

**2000-2001
LANDOWNER'S GUIDE
TO VOLUNTARY
WETLAND PROGRAMS
IN ARKANSAS**



Wetland
Conservation
and
Production
Agriculture
in
Arkansas:
The Common
Ground

FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The purpose of this guide is to assist private landowners in the conservation and management of Arkansas' wetlands and associated agricultural lands. It contains information on voluntary programs that provide technical and/or financial assistance for wetland and riparian habitat restoration and agricultural land management activities.

Many different conservation programs are available through various government agencies and private organizations. Detailed program information and agency contacts were combined in this guide to provide a "one-stop" source of information on all wetland-related programs currently available to Arkansas landowners. These programs offer:

- ❖ **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE** on combining wetland restoration and management with agricultural production, including integrated management plans for wildlife, forestry, and agriculture.
- ❖ **FINANCIAL INCENTIVES** including cash benefits, improvement cost sharing, tax incentives, conservation easements, and limited development materials such as water control structures.

These voluntary programs have been highly successful in helping private landowners restore and preserve the natural, recreational, cultural and economic values of their property. The resulting improvements in land stewardship benefit sustainable agriculture, and are essential components of state and national conservation initiatives.

The programmatic information listed herein was generously provided by the respective conservation agencies and organizations. Agriculture programs are based on the 1990 and 1996 Farm Bill. Future updates of this guide are planned as existing programs are modified and new programs are developed.

We hope this reference guide will enable landowners to optimize the conservation of their valuable wetland resource while enhancing their economic situation.

The Arkansas Multi-Agency Wetland Planning Team (MAWPT) produced this document with help from many different agency personnel. The material was compiled by the MAWPT Coordinator, Jeff Raasch. The MAWPT is made up of representatives of the following Agencies:

- ❖ Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission
- ❖ Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
- ❖ Arkansas Forestry Commission
- ❖ Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission
- ❖ Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality
- ❖ University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service

In addition, MAWPT would like to thank David Long, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, and Jody Pagan, Natural Resources Conservation Service, for the time they put in reviewing this guidebook, and special thanks to Beverly Birdsong of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission for publication layout.



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AFC	Arkansas Forestry Commission
AGFC	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
ANHC	Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission
ASWCC	Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission
CCC	Commodity Credit Corporation
CCS	Challenge Cost Share
COC	County Committee
CRP	Conservation Reserve Program
CWA	Clean Water Act
DU	Ducks Unlimited
EQIP	Environmental Quality Incentive Program
FIP	Forestry Incentive Program
FSA	Farm Services Agency
FSP	Forestry Stewardship Program
MAWPT	Multi-Agency Wetland Planning Team
NPS	Nonpoint Source Management Program
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
SIP	Stewardship Incentive Program
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
WHIP	Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program
WRP	Wetlands Reserve Program

INTRODUCTION

Private landowners play the controlling role in determining the future of our nation's wetland-related natural resources. More than three-quarters of the remaining wetlands in the lower 48 states are privately-owned. In Arkansas, about 90 percent of the state is in private ownership, including a significant portion of the remaining wetlands and nearly all converted and farmed wetlands suitable for restoration or management. Clearly, private land stewardship is key to wetland conservation and restoration in Arkansas.

State and federal agencies and private conservation organizations have recognized the need for private land stewardship by developing a wide array of voluntary land conservation and management programs to assist private landowners. In many cases, these programs integrate conservation principles with common agricultural practices to help landowners meet their overall landuse objectives.

This guide was developed as a comprehensive source of voluntary technical and financial assistance currently available to Arkansas' private landowners. The programs that deliver this assistance are designed to advance wetland conservation and improve land stewardship for the benefit of the landowner and society.

WHY CONSERVE OR RESTORE WETLANDS?



Wetlands provide many important functions and values to society as a whole. These include providing habitat for wildlife such as waterfowl, reducing the severity of floods, contributing to groundwater recharge, and improving water quality. Some of these wetland functions and values can also be provided on agricultural lands during fall and winter if certain conservation practices are employed.

Conservation of wetlands and management of agricultural lands can produce a wide variety of benefits to individual landowners as well, enhancing both economic and agricultural objectives. For example:

- ❖ Some programs pay cash for wetland conservation (including restoration costs) *on lands that remain in private ownership*.
- ❖ Leasing wetlands can provide from a few dollars an acre for deer hunting to hundreds of dollars an acre for duck hunting.
- ❖ Forested wetland management can provide significant future timber revenues.
- ❖ Many agricultural practices, such as reducing soil erosion, benefit adjacent wetlands while increasing short-term (annual) net profits and long-term earnings potential (productivity) of the land.

ARKANSAS' WETLANDS

The Mississippi Alluvial Valley (Delta) was once the largest (24.2 million acres) forested wetland complex in the U.S. However, due to the alteration of its hydrology coupled with the associated land clearing, only 11.8 million acres remained by 1937; and by 1985, 81 percent of its wetlands were lost.



Arkansas originally possessed over 8 million acres of the Delta, which contained about

95 percent of the wetlands in the state. By 1985, only about 875,000 acres of Arkansas' original forested wetlands were left. This 89 percent loss was greater than that of any of the other major Delta states, and Arkansas has lost more wetland acres than any other inland state in the nation, ranking fourth among all states.

WETLANDS AND AGRICULTURE IN ARKANSAS: THE COMMON GROUND

It is obvious that much of Arkansas' current agricultural landscape was once wetland. This will not change significantly, although there are now some programs directed at the restoration of wetlands on marginal agricultural lands. More important to the conservation of Arkansas' remaining wetlands is that virtually all are located in very low areas, and are therefore influenced greatly by dominant agricultural practices. The greatest threats to the long-term conservation of Arkansas' remaining wetlands are the cumulative impacts from (1) altered flooding regimes, and (2) increased sedimentation rates. Both of these impacts are a result of changes to the landscape that have modified hydrology and increased soil erosion.

Remaining wetlands in the upper parts of watersheds are now less wet due to the progressive alteration by past drainage projects, while wetlands in the lower parts of watersheds, especially the larger ones, are flooded longer and deeper than in the past due to the rapid drainage of water from the upper watershed into these lower areas. Increased sedimentation, the other major problem, is currently filling in some of the remaining wetlands and oxbow lakes at over 25 times the natural rate.

Fortunately, the conservation, agricultural and political communities have all recognized that development of partnerships to implement voluntary, incentive-based programs can lead to significant progress in addressing these problems without economic sacrifice by landowners. New agricultural developments and research has made it possible, more acceptable, and in many cases more cost effective, for farmers to incorporate "wetland-friendly" practices into their normal production practices.

For example, winter flooding of rice fields is a wetland conservation practice in that it provides some important wetland wildlife functions (e.g., waterfowl foraging habitat) and reduces sediment runoff by approximately 50 percent; in addition, it also greatly benefits the producer in providing effective red rice control and cost-effective winter weed suppression.

Thus, specific programs have been developed to encourage voluntary implementation of such practices. In addition, conservation provisions in the Farm Bills provide incentives to promote many desirable practices in ways that avoid adverse impacts on the agricultural economy.

THIS PUBLICATION

This “Landowner’s Guide to Voluntary Wetland Programs in Arkansas” is intended to provide you, the private landowner, with a quick reference and concise listing of voluntary programs designed to foster the growth of partnerships on behalf of wetland conservation and management.

Included is an Index to County-Level Contacts, which lists the appropriate conservation agency personnel to contact for assistance in your county. Please check the program descriptions for the appropriate agency contact.

