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Agri-Pulse Guest Commentary:

Food vs. Fuel – And what about the birds?

Prescriptions for the 2007 Farm Bill

John B. Campbell

Senior Vice President for Industrial Products and Government Affairs for
Ag Processing Inc (AGP), and former USDA Deputy Undersecretary for
International Affairs and Commodity Programs.

The stage is set for a land fight in the 2007 Farm Bill.

- Analysts at the World Bank point out that farmers need to double food output over the next 50 years to meet the needs of 9 billion people.
- High energy prices and government programs are encouraging the conversion of agricultural commodities to fuel.
- Urban and rural sprawl is eating away millions of productive farmland acres annually.

The struggle for land between food and fuel will ultimately be won by food, but the damage to wildlife and the environment could be enormous if governments around the world do not embrace resource protection measures and productivity enhancements.

In the United States, 36 million acres of farmland have been rented from farmers by the USDA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to control surplus production and protect the environment. These acres are now being viewed as a source of land to relieve the pressure from food and fuel demands.[1] Environmental and wildlife advocates are caught in the middle.

Reviewing the early testimony from Farm Bill hearings it is clear that farmers, environmental groups and renewable fuel groups all want more. This is typical positioning for lobby groups. However, the next Farm Bill might well be debated in an environment where budget deficits matter and/or there are other priorities besides spending on the Farm Bill.

In simple terms, what CRP advocates face is the growing cost of trying to keep acres out of production when a hungry world – for food, feed and fuel – want the production from those acres. It is possible that Congress will allow all these forces to ratchet up on each other – they have done it before. In the past CRP competed against farm programs for land. Today CRP competes not only with farm programs but energy programs too.

If petroleum prices stay high and Congress continues to ramp up renewable fuel programs, CRP advocates must come up with "Plan B" or the market will take acres out of CRP and put them into production.

As CRP and renewable fuel issues are debated in the Farm Bill an elephant stands silently in the room. It is barely acknowledged that in the past 20 years as much land was permanently taken out of agricultural use due to urban and rural sprawl as was idled in CRP. It is not popular to talk about the fact that America's landscape is open for development and that restrictive zoning and other land use planning is not done until after it is too late. These issues are pushed off as local or state problems and not something appropriate for the Federal government. Perhaps so, but the consequences of millions of little decisions at the local level add up to a national problem. "America the Beautiful" is becoming "America the formerly Beautiful". It is left up the Agriculture Committees in Washington, DC to figure out how to squeeze more food, feed, fuel and habitat out of a shrinking pie. Few politicians want to appear anti-development or anti-growth.

BACKGROUND

High energy prices have quickened the pace of global ethanol and biodiesel production. Hardly a day goes by without a new ethanol or biodiesel plant being announced. Governments around the planet have embraced renewable fuels and have implemented incentives and mandates to assure their use. Buyers of feed grains and oilseeds for food and feed are concerned that they will be squeezed out by the government sponsored renewable fuel industry. Conservation and wildlife organizations worry that land set aside in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) will be plowed up as fuel, feed and food as buyers bid up crop prices.

If we step back we can see that food, fuel and wildlife are not mutually exclusive. Modern agriculture can provide adequate food, some energy and better wildlife habitat on a sustainable basis but some policy adjustments are needed in the next Farm Bill.

HAY IS FOR HORSES

It is important to recognize that food and energy are sometimes interchangeable goods. Almost all forms of food contain energy but not all forms of energy contain food. Less than 100 years ago much of our work was accomplished by people power and animals. Horses, mules and oxen carried and pulled people, goods and equipment.

The term "horsepower" was coined by a man named James Watt – also famous for the measurement of light bulb energy. Mr. Watt found that ponies working in coal mines could do 22,000 foot-pounds of work in one minute. He raised that figure by 50 percent to 33,000 foot-pounds per minute probably to account for the benefit of pulleys and levers.

James Watts' measurement can be translated to 746 watts, 2545 BTU's and .252 food calories. Theoretically, a horse producing 1 horsepower would burn 641 calories in one hour.[2] Humans need about 2000 calories in a normal day but athletes performing long periods of work such as triathlons or bicycle races might need 5 times as many calories.

