



2001 Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

Program Focus —

Farmers in Kent County, Maryland have been pleased with WHIP and the opportunity to restore farmland back into wildlife habitat, primarily for ducks and geese. Shallow water areas for wildlife were a popular conservation practice with Kent County farmers as it provided a food source for wildlife.

Last year, NRCS in Kent County managed 17 WHIP contracts covering 66 acres. The typical size of a WHIP contract in Kent County is 3 acres.

Participants were pleased with the timely and simple-to-use application process for the program and the technical assistance provided by NRCS.

Canada geese on an Eastern Shore farm pond. WHIP helps Maryland farmers restore and manage shallow water and wetland habitat to benefit waterfowl, wading birds, and other wildlife.

Maryland Summary

Overview

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program for people who want to develop or improve wildlife habitat on private lands. It provides for both technical assistance and financial assistance through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Specific objectives of the fiscal year (FY) 2001 WHIP in Maryland were to: (1) Restore and manage upland grassland habitat to benefit groundnesting birds and associated wildlife; (2) Restore and manage riparian corridor habitat to benefit terrestrial and aquatic species; and (3) Restore and manage shallow water and wetland habitat to benefit waterfowl, wading birds, and other wildlife.

Strong interest and participation in the WHIP continued through 2001. Applications requesting federal cost-share funds totaling over \$181,000 were submitted by 70 landowners. The Maryland FY 2001 WHIP allocation for financial assistance was approximately \$152,000, a shortfall of \$29,000. Maryland Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff, with the assistance of our partner agencies and non-profit organizations, developed and approved 61 new WHIP plans and contracts, and provided additional funding for four prior year contracts, which obligated all of our FY 2001 financial assistance funds.

Accomplishments

In FY2001, more than 250 acres were enrolled in the statewide WHIP program. This acreage included contracts to restore 188 acres of permanent upland habitat (by planting predominantly native grasses), 51 acres of shallow water habitat, and 12 acres of native riparian forest buffer plantings. To date (FY1998-2001), there are 187 WHIP contracts, totaling more than 1,000 acres and over \$486,000 in cost share funds.

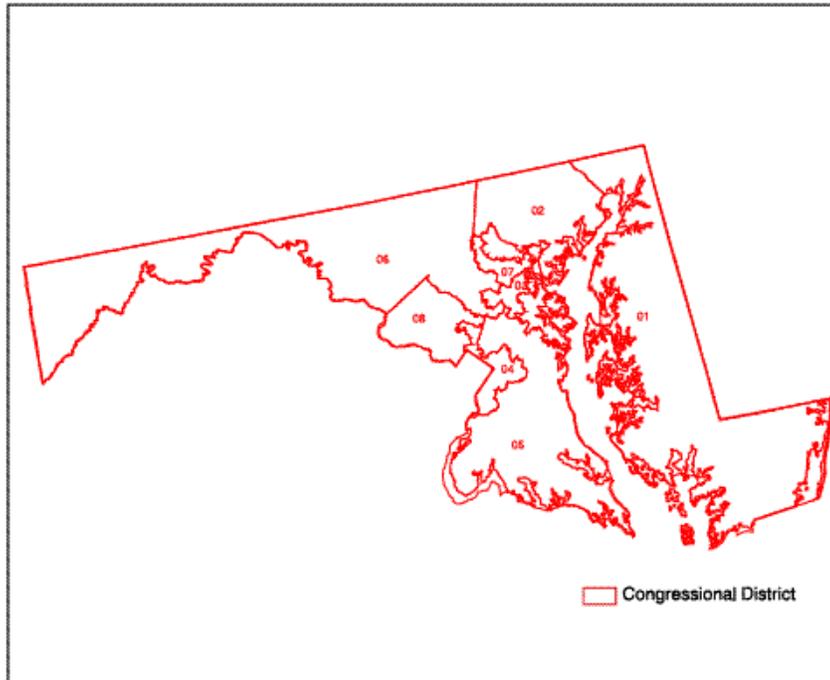
Program Benefits

The emphasis of Maryland's WHIP is on wildlife and fisheries habitats of regional and state significance that have experienced or are experiencing significant declines. Habitat loss due to human activities such as farming, logging, and urbanization is the number one reason for species decline. Many of our native plants--grasses, wildflowers, shrubs, trees, and aquatic vegetation--have been replaced by non-indigenous species that may not provide the same benefits to wildlife as native species. These changes are reversible. It may not be desirable or necessary to restore the landscape to pre-settlement conditions, but there are opportunities--like WHIP--to help participants voluntarily improve and protect wildlife habitat.

State contact

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Maryland Contracts and Dollars by Congressional District



Maryland Dollars and Contracts

Congressional Districts	Fiscal Year 2001		Cumulative Total (98-01)	
	Number of Contracts	Dollars Obligated	Number of Contracts	Dollars Obligated
District 1	42	110,827	92	225,495
District 2	4	7,384	9	13,919
District 3	2	5,075	8	28,309
District 4	0	0	0	0
District 5	4	6,689	16	18,488
District 6	9	20,150	60	193,950
District 7	0	0	1	5,746
District 8	0	0	1	900
State Totals	61	150,125	187	486,807

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