibility and crop history requirements, but do not currently meet CRP requirements for enrollment as MNCREP Cropland acres. Easement acres eligible for this payment rate are limited.

## Lands without Crop History:

**RIM-ONLY NON-CROP:** Easement acres eligible for this payment rate must meet RIM eligibility, but do not meet crop history requirements. Easement acres eligible for this lower payment rate are limited.

# Rates and Payment Calculations



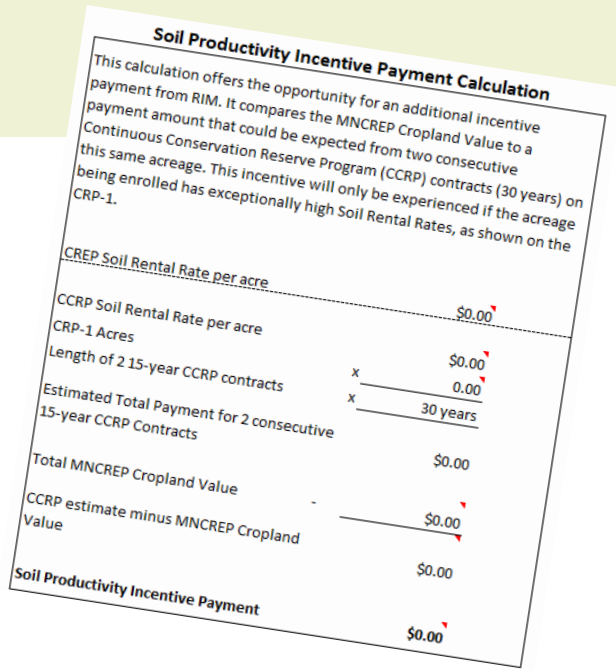
# Questions?

# RIM Payment Calculation

MNCREP Cropland Payment		\$0.00	(MNCREP Cropland Value minus Total CRP Payment)
RIM-Only Crop Payment	+	\$0.00	
RIM-Only Non-Crop Payment	+	\$0.00	
Soil Productivity Incentive Payment	+	\$0.00	(generally applies if CRP acres enrolled have exceptionally high soil rental rates)
<b>Total RIM Payment</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>	



- A new additional incentive payment
- Basically, calculates what the landowner would have received if they signed up for two consecutive CCRP contracts
  - Application workbook back-calculates the SRR
  - Uses current CCRP process (100% of SRR's, no SIP)
- We'll share additional detail on this at a later time (pre-recorded webinar, or a follow-up webinar the week of July 9th)





# Current Applications

- BWSR Staff ran the numbers for current applications (184 Pending and Funded apps)
- Majority of applications have a payment increase from RIM using the new rates and workbook
  - 10 applications were exceptions to this rule- these still get their previous rate amount and use the Version 4 workbook
- BWSR will:
  - 1. Upload these workbooks to the App module
  - 2. Notify SWCD via email of these new amounts
  - 3. Mail the Landowner a letter to inform them of new amount, and that no action is needed on their end to accept (cc'ing the SWCD)
    - Four SWCDs sending their own letter
- Apps will pick up where they left off (no new Agreement will be sent)

# Rates and Payment Calculations



# Questions?

# Updated Program Guidance and Roundouts



## **MN CREP RIM General Program Guidance Document 6/27/18**



Included in this guidance document for MN CREP is important information relating to application eligibility, submittal requirements, enrollment of non-CRP eligible areas, conservation plans, practices, practice payments, and state of MN requirements for vegetation establishment on Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve conservation easements.

The term offer and application should be considered similar terms. Offer is typically used with the CRP Program, while application is used frequently with the RIM Program.



# Updated Program Guidance and Roundouts



- Highlights:

- Ensure app checklist is reviewed and make sure application is complete
  - Impacts if we can verify scoring
- Scoring & Ranking of offers with multiple CP's: Scored based on CP with the largest acreage
  - Other CP's come along for the ride
- Easement payment
  - Remember those 3 types (MNCREP Cropland, RIM-Only Crop, and RIM-Only Non-Crop)?
  - **We'll go over the situations where the RIM-Only ones will apply.**

# Updated Program Guidance and Roundouts



- Common Points:

- ✓ • Increase payment rates
- ✓ • More of the total payment should be paid up front
- ✓ • Allow more non-cropland to be included in the easement
- ? • More CRP practices to be eligible under CREP
- ✓ • Allow existing CRP acres to be eligible
- ✓ • Simplify the payment calculation process
- ✓ • Opposition to perpetual easements

# Updated Program Guidance and Roundouts



## RIM-Only Crop: \*

- **Existing CRP (limited to no more than 50% of MNCREP Cropland acres):** Areas currently enrolled in a CRP contract that meet the following criteria may be enrolled at the RIM-Only Crop rate: Existing CRP contract must have been approved prior to June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018, acres must abut or adjoin some portion of the MN CREP application acres, and acres must have originally been enrolled into CRP at a cropland rate. *If acres were originally enrolled into CRP at a non-cropland rate (i.e., pastureland), these may be included as RIM-Only Non-Crop acres utilizing this same maximum 50% ratio (see RIM-Only Non-Crop Other Exception Criteria below).*





Edited after 6/28/18 Teleconference to match 6/28/18 Program Guidance



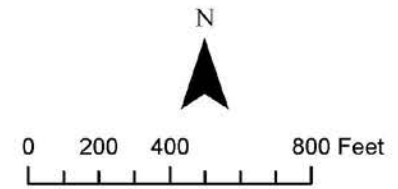
**6 - A - Eligibility -  
Allow RIM only  
for existing CRP**



