

### What is Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management?

**How it helps:** The purpose of the wetland wildlife habitat management practice is to plan and manage habitat for wetland-dependent wildlife. Species that will benefit from this practice include waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds, amphibians, reptiles, aquatic furbearers, aquatic invertebrates, and several species of upland wildlife. In addition, providing wetland wildlife habitat will positively impact the water quality of the watershed in the planned or managed area.

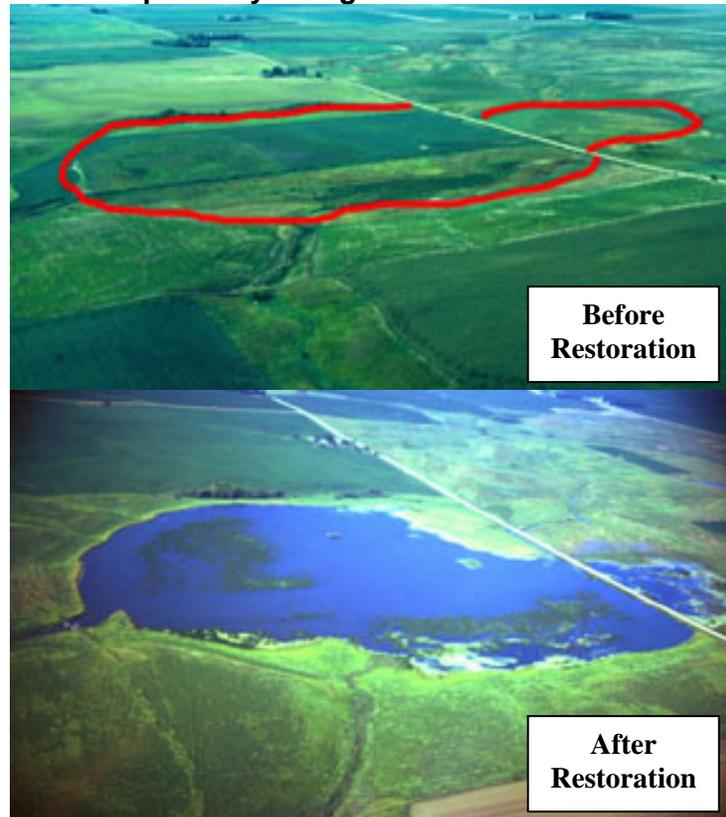
**To apply this practice:** Consideration for planning a unit should take a holistic approach and strive to conserve a diversity of wetland and upland species. Details for implementing this practice and providing habitat for wetland wildlife species are recorded in the Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management Design and Installation Guide and the Standard in Section IV of the Field Office Technical Guide. More specific details of the habitat needs for individual wetland wildlife species can be found on the Wildlife Habitat Management Institute's website, <http://www.ms.nrcs.usda.gov/whmi>.

Potential methods for implementing this practice:

- Connecting wetland habitats to other habitats through the use of corridors to reduce edge effect
- Establishing upland grass buffers to protect the overall function of the wetland and provide habitat for wetland and upland wildlife
- Revegetating wetlands providing habitat for wetland and upland wildlife (this is especially critical to upland species for winter food and cover)
- Restoring hydrology of drained or filled wetlands recreating necessary water regimes for wetland wildlife habitat

- Incorporating management practices to improve wetland wildlife habitat (i.e. prescribed grazing, nutrient management, delayed mowing and haying activities, etc.) to maintain restored, created, or enhanced wetlands.

**Example of Hydrologic Wetland Restoration:**



**Maintaining Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management:** Operation and maintenance requirements shall be documented in a plan to ensure that the practice is functioning as intended. Operation and maintenance items that should be addressed in the plan include:

- appropriate management and monitoring of vegetative cover both within the wetland basin and the surrounding upland
- monitoring of hydrologic restorations (i.e. surface and subsurface plugs, sediment removal)
- control of sediment delivery to the wetland
- management of weed infestations
- acceptable compatible uses (i.e. haying, grazing, burning)

**Applicable Programs:**

- The **Wetlands Reserve Program** is a conservation easement and cost-share program for landowners. NRCS provides financial incentives and technical assistance for restoring, enhancing and protecting wetlands.
- The **Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program** provides both technical assistance and cost-share payments to private landowners through the establishment and improvement of fish and wildlife habitat conservation practices.

**Where to get help:** Contact your local NRCS office for a site-specific plan.