

Benefits

Although slowing climate change is the primary reason for a cap and trade carbon credit market, there are co-benefits.

They include:

- The same practices that will increase soil carbon sequestration are also beneficial to soil health and water quality. There will be less soil erosion, decreased nutrient loss and less chance of contamination to ground and surface waters.
- Reduced direct costs are possible, such as using less fuel to plant no-till compared to conventional methods of planting.
- Productive, sustainably managed forests are important for the environment, wildlife, mankind and the economy.
- There will be an additional source of income available to participants, stackable with other cost share programs.

Of course, there is always the satisfaction of knowing that what you do today will have an impact on what happens to the climate in the future.



Harvesting a test plot. Yield was the same as conventional tillage corn planted on the same day.

Please Contact Us

To learn more about, or to express interest in, participating in the voluntary carbon credit market

To assist by providing information about your land

To learn more about conservation practices that will increase carbon storage as well as protect our soils and water

To become a contributing partner to help with outreach, education, data collection or policy development.

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Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation District

254 Goddard Road
P.O. Box 1938
Lewiston, ME 04241

Phone: 753-9400 X 3
Fax: 783-4101

E-mail: susan.gammon@me.nacdnet.net

Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation District

The Voluntary Carbon Credit Market In Maine



What can be sold in Maine now?

- Managed Forestry Projects
- Tree Planting Projects
- Anaerobic Manure Digester Projects
- Fossil Fuel Displacement Projects
- Grassland Projects
- Future possibilities**
- Conservation Tillage-No Till
- Strip Tillage
- Wetland Reclamation Projects
- Other Conservation Projects

Androscoggin Valley SWCD

An equal opportunity employer and provider
"Making Conservation Work for You"



The Voluntary Carbon Credit Market In Maine

Why should you get involved? Our climate is changing. The long term effects on our agriculture, forests, water resources and air quality will not be good. If we change the way we use our natural resources, conserve energy and switch to cleaner technologies, we have a chance to slow the impact of human induced climate change on the world our grandchildren will inherit. Agriculture and forestry are part of the solution to global warming.

One of the driving factors of climate change is carbon dioxide emissions, from all sorts of sources. Increasing carbon sequestration (storage) in soils by changing our farming practices can help reduce the amount of emissions available to fuel climate change, as well as provide additional protection for our soil and water resources. Planting more trees and managing forests sustainably will also help, as can other conservation measures.

It is estimated that the United States could sequester 40 to 60 billion metric tons of CO₂ over 50 years using agricultural and forestry practices that increase carbon sequestration.

What are Carbon Credits? They are a commodity developed for the cap and trade carbon market. They are used to offset greenhouse gas emissions and control pollution. Offsets must be quantifiable, verifiable, enforceable, additional and permanent. Agricultural carbon credits can be generated by preventing future emissions and reducing past emissions.



What practices are accepted as carbon credits? Practices that sequester more carbon or slow down the rate carbon dioxide is released include things such as no-till planting, strip till planting, converting cropland to grassland, planting trees, managed forestry, wetland reclamation. Some energy efficiency and fuel displacement projects are acceptable.

What practices are accepted in Maine? Right now managed forestry projects, tree planting projects, grassland projects, anaerobic manure digesters and possibly fossil fuel displacement projects can be used as a source of carbon credits.

Soils carbon projects are not accepted as a carbon credit because we do not have the necessary baseline established. We are currently working on developing a baseline and hope to be able to include these types of credits in the future.

The practices used for carbon credits must be in addition to, or over and above, your normal operation, for instance, changing from a crop to grassland or planting trees.

A project must comply with established guidelines for permanence, depending on the market. The credits must be backed by guarantees that provide some recourse if reversal occurs. Some projects and markets require long periods of contracted time, conservation easements or both.

There are currently rules in place governing what is accepted for credits but they are subject to change and very likely will change in the future as the science and market for carbon credits evolves.

How can carbon credits be sold? Right now, credits are being sold on the Chicago Climate Exchange (CCX), an entity similar to the stock market operating since 2003, on the private market and through registries that list projects and contact information. The first carbon credit from agricultural soils was sold in 2005. Several corn belt states now have programs with over 2,500,000 acres enrolled. Managed forestry was added in late 2007. Landowners who have participated in the market have received an additional income even though the market has been fluctuating with the economy.

You need to know– The pooled credits are handled by an aggregator, an organization that handles the sales and parcels out the funds. Agricultural aggregators include the National Farmers Union, the Iowa Farm Bureau and Delta Institute as well as others. Not all aggregators accept all types or sizes of projects or charge the same fees.

The projects must be independently verified. Verification is not generally an up front cost to you. The verifiers are paid by the aggregator and deducted from the gross sale.

The CCX charges \$.20 per metric ton of carbon dioxide equivalency sold each year. Other markets may charge a different fee. These fees are deducted from the gross sale. The CCX also reserves 20% of sales each year, to protect against reversal. It is returned at the end of the contract period if no reversal has occurred.

Contracts are legally binding and you need to read them carefully.

For more information contact: Androscoggin Valley SWCD at 753-9400 X3.