Legend

-  Proposed RIM Easement
-  Existing CRP Contract

Proposed RIM Easement: 100 Acres  
Existing CRP Contract: 30 Acres



# Updated Program Guidance and Roundouts



## RIM-Only Crop:

- **Acres that exceed the CP-23a 4:1 upland to wetland ratio:** Areas that will add additional upland acres beyond the 4:1 upland to wetland acres allowed under CRP. The maximum upland acreage shall not exceed an 8:1 upland to wetland ratio. *If upland acres do not meet RIM crop history requirements, these may be included as RIM-Only Non-Crop acres utilizing this same maximum 8:1 ratio (see RIM-Only Non-Crop Other Exception Criteria below).*

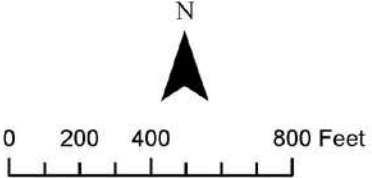


**6 - B - Eligibility -  
Current CP23A Upland  
to Wetland Ratio**

Legend

-  Upland Area
-  Wetland Basins

Upland Area: 100 Acres  
Wetland Basins: 25 Acres  
Total RIM Easement: 125  
Upland to Wetland Ratio: 1 : 4

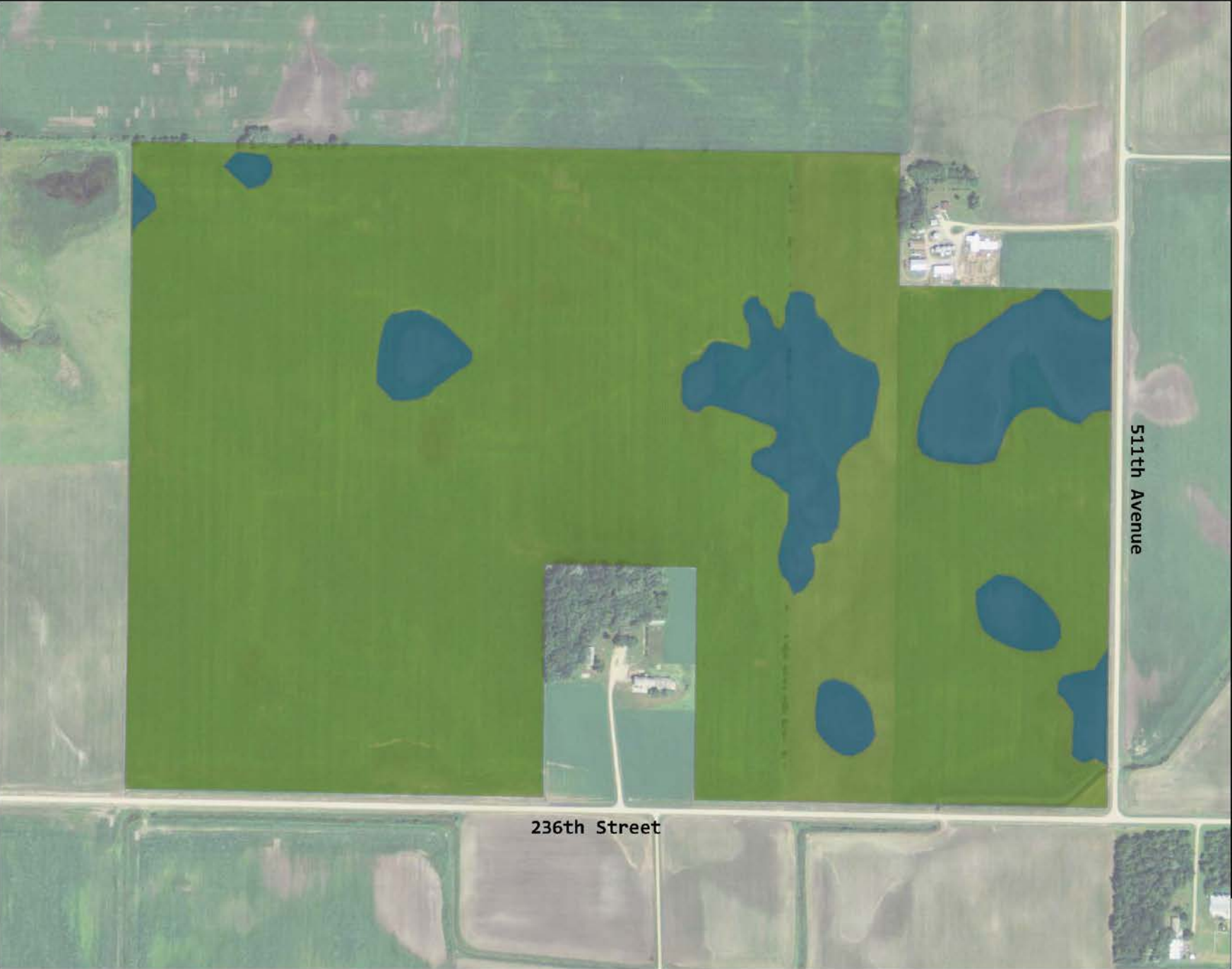
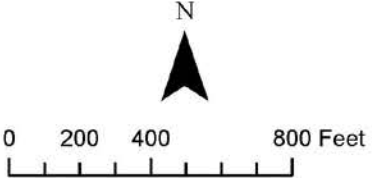