The US Department of Energy (DOE) estimated that the advent of fossil fuels freed 90 million acres from growing hay for horses (not to mention grain).[3] If accurate, that is more than the entire planted acres of corn or soybeans (about 155 million acres together). Today, only about 15 million acres are used for fuel ethanol and biodiesel. From this historical perspective we are using fewer acres for fuel than ever.

FARM PROGRAMS AND THE CRP

Taxpayers are benefiting from the renewable fuels boom. Higher corn and soybean prices have helped reduce Federal farm program subsidies. The U.S. Treasury payback for ethanol and biodiesel tax incentives may be 5 to 1 or even 10 to 1 in USDA farm program subsidy reductions. Budget savings are accomplished because the line between surplus and shortage is very thin in agriculture. One extra apple makes the whole bushel worth less. Conversely, one apple too few and prices shoot up.

From this one-apple-too-much economic theory, formally known as short–run inelastic supply and demand, was born the farm programs. Government farm programs were established during the Great Depression of the 1930's. The programs cover mainly row crops, dairy and sugar. Livestock, fruits and vegetables comprising about 50 percent of farm output are not covered. Farm programs were designed to deal with the theory that farmers would produce themselves into oblivion unless the government stepped in to stop them. Farmers were provided with price and/or income support in exchange for agreeing to cut production and/or limit marketing. Acreage allotments, marketing quotas, land set asides, whole herd buy outs and grain reserves all aimed to take the proverbial extra apple out of the basket.

One major policy issue for the 2007 Farm Bill is how to deal with the last vestige of supply control. Is it possible to modify the CRP to meet multiple objectives of food, fuel and the environment? Do we need to rethink the entire premise for creation of the CRP in 1985?

In 1985 I served as a Professional Staff Member on the Senate Agriculture Committee during creation of the 1985 Farm Bill. It was our job to draft and justify every word of that legislation. Rural America was in the depths of a farm crisis. Hard times were brought on by a Russian grain embargo, a high valued dollar, high interest rates, inflationary 1980 farm bill and good crops. When the Federal Reserve wrung inflation

out of the economy a decade of asset-based farm lending came crashing down. In 1983, to deal with growing mountains of grain, the anti-farm program Reagan Administration instituted the largest ever land set aside the world had ever seen – nearly 80 million acres.

During the 1970's most grain farmers did not participate in the farm programs. Enough participated to get some reduction in production and marginally increase prices. Supply control helped keep the cost of price and income supports under control. The 1983 Payment-in-Kind (PIK) land retirement program changed farmer program participation rates. Farmers signed up in droves and have been enthusiastic participants in the farm programs ever since.

As we entered the 1985 Farm Bill debate it became apparent to almost everyone that farm programs had the duel impact of supporting farm income but also encouraging production among non-program participants and participants alike. We described the result as having your feet on the brake and the accelerator at the same time. The accelerator impact was apparent even for farmers in far off lands like Australia where production expanded under US price protection and supply controls.

The programs encouraged new and fragile acres to be brought into production. Production-based subsidies rewarded damaging farming practices on existing acres. There was also growing awareness about the environmental consequences of soil erosion.[4] This production, and these practices, was being encouraged by the structure of our farm programs at a time when grain markets were collapsing and stockpiles were growing.

In response, Congress not only created the CRP to control wheat supply and erosion but also created "Sodbuster", Swampbuster" and "Conservation Compliance". Press releases to the contrary, when it comes to conservation, no Farm Bill before or since has been as important or far reaching as the 1985 legislation. And, with some author's pride, I can state that every farm bill since has been built on the foundation of these provisions.

EVOLUTION OF THE CRP

While serving as USDA Deputy Undersecretary for International Affairs and Commodity Programs in the George H. W. Bush Administration, I was charged with the task of running the CRP and shepherding the 1990 Farm Bill through Congress. When Congress got through the Farm Bill process, my job was to coordinate an interdepartmental and multiagency team to recommend hundreds of implementation decisions to Undersecretary Crowder and Secretary Yeutter.

One of the first things I did at USDA was attempt to reshape the CRP. Prior to our arrival at USDA the CRP formula was simple: rent as many acres as possible as quickly as possible but don't pay more than the local going rate and don't idle the whole county.

In order to have plausible conservation benefit "wind" erosion was deemed a good enough excuse to get in the CRP. Not surprisingly, by the end of 1988 the vast majority of CRP was enrolled in Western wheat ground. Thus, much of intended wheat supply control objective was achieved. Complaints from other parts of the country resulted in the Reagan administration offering a special "corn" bonus for land previously in corn production. Despite the efforts of environmental and wildlife organizations the name of the game for CRP was supply control.

