Guidance Documents

Resource Management System Guide Sheet

STATE: Montana
For: WETLAND WILDLIFE HABITAT **Date: August 2001**

RESOURCE SETTING: There are two common scenarios where wetland wildlife habitat is designated as "Wildlife land" on a conservation plan map. In the first, the resource area is the rolling glaciated plains north of the Missouri River. Upland soils are typified by the Scobey series. The Nishon series occupies the glacial potholes. Precipitation ranges from 10"–14" per year. Dominant land uses are small grain-fallow rotations and CRP. In the second scenario, riparian corridors occur along streams in the mountainous and intermountain resource areas of western and central Montana (MLRA 43,44,46). Soils are typically fluvents. Mean annual precipitation ranges from 12"–20". Dominate land uses are rangeland, pastureland and hayland in wetlands and surrounding uplands.

IDENTIFIED PROBLEMS: Nesting cover is inadequate for waterfowl around glacial potholes. Wetlands are being drained and farmed which reduces food and cover during the critical nesting and migrating periods. Farming practices that leave little residue further reduce available habitat for ground nesting birds in adjacent uplands. Livestock that concentrate along stream corridors also reduce riparian habitat structural diversity and degrade fish habitat in streams. Haying and cropping along streambanks have the same effect. Noxious weeds and stream sedimentation further degrade fish and wildlife habitat in riparian areas.

ESSENTIAL PRACTICES: The practice standard considered to be essential to meet a RMS is 644–Wetland Wildlife Habitat.

RMS OPTIONS:

RMS #1 Practices for Glacial Pothole Wetlands

644	Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management	Habitat protection and maintenance
382	Fence	Protect wetland habitat and adjacent nesting cover
645	Upland Wildlife Management	Habitat protection and maintenance
344	Residue Management, Seasonal *	Provides residue and nesting cover
590	Nutrient Management *	Minimize entry of nutrients to surface or groundwater
390	Riparian Herbaceous Cover	Protect water quality and provide nesting cover
512	Pasture and Hayland Planting *	Improve nesting cover for targeted species
657	Wetland Restoration	Restore or improve degraded wetlands

RMS #2 Practices for Riparian Habitat and Associated Wetlands

644	Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management	Habitat protection and maintenance
645	Upland Wildlife Management	Habitat protection and maintenance
382	Fence *	Protect riparian areas
391	Riparian Forest Buffer	Protect riparian areas and provide nesting cover, re-establish woody vegetation
528	Prescribed Grazing	Manage for key species
395	Fish Stream Improvement	Improve fish habitat
322	Channel Vegetation	Protect streambanks and provide nesting cover

***** These practices should be considered on cropland, pasture, and hayland adjacent to upland wildlife habitat to complete a wildlife RMS.

EXAMPLE RMS GUIDE SHEET—To be discarded after local guide sheet is developed.