

Conservation Security Program

Program Overview

**The Self-Assessment Workbook
(Producer and Land Eligibility)**

The Application Process



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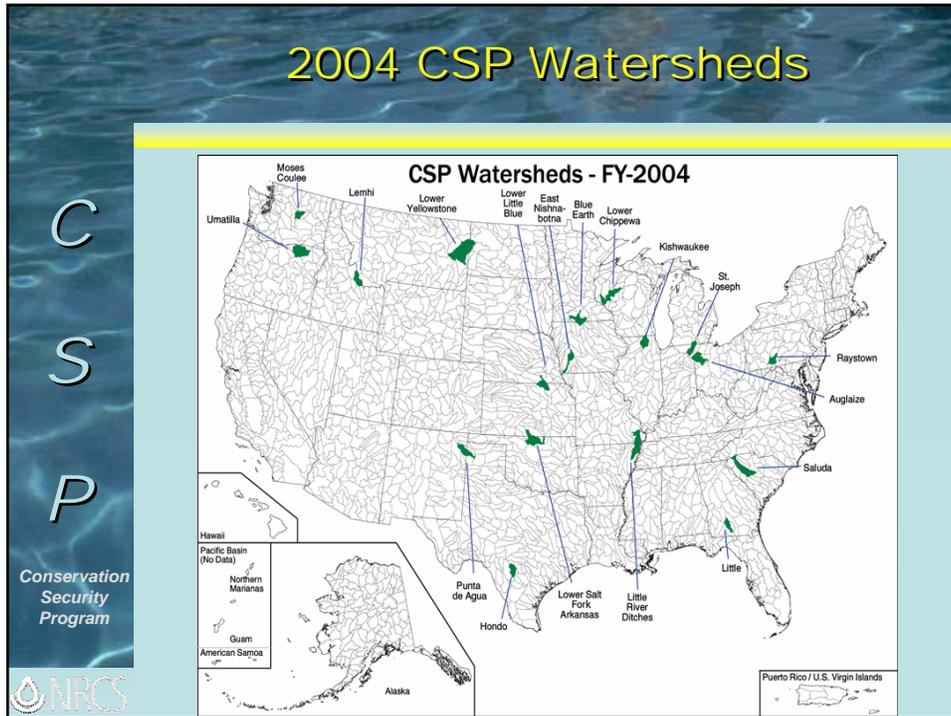
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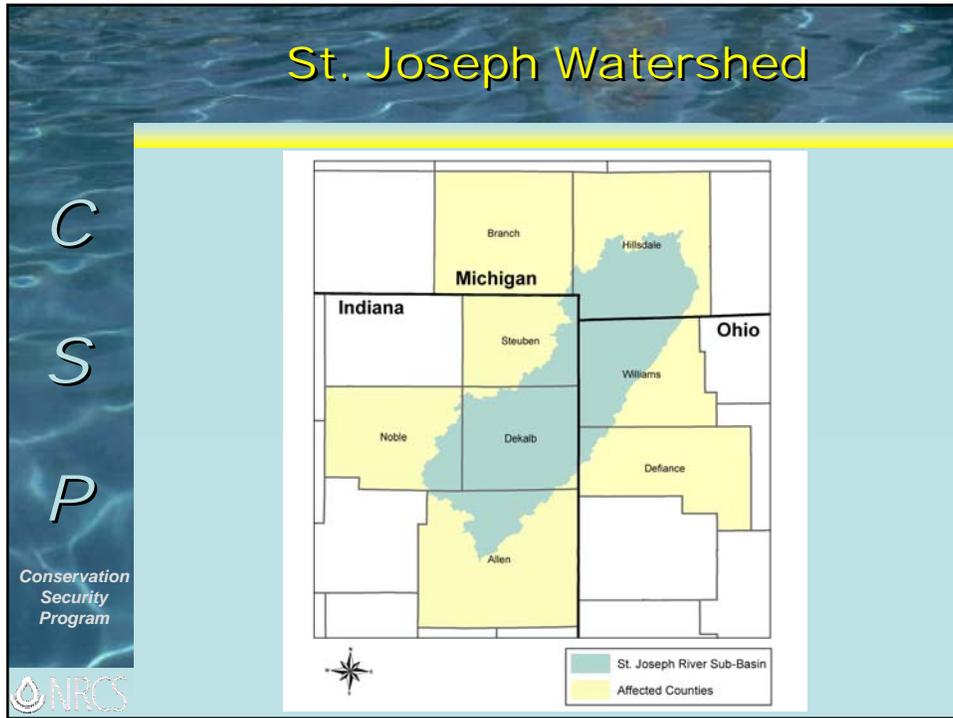
- **Voluntary Program**
- **Authorized by 2002 Farm Bill**
- **Rewards producers that are already applying conservation practices**
- **Available in Selected Watersheds on a rotational basis**

