

Wetlands Reserve Program

Benefit the Land, Secure Your Future

Fact Sheet
Salina, Kansas
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Sound Familiar...?

"I've spent more money fixing that levee than I've made off the crops..."

"A guy probably shouldn't be farming a field if he's got fish swimming through it..."

"I've sat in the cab of my harvester and watched the yield monitor hover at 200 bushels an acre. I've also sat in the cab, driving through 6 inches of water, trying to save what's left before the flood takes it all..."

Wetland Benefits...

- alternatives for areas where crops are lost to high water
- increase wildlife opportunities
- groundwater recharge
- improve water quality by filtering out sediment



NRCS ~ Helping People Help the Land

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Wetlands

Wetlands are unique ecosystems that offer an array of biologically diverse plants and wildlife. They are natural areas that are often wet but may not be wet year round. They are characterized by distinctive hydrology, soils, and plants. Wetlands offer valuable environmental benefits as well as financial security and alternative enterprise opportunities for landowners and communities.

Wetland areas can be large areas, awkward sized potholes in the middle of a field, or areas adjacent to watercourses, creeks, or tributaries. Large or small, these can be managed as wetlands, offering INCOME and SOLUTIONS for Kansas landowners.

The Program

The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is a voluntary restoration program that provides technical assistance to restore and improve wetland resources on private lands. The WRP is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

WRP helps restore, enhance, or improve wetland acres. In many cases, potholes, low-lying areas, and floodplains need minimal assistance or structural alterations to be transformed into functional and attractive wetlands.

Small or Large - WRP Works!

Regardless of size, wetlands are a sensible solution and addition to your operation. Even small and medium-sized sites from less than 20 to over 200 acres that are "meant to be" wetlands offer benefits and value. All these areas need are:

- Good planning
- Simple water-level controls
- Help with seeding and planting
- Minimal long-term maintenance

WRP works...on small farms and acreages, marginal land, or wet and troublesome areas. WRP works for Kansas landowners who need a solution to recurring crop losses and who want to improve wildlife habitat and restore wetland functions on their land. Wetlands and the WRP can improve your land and might offer the financial solution or security you seek.

WRP is not just for large farms or large tracts of land. WRP works on any kind of operation. WRP can work for YOUR operation!



Easements Made Easy

NRCS works hard to make WRP program requirements, applications, ranking processes, and timeframes **MANAGEABLE**.

Once a land eligibility has been made, NRCS ranks the applications to determine which applications can be funded. Those with higher environmental rankings are funded first. NRCS then offers a payment to purchase a conservation easement on the land based on the fair market value of the land as determined by an appraisal using the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practices (USPAP) or an area-wide market analysis or survey, a geographic area rate cap, or landowner offer, whichever is less. The landowner has the option to accept or reject the offer at that time and withdraw from WRP without any penalties. The geographic area rate cap is posted on the Kansas NRCS Web site at www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/wrp.

NRCS pays all acquisition costs—appraisals, surveys, title work, and recording fees. Once all the legal work is done, NRCS' technical staff can follow through on restoration plans and let the wetland come alive. WRP contracts last as long as you want—10 years without an easement or easements of 30 years...or FOREVER!



You Maintain Control

WRP allows landowners to maintain the title to the land, control of access, use for non-developed recreational activities like hunting or fishing, nature-based tourism, and subsurface mineral rights. The contract simply requires that uses of the land are compatible with the conservation objectives of the plan.

It's Your Decision

A WRP contract can **PAY YOU** for letting your land be what it was intended to be. It is a solution that offers economical, practical, and personal benefits.

Does WRP sound like it might fit into **YOUR** operation? If so, visit your local NRCS office at

the USDA Service Center to apply now. Submitting an application does not obligate the landowner in anyway to continue with the WRP. A signed application will start the process to determine if your land is eligible for WRP.

- *Turn economic burdens into opportunity*
- *Solve problems you have on the farm*
- *Improve water quality on/off the farm*
- *Create a home for wildlife*

Call or visit your local USDA Service Center (listed in the telephone book under United States Government or on the Internet at offices.usda.gov)
or visit www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov TODAY!