# 6 - B - Eligibility - CP23A Upland to Wetland Ratio Change

## Legend

-  Upland Area
-  Wetland Basins

Upland Area: 185 Acres  
Wetland Basins: 25 Acres  
Total RIM Easement: 210 Acres  
Upland to Wetland Ratio: 1 : 7.4



Updated Program Guidance and Roundouts



# Questions?



# Updated Program Guidance and Roundouts



- RIM-Only Non-Crop:
  - Standard Criteria (NTE 20% of MNCREP Cropland acres)
    - Landlocked areas (filling in the donut)
    - Areas with VH, H DWSMA Vulnerability
    - MN Biological Survey areas of biodiversity significance
    - Areas where enrollment would provide manageable boundaries

*DOCUMENTATION*

**Maps! Maps! Maps!**

# Updated Program Guidance and Roundouts



- RIM-Only Non-Crop:

- Other Exception Criteria

- Areas needed for wetland restoration (this used to be part of the 5% noncrop allowance): limited to areas needed for successful restoration of wetlands on the MNCREP Cropland area
    - Existing CRP: limited to 50% of MNCREP Cropland acres
      - Re-stated here, as some CRP was enrolled at a noncropland rate (was pastureland prior to enrollment)
    - Acres that exceed the CP-23a 4:1 upland to wetland ratio
      - Re-stated here, as some of these lands may be noncropland areas.
    - Easement Section Manager can waive criteria in extremely rare circumstances

# Updated Program Guidance and Roundouts



- Ability to Mix & Match multiple criteria:
  - Landowner can enroll existing CRP (RIM-Only Crop), enroll land under Standard Criteria (RIM-Only Non-Crop), and enroll wetland areas needed for restoration (RIM-Only Non-Crop)
- Allows you to work with multiple types of situations
- Documentation is key for BWSR to verify
  - Maps! Maps! Maps!





# Updated Program Guidance and Roundouts

- RIM Reserve Policy on USFWS Lands (Appendix 2)

Small Wetland Acquisition Program (SWAP) wetland easements, generally referred to as a no fill, drain or burn easements:

“When RIM is partnering with another governmental unit or conservation organization and as a result is providing a discounted or reduced easement payment (i.e. CREP), **these USFWS easement lands are eligible for full easement payment from RIM in accordance with the partnership criteria.**”

SWAP Easements can receive payment, as long as also eligible for the CRP portion of CREP.

Updated Program Guidance and Roundouts



# Questions?



# Determining Drained and Altered Wetland Areas

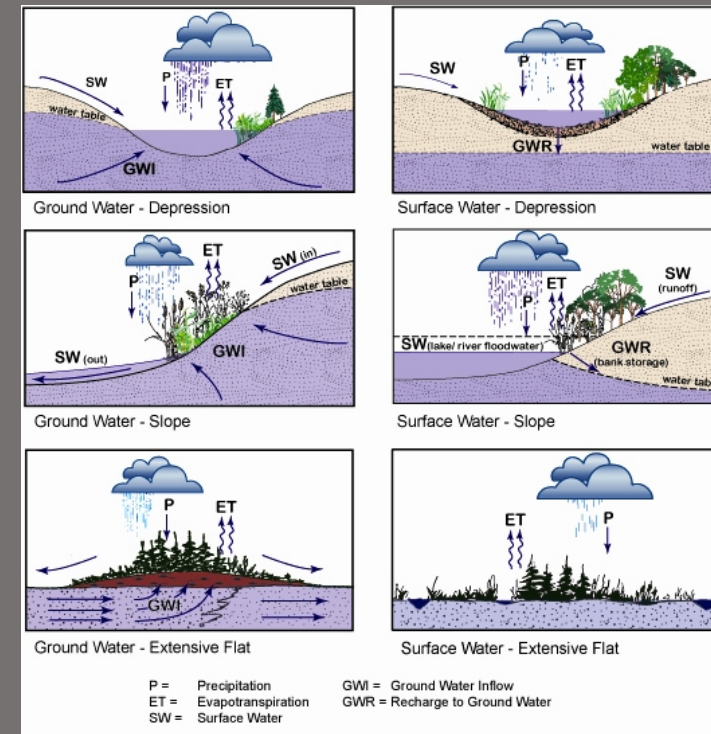
- Scoring vs. Conservation Planning

# Scoring



## Definitions

- Depressional Wetlands
- Non-Depressional Wetlands
- Farmed Only Wetlands
- Drained Wetlands
- Basin
- Size of Largest Basin





