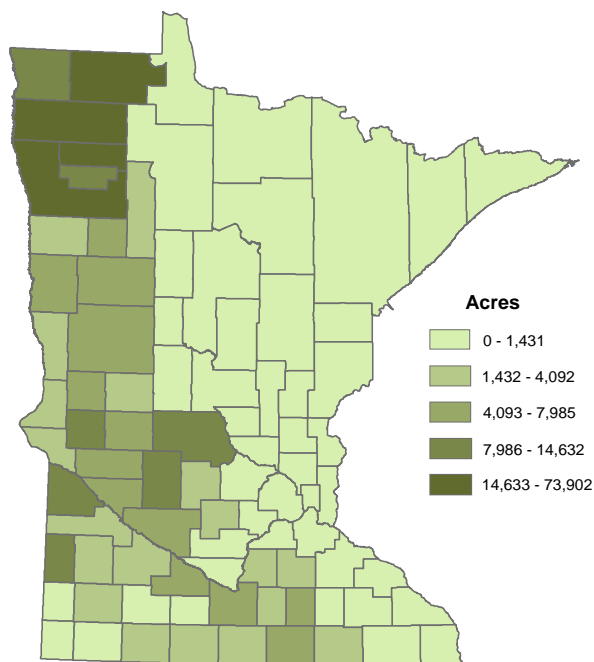


# Agriculture's Contribution to Restoring Minnesota's Wetlands

## 2007 RESTORED WETLAND HABITAT



The map includes 84% of the wetland habitat acreage (wetlands and upland buffers) voluntarily restored on private farmlands data available to date. All data is obtained from the United States Department of Agriculture. The remaining data is not readily available.

## WHERE ARE THE RESTORED WETLANDS?

**CRP:** Wetlands and surrounding upland buffers restored through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) are located mainly in the prairie pothole region of Minnesota. In several northwestern counties, over 6% of the cropland is devoted to restored wetlands with surrounding upland grass buffers.

**CREP:** Wetlands and surrounding upland buffers restored through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) are located in frequently flooded areas along the Minnesota River main stem and tributaries.

**WRP:** Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) wetland restorations are concentrated within the Prairie Pothole region of the state in areas where they will especially benefit migratory waterfowl.

**Other Programs:** Information on the location of wetlands restored through other government conservation programs can be obtained from the respective agencies (see table on back).

## OTHER WETLAND RESTORATION OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to the programs listed in the back table, several other government programs offer technical assistance and cost-sharing to restore wetlands, including the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program and Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), both administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service. Some non-governmental organizations also offer easements or other assistance with wetland restoration

## MINNESOTA WETLAND RESTORATION FACTS

- ❑ To date, Minnesota farmers have enrolled over **500,000 acres** of wetlands and associated upland buffers on privately owned farmland in various conservation programs (see table on back).
- ❑ 34% of this acreage is protected by **permanent easements**.
- ❑ More than 67% of the acres restored through the programs listed on the back table were restored within the past seven years. In 2006, enrollment in these programs began to level off due to several factors described in the table.
- ❑ Farmers' required **out-of-pocket share** of the cost to establish more than 330,000 acres of CRP wetland restorations and associated upland buffers since 1997 is estimated to **exceed \$18 million**.

## IN ADDITION TO WETLANDS...

Many other conservation practices besides wetland restoration are funded by CRP, EQIP and other conservation programs. Most of these practices help protect existing wetlands, such as several hundred thousand acres of wildlife habitat and native grass stands that have been established through CRP.

Minnesota also **ranks third nationally** in CRP filter strip and buffer strip acreage along waterways. To learn more about these accomplishments see our fact sheet "Agriculture's Contribution to Habitat and Conservation in Minnesota."

## RE-ENROLLED CRP WETLAND CONTRACTS

In 2006, more than half of all CRP lands in Minnesota were in contracts scheduled to expire in 2007-2010. USDA acted quickly to offer certain eligible contract holders an opportunity to automatically renew contracts for an additional 10 to 15 year term or extend contracts for one to five years. The nature of the offer depended on the contract's environmental index score when the land was first enrolled. In Minnesota, about 80% of the CRP lands included in these offers will be re-enrolled or extended. Contracts with restored wetlands qualified for the most generous offer of all—automatic renewal for 15 years.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about agricultural perspectives on wetland restoration contact **Chris Radatz, Minnesota Farm Bureau, 651-905-2104, cradatz@fbmn.org.**

For more information about the wetland data in this fact sheet contact **Barbara Weisman, Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), 651-201-6631, barbara.weisman@state.mn.us.**

For more information about wetland restoration opportunities contact your **local Soil & Water Conservation District** (directory available at: [www.bwsr.state.mn.us/directories/SWCDs.pdf](http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/directories/SWCDs.pdf)) and **local USDA FSA and/or NRCS office** (directory available at: <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=MN>).