Three appendices are also included for your reference. Appendix A lists descriptions of most agencies and organizations that offer programs included in this guide. Appendix B lists useful wetland definitions to aid in discussions between you and technical assistance providers. Appendix C is a summary of current wetland regulation compliance requirements that may affect land management activities.

QUICK REFERENCE INDEX

The following Quick Reference Index provides an easy means to identify programs appropriate for individual landowner situations, and the location of their description in this publication. The index is organized as follows:

EXISTING WETLANDS: This land category deals with the conservation and management of existing natural wetlands not in row crop production.

- Protection:** Incentives to protect existing wetlands from conversion.
- Improvement (timber):** Incentives to manage forested wetlands for timber value.
- Improvement (wildlife):** Incentives to manage existing wetlands for wildlife.

CROPLANDS: This land category deals with the conservation and management of converted or farmed wetlands and other agricultural lands.

- Reforestation (timber):** Incentives to reforest cleared lands for future timber value.
- Restoration (shallow water):** Incentives to restore croplands to shallow wetlands.
- Enhancement (wildlife):** Incentives to improve cropland for wetland wildlife value.
- Enhancement (soil and water):** Incentives to conserve soil and water on cropland.

QUICK REFERENCE INDEX

EXISTING WETLANDS		ASSISTANCE		
MANAGEMENT OPTION	Agency – Private Lands Program	Financial	Technical	Page #
PROTECTION	Arkansas Forestry Commission -Forestry Stewardship Program		X	22-23
	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission -Private Lands Program		X	23-24
	Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission -Land Acquisition Program	X		24
	-Wetland Easement Program	X		25
	Ducks Unlimited -Conservation Easement Program	X		31-32
	Farm Services Agency -USDA Conservation Contracts “Debt For Nature Program”	X		10-12
	Natural Resources Conservation Service -Wetlands Reserve Program	X	X	16-17
The Nature Conservancy	X	X	33	
IMPROVEMENT (Timber)	Arkansas Forestry Commission -Forestry Incentives Program		X	22
	-Forestry Stewardship Program	X	X	22-23
	-Nursery Program		(seedlings for sale)	22
	-Rural Forestry Assistance		X	21-22
	Farm Services Agency -USDA Conservation Contracts “Debt For Nature Program”	X		10-12
Natural Resources Conservation Service	-Forestry Incentives Program	X	X	15-16
	-Wetlands Reserve Program	X	X	16-17
IMPROVEMENT (Wildlife)	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission -Private Lands Program		X	23-24
	Ducks Unlimited -Arkansas Partners Project	X	X	30-31

EXISTING WETLANDS, CONT.

ASSISTANCE

MANAGEMENT OPTION	Agency – Private Lands Program	Financial	Technical	Page #
IMPROVEMENT (Wildlife)	Farm Services Agency -USDA Conservation Contracts “Debt For Nature Program”	X		10-12
	Natural Resources Conservation Service -Forestry Incentives Program	X	X	15-16
	-Wetlands Reserve Program	X	X	16-17
	-Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program	X	X	18
	United States Fish and Wildlife Service -Challenge Cost Share Program	X	X	20
	-Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program	X	X	19-20

CROPLANDS

REFORESTATION (Timber)	Arkansas Forestry Commission -Forestry Incentives Program	X	X	22
	-Nursery Program	(seedlings for sale)		22
	Ducks Unlimited -Arkansas Partners Project	X	X	30-31
	Farm Services Agency -Conservation Reserve Program	X	X	12-13
	-USDA Conservation Contracts “Debt For Nature Program”	X		10-12
	Natural Resources Conservation Service -Environmental Quality Incentive Program	X	X	13-15
	-Forestry Incentives Program	X	X	15-16
	-Wetlands Reserve Program	X	X	16-17
	United States Fish and Wildlife Service -Challenge Cost Share Program	X	X	20
	-Partners for Fish and Wildlife Programs	X	X	19-20

RESTORATION (Shallow Water)	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission -Private Lands Program		X	23-24
	Ducks Unlimited -Arkansas Partners Project	X	X	30-31
	Farm Services Agency -Conservation Reserve Program	X	X	12-13
	-USDA Conservation Contracts “Debt For Nature Program”	X		10-12

CROPLANDS, CONT.

ASSISTANCE

MANAGEMENT OPTION	Agency – Private Lands Program	Financial	Technical	Page #
RESTORATION (Shallow Water)	Farm Services Agency -Conservation Reserve Program	X	X	12-13
	Natural Resources Conservation Service -Wetlands Reserve Program	X	X	16-17
	United States Fish and Wildlife Service -Challenge Cost Share Program	X	X	20
	-Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program	X	X	19-20

ENHANCEMENT (Wildlife)	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission -Private Lands Program		X	23-24
	Ducks Unlimited -Arkansas Partners Project	X	X	30-31
	Farm Services Agency -Conservation Reserve Program	X	X	12-13
	Natural Resources Conservation Service -Wetlands Reserve Program	X	X	16-17
	-Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program	X	X	18
	U of A Cooperative Extension Service -Managing Rice For Ducks		X	28-29
	United States Fish and Wildlife Service -Challenge Cost Share Program	X	X	20
	-Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program	X	X	19-20

ENHANCEMENT (Soil and Water)	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission -Private Lands Program		X	23-24
	Ducks Unlimited -Arkansas Partners Project	X	X	30-31
	Farm Services Agency -Conservation Reserve Program	X	X	12-13
	-USDA Conservation Contracts “Debt For Nature Program”	X		10-12
	Natural Resources Conservation Service -Environmental Quality Incentive Program	X	X	13-15
	-Forestry Incentives Program	X	X	15-16
	-Wetlands Reserve Program	X	X	16-17
	Arkansas Soil and Water Commission -Arkansas Private Wetland and Riparian Zone Creation and Restoration Incentives Act	X		26-27
	-Nonpoint Source Management Program	X	X	25-26

AGENCY AND PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Descriptions of agency programs are included as supplemental information to the “Quick Reference Index.” Program descriptions are uniform in format for convenience and have an agency contact available to answer additional questions. Program information is listed under the following headings:

1. Program Overview
2. Eligibility
3. Advantages
4. Constraints
5. Program Mechanics
6. Additional Program Information
7. Contact

Contacts for Forestry Commission programs are the county-level foresters listed in the “Index of County-Level Contacts” (pages 7-9). Program information was compiled December 1999. Annual update of program information is anticipated depending on staff availability.

Farm Service Agency

USDA CONSERVATION CONTRACTS

“DEBT FOR NATURE PROGRAM”

Program Overview: Persons with Farm Service Agency (FSA) loans secured by real estate may qualify for cancellation of a portion of their FSA indebtedness in exchange for a conservation contract. A conservation contract is a voluntary legal agreement to restrict the type and amount of development that may take place on portions of a landowners property. Contracts may be established on marginal cropland and other environmentally sensitive lands for conservation, recreation and wildlife purposes. All the details of the contract are worked out and explained to an interested borrower before he or she chooses to enter the contract agreement.

Eligibility: All FSA farm loan borrowers who have loans secured by real estate are eligible if they have land that qualifies for a conservation contract. This includes both borrowers who are up-to-date on their payments as well as those who are experiencing difficulty in keeping their loans current. A conservation contract may be considered alone or in conjunction with FSA’s Primary Loan Servicing Programs or new loans which are secured by real estate. Eligible lands include the following:

- ❖ Wetlands.
- ❖ Highly erodible lands.
- ❖ Lands containing aquatic life, endangered species, or wildlife habitat of local, regional or national importance.