# Example

Assume 100% Eligible for MNCREP

Scored as Depressional Landscape Setting

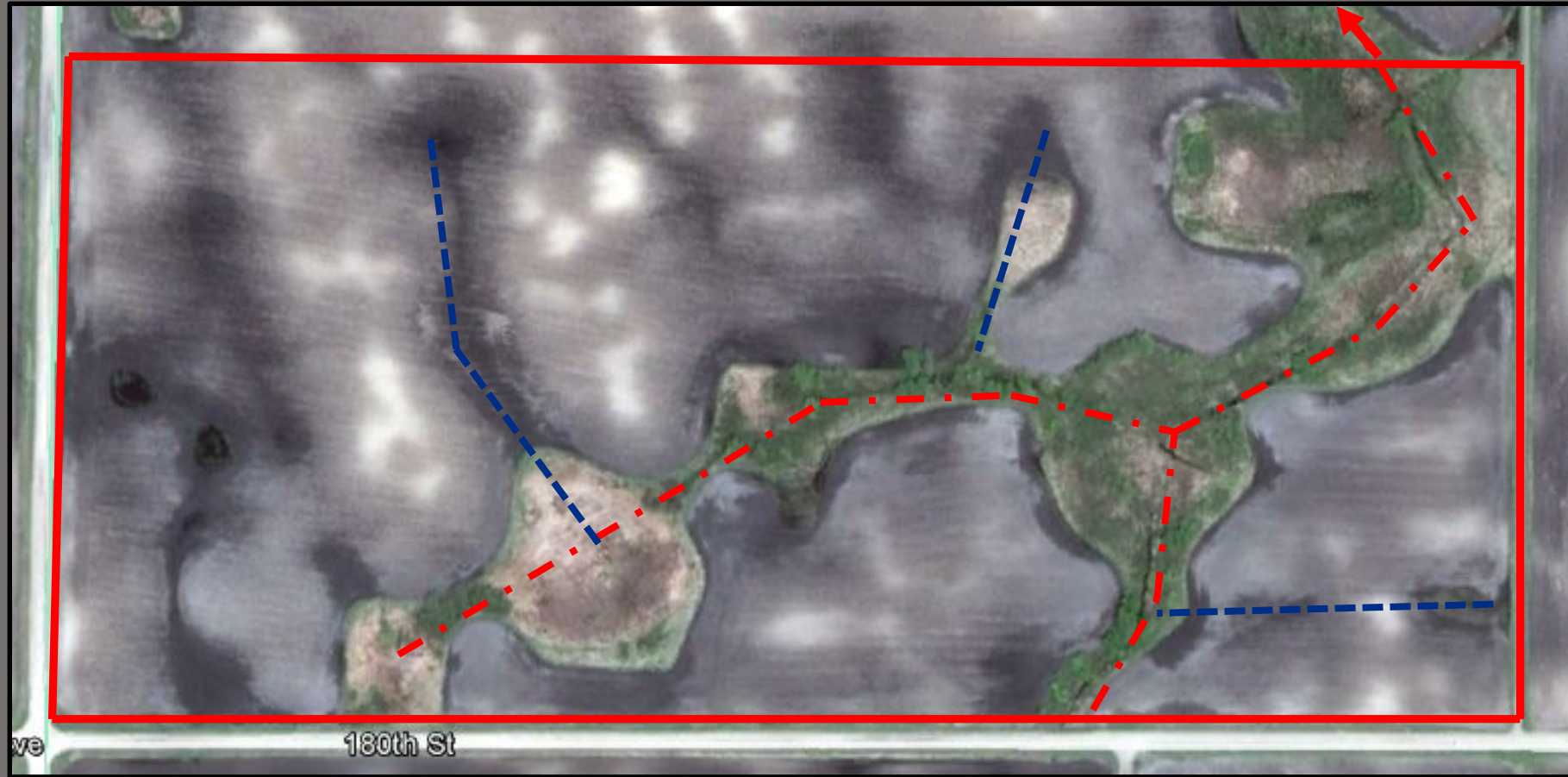




# Scoring



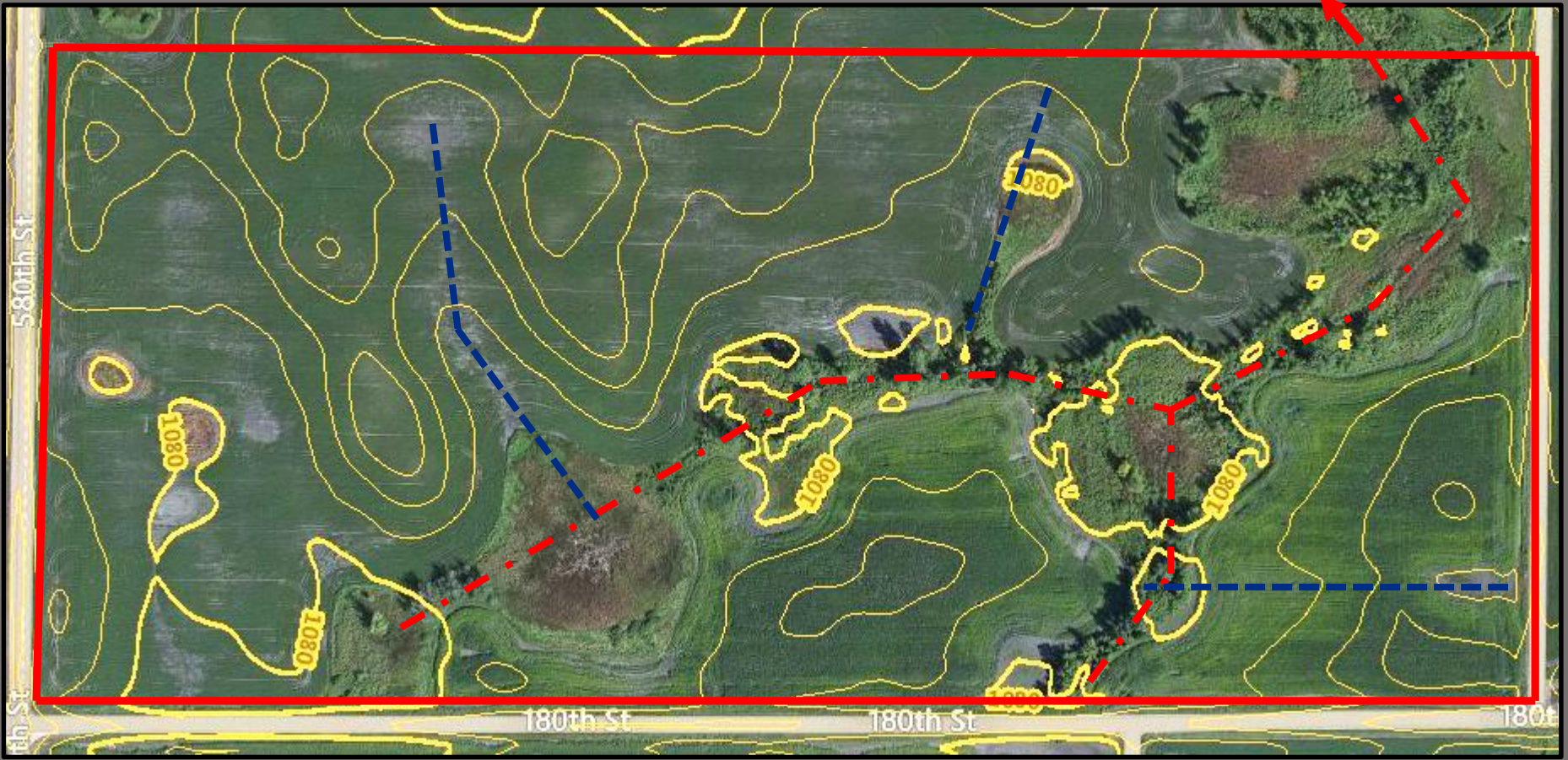
- - - Drainage Ditch
- - - Drainage Tile