Not all of the congressionally authorized 40-45 million acres had been enrolled when the Bush/Yeutter team came to town in 1989. One of my first recommendations in office was to cancel CRP signups ahead of the 1990 Farm Bill. My objective was to save what few acres we had left under the authorized cap for a reformed program. We then set about restructuring the method by which USDA enrolled acres.

With a lot of help from a lot of folks we developed the Environmental Benefit Index (EBI). The index was designed to provide a somewhat objective cost/benefits analysis for CRP enrollment. We determined that our greatest environmental benefit was to protect surface and groundwater quality. That meant we had to target sheet and rill erosion and shift the CRP to areas where there was more rain and more water. Places like the Missouri, Mississippi and Ohio River basins rose to the top of the list using the new EBI. If we were going to shift enrollment from the High Plains to the Midwest and East we had to do it more economically. The cost of farm acreage is twice or more in these river basins compared to the High Plains. From a cost point of view we could no longer afford to put huge sections of ground in the CRP.

We also determined that surface and groundwater protection could be accomplished most economically with partial fields and cropped wetlands. At that time we had to enroll land with cropping history and farm program "base". Our objective was to enroll as many grass waterways, filter strips, turn rows and cropped wetlands as possible. Congress ultimately endorsed this restructuring of the CRP in the 1990 Farm Bill.

Over the next several signups USDA began to accomplish our new objectives. A much greater portion of land in new enrollments moved East based on water quality objectives. However, there were so few acres left to enroll that the aggregate picture did not change much. We were too late.

The Clinton/Glickman Administration carried on and refined the EBI during their tenure. Secretary Glickman wisely initiated an objective of enrolling 2 million miles (8 million acres) of grass waterways through a continuous enrollment program. However, the initiative fell far short.

The 1996 and 2002 Farm Bills continued to expand the objectives of the CRP but did not change the basic structure or significantly tamper with the EBI concept. Over time Congress and successive Administrations greatly expanded the acreage eligible for CRP. In 1985 only 100 million acres qualified but by 2002 around 260 million acres qualified. To put this in perspective, in 2002 around 65 percent of cropland could have gone into the CRP while only 25 percent would have qualified in 1985.

This dramatic expansion of acreage eligibility demonstrates that the policy justification for CRP has expanded substantially beyond supply control. Predominate in the debate are wildlife and environmental groups who view the CRP primarily as a habitat or a water quality protection tool.

Despite growing interest in the CRP by environmental and wildlife groups and a more than doubling of the acres eligible, the composition of the CRP has not changed very much in 20 years. The majority of acres was originally, and continues to be, located in the famously labeled "Buffalo Commons" of the Western High Plains.

Many of these same acres may soon be extended for their third 10-year contract. If this happens it means that taxpayers will have rented the same property for 30 years. Some of this same ground was likely to have been rented in the Soil Bank of the 1950's and 60's. Ironically, taxpayers could have outright purchased much of this property with only the first 10 years rent as full value purchase price. In 1985 Congress did not anticipate that land would be rented in virtual perpetuity. Ten years was viewed as plenty of time for grain demand to rebound. The long-term 10-year CRP contract seemed like a more economical and environmentally sound method of idling acres than annual acreage set asides or paid diversions.

LAND USE AND CRP

Land use data from 1982-2002 shows that cropland (including CRP) dropped 10 million acres. Pasture dropped 14 million acres and range dropped 10 million acres. Almost all of these agricultural losses are offset by a 35 million acre increase in developed land.[5] The total reduction in agricultural land use was 70 million acres (somewhat offset by occasional haying and grazing on CRP).

Development losses came from range, pasture and wetlands at the same time taxpayers were funding the CRP to reestablish grasslands and wetlands. From a policy perspective we lost as much agricultural land to development as was put in the CRP.