- ❖ Lands in 100-year floodplains.
- ❖ Areas of high water quality or scenic value.
- ❖ Historic or cultural properties listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
- ❖ Aquifer recharge areas of local, regional or state importance.
- ❖ Buffer zones necessary to protect proposed conservation easement areas.
- ❖ Areas within or adjacent to federal, state or local conservation areas.

Except for wetlands and wildlife habitat, eligible lands must have been considered row cropped during the 3-year period ending on December 23, 1985. Lands that are enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) may also be eligible.

Advantages: By participating in the Debt For Nature Program, borrowers reduce their FSA debt, thereby improving their overall financial stability. Also, borrowers can conserve wildlife habitat and improve the environment and scenic value of their farms.

Constraints: The program is limited to those landowners who have a loan on real property with the FSA. The program promotes wetland protection and the protection of other environmentally sensitive lands. It has the potential to protect various types of land as noted under the eligibility section.

Program Mechanics: The process begins at the FSA County Office level when a borrower requests to be considered for a conservation agreement. The Agriculture Credit Manager determines if the borrower is eligible and contacts members of a contract review team. This team, consisting of representatives of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC), and other interested state and local conservation agencies, works with the prospective borrower to conduct a field evaluation of the farm. Within 30 days of site review, the team provides a report to the Agriculture Credit Manager indicating the following: eligible lands; potential contract boundaries; finding of whether land is suitable for conservation, recreation, and/or wildlife purpose; name of agency or entity willing to accept contract enforcement responsibility from FSA; recommended terms and conditions of the contract; and a proposed management plan consistent with the contract purposes.

The Agriculture Credit Manager then evaluates the contract review team’s report to determine if a conservation contract can be established on the farm in exchange for debt reduction.

Additional Program Information: In general, the amount of a borrower’s FSA farmer loan debt secured by real property that can be canceled is proportional to the amount of the farm that will be covered by the contract. However, for borrowers up-to-date on their loan payment or receiving a new loan secured by real estate, no more than 33 percent of the loan principal can be canceled in exchange for an contract.

FSA will cover the cost of all surveys, appraisals and recording fees associated with the conservation contract. However, the borrower must obtain written consent to the terms of the conservation contract from all prior and/or junior lienholder(s), if any exist.

In general, the following activities are prohibited:

- ❖ Building, construction or other development.
- ❖ Altering the vegetation or surface or ground water on the contract site, except for the purpose of wildlife habitat restoration or management as prescribed by the contract manager and enforcement authority.
- ❖ Allowing access for livestock, unless worked out with the contract manager to protect the contract area.
- ❖ Harvesting timber.
- ❖ Placing refuse, waste, or other contaminants or debris on the contract area.

The borrower retains the right to control public access to the contract area, and may use the area in a manner compatible with the contract (e.g., hunting and fishing). The contract enforcement authority, in conjunction with FSA, monitors the terms and conditions of the conservation contract.

In most instances, the Fish and Wildlife Service provides the technical and financial assistance necessary to restore wetlands and other important habitats valuable to migratory birds and other wildlife on the contract area. If funds are not available, restoration may occur by natural succession.

Once a conservation contract is established, the property is subject to the contract for its duration, regardless of who owns the land. New owners of the property will be subject to the same restrictions and retain the same rights as the borrower who granted the contract in exchange for debt reduction.

For more information contact:

Ron Phillips
State Environmental Coordinator
USDA/Farm Service Agency
700 West Capitol, Room 3416
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-301-3036

David Long
Agricultural Liaison
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
2920 McClellan
Jonesboro, AR 72401
501-932-6888

Farm Service Agency

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM

Program Overview: The Conservation Reserve Program introduced in the Food Security Act of 1985, and amended by the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 and 1996, encouraged farmers to enroll highly erodible cropland and/or land contributing to a serious water quality problem into the reserve for 10-15 years.

The CRP reduces soil erosion, protects the nation's ability to produce food and fiber, reduces sedimentation in streams and lakes, improves water quality, establishes wildlife habitat, and enhances forest and wetland resources. It encourages farmers to convert highly erodible cropland or other environmentally sensitive acreage to vegetative cover, such as tame or native grasses, wildlife plantings, bottomland hardwood, trees, filter strips or riparian buffers.

Farmers receive an annual rental payment for the term of the multi-year contract. Cost sharing is provided to establish the vegetative cover practices. The CRP program is administered by the FSA and is implemented through the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC).

Eligibility: CRP lands are qualified based on erosion problems and wetland restoration is based on the acres of Prior Converted wetlands to farmed wetland that can be restored. The program focuses on enrolling land that will yield the highest environmental benefits when taken out of production. Less erodible land better suited for planting crops may be allowed to return to production as contracts expire.

Under CRP, the FSA will cost-share with landowners to implement an approved conservation plan and pay landowners annual rental payments for 10-15 years to maintain those practices. To be eligible, landowners must have owned their land for at least one year. Eligible lands must have been planted or considered planted to a commodity crop two years out of the five most recent years and must be physically and legally capable of being cropped.

Advantages: Eligible landowners receive annual rental payments for the land, cost-sharing for establishing certain conservation practices, and technical assistance to plant vegetation for conservation. There is a 20 percent incentive payment on some practices and some continuous practices have very high soil rental rates.

Constraints: Lands in CRP cannot be tilled or grazed until the end of the 10-15 year contract (only lands planted to trees may have a longer contract).

Program Mechanics: CRP is administered by FSA. Technical assistance for the program is provided by the NRCS, the Cooperative Extension Service, the state forestry and wildlife agencies and local conservation districts.

Additional Program Information: Continuous sign up practices like CP-9, CP-22 and CP-21 are not ranked. If you sign up you will get rental payments if the property is eligible.

Contact: For more information contact your local USDA Service Center or

Clayton Parr
Farm Service Agency
Room 5416, Federal Building
700 West Capitol
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-324-5457

Natural Resources Conservation Service

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Program Overview: Individuals eligible to participate in Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) must be engaged in livestock or crop production. Conservation plans must address conservation needs for a minimum of five years. USDA will pay up to 50 percent of the cost of eligible practices in most cases and up to 75 percent in

selected high priority areas. Applicants can make their EQIP bids more competitive by increasing personal inputs and decreasing the cost-share request. A minimum of a 5-year contract is required on all land receiving cost-share assistance. All fields within the farm tract will not be eligible for any other EQIP cost-share assistance for five years. Cost share practices should not begin until after the contract is signed and approved by Farm Service Agency County Committee (FSA COC). Soils tests are required. EQIP funding is not available for pasture improvement (lime and fertilizer only).

Eligibility: Conservation practices eligible for EQIP include vegetative practices such as pasture establishment, structural practices such as animal waste facilities or irrigation pipeline, and management practices such as nutrient management. Individuals eligible to participate in EQIP must be engaged in livestock or agricultural production defined by the FSA and meet all conservation compliance conditions outlined by the 1996 Farm Bill. FSA personnel can aid applicants in determining status or farm eligibility.

Application Process: EQIP sign-up periods are set by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, with a continuous, year round sign-up and at least one selection period each year. Only those applications received prior to and during the selection period will be ranked and considered for the funding period. Applications received later will be held until the next selection period. All USDA Service Centers and FSA, NRCS and Conservation District offices accept applications.