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- ## Watershed Selection Criteria
- High-priority resource issues to be addressed
 - History of good land stewardship
 - Availability of necessary technical tools
 - Wide variety of land uses and input intensities
- CSP**
- Conservation Security Program
- NRCS



CSP Rewards Stewardship

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CSP Has 3 Tier Structure

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	Resources Treated	Scope
Tier 1	Water & soil quality	Part of the operation
Tier 2	Water & soil quality	Entire operation
<i>Plus: Agree to address one other resource concern</i>		
Tier 3	All resources	Entire operation
<i>Plus: Agree to additional activities</i>		

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CSP Eligibility Requirements

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- Majority of operation within priority watershed
- In compliance with HEL/wetland provisions
- Active interest in operation
- Control of land for life of contract
- Privately owned or tribal lands
- Applicant shares risk and is entitled to share of crops/livestock

NRCS

CSP Eligibility Requirements

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Non-eligible lands include:

- Land in Conservation Reserve, Wetlands Reserve, or Grasslands Reserve Program (These lands can be used to document existing practices but are not eligible for CSP payment.)
- Recently converted cropland
- Forestland

NRCS

CSP Application Process – Producer Actions

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- **Completes self-assessment workbook, determines eligibility, and documents stewardship to date**
- **Contacts NRCS District Conservationist to schedule interview during sign-up between July 6-30.**
- **Brings completed workbook and supporting documentation to interview**

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CSP Application Process – NRCS Actions

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- **Schedules interview appointment with producer**
- **Reviews self-assessment workbook and supporting documentation**
- **Determines enrollment category**
- **Selects categories to be funded**
(NRCS National Headquarters)

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The Self Assessment Process

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CSP Self Assessment Process

- Producers fill out self-assessment workbook.
- Workbook is in question and answer format.
- Workbook takes three progressive steps to complete.

NRCS

Self Assessment Workbook

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Available in Three Formats:

- **Paper workbook**
- **Self-starting CD-ROM workbook**
- **Interactive Internet workbook on-line at <http://csp.sc.egov.usda.gov/>**

Topics of the 3 Step Self Assessment Process

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Step 1
Determine initial eligibility for producer/landowner and land.

Step 2
Assess land use.

Step 3
Describe your operation.

Step 1 - Determine Producer and Land Eligibility

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Determine Producer Eligibility

- Answer questions only for the land, or portion of land, that you wish to enroll in the CSP.
- Answer all questions with “yes,” “no,” or “na” for not applicable.
- Underlined terms are defined in the glossary, computer versions of self-assessment have clickable links highlighted with an underline.



Step 1 - Determine Producer and Land Eligibility

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Question 1 - Page 4

“Do you share in the risk of producing crops or livestock on this operation?”



Step 1 - Determine Producer and Land Eligibility

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NRCS

Glossary Definition - Page 37

“See share in the risk.... The term producer means an owner, operator, landlord, tenant, or sharecropper that materially participates and shares in the risk of producing any crop or livestock; and is entitled to share in the crop or livestock available for marketing from a farm (or would have shared had the crop or livestock been produced).”