The data also shows that there has been significant slippage within agricultural categories. For example, grasslands are disappearing as farming expands in the High Plains. The National Resource Inventory found that while North Dakota enrolled 2.8 million acres in the CRP it also lost 790,000 acres of rangeland and 160,000 acres of pasture, not to development, but to expanded cropping. In North Dakota 34 percent of the CRP was offset by sodbusting. It is a similar story in South Dakota, Montana and Nebraska.[6]

Wetlands losses also continue but at a much reduced rate. In the pre-swampbuster period of 1974-83 wetland losses averaged 150,000 acres per year. That rate slowed to 56,000 acres per year in the 1997-02 period. Combined with wetland gains from CRP and the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) it is estimated that the US actually had a net wetland gain of 131,000 acres for the 1997-02 period representing a major trend reversal.[7]

Perhaps the difference between wetland and grassland trends is that enforcement of wetland drainage laws and regulations is a multiagency task involving not only USDA (swampbuster) but the Army Corp of Engineers, EPA and State and local government. Grasslands, on the other hand, are only protected by the "sodbuster" provisions of the farm bill which are not sufficient to prohibit grassland conversion to cropping.[8]

SOIL EROSION AND THE CRP

Soil erosion has slowed dramatically since the early 1980's. From 1982-2001 soil erosion declined 42 percent.[9] Sheet and rill erosion slowed from 4.0 tons per acre to 2.7 tons per acre. Wind erosion slowed from 3.3 tons per acre to 2.1 tons per acre.

The CRP and Conservation Compliance provisions of the farm bill target 124 million acres of Highly Erodable Land (HEL). Conservation compliance and CRP along with changes in farming practices have succeeded in bringing 23 million acres of HEL to within tolerable (*T*) erosion rates.

Interestingly, erosion rates on 296 million acres of non–HEL have fallen to tolerable (*T*) on 22 million acres. The reduction in erosion on non-HEL is almost equivalent to the reduction on HEL. The improvements on non-HEL are almost strictly due to changes in farming practices – not Farm Bill or government policy.

The policy message is that CRP has been an important but minority factor in overall soil erosion progress. More importantly, sheet and rill erosion, that is most damaging to water quality, has not been significantly addressed by the CRP due to the high concentration of acres enrolled in the High Plains. Gains in sheet and rill erosion are due primarily to voluntary changes in tillage practices by farmers and conservation compliance requirements.

DUCKS AND THE CRP

Ducks Unlimited (DU) is the premier duck advocacy and private habitat group in the world. In 1985 duck populations dropped to 25 million spring breeders -- a point not seen since 1965. At this low point DU set a goal of 62 million spring breeders and 100 million fall flight ducks (Ducks Unlimited online).

DU's 1985 strategic plan was inspired the same year CRP was authorized. During the next ten CRP years duck populations recovered somewhat but remained below their long-term average. The years 1996-2000 showed the most dramatic population improvement. Spring breeding counts rivaled populations of the late 1950's. Unfortunately, populations have given up much of the gains made in the last half of the 1990's.[10]

Clearly, if CRP (or the WRP) was the solution, duck populations would have shown a steady upswing from 1985 leveling off when the CRP acreage cap was reached. Instead, duck populations appear to be showing typical cyclical ups and downs with variability among species. The long-term trend since 1955 is about 35 million breeding birds – almost spot on what is expected this year.[10]

Spring pond counts in critical breeding areas are the primary indicator of breeding populations. Spring ponds, mainly in Canada, correlate closely with the ups and downs of breeding populations and are mainly impacted by weather conditions. The number of ponds in 2006 is above the long-term average and do not show a long-term downward trend since 1960. The same is true of duck populations.

The number of CRP (and WRP) acres does not correlate closely (or at all) with duck populations. Yet, USDA recently proclaimed that, "CRP has restored two million wetland and wetland buffer acres nationwide and adds 2.2 million new ducks to our country's flyways each year".[11] The USDA statement is plausible but in the context of populations that have ranged from 25 – 40 million per year during the CRP and sharp declines since 1999 one would wonder what is really going on.

If spring ponds are the key to breeding populations and three quarters of them are in Canada there is limited opportunity for a US program to substantially alter the situation. However, there may be ample opportunity to better target CRP so that spring pond numbers are increased in the North Central United States. Simply extending the current CRP contracts in the High Plains does not appear to offer great hope for improving waterfowl breeding populations. USDA is trying to improve the effectiveness of CRP for ducks with the Duck Nesting Habitat Initiative. Their goal is restoration of 100,000 acres of wetlands and wetland buffers and 60,000 birds annually in the Prairie Pothole Region.