Ranking Process: Upon receipt of an EQIP application, NRCS will schedule a meeting with the applicant to discuss the conservation needs of the farm and the practices needed to address those needs. A conservation plan will be developed which outlines the applicant's decisions and the practices required to meet the conservation needs. Conservation plans must address conservation needs for a minimum of five years. Once the plan is developed, data from it will be entered into an EQIP ranking worksheet. The worksheet assigns points for the environmental benefits provided by the plan, including water quality and animal waste, soil quality-erosion, groundwater decline concerns, wildlife and waterfowl habitat establishment, and alternative crop technology. The total points of each application are weighed against the total dollars of cost-share assistance requested to calculate index values. Cost-sharing may pay up to 75 percent of eligible conservation practices but, in most cases, will pay up to 50 percent. The index values are used to compare applications in EQIP funding areas. EQIP is designed to get the maximum conservation return for the cost-share dollar spent. Applicants can make their EQIP bids more competitive by increasing personal inputs and decreasing the cost-share requested. Prior to submitting ranked applications for funding consideration, NRCS will meet with each applicant to review ranking and to confirm the application's index value. All ranked applications are submitted to NRCS for funding consideration. When the funding decisions are made, NRCS will forward them to the FSA offices for applicant notification.

Funding Process: Applicants will be notified of their application funding status by the FSA. Once a ranked application is approved for funding, an official conservation plan and cost-share support document is prepared by NRCS and forwarded to the FSA for FSA County Committee approval. Approved applicants may begin implementing their conservation plans only after receiving final EQIP approval notification from the FSA COC. Applicants not approved for funding may reapply at any time. All EQIP appli-

cants have the appeal rights described in USDA guidelines and policies. Cost-share payments are limited to a maximum of \$50,000 per individual for the life of a contract. Annually, the cost-share is limited to \$10,000 per individual. Contracts must be for a minimum of five years and cannot exceed 10 years. Conservation practices installed within the first year of the contract will be paid after October 1 of that year. In the following years, payment will be made once conservation practice installation is certified complete by NRCS and the bill for installing a conservation practice has been processed (usually two to four weeks). Payments are directly deposited to the approved applicant's bank of choice.

Plan Development and Implementation: Once an applicant is approved for EQIP funding, a 5-year contract or plan is developed listing the cost-shared and noncost-shared practices. For example, if an applicant is funded for pasture establishment, a noncost-shared practice for pasture management is included in the agreement. These practices are required to be carried out for the life of the contract. Noncost-shared practices help insure the funded practices are managed properly and sustained. There may also be an opportunity for the applicant to add some noncost-shared practices to the plan to improve eligibility for funding. A minimum of a 5-year contract is required on all land receiving cost-share assistance. Cost-shared practices should not be started until after the contract is signed and approved by the FSA COC. Applicants must complete at least one cost-shared practice within the first 12 months of signing an EQIP contract. All fields within the farm tract will not be eligible for any other EQIP cost-share assistance for five years. Soils tests are required for all pasture-establishment practices. If a soils test is not provided at the time of application, NRCS will make an estimate of lime and fertilizer needs to approximate EQIP contract costs, but the applicant must get a soils test and follow its recommendations when implementing the contract. EQIP funding is not available for pasture improvement. Lime and fertilizer costs are only payable when associated with pasture-establishment practices.

Contact: For more information about EQIP, contact your local USDA Service Center.

Natural Resources Conservation Service FORESTRY INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Program Overview: The Forestry Incentive Program (FIP) is the major USDA forest tree planting program and can be used to help restore wooded wetlands. FIP provides technical and cost-share assistance to landowners participating in any one of the four national forestry practices eligible under FIP. The overall goal with FIP is to increase the nation's supply of timber products from private nonindustrial forest lands and to preserve and improve the environment. FIP is jointly administered in Arkansas by the NRCS in cooperation with the Arkansas Forestry Commission (AFC).

Eligibility: FIP is available to all counties in Arkansas. FIP is limited to landowners who own 5-1,000 acres.

Advantages: Cost-share assistance may be up to 50 percent of the actual, average or estimated cost of performing the practice. The maximum cost-share a participant can earn annually for forestry practices under FIP is \$7,500.

Constraints: Ornamental, Christmas tree production and orchard tree plantings are not eligible for FIP funding.

Program Mechanics: Landowners apply for participation in the program at the county NRCS office. Upon request from NRCS, the AFC examines the property, develops the Forest Management Plan, and certifies the need for the practice. Forest management plans should specify the need for wetlands and riparian area protection measures.

During the planning process, wetlands conservation and restoration opportunities should be discussed with the landowner and agreed-to measures incorporated into the final plan. The AFC will also provide technical advice and help locate approved vendors for getting the work accomplished.

Additional Program Information: Eligible FIP practices are divided into four forestry practice areas: tree planting (FP1), improving a stand of forest trees (FP2), site preparation for natural regeneration of trees (FP3), and special forestry practices (FP4). All FIP practices require a minimum 10-year maintenance agreement from the landowner.

The AFC must certify that the work has been completed in accordance with the approved plan before payment is made to the landowner.

Contact: For more information contact your local USDA Service Center, Forestry Commission Office or Cooperative Extension Agent.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

WETLANDS RESERVE PROGRAM

Program Overview: The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) was authorized by the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990. WRP is a voluntary program offering landowners a chance to receive payments for restoring and protecting wetlands on their property. Under WRP, landowners are provided cost-share funds and/or land payments to restore wetlands.

Eligibility: Eligible for inclusion in the WRP are wetlands farmed under natural conditions, farmed wetlands, farmed wetlands pasture and wetlands converted to cropland prior to December 23, 1985. Adjacent land deemed necessary to protect the restored wetlands will also be included. WRP lands must contain a substantial amount of restorable wetland. Limited areas of natural wetland, plus nonwetland areas needed to buffer the wetland from disturbance or to establish reasonable field boundaries, may be included. Former cropland areas, where either wetland hydrology or vegetation have been altered, are potential sites.

Riparian areas that link wetlands protected by easement or similar device are also eligible for WRP regardless of their land use. The protected areas being linked can be protected by a WRP easement entered in a previous sign-up or offered at the same time, or it may be a wetland area owned and protected by a government agency or a private organization. Because of the multiplicity of these values provided by connecting riparian strips, riparian offers are generally given a top priority for acceptance.

Advantages: In Arkansas, qualifying landowners may receive up to \$700 per acre for the agricultural value of land and will receive up to 100 percent cost-share for essential conservation practices necessary to restore the areas to wetlands in the permanent easement program. Under the 30-year easement the landowner may receive 75 percent of the appraised agricultural value and 75 percent cost-share on restoration. Under the 10-year restoration agreement there is no easement payment, but landowners receive 75 percent cost share for restoration. State agencies and private conservation organizations may provide additional assistance and incentives for enrollment.

All legal costs associated with recording the easement, such as appraisal, survey and closing costs, will be paid by the federal government. Landowners continue to own the land and may request compatible uses such as hunting, fishing and timber management.

Constraints: The WRP easement does not open the areas to public hunting, fishing or other forms of recreation unless the landowner desires to do so. The landowner will be responsible for the minimal maintenance the area may require and for state and local land taxes. However, taxes will likely be minimal as the land can no longer be used for crop production or developed for other uses. When lands are sold, the easement will follow the sale and the new owner will assume easement obligations.

Program Mechanics: Owners of eligible lands apply for enrollment at their local NRCS office by declaring their intent to participate during the specified enrollment periods. Following the declared intentions (or tentative offers), the NRCS and the USFWS, assisted by the AGFC, will determine the eligibility of the acres offered.