Step 1 - Determine Producer and Land Eligibility

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Question 3 - Page 4

“Do you have control of some or all of the land you manage for the life of the proposed 5 to 10 year contract period?”

Step 1 - Determine Producer and Land Eligibility

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Glossary Definition - Page 26

“The CSP participant does not need to own eligible land, but must demonstrate control of the land for the life of the CSP contract through ownership, a lease, or proof of a long-standing relationship as determined by NRCS. If the applicant is a tenant, the applicant must provide NRCS with the written evidence or assurance of control from the landowner.”

Step 1 - Determine Producer and Land Eligibility

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- **Review your answers and compare to the list at the end of the section.**
- **If your answers differ from the listed answers, you may not qualify for the CSP.**
- **The internet version of the self-assessment will immediately notify you of ineligibility if you answer in a manner that disqualifies you from participation.**

Step 1 - Determine Producer and Land Eligibility

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- If you answered “no” to any question except Question 8, you must redefine your operation or you are not eligible.
- Any questions?
- Proceed to Step 2.

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Step 2 - Assess Land Use

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- There are 4 types of land use eligible for CSP
 1. Cropland (including Hayland), Vineyards, or Orchards
 2. Pastureland
 3. Rangeland
 4. Farmstead or Headquarters
- Answer questions for each land use you wish to enroll.

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Step 2 - Assess Land Use

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Question 1 - Page 7

“Do you keep written records or documentation of your nutrient management activities for each field, such as yields, soil analysis, plant tissue analysis, and nutrients applied—including animal waste?”

Step 2 - Assess Land Use

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Glossary Definition - Page 39

“Field diaries and logs which may include names, rates, and dates of application of all fertilizers, manures, composts and pesticides.”

Note - You must have 2 years of written records to qualify for CSP.

Step 2 - Assess Land Use

C Question 10 - Page 8
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“Are you following a pest management plan or schedule that includes, as needed, insects, invasive species, and weeds?”

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Step 2 - Assess Land Use

C Glossary Definition - Page 34
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“Utilizing environmentally sensitive prevention, avoidance, monitoring and suppression strategies, to manage weeds, insects, diseases, animals and other organisms (including invasive and non-invasive species), that directly or indirectly cause damage or annoyance.”

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Step 2 - Assess Land Use

Question 13 -

“Do you grow high residue crops at least 1 in 3 years in rotation, or use a cover crop annually, and/or have hay/pasture in rotation?”

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Step 2 - Assess Land Use

Glossary Definition - Page 30

“Crops that produce and leave high levels (> 3000 lbs per acre) of biomass in the field after crop harvest. High residue crops can include corn, small grains, hay and other crops expected to produce adequate crop residue for soil improvement and protection from erosion. The crop aftermath is left to protect the soil.”

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Step 2 - Assess Land Use



- If you answered “no” to any question you must redefine your operation or you are not eligible.
- Any questions?
- Proceed to final Self Assessment Step 3.

