

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
NEVADA CONSERVATION PRACTICE SPECIFICATION**

**WETLAND WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT**

(Acre)

**CODE 644**

**PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

**DUCKS, GEESE, SHORE BIRDS**

**Courting and Breeding Areas (Open Water)**

1. Minimum size - 1,000 square feet.
2. Minimum depth - 6 inches over 50% of area during March and April.
3. No minimum spacing.
4. Side slope 6:1 or flatter on all sides.

**Brooding or Resting Areas (Open Water)**

1. Minimum size - 1/4 acre.
2. Minimum depth - 3 feet over 50% of area after spring runoff. Two feet over 50% of area if water is available to maintain depth.
3. Side slopes 6:1 or flatter on 50% of shoreline.
4. Remainder of shoreline should be as steep as possible to discourage predators during nesting 1:1 or 2:1.

**Islands Within Water Areas**

1. Minimum size - 300 square feet above average high water level.
2. Side slopes 6:1 or flatter on island.
3. Minimum height - 1 foot above average high water level.
4. No minimum spacing.

**Creating Openings in Wetlands**

**Blasting.** Water level should be above, at, or within 1 foot of ground level during at least 6 months of period of expected use.

Minimum size - 300 square feet surface area.

Minimum depth - 2 feet over 50% of area during period of intended waterfowl use.

Spacing - 300 feet apart (recommended).

**Food Production Areas - Upland Grazing Areas - For Grazing Birds such as Geese, Mallards**

See Wildlife Upland Habitat Management (Code 645) for food plantings on upland sites.

**Recommended Food Species:**

Blue Panic  
Milo  
Corn  
Alfalfa  
Cicer milk vetch  
Wheat  
Barley

**Site Preparation, Seeding Rates, Time of Seeding.** See appropriate Plant Guide

Food Production Areas - With Water - For Ducks, Shore Birds

Minimum size - 1 acre

Water supply and control devices adequate for flooding area when needed.

**Recommended Food Species:**

Bulrush  
Pondweed  
Smartweed  
Wild millet  
Widgeongrass  
Proso millet  
Foxtail millet

**Site Preparation, Seeding Rates, Time of Seeding.** See appropriate Plant Guide.

Planting may not be needed if waterfowl bring in seed.

**Flooding of Food Planting.** See (moist-soil) wetland guide. (This should be included with plant guide or write a new job sheet.)

### **Muskrat and Mink**

#### **Area Without Water Level Control**

1. Minimum size - 1/4 acre. One acre more desirable.
2. Minimum depth should be 3 feet over 20% of area during fall and winter.
3. Side slopes 6:1 or flatter on 50% of shoreline.

#### **Area With Water Level Control**

1. Minimum size 1/4 acre. One acre more desirable.
2. Minimum depth.
  - a. Spring and summer - 12 to 15 inches
  - b. Fall and winter - 3 feet over 20% of area
3. Adequate water supply must be available to maintain water depth.

### **Food Production Areas**

1. Cattails (*Typha latifolia*) preferred. (See Plant Guide.)
2. Plantings generally not necessary.

**Level Ditching.** See level ditching specifications above (1-D-1).

### **Other Species Using Wetlands**

1. Pheasant, beaver, snipes, shore birds, doves, non-game birds.
2. No specifications - see appropriate Animal Guides or consult NRCS Biologist.

### **Water quantity**

Impoundment development can result in reduced frequency of destructive flood flows in the downstream channel. In areas of permeable soil, increased infiltration and percolation in the impoundment areas may increase ground water recharge. Protection and vegetation management elements of this

practice would have minor effects on surface and ground water resources.

### **Water Quality**

The effects of water manipulation may be more substantial than other elements (i.e. vegetation management, excavation, area protection by fencing, etc.). Impoundment development may result in sediment storage and reduction in sediment transport to downstream areas, increased nutrient uptake with a reduction in amounts delivered to downstream areas, and pesticide entrapment.

Effects on downstream water quality may include reduced downstream flow, water temperature increase, tannin stained water, increased hydrogen sulfide, increased or decreased pH, changed alkalinity, lowered dissolved oxygen, and increased dissolved carbon dioxide. Soils and climatic conditions influence the effects of this practice on water chemistry. The vegetation management part of this practice often includes herbicide use, which could have an adverse effect on downstream use of the water.

### **PRACTICE SPECIFICATION**

The principal species of wildlife to be benefited and the practice will be named, and the acreage and location will be given in the case file. All water uses will comply with state law.

Managed areas for wetland wildlife will be at least one acre in size.

Specifications for the establishment and maintenance of habitat for some waterfowl species and other wetland wildlife are given in individual Animal Guides - Mallard, Canada goose, etc.

Planting, establishment, maintenance, and management specifications for selected plants are found in individual Plant Guides - Japanese millet, buckwheat, cattail, etc.

Plants used in this practice will be adapted to the climate and soils of the area.

Adequate water to develop and maintain wetland habitat must be available.

All earthwork and water control structures needed will comply with applicable

engineering standards and specifications for dikes, levees, and water control structures.

Domestic livestock will be excluded from all wetland developments when plants would be damaged during nesting season and during winter.

Wetland development should be located away from farmsteads, well-traveled roads, or other areas where human activities may seriously harass the desired species of wildlife. Consult NRCS biologist for further information.

#### **REFERENCES**

Making Land Produce Useful Wildlife,  
Farmers' Bulletin 2035, USDA.

Wild Ducks on Farmland in the South,  
Farmers' Bulletin 2218, USDA.

Pond and Marshes for Wild Ducks on Farms  
and Ranches in the Northern Plains, Farmers'  
Bulletin 2234, USDA

USDI, FWS, Circular 39

Animal Guides for Mallards and Canada  
Geese.