



CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

E646137X

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Renovate small, shallow pothole and playa sites which may seasonally hold water

Conservation Practice 646: Shallow Water Development & Management

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Crop (Annual & Mixed); Crop (Perennial); Associated Land Use

RESOURCE CONCERN ADDRESSED: Fish & Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat

PRACTICE LIFE SPAN: 5 Years

Enhancement Description

Renovate small, shallow pothole and playa sites which may seasonally hold water.

Criteria

- Sites should be natural, internally drained areas, such as prairie potholes or playas, and should not require diking or ditching. Seasonal or episodic inundation should be from local watershed runoff or a seasonably high groundwater table. These pools do not provide year-round water habitat. This enhancement does not apply to existing wetlands.
- Remove accumulated sediment, if necessary, to increase pool depth.
- Improve the diversity of native or natural shrub and/or herbaceous plant species suitable for the site and appropriate for wildlife species that require shallow water for at least a part of their life cycle. Selected plant species must be adapted to the projected duration of saturation and inundation of the site.
- Protect the site from flooding, drainage, sedimentation, and contamination. Use erosion control and nutrient and pest management conservation practices in the contributing watershed to maintain water quality and reduce sediment production.



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- Establish a minimum 35-foot vegetated buffer around the shallow water feature. Species selected shall have stiff stems and high stem density near the ground surface to reduce water velocities and facilitate sedimentation. Only viable, high quality and site-adapted planting stock will be used. Selection of native plants is recommended.
- Biological control of undesirable plant species and pests (e.g., using predator or parasitic species) may be the least damaging alternative for pest control.
- Human and livestock activities in and surrounding the shallow water pool may disturb wildlife, thereby decreasing habitat suitability and function. Vegetative screens, fences, or gates should be used as means of reducing unwanted disturbance. Cover around the site that may provide nesting habitat should not be mowed until after the primary nesting season.
- Design the shallow water feature for an expected life of at least 5 years.

Documentation Requirements

- Specifications for this practice shall be prepared for each site. Specification shall be recorded using approved specifications sheets, job sheets, narrative statements in the conservation plan, or other acceptable documentation.