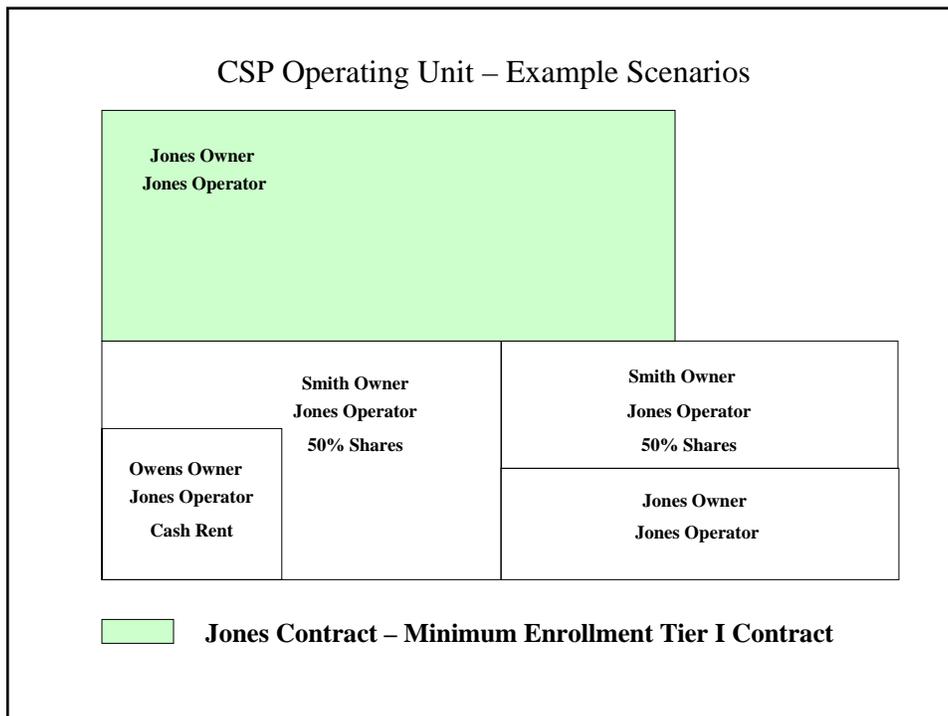
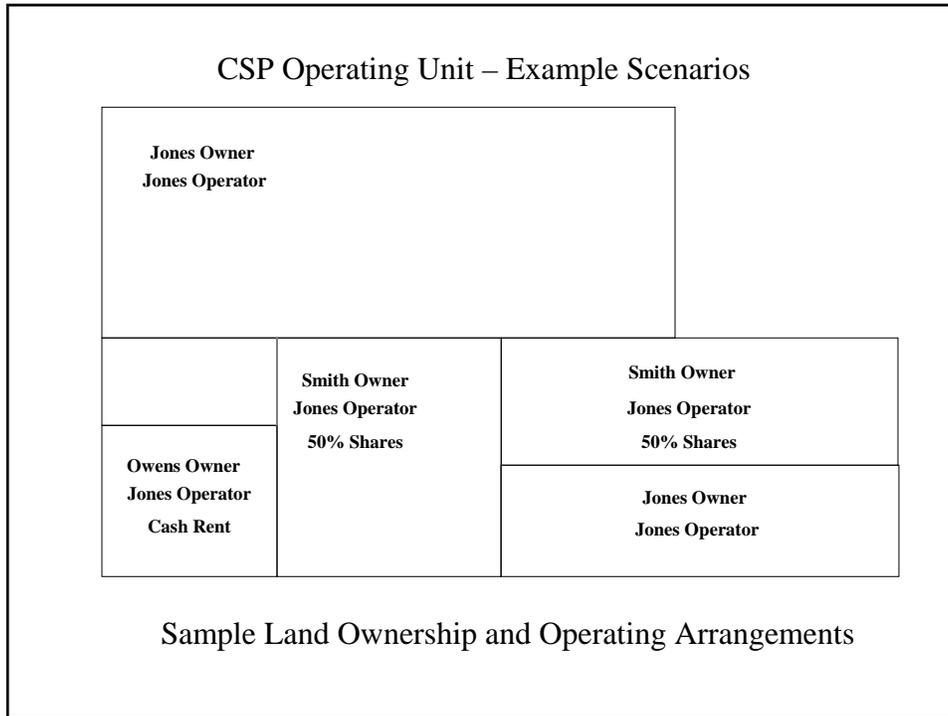