## VOLUNTARY WETLAND RESTORATION AND PROTECTION ON PRIVATE FARMLAND IN MINNESOTA

Agency <sup>1</sup>	Voluntary (non-regulatory) program <sup>2</sup>	Wetland restoration project acres, including upland buffers <sup>3</sup>	Since year <sup>4</sup>	Length of contracts or easements	Change in acres since March 2005	Notes
FSA	CRP General Signup <sup>5</sup>	266,653	1995	mostly 10-yr contracts	- 3,330 <sup>6</sup>	In 2003, CRP wetland options previously available only through general signups shifted to continuous signups, eliminating wetland options under the general signup.
FSA	CRP Continuous Signup <sup>5</sup>	63,955	2001	mostly 15-yr contracts	+ 13,059	
NRCS	WRP	58,500	1994	permanent easements	+4,865	A recent change in WRP land appraisal methods may negatively impact future enrollment.
NRCS	EWP	5,173	1997	permanent easements	n/a	No funding has been allocated to Minnesota for these programs since 2001.
NRCS	EWRP	2,103	1994	permanent easements	n/a	
FWS	PFW	6,610	2001	mostly 10-yr agreements	n/a	
BWSR	RIM Reserve	20,188	1986	permanent easements	n/a	Since 1998, most of the funding for these programs has been reallocated to CREP, WREP and RIM Reserve/WRP.
BWSR	RIM Reserve/PWP <sup>7</sup>	11,506	1991	permanent easements	n/a	
BWSR/FSA	CREP I – MN River	53,966	1998	permanent easements	n/a	Funding expired in 2002.
BWSR/FSA	CREP II – Statewide	2,100	2005	permanent easements	+ 2,100	Reauthorization beyond 2007 is anticipated.
BWSR/NRCS	WREP	3,542	2005	permanent easements	+3,542	Program was offered nationally only in 2005-2006.
BWSR/NRCS	Rim Reserve/WRP I	7,017	1997	permanent easements	n/a	Funding ended in 1999.
BWSR/NRCS	Rim Reserve/WRP II	8,777	2007	permanent easements	+ 8,777	Most of these easements are currently pending.
<b>Totals</b>		<b>510,090</b>			<b>+29,013<sup>8</sup></b>	

<sup>1</sup> **Key to Agencies:** FSA – USDA Farm Service Agency; FWS – U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; NRCS – USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; BWSR – Minnesota Board of Water & Soil Resources

<sup>2</sup> **Key to Programs:** CREP – Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program; CRP – Conservation Reserve Program; EWP – Emergency Watershed Protection Program; EWRP – Emergency Wetlands Reserve Program; PWP – Permanent Wetlands Preserve; RIM Reserve – Reinvest in Minnesota Reserve; WREP – Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Program; WRP – Wetlands Reserve Program; PFW – Partners for Fish & Wildlife Program.

<sup>3</sup> Includes wetlands as well as surrounding (upland) buffers that are part of a restoration project, based on the best data available at the end of January 2007. Acreage in projects that were aided by more than one program has been counted only once, under the primary program (i.e., none of the acreage has been double-counted).

<sup>4</sup> Calendar year in which program was enacted or, for CRP general and continuous signups, the year wetland restorations first became an enrollment option. The only exception is the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's PFW program. The program began in 1987, but data prior to 2001 is unavailable.

<sup>5</sup> Does not include CREP acreage, which is counted separately in another part of the table.

<sup>6</sup> The decrease from March 2005 to March 2007 is due to expired contracts. In 2006, USDA offered certain eligible CRP contract holders with contracts scheduled to expire from September 2007 to September 2010 an opportunity to re-enroll or extend their contracts. In Minnesota, 80% of the eligible acreage is to be re-enrolled or extended.

<sup>7</sup> Pre-existing rather than restored wetlands, protected by permanent easements.

<sup>8</sup> Net increase from March 2005 to March 2007 in the number of acres in wetland restoration projects funded by the non-regulatory programs listed in this table (except PFW).