Wetland Mitigation Banking in Nebraska with NRCS

Ritch Nelson
State Wildlife Biologist

State Forester
Why is a “Wetland Bank” needed?

• Wetland Conservation provisions of the 1985 Food Security Act require that wetlands not be converted to make crop production possible to remain eligible for USDA benefits.

• Wetlands that are converted must be mitigated (both acres and “function”) to replace those lost wetlands.

• Options for producers include:
  • Restoring the impacted wetland
  • Replacing it on land they own/control
  • Purchasing credits from a wetland bank
What is a “Wetland Bank”?

• A wetland mitigation bank is a current “non-wetland” that is restored or created and then protected and managed to be used to off-set wetlands lost elsewhere.

• Wetland mitigation banks are owned by a private individual, corporation, non-profit organization, etc. and the bank is administered under the oversight of an agency (NRCS).

• Credits are sold (essentially acres of wetland) to replace lost acres which are converted for crop production.
Who operates Wetland Banks in Nebraska?

- There are several owners of wetland banks that operate under the oversight of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
- One wetland bank with NRCS administration is operational in Nebraska at this time.
- Westervelt Ecological Services is the entity that owns North Utica Agricultural Wetland Mitigation Bank in Seward County.
- Recently, a new grant was awarded to Magnolia Inc. to develop a wetland bank in Eastern Nebraska on a stream floodplain.
North Utica Bank
Plan/Design
Service Area
When will wetland credits be available?

- The first round of credits were released to Westervelt for sale to Nebraska producers in late 2021.
- Another credit release is expected in the coming weeks.
- A total of 40 acres of credits is expected to be released over a five year period.

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How are wetland credits sold/purchased?

• Producer determines the amount of wetland (acres) needed for mitigation using NRCS Certified Wetland Determination.

• NRCS advises producer on applicability of wetland bank.
  • Wetland “TYPE” and location relative to Service Area...

• Producer contacts Westervelt to purchase needed credits and completes the transaction.

• NRCS finalizes agreement to allow wetland bank credits to replace wetland that is converted to maintain eligibility.
Questions?