The NRCS, with the assistance of the USFWS/AGFC, will rank the intentions and help landowners develop the restoration plan. Each plan will describe intentions and objectives as to restoration practices needed to accomplish the restoration, landowner requirements for maintaining the restored wetland values, and other details. The compatible uses of the land after the easement is filed will also be spelled out in detail in the plan. They may include hunting, fishing, timber harvest, haying or grazing, and other uses depending upon the situation. Duration and timing of these activities must be agreed upon and approved prior to carrying out the activity. No activities may degrade or diminish the wetland functions and values of the land under easement.

Additional Program Information: After completion and approval of the plan by the agencies and the landowner, the plan and rating from the ranking factors will be reviewed by NRCS. High priority intentions, on which to extend offers, will then be selected.

The landowners selected for the program may accept the amount offered by NRCS for the easement at any time before the easement filing deadline. The federal government's payment to the landowner (when the easement is filed) will be based on the appraised agricultural value of the land unless the landowner has offered to take less.

Contact: For more information about WRP contact your local USDA Service Center.

Natural Resources Conservation Service WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVES PROGRAM

Program Overview: The Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program for people who want to develop and improve wildlife habitat primarily on private lands. It provides both technical assistance and cost-share payments to help establish and improve fish and wildlife habitat. Participants who own or control land agree to prepare and implement a wildlife habitat development plan. The NRCS provides technical and financial assistance for the establishment of wildlife habitat development practices. In addition, if the landowner agrees, cooperating state wildlife agencies and nonprofit or private organizations may provide expertise or additional funding to help complete a project.

Participants work with NRCS to prepare a wildlife habitat development plan in cooperation with the local conservation district. The plan describes the participant's goals for improving wildlife habitat, includes a list of practices and a schedule for installing them, and details the steps necessary to maintain the habitat for the life of the agreement. This plan may or may not be part of a larger conservation plan that addresses other resource needs such as water quality and soil erosion. NRCS and the participant enter into a cost-share agreement for wildlife habitat development. This agreement generally lasts from 5-10 years from the date the agreement is signed. Cost-share payments may be used to establish new practices or replace practices that fail for reasons beyond the participant's control.

- ❖ All lands are eligible for WHIP, except:
- ❖ Federal lands.
- ❖ Land currently enrolled in Waterbank, Conservation Reserve Program, Wetlands Reserve Program or other similar programs.

Lands where the expected impacts from on-site or off-site conditions make the success of habitat improvement unlikely.

WHIP funds are distributed to states based on state wildlife habitat priorities which may include: wildlife habitat areas, targeted species and their habitats, and specific practices. WHIP may be implemented in cooperation with other federal, state or local agencies, conservation districts or private conservation groups. State priorities are developed through a locally led process to identify wildlife resource needs and finalized in consultation with the State Technical Committee.

Currently, there is no money available to fund the program. New funding will be sought from Congress in the next Farm Bill.

Contact: For more information about WHIP, contact your local USDA Service Center, the Cooperative Extension Service or your local conservation district.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service PARTNERS FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE

Program Overview: The Partners for Fish and Wildlife program offers financial and technical assistance to landowners who wish to restore wetland habitats on lands which are currently degraded or converted wetlands, especially prior-converted or farmed wetlands, or are riparian, stream or other critical habitats. The program focuses on reestablishment of original natural communities.

Eligibility: Subject to priority and preference factors stated below, any degraded or converted wetland or riparian area is eligible for financial assistance. Upland habitats are eligible for financial assistance only if their restoration will contribute to certain program goals (e.g., unique habitats, threatened or endangered species).

Advantages: The program can provide the total project cost for restoration projects, and up to a 50 percent cost-share for selected habitat enhancement projects. The emphasis of the program is on the development and enhancement of wildlife habitat, especially for migratory birds, including waterfowl. Landowner's may request up to \$10,000 a year for eligible projects.

Constraints: Most of the funds are available for projects which restore hydrology and natural vegetation, which in Arkansas is predominantly bottomland hardwoods. These projects require that the land involved will not be in agricultural production for at least 10 years, or for 30 years for reforested acres. This program can not secure land use rights (easements or rent).

Program Mechanics: Landowners with a potential Partners for Fish and Wildlife project, should contact with the USFWS state representative listed below for further discussions to ascertain his eligibility, further interest, assess current program funding status, etc. If the landowner is eligible and interested in continuing, a USFWS (or, in some cases, AGFC) technical assistant will visit with the owner on his land to discuss further the landowner's objectives, determine financial assistance needed and desired, and to develop a project plan and proposal. The proposal and funding request is then submitted to the USFWS regional partners coordinator for consideration. Applications are normally taken once per year in mid-August; however, it is strongly encouraged that suitable project proposals be submitted throughout the year because there are frequently midyear funding additions to the program. If funded, a "handshake" management agreement is signed by the landowner, funding arrangements finalized, and the project is implemented. Normally, the landowner arranges for the actual field work, but this is negotiable under special circumstances.

Additional Program Information: The program strongly emphasizes habitat restoration over enhancement, and places a priority on projects which benefit federal trust resources, e.g., migratory waterfowl and other birds, threatened and endangered species, and wetlands. Project review and application is a relatively simple, straightforward process, making the program well suited for small to medium-sized restoration projects. Habitat agreements may be modified or terminated by either party under specified conditions. Projects with in-kind services (or cash) provided by the landowner (e.g., landowner agrees to install structure and maintain it over the period of agreement) receive a higher priority, other factors being equal.

For more information contact:

Tom Edwards
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Wildlife and Habitat Management Office
110 Industrial Street
Hazen, AR 72064
870-255-3812

Melvin Tobin
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Arkansas Field Office
1500 Museum Road, Suite 105
Conway, AR 72032
501-513-4473
email: Melvin_Tobin@fws.gov

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service CHALLENGE COST SHARE

Program Overview: The objectives and purposes of the USFWS Challenge Cost Share (CCS) program are almost the same as the Partners for Fish and Wildlife program (see preceding page), except that the CCS can be used to a greater extent to fund enhancement and other projects which do not necessarily involve taking land out of production, or restoring native, self-sustaining vegetation.

Eligibility: Same as Partners for Fish and Wildlife (see preceding page).

Advantages: The program can provide up to a 50 percent cost share for worthy habitat enhancement projects. It can be used for wildlife/wetland management on lands that remain in production (e.g., winter flooding of rice fields).

Constraints: As in Partners for Fish and Wildlife, a minimum of 10-year management agreements are required. Funding is very limited and highly competitive. The funding can not be used to secure land use rights.

Program Mechanics: In dealing with the landowner and implementing the program at the field level, the CCS works exactly like Partners for Fish and Wildlife but with the differing eligibility factors. When dealing with a potential CCS project, first be sure that it does not qualify for USDA funding which it might more likely receive. If not, and if CCS is an appropriate funding mechanism, put the landowner in contact with the USFWS state representative for further discussion and arrangement of a site visit by a USFWS field biologist, who will follow the same procedures as indicated for Partners for Fish and Wildlife. Due to federal funding and project review cycles, notification of a decision on the funding request takes a minimum of 2-3 months.

Additional Program Information: This program is best suited for enhancement projects such as moist soil habitats, encouraging winter flooding of rice fields, and similar work involving nonforested wetlands.

For more information contact:

Tom Edwards
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Wildlife and Habitat Management Office
110 Industrial Street
Hazen, AR 72064
870-255-3812

Melvin Tobin
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Arkansas Field Office
1500 Museum Road, Suite 105
Conway, AR 72032
501-513-4473
email: Melvin_Tobin@fws.gov

Arkansas Forestry Commission RURAL FORESTRY ASSISTANCE

Program Overview: The Arkansas Forestry Commission offers a variety of technical assistance and technical service programs to promote sound forest management on private nonindustrial forest lands.