# Scoring





- Drainage Ditch
- Drainage Tile





# Scoring

-  **Drained, Restorable Wetland Basin**
-  **Farmed Only - Basin**

-  **Ditch Plug**
-  **Tile Block**

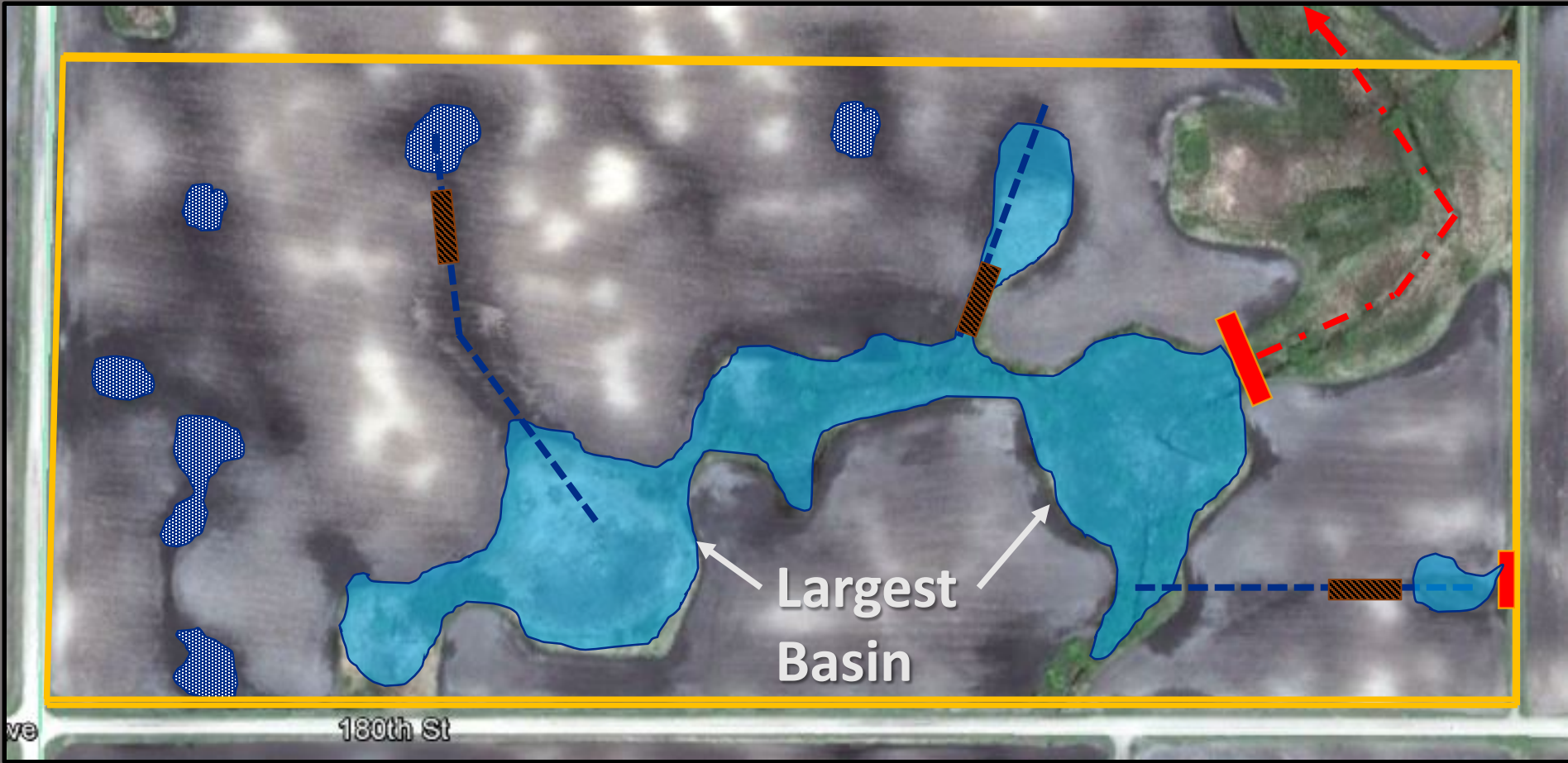




# Scoring

-  Drained, Restorable Wetland Basin (Pool)
-  Farmed Only - Basin

-  Ditch Plug
-  Tile Block



# Conservation Planning

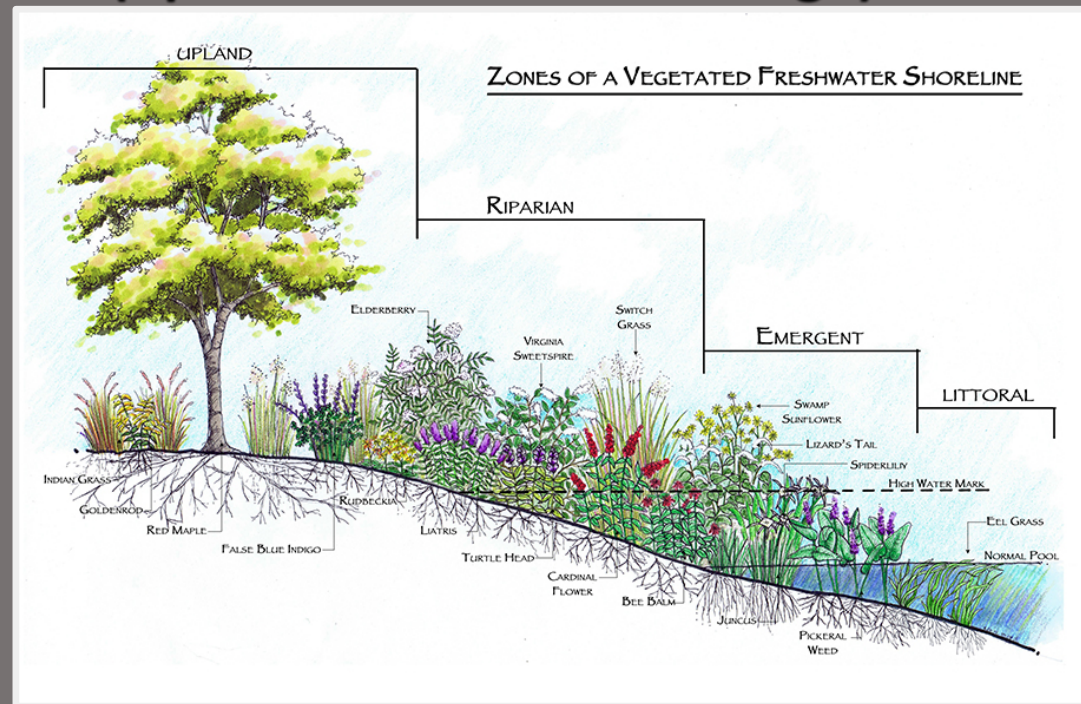


Wetland basin areas used for scoring purposes not equal to restored wetland areas used for conservation plans



Wet Meadow Wetland  
(saturated soils)

## Shallow/Deep Marsh Wetland (open water with wet fringe)



# Conservation Planning



- For program purposes, drained wetlands not physically restored are still considered “minimally restored” upon establishment of vegetation
- Want to report all restored wetland acres via appropriate wetland practice within respective program conservation plans
  - **Accomplishment reporting**
  - **Practice funding**