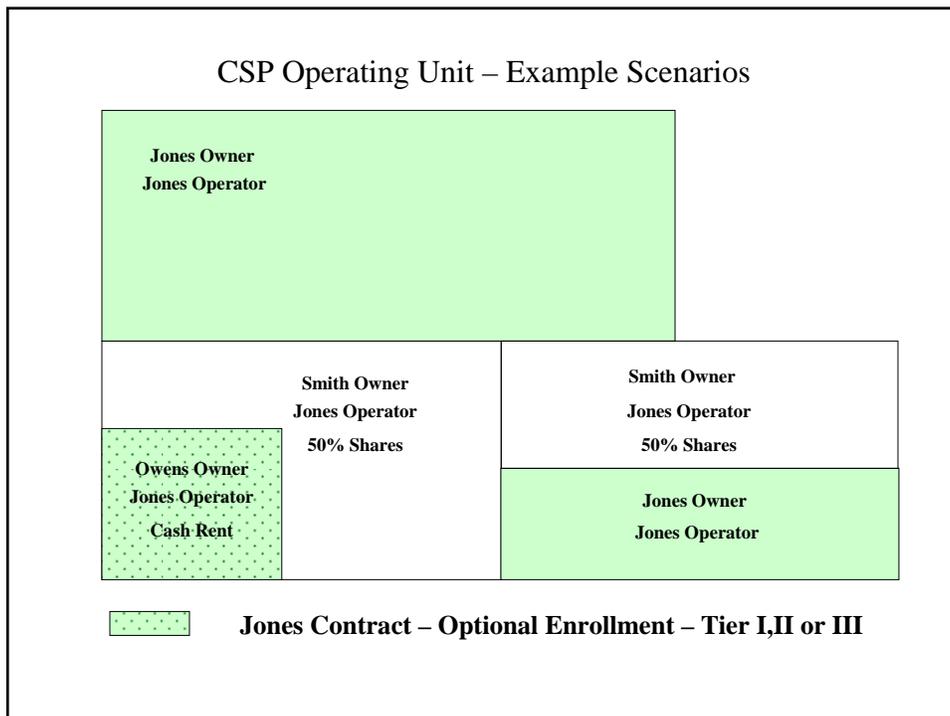
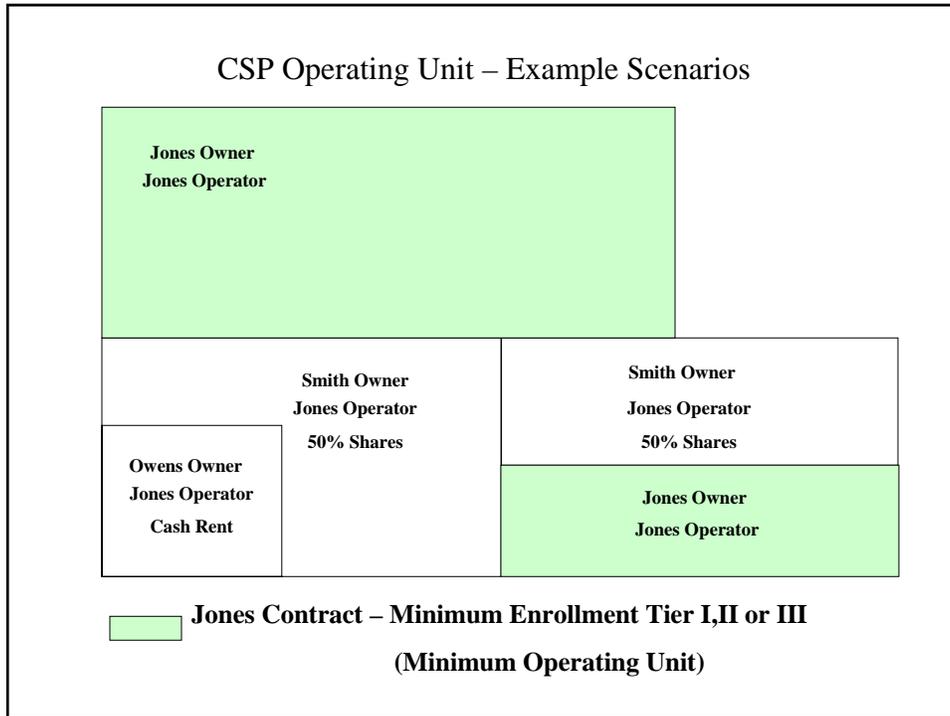
Step 3 - Describe Your Operation