Technical assistance includes: woodland examinations; preparation of forest management plans; regeneration recommendations; marketing information; forest health information and other pertinent information related to the management of individual tracts of land.

Technical service includes: timber marking; tree planting (on a very limited basis); firelane construction and prescribed burning. A fee is charged for all technical services provided by the AFC. The following is a further breakdown of assistance to private landowners:

1. Technical recommendations in both pine and hardwood forest management practices. These recommendations take into consideration the landowner's objectives and include multiple use aspects.
2. Provide a brief written forest management plan to supplement the verbal recommendations made by AFC foresters to the landowner or designated representative, at the time of land examination.
3. Demonstration and training in the selective timber marking system for pine and hardwood timber.
4. Do selective marking, on a limited basis, of pine and hardwood stands in areas where such services are not economically available from other qualified sources. A charge is made for this service.
5. Provide a sample timber sale contract and list of potential timber markets to landowners who desire to make a timber sale.
6. Protection of Arkansas forests from fire, insects, and disease, and recommend measures for prevention and control of fire, insects, and disease.
7. Examination of areas needing reforestation, technical advice and information on seedling selection, cost and availability, and site preparation.
8. Advise and demonstrate silvicultural methods of stand treatments needed to improve overall growth and vigor of timber stands.
9. Advise landowner on availability of forest cost share programs, their applicability, benefits and requirements.
10. AFC pine seedlings are grown from genetically improved seed obtained from AFC seed orchards.

Forestry assistance can be obtained by contacting the nearest county AFC office, or by contacting the state headquarters in Little Rock.

Contact: Check the County Index for your County Forester.

Arkansas Forestry Commission NURSERY PROGRAM

Arkansas Forestry Commission Program Overview: The AFC owns and operates a tree improvement complex and a tree seedling nursery for production of pine and hardwood seedlings for sale to private landowners. Seedling price list and order forms may be obtained at any Forestry Commission office.



Contact: Check the County Index for your County Forester.

Arkansas Forestry Commission FORESTRY INCENTIVES PROGRAM

Program Overview: The primary objective of the Forestry Incentives Program (FIP) is to increase the future supply of timber products of private nonindustrial land.

FIP is funded by the USDA and administered by the NRCS. Technical input for the forestry practices available under FIP are provided by the AFC. Cost sharing is provided to assist with tree planting, timber stand improvement or site preparation for natural regeneration. To be eligible for FIP, a landowner must own land in a designated FIP county, have a minimum of 5 acres that is eligible, and a written forest management plan. A maximum of \$7,500 is available per year per landowner.

Contact: Check the County Index for your County Forester or NRCS office.

Arkansas Forestry Commission FORESTRY STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Program Overview: The Forestry Stewardship Program (FSP) was authorized by the 1990 Farm Bill. The intent of the FSP is to encourage wise use and management of all natural resources that maintain and enhance the value of the forest and other lands. An FSP management plan will identify and describe actions compatible with the landowners objectives that address management and protection of multiple natural resources such as timber, soil, water, range, wildlife, recreation and aesthetics. The FSP management plan would include input from natural resource professionals (foresters, wildlife biologist, recreational planners and soil conservationists). Land managed in accordance with the written FSP plan are designated as "Stewardship Forest."

Eligibility: The Forest Stewardship Program is available in all counties. To be eligible, a private landowner must own a minimum of 25 contiguous acres with at least 10 in forest or intended to be forested.

Advantages: FSP is not a cost-share program, rather it provides technical and planning guidance, encouraging multi-resource management. FSP plans are prepared at no cost to a landowner. FSP plans are prepared by natural resource professionals. Depending on a landowner's objectives, an FSP plan can identify income opportunities, enhancement of wildlife habitat, identify recreational opportunities and assure a future supply of forest products. Other cost-share or incentives programs are identified to assist with the expense of management recommendations.

Constraints: Must meet eligibility requirements.

Contact: Check the County Index for your County Forester.

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission PRIVATE LANDS PROGRAM

Program Overview: The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission delivers several wetland habitat programs on private lands under the umbrella of the Private Lands Program. Under these programs, AGFC biologists provide technical assistance to landowners interested in improving or creating wetland and waterfowl habitat. Assistance includes advice on habitat improvement techniques and the development of a management plan if requested, and landowners will be advised of other applicable programs that offer financial incentives or cost-share recommended improvements. The AGFC also has an active land acquisition effort that may be of interest to willing sellers of wetlands near or adjacent to existing Wildlife Management Areas. The following is a description of some of the programs that offer financial incentives or cost-share currently offered under the Private Lands Program:

- **Arkansas Partners Project:** This program is a cooperative effort among the AGFC, DU, USFWS and the NRCS that offers free water control structures and technical assistance to eligible landowners.
- **Conservation Reserve Program:** CRP is a Farm Bill Program administered by the USDA, with AGFC biologists assisting in its delivery. Certain CRP practices are targeted towards shallow-water natural wetlands, and provide cost-incentives in the form of annual rental payments and cost-share incentives.
- **Wetland Reserve Program:** WRP is also a Farm Bill Program administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and delivered in part by AGFC biologists. In this program, landowners are paid a one-time payment for long term protective easements, as well as the cost of necessary wetland restoration.

Eligibility: Any landowner in Arkansas with potential waterfowl habitat is eligible for technical assistance through the Private Lands Program. Appropriate habitat includes agricultural lands, idle lands, forested lands and natural wetlands in counties that are frequented by wintering or migrating waterfowl or breeding wood ducks.

Advantages: Improving and creating waterfowl habitat using technical assistance offered through the Private Lands Program will help landowners attract more waterfowl and other wetland-dependent wildlife, provide hunting and leasing opportunities, and often will benefit farming operations. In addition, advice on sources of cost-share and other financial incentives will help defray the expense of improvements.

Constraints: Assistance is only offered on nonurban lands with potential or existing waterfowl habitat.

Program Mechanics: Landowners interested in helping provide waterfowl habitat should contact the private lands biologist in the nearest AGFC office and request assistance. A private lands biologist will schedule a site visit, during which technical assistance and advice on sources of financial assistance will be offered. Upon request, management plans may be developed following this visit.

Additional Program Information: The Private Lands Program is designed to help increase the amount of privately-owned land that is managed for waterfowl as part of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. The purpose of this effort is to provide an adequate quantity, quality, and distribution of waterfowl foraging habitat in Arkansas to allow wintering waterfowl to return north in good biological condition to breed.

Contact: For more information contact the private lands biologist in the nearest District Office.

Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission

LAND ACQUISITION

Program Overview: Agency acquires fee or easement in land that has rare species, exemplary natural communities or contributes significantly to functioning of ecosystems – both wetlands and uplands. Examples of wetland acquisitions: Bayou Dorcheat (Falcon Bottoms Natural Area), Cache River (Black Swamp Natural Area easement on AGFC WMA). Acquisition is from willing sellers only. Areas to be acquired must have been identified as high priority through agency inventory.

Advantages: State ownership of fee or easement allow control over management/restoration activities and allows state funds to be spent on these activities. Public access of acquired lands is provided.

Constraints: Funding is provided from Natural and Cultural Resources Council. Funds are limited (approximately \$400,000 a year).

