**Avoiding Wetland Violations in a Herbaceous/Open Wetland**

Disturbance Activities May Lead To Wetland Violations = Loss of USDA Program Benefits

Maintain wetlands in natural conditions to remain eligible for USDA benefits. **Avoid activities shown below in the middle graph. To avoid wetland conversions and violations** do not carry out any land disturbance activities. Leave the area as a natural wetland to ensure natural processes occur.

**Wetland Uses**
- Use wetlands for:
  - Recreation
  - Hunting
  - Mowing
  - Pasture
  - Hay Production
  - Cropping under naturally dry conditions
  - Maintaining drainage
  - In place before 12/23/85 if it is still functioning and drains other fields

**Land Disturbance Activities That May Progress to Wetland Violations**
- Diverting surface water away from wetland
- Placing spoil in a wetland
- Adding or improving drainage
- Tillage or other activities to dry out the soil

Any activity can develop into a conversion if the production of an agricultural commodity becomes possible.

**End of Path = Wetland Violation (CW+Year Label)**

Violations are called CW+Year and result in the partial or total loss of USDA benefits covering all acres/fields (not just the area of the violation).

**Violation of Swampbuster Provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985** occur when a wetland is converted by:
1) Installing new drainage in a wetland
2) Improving old drainage in a wetland
3) Drainage too close around a wetland
4) Filling in a wetland
5) Deep-ripping to drain a wetland
6) Removal of brush older than 5 years for the purpose of, or to have the effect of making production possible

**Loss of USDA Benefits**

A Person shall be ineligible for USDA benefits if “the person converts a wetland by draining, dredging, filling, leveling, removing woody vegetation or other means for the purpose, or to have the effect, of making production of an agricultural commodity possible. 7CFR12 (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 7, Part 12"

For more information, contact your local USDA Service Center

**USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.**