For Mallards, the largest duck species, nest success has been identified as the most important population change factor.[12] Predation has been identified as the most important determinate of nest success.[13] It has been postulated that conversion of grasslands to cropland has altered the predator/prey relationship in the Prairie Pothole Region (PPR).[14] It follows then that reestablishment of grasslands has also

reestablished more favorable predator/prey relationships and led to more Mallards than would otherwise be the case.[15] Despite these presumably positive impacts on nesting success from CRP, Mallard breeding pairs have cycled from 50 year highs to 10 year lows during the CRP period.[16]

Beyond breeding habitat is the issue of flyway habitat. Very little of the CRP is enrolled in prime flyways or specifically designed to provide resting spots along the north/south migration routes. The WRP is doing a better job in this regard.

What is one to make of the conflicting evidence? On one hand USDA claims that millions of ducks have been produced by the CRP but the US Fish and Wildlife Service shows no correlation between duck populations and CRP and that duck populations are about the same as they were in 1955.[17]

Grassland conversions and wetland conversions in Canada and the US are key human elements determining duck populations. Nearly 5 million acres of CRP in the PPR has helped mitigate grassland and wetland conversions. However, the Wildlife Management Institute recommends 8 million acres of CRP cover in the region to maximize duck production.[18]

From a policy perspective it is unlikely that more CRP is the answer. Nothing is as helpful as more rain. Absent rain, stopping grassland conversions and wetland losses could do as much or more as enrolling more ground in the CRP.

PHEASANTS AND THE CRP

Pheasants Forever (PF) is the premier private non-profit organization devoted to increasing pheasant populations for hunters. USDA and PF recently proclaimed that CRP has been responsible for "doubling or tripling pheasant populations in many regions across the pheasant range." PF goes on to state that, "This USDA study gives us absolute statistical proof of CRP's impact on pheasants." PF estimates that the 25 million CRP acres in the pheasant range produced an estimated 13.5 million pheasants annually.[19]

The cited study done for USDA by Western EcoSystems Technology doesn't actually say anything resembling these bold proclamations. In fact, the situation on the ground is strikingly different than the impression given by USDA and PF news releases. The reality of pheasant counts done by the US Fish and Wildlife Service is disturbing at best.[20]

United States Geologic Survey (USGS) data, which was used in the USDA study, show that bird counts are actually down compared to pre-CRP times.[20] A more accurate account of what the exhaustive pheasant study actually said would be that, "without CRP, pheasant counts would have been 20 percent worse." The study is hardly a ringing endorsement of success. After renting 25 million acres in prime pheasant country for 20 years we should expect better!

To put this in perspective, if the average rental rate for those 25 million acres was $40 per acre for 20 years the total expenditure would be $20 billion. If, according to PF, 13.5 million pheasants were saved over the same 20 years it would amount to 270 million pheasants. That amounts to about $75 per pheasant saved. Private hunting reserves with raised pheasants only cost between $6 and $12 per bird to hunt.

Nobody would argue that the only objective of the CRP is pheasants but who could disagree that there might be a more cost effective method to increase wild pheasant populations? CRP is only a small portion of total US grassland and grasslands are being lost in spite of CRP. Habitat conditions on non CRP land may have more impact on bird and other wildlife populations than CRP.[21]

Specific studies on pheasant populations and CRP in Minnesota, Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas and Illinois surveyed by D.T. Farrand and M.R. Ryan show mixed results. Some studies show positive correlations and some did not.[22]

HUNTING AND THE CRP

In the 1960's we had Soil Bank land that was open to hunters. Soil Bank was a grain supply reduction program similar to the CRP. When world demand for grain rose in the 1970's the Soil Bank land went back into production. However, farms were more diversified than they are today. Most had livestock, for example. When farmers have livestock they need to have fences around cropped fields, tree stands, nooks and crannies and other spots that offer habitat for wildlife and livestock.

Today, with specialization in agriculture (loss of diversified farms) and the advent of electric fence and the destruction of fence rows and tree lines by farmers, there is not much habitat left besides big tracts of CRP. These large tracts are nearly impossible to hunt without a team of hunters and a pickup full of dogs. Big tracts of land lend themselves to hunting leases whereby access is limited to wealthy and corporate hunters.