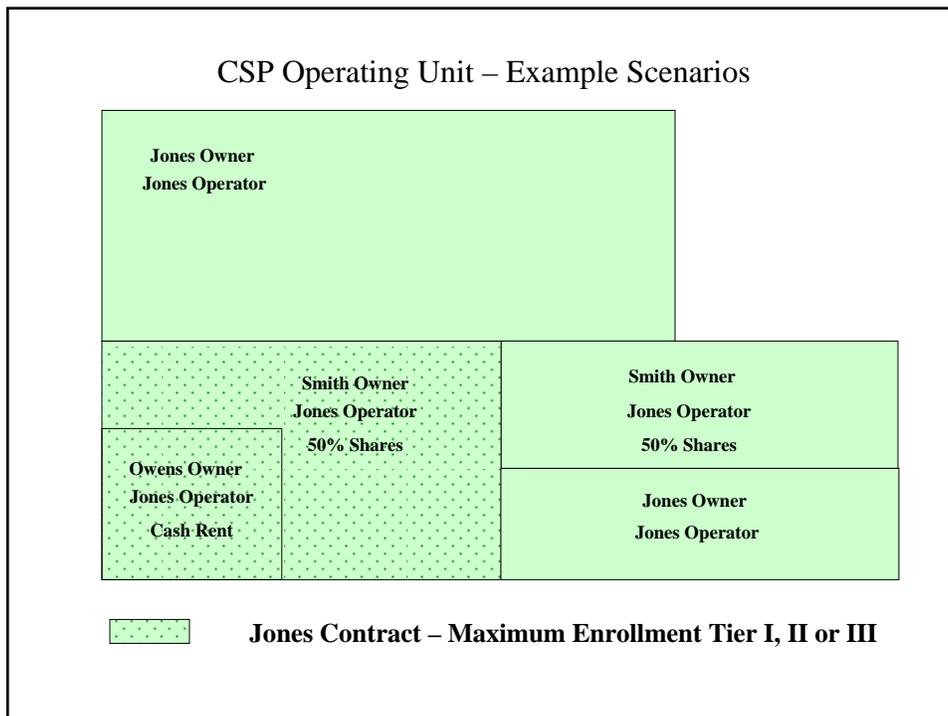
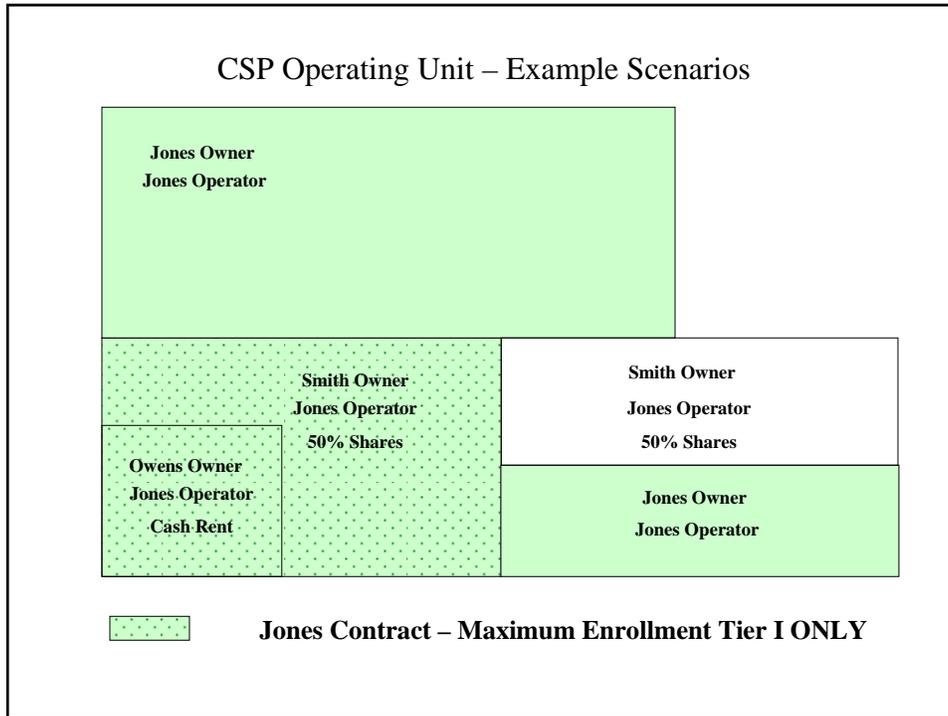


- Step 3 asks you to “Describe the fields or portion of your farm or ranch that you are proposing for CSP.”