# Conservation Planning






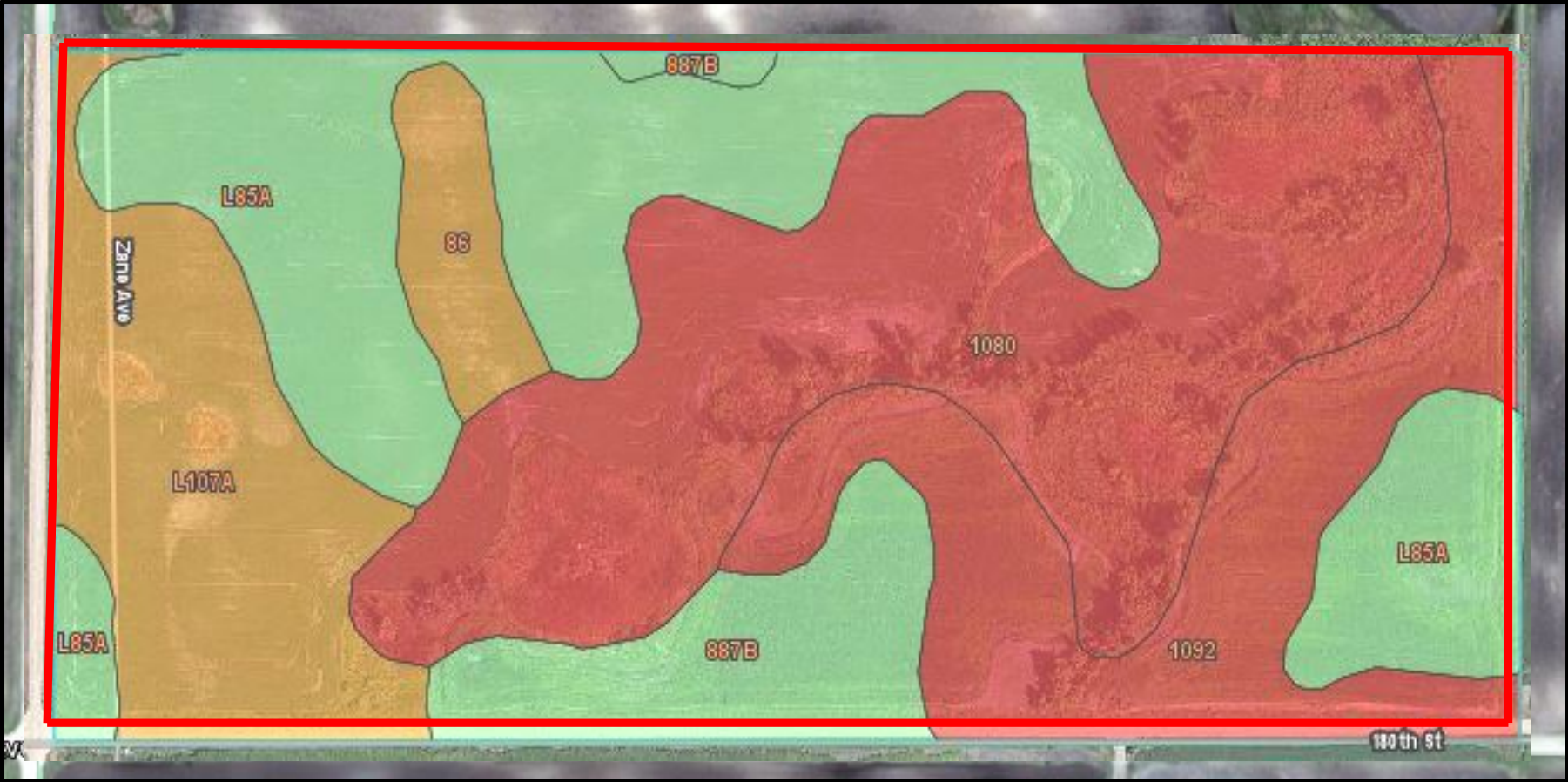
## Determining Drained and Altered Wetland Areas

MN CREP RIM General Program Guidance  
Document - Appendix 1

# Conservation Planning



-  Predominantly Hydric
-  Partially Hydric
-  Predominantly Non-Hydric










# Conservation Planning






-  Predominantly Hydric
-  Partially Hydric
-  Predominantly Non-Hydric

-  Restorable Wetland Basin (Pool)