It is well understood by hunters and biologists that a mature CRP stand (after 5 years) is not very good habitat. Work has been done showing that mechanical disturbing of CRP helps bring back the wildlife benefits of mature CRP but they are not long lasting. In addition, drought in the High Plains has resulted in USDA allowing many years of CRP haying and grazing. Haying and grazing specifically designed to improve habitat can be beneficial but continual "emergency" haying and grazing due to drought can destroy the wildlife benefits of CRP.

With some popular wildlife populations in trouble it should not be surprising that hunting is on the wane too. According the US Fish and Wildlife Service, hunting has undergone a gradual decline since 1975. The most recent data shows a 7 percent decline from 1996 to 2001.[23] Not all the news was bad. Turkey hunting increased 46 percent, duck hunting increased 37 percent and goose hunting increased 13 percent.[23]

Ironically, the species most associated with the CRP – pheasants – experienced a sharp 25 percent decline in hunting. The disparity in participation trends carried over to the number of days in the field as well. Pheasant hunting days dropped 26 percent while duck and goose hunting days were up 33 and 24 percent respectively.[24] Were it not for the spectacular pheasant hunting promotion of South Dakota, the national statistics would have been even worse! South Dakota is unique in their passion for pheasant hunting promotion and the liberal use of farm-raised birds for commercial hunting enterprise. Many hunters have concluded that pheasant hunting has become too difficult and/or expensive since creation of the CRP.

PRESCRIPTIONS FOR THE 2007 FARM BILL

The previous sections of this paper outlined shortcomings of the current CRP with respect to land use, soil erosion, water quality, wildlife habitat and hunting. These shortcomings do not warrant abolition of the CRP because there are many documented benefits also. I believe the challenge of the next Farm Bill will be how to do more with less.

If so, some hard questions need asked. Could CRP be more targeted and thus achieve as much or more benefit with fewer acres? Could wildlife practices be a higher priority and spread over more areas of the United States? Could water quality issues be better addressed on a watershed by watershed basis? Could the myriad of USDA programs that many times operate at cross purposes be harnessed to achieve agreed upon national objectives? Could local and state governments be persuaded to pull their share of the load or penalized if they do not (the way Federal highway dollars are used)? Could the billions we spend on commodity programs be redirected to incent farmers on "how" they produce instead of "how much of what" they produce?

Wildlife, conservation and farm groups have an opportunity in the 2007 Farm Bill to reshape the CRP and other USDA programs so that they target areas of higher priority for wildlife habitat and environmental benefit. Farm groups are no longer wedded to a big CRP, and USDA has already signaled that it is willing to give up 7 million acres of low priority ground.

Inside the Beltway, lobbies divide up the Farm Bill pie in a mine and yours fashion. Newcomers are not welcome and crossing lines is frowned upon. Outside the Beltway, and especially in rural areas, taxpayers and farmers know that our current farm support programs do not make a lot of sense. Rather than cling to the old programs and the old CRP acres now is the time to decide the highest and best use for funds that are available.

In this regard the following are policy ideas for the next Farm Bill:

1) USDA conservation programs overlap on many fronts. CRP, WRP, CSP, WHIP, EQIP all, for example, contain wildlife practices and payments. All but WRP pay for buffer strips. There are many other examples of overlap. Program administration, landowner understanding and funding efficiency could be

improved if Congress and the Administration could streamline and consolidate the myriad of USDA conservation programs.

2) Nothing is a priority if everything is a priority. Congress has continued to add programs and priorities over the years. As a result, most cropland in America is eligible to be idled in CRP and WRP. Similarly, the 2002 Farm Bill added hundreds of millions of acres in working lands programs such as WHIP and CSP. Perhaps Congress desires that most all land be covered by some USDA program but the lack of real prioritization leads to ambiguous results.

3) Strengthen sodbuster, swampbuster and conservation compliance rules and enforcement. The loss of grassland, wetlands and cropland continues in the face of CRP and WRP resulting in significant slippage in objectives and funds.

4) Reduce the size of the CRP to no more than 20 million acres and use savings to target more expensive and broad-based wildlife habitat practices and water quality (sheet and rill erosion) on a watershed by watershed basis.

5) Prohibit 10-year contract extensions absent permanent easements. Semi-perpetual rent is not an economical use of taxpayer funds.

6) Add a bonus to the EBI for non-motorized public access on CRP.

7) Accelerate the process of converting price and income support programs to land stewardship and wildlife habitat programs mainly on working lands.

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