Step 3 - Determine Producer and Land Eligibility

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- Any questions?

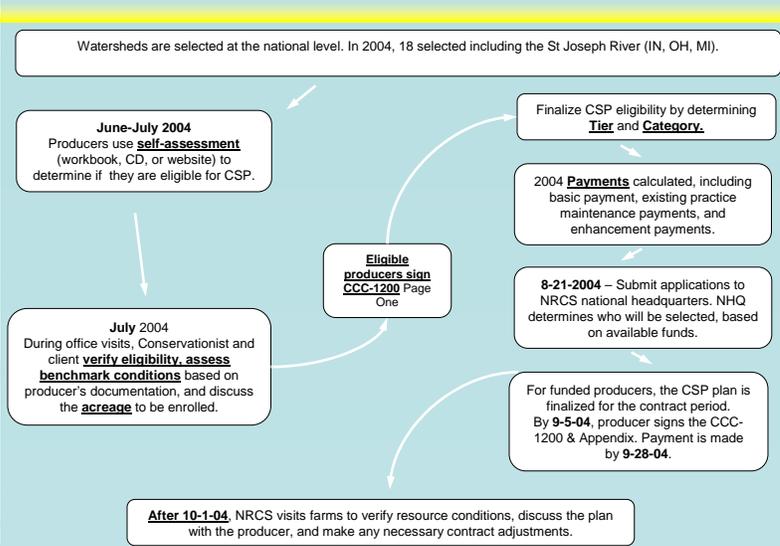
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Application Process

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Watersheds are selected at the national level. In 2004, 18 selected including the St Joseph River (IN, OH, MI).



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graph TD
    A[Watersheds are selected at the national level. In 2004, 18 selected including the St Joseph River (IN, OH, MI).] --> B[June-July 2004  
Producers use self-assessment  
(workbook, CD, or website) to  
determine if they are eligible for CSP.]
    B --> C[July 2004  
During office visits, Conservationist and  
client verify eligibility, assess  
benchmark conditions based on  
producer's documentation, and discuss  
the acreage to be enrolled.]
    C --> D[Eligible  
producers sign  
CCC-1200 Page  
One]
    D --> E[Finalize CSP eligibility by determining  
Tier and Category.]
    E --> F[2004 Payments calculated, including  
basic payment, existing practice  
maintenance payments, and  
enhancement payments.]
    F --> G[8-21-2004 – Submit applications to  
NRCS national headquarters. NHQ  
determines who will be selected, based  
on available funds.]
    G --> H[For funded producers, the CSP plan is  
finalized for the contract period.  
By 9-5-04, producer signs the CCC-  
1200 & Appendix. Payment is made  
by 9-28-04.]
    H --> I[After 10-1-04, NRCS visits farms to verify resource conditions, discuss the plan  
with the producer, and make any necessary contract adjustments.]
    
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- **Documents to bring to the interview:**
 - **The workbook**
 - **Handouts provided by NRCS**
 - **FSA form 1026a**
 - **Aerial photos of land offered**

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Example CSP Payment Cropland – 500 acres

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Tier 1	Stewardship & Existing Practice	\$ 766 / yr
	Enhancement Practices	\$ 10,000 / yr
Tier 2	Stewardship & Existing Practice	\$ 3,063 / yr
	Enhancement Practices	\$ 17,500 / yr
Tier 3	Stewardship & Existing Practices	\$ 6,891 / yr
	Enhancement Practices	\$ 22,500 / yr

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