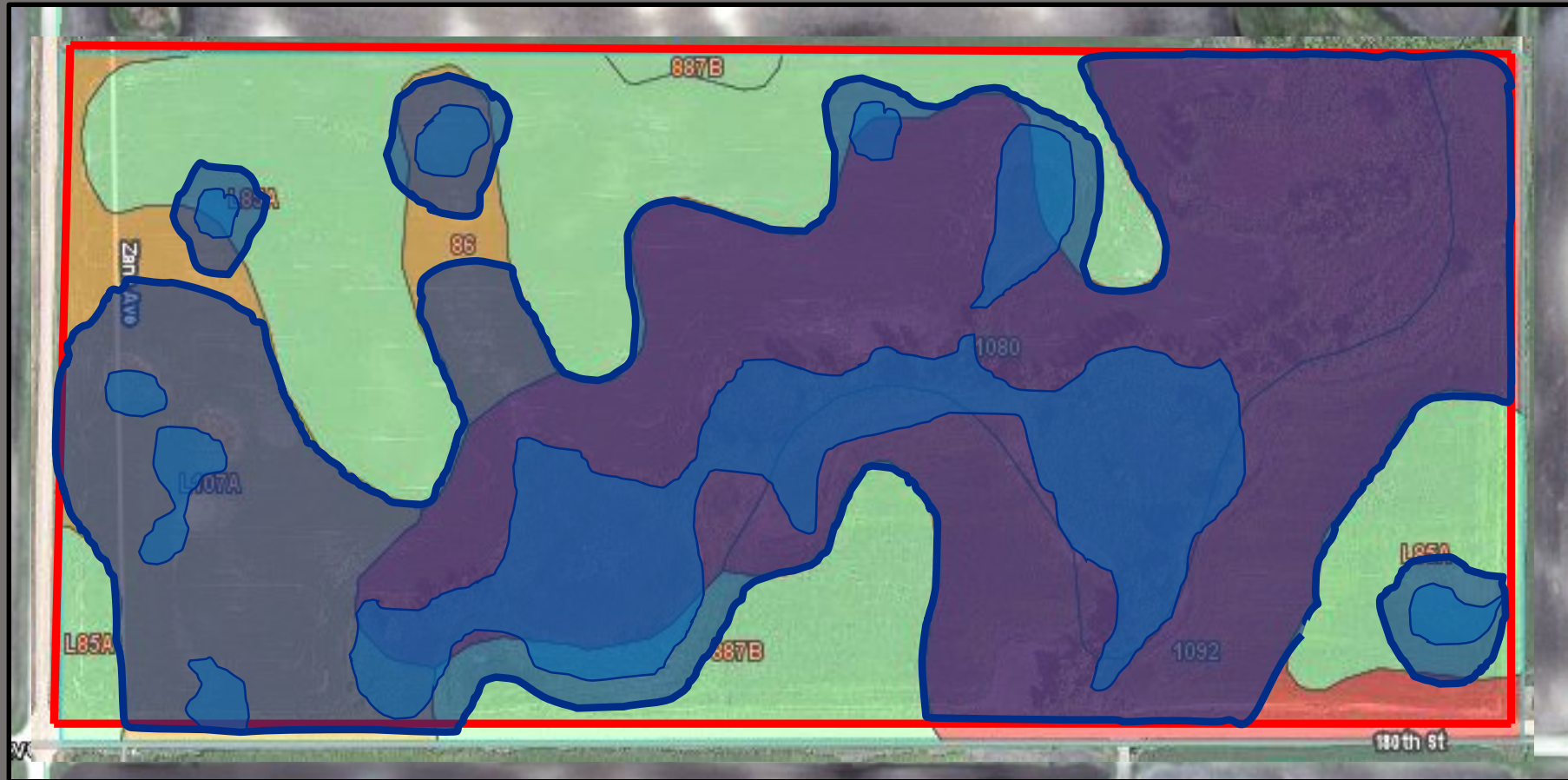


# Conservation Planning



-  Predominantly Hydric
-  Partially Hydric
-  Predominantly Non-Hydric

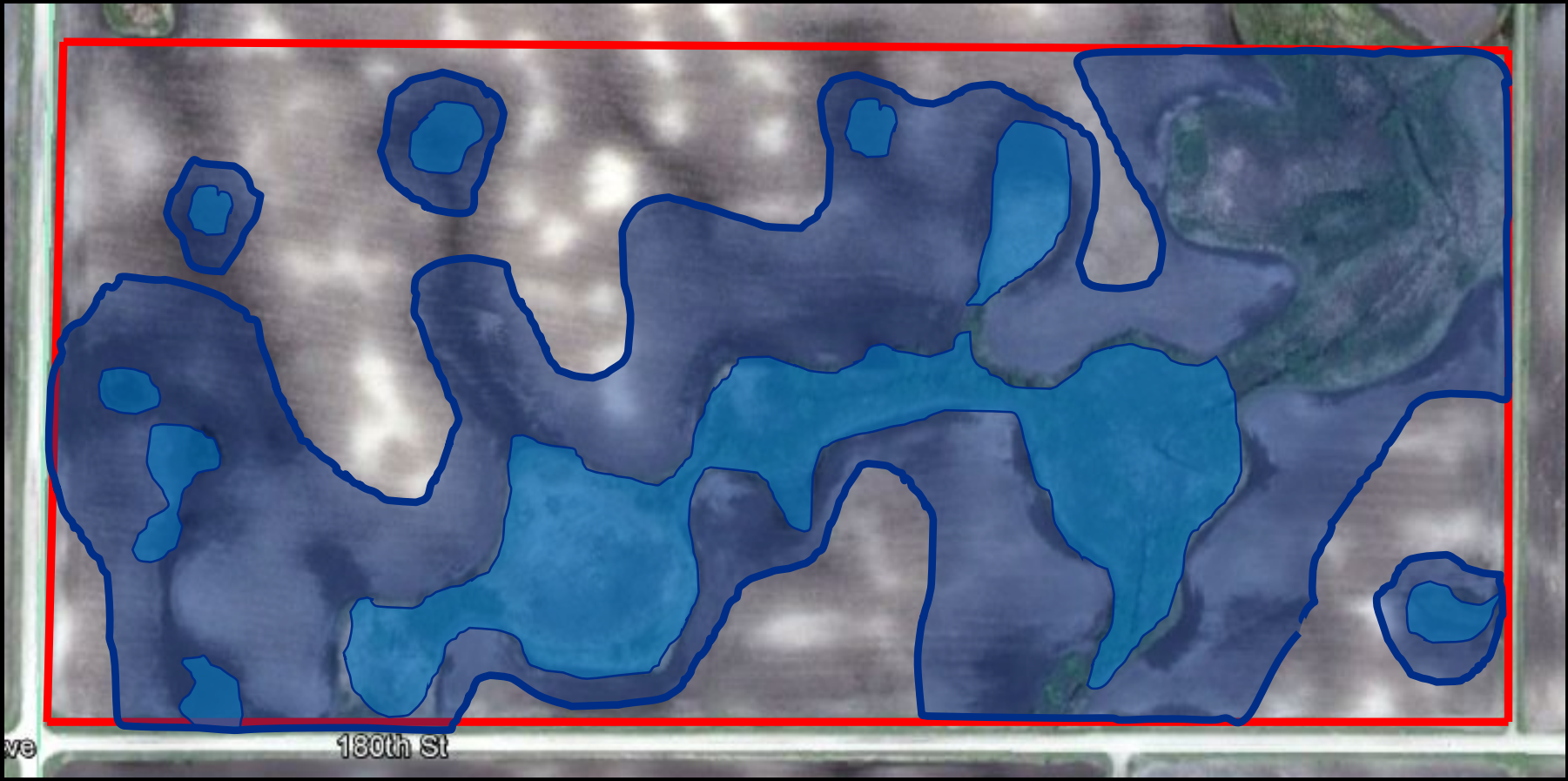
-  Restorable Wetland Basin (Pool)
-  Restorable Wetland Area



# Conservation Planning



-  Restorable Wetland Basin (Pool)
-  Restorable Wetland Area



# Determining Drained and Altered Wetland Areas



# Questions?



# Questions & Answers