For more information contact:

Mina Marsh, Deputy Director
1500 Tower Building
323 Center Street
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-324-9150
Fax: 501-324-9618

Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission

WETLAND EASEMENT PROGRAM

Program Overview: Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission (ANHC) is implementing a program to buy easements on wetlands particularly in the Cache River and Bayou De-View watersheds. The program can be extended to other areas. These easements differ from other partial interests in land acquired by ANHC in the past in that past easements have been acquired to meet traditional ANHC priorities – protection of rare species and exemplary natural communities. The Wetland Easement Program is directed at protecting broader wetland values and integrity of wetland systems. To do so, limitations on use are minimized – the basic requirement is to maintain wetland vegetation and hydrology.

Eligibility: Announcements of willingness of ANHC to acquire easements are periodically made for response by interested landowners. Statements of interests from landowners may be considered at any time.

Advantages: Few demands are placed on the landowner and cost of easement is consequently low (about \$200 an acre).

Constraints: Budget has been very small.

For more information contact:

Director
1500 Tower Building
323 Center Street
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-324-9150
Fax: 501-324-9618

Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission

NONPOINT SOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Program Overview: Nonpoint Source pollution is defined as impairments to water quality resulting from sources that are diffuse in nature as opposed to point sources which have an identifiable discharge point. Arkansas' Nonpoint Source (NPS) Management Program is a cooperative effort of state, federal, and local agencies for implementation of best management practices to control nonpoint sources of pollution. Voluntary incentives for implementation are emphasized. The majority of funding for the NPS program comes from EPA grants under section 319(h) of the Clean Water Act. Matching funds are provided by a variety of state and local agencies. In addition, the Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission (ASWCC) conducts water quality programs independent of the EPA. Federal agencies cooperate with the NPS program by providing technical and financial assistance when possible. In turn, the NPS management program provides for targeting areas for federal programs.

Eligibility: Projects funded by the section 319(h) grant program must address a category of NPS or an impaired water as identified in the state's NPS Assessment Report

published by the ADPC&E. In addition, projects must result in the implementation of BMP and program milestones as identified in the NPS management program. The management program is produced by the ASWCC and updated periodically as the need arises. An Advisory Panel of state and federal agency personnel reviews the program at least annually and establishes priorities for the upcoming year.

Advantages: Section 319(h) can provide relatively large grants (\$50,000 - \$500,000) to eligible projects. Projects can be either categorical or watershed oriented. The grants can be used for regulatory or nonregulatory enforcement, technical assistance, demonstration, training and education projects. Matching funds can be provided through “in-kind” services or personnel time if necessary. Projects can be up to five years in duration.

Constraints: Section 319(h) grants are only for implementation of the approved management program. Projects must result in implementation of water quality improvement. Strict tracking and monitoring protocols are required to verify implementation. Extensive project preplanning is required as is submission of a detailed project workplan. Federal audit regulations apply to all projects.

Program Mechanics: Agencies seeking section 319(h) funding should contact the ASWCC to determine if their projects are eligible and in accordance with the current management program. If the project is eligible, then a proposal should be submitted to the ASWCC by the next submittal date. The ASWCC communicates with likely parties annually to set submittal dates. Normally, submittal of proposals is in January or early February. The Advisory Panel will then determine if the project is a high enough priority to submit to the EPA for funding. Plan on at least a year between proposal and receipt of funds if the projects is selected.

If the project is not in accordance with the current management plan, then it can be submitted for inclusion in the next update. The Advisory Panel will determine priorities for the direction of the management program and include applicable projects. In this case, a minimum of two years will be necessary to move from concept to funding.

For more information contact:

Robert Morgan, P.E.
Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission
101 East Capitol, Suite 350
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-682-3954

Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission
ARKANSAS PRIVATE WETLAND AND RIPARIAN ZONE
CREATION AND RESTORATION INCENTIVES ACT

Program Overview: Wetlands and riparian zones have significant benefit to the state. They include: flood impact mitigation by slowing storm water runoff; water quality enhancement by removing sediment, nitrogen, phosphorus and other pollutants from surface water; habitat for fish and wildlife, including waterfowl and rare or endangered

species; recreational use for hunting, fishing, hiking, etc., that not only add to the quality of life, but also have a significant economic impact on the state and timber and food production. Properly managed wetlands can provide wood products, plants and animals for human and livestock consumption. The majority of lands suitable for wetlands and riparian zones are held by private landowners. The state encourages these owners to restore and enhance existing wetlands and riparian zones, and when possible create new wetlands and riparian zones through tax credits and incentives authorized in Act 561 of 1995.

Eligibility: Any taxpayer whose project meets the criteria and standards described in the ASWCC rules and regulations governing this program. A multi-agency committee of state officials review project proposals. Any person may submit an application and proposal to the Private Lands Restoration Committee for review.

Advantages: A certificate of tax credit for a maximum of \$50,000 per project (\$5,000 a year over 10 years) can be claimed by applicants who successfully implement an approved restoration project.

Constraints: Only projects that restore or enhance riparian zones and wetlands are eligibility for approval by the Private Lands Restoration Committee. Professionals who possess expertise in restoration and implementation efforts should complete project plans. Project activities can not begin until the ASWCC has issued a certificate of tax credit approval, in order to claim the tax credit. All projects must be completed and properly functioning within three years of the date of the certificate of tax credit approval, unless the ASWCC determines that failure to comply is a result of conditions beyond the control of the taxpayer. Any taxpayer claiming a tax credit under this act may not claim a tax credit under any other act for any costs related to the same project. Restoration projects must be maintained for a minimum life of 10 years after certification of project completion has been issued.

Program Mechanics: Applicants seeking tax credit for this program should submit an application to the ASWCC. The ASWCC shall make the application available to the Private Lands Restoration Committee for review and comment. After review of committee comments, the ASWCC may issue tax a credit approval certificate for those applications proposing projects that meet the requirements of this act and rules promulgated thereunder. Upon completion and proper functioning of the project, the ASWCC shall issue a certificate of completion. The taxpayer must file the certificate of tax credit approval with his income tax return for the first year in which the taxpayer claims a tax credit. A maximum of \$5,000 a year in project costs may be claimed for tax credit.

For more information contact:

Kenneth Colbert
Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission
101 East Capitol, Suite 350
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-682-1608
Fax: 501-682-3991

University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service

MANAGING RICE FOR DUCKS

Program Overview: Managing Rice for Ducks is a youth program designed to allow young people to work with rice producers to implement harvested rice field management techniques in order to establish efficient waterfowl habitat in harvested rice fields. Managing Rice for Ducks is a cooperative program between several organizations: Arkansas Ducks Unlimited, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation, USDA Farm Service Agency, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service.

This program educates youth, parents, leaders and the general public to tremendous compatibility and interdependence of standard rice farming practices and waterfowl habitat.

Eligibility: There are two ways to participate in the program:

1. Waterfowl Habitat Activity – Short-term activity (6 months) open to all youths, ages 9-19. Individual or group activity.
2. 4-H Waterfowl Habitat Project – A calendar year 4-H project for 4-H members ages, 9-19. Individual participation only.

Advantages: Harvested rice field management is not just good for ducks – it's a good farming practice, too. The steps involved in managing a harvested rice field include rolling the rice stubble, instead of burning or disking, and holding shallow water on croplands over the winter. This enhances water quality by holding valuable topsoil in place. Wintering waterfowl feeding in undisked fields helps landowners by consuming red rice seed and other weed seed that are problems in rice production. Rolling rice stubble, which facilitates rice straw decomposition, is one of the steps in implementing conservation tillage practices that are cost effective in rice production. Improved waterfowl habitat also increases the potential for improved hunting opportunities, either for pleasure or profit. Young people completing this project will automatically receive a free one year subscription to the Arkansas Game and Fish magazine and enrollment as a Ducks Unlimited Greenwing member. Participants are eligible for special county and state awards.

