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## Emergency Watershed Protection Fact Sheet

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**The Program** -- The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is authorized in emergency situations (under Section 216 of Public Law 81-56) to direct money and technical assistance to landowners to treat land within watersheds.

**Purpose** -- The funds, administered by NRCS, are to relieve imminent hazards to life and property caused by fire, floods, earthquakes, or other natural disasters.

**Type of Assistance** -- Emergency watershed protection consists of installing or repairing conservation measures that control flooding and prevent soil erosion, as needed to protect life and property from floods, drought, and erosion. The program is applicable in any watershed impaired by a natural occurrence.

**Eligible Conservation Measures** -- Any conservation measure is eligible that, by controlling runoff, prevents flooding and soil erosion, thereby reducing the threat to life and property. Generally, more than one individual should stand to benefit from the construction or repair of the measure.

**Cost-sharing** -- Federal funds may cover 75 percent of the construction cost of eligible emergency measures.

**Eligibility** -- Public or private landowners, land managers, land users, or others who have a legal interest in or responsibility for the values threatened by a watershed emergency are eligible to receive assistance under the Emergency Watershed Protection program. Applicants who do not have sufficient funds or other resources to provide relief from the hazard(s) are eligible. Applicants must be represented by a project sponsor.

**Sponsors** -- Federal agencies could be sponsors. Other sponsors could be any legal subdivision of state or local government. Sponsors must have legal authority and must agree to use the authority to obtain land rights, water rights, and permits. Sponsors must agree to operate and maintain the completed emergency measures. Sponsors may provide their share of construction cost in the form of cash, in-kind services such as labor, equipment, etc., or a combination of cash and in-kind services.

**Where to Get Help** -- If you think you may qualify for assistance under the Emergency Watershed Protection Program, contact the NRCS office serving your county. NRCS offices are listed in telephone directories under "U.S. Government, Department of Agriculture."

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