Constraints: This program is an educational program for youth to work with rice producers for the establishment of effective waterfowl habitat. Participation is on a strictly voluntary basis. All costs associated with the waterfowl habitat establishment and management is the responsibility of the producer.

Program Mechanics: Young people who want to participate in this program should first contact a local cooperating rice producer and arrange for a field (or fields) to manage. The farmer must be willing to roll the rice stubble, close up levees, and reinstall/readjust levee gates to hold six to eight inches of water. An enrollment form should be turned into the local county Cooperative Extension Service office by November 1. The participating young person will keep a field diary of activities for each field. These activities can include: weekly levee inspection, waterfowl inventory counts and field conditions. The field records, a narrative report and a summary of program participation is turned in at the end of the program. Awards and recognition are based on these reports.

For more information contact:

Rex Roberg
Asst. Specialist – Wildlife
Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service
P.O. Box 391
Little Rock, AR 72203
501-671-2334



Ducks Unlimited

ARKANSAS PARTNERS PROJECT

Program Overview: The Arkansas Partners Project is a cooperatively funded effort among Ducks Unlimited (DU), AGFC, USFWS, and the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. DU coordinates the program's delivery of free technical assistance and water control structures to enhance and restore natural wetlands and selected agricultural fields for waterfowl during migration and in winter. Detailed restoration and habitat management plans are also offered free of charge by trained biologists and natural resource technicians, and engineering assistance may also be available.

Eligibility: The project is offered to private landowners and managers with potential waterfowl habitat throughout Arkansas. Priority is given to sites in eastern Arkansas, southwest Arkansas, and the Arkansas River valley due to the importance of these areas to waterfowl. Willingness to sign a 15-year management agreement with Ducks Unlimited, Inc. is a prerequisite for eligibility.

Advantages: The project offers free steel drain pipes fitted with "flash-board" water control structure risers on one end (approximate value is \$2,000 each) that can be used by farmers during the crop production season as well as after harvest to reduce soil erosion and residual crop stubble while providing habitat for waterfowl. In addition to benefiting the farming operation, additional recreation and income may be realized through increased waterfowl use and hunting opportunities. Restoration and management plans developed through the project will allow natural wetlands (such as green-tree reservoirs) to be properly restored and managed for the long-term benefit of both the resource and landowner.

Constraints: The project requires landowners to transport and install the water control structures themselves. In addition, landowners must sign a 15-year management agreement with DU that requires structures to be closed to hold water on project sites during winter until March 1 (no winter wheat), prohibits fall tillage or burning, and limits duck hunting to mornings only.

Program Mechanics: Landowners and managers contact Ducks Unlimited's project biologist or one of the cooperating agencies, and either he or a biologist from one of the cooperating agencies will schedule a site visit with the landowner to assess the proposed project site and determine water control and/or restoration needs. Signed management agreements for appropriate projects are then submitted to an interagency project review committee for consideration. Water control structures for approved projects are then fabricated at welding shops in either Eudora or Fair Oaks, and landowners are advised when structures are complete. Landowners then transport and install the structures at predetermined locations. On harvested crop fields, water control structures must be closed by November 15, and held in fields until March 1 of the following year annually during the 15-year agreement period. Compliance with the signed management agreement is monitored and waterfowl use evaluated over the 15-year agreement period by a biologist from one of the cooperating agencies.

Additional Program Information: The purpose of the project is to improve wintering wetland habitat for waterfowl and other wetland-dependent migratory birds, especially shallow foraging habitat on agricultural fields, forested tracts and naturally vegetated areas. The project relies on funding and in-kind services from the cooperating agencies and donations of used steel pipe from outside sources. The project has been highly successful since it began in 1993 by enrolling nearly 100,000 acres and providing over 1,800 individual water control structures to about 450 different landowners throughout the state. Additionally, based on average soil erosion estimates from the University of Arkansas' Rice Experiment Station, management of agricultural fields as recommended by the project's management agreement should result in a savings of nearly two tons of topsoil an acre per year. Therefore, the nearly 70,000 agricultural acres enrolled in the program to date should result in the retention of approximately 140,000 pounds per acre of soil in the projects sites annually, or an equivalent of 23,000 dump truck loads of soil that would have otherwise runoff into adjacent water courses.

For more information check the County Index for the nearest AGFC, USFWS or NRCS field office, or call:

Bill Noble
Arkansas Project Biologist
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
4511 E. 43rd Street
North Little Rock, AR 72117
501-955-9264 or
Fax: 501-955-9266

Ducks Unlimited

CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM

Program Overview: Ducks Unlimited's Conservation Easement Program can meet the needs of interested owners of hunting clubs, farms, ranches, timberlands and other natural areas who wish to protect valuable natural wetlands while retaining ownership of the property. A perpetual conservation easement allows a landowner to protect key natural habitats of a property while continuing to use the area for economic gain or recreation.

Eligibility: Any landowner with natural wetlands or other significant natural feature.

Advantages: Assistance from DU in land management will ensure the continued use and protection of the property, and management guidelines developed through the easement may also enhance the wildlife habitat value of the property. The donation of a conservation easement may result in the reduction of current and estate taxes in addition to permanently protecting the wetlands and other natural features of his or her property. An allowance is provided by the Internal Revenue Service to deduct the value of an easement up to 30 percent of adjusted gross income as a donation which can be spread over five years, with the additional possibility of reductions of estate taxes. Adjustments to local taxes may accrue in some states. While the landowners may have financial incentives for donating conservation easements, the protection of wildlife habitat and other natural values should be the primary motivation for entering such an agreement.

Constraints: A conservation easement will limit the future development value of the property, and will limit the type and amount of economic activities that may take place on the easement property in terms of development and conversion of natural wetlands to agricultural crop production.

Program Mechanics: A landowner wishing to donate a conservation easement to Ducks Unlimited should contact the nearest DU office. When a property is determined to be of interest to DU, a biologist will conduct a site visit to assess the condition and value of the property as waterbird habitat. Pending a positive outcome of the assessment, the landowner is notified and requested to have a more thorough baseline data report performed by a private consultant. If the property has resource and natural values pertinent to Ducks Unlimited's mission, the terms of the conservation easement will then be negotiated and the transaction is underway with DU assuming a perpetual obligation to ensure the conservation of the rights donated in the easement. Landowners should work with their tax advisors to determine any financial benefits they might receive. DU will request that donors of a conservation easement also provide a tax-deductible cash donation to Ducks Unlimited's endowment fund to help provide for monitoring of the easement in perpetuity.

Additional Program Information: A conservation easement is a legal agreement that a property owner makes to restrict the type and amount of development that may take place on his or her property. The easement document is tailored to meet the needs and interests of the landowner. Ducks Unlimited's Program accepts easements in perpetuity through its affiliate Wetlands America Trust as well as accompanying donations to cover associated costs such as the annual monitoring effort of the easement property. DU agrees to monitor the property on a yearly basis to ensure the protection of its natural resources for years to come. Such protection will ensure that large acreages of wetlands, riparian habitats, and important uplands will be preserved for the benefits of waterfowl and other wildlife and the enjoyment of future generations. This partnership between the landowner and DU also may result in the reduction of current and estate taxes. Each donated conservation easement is assessed for its overall contribution to the DU mission. The nonadversarial nature of the conservation easement transaction ensures that both Ducks Unlimited/Wetlands America Trust and the landowner are satisfied with all of the easement's terms and confident that the protection of the natural resources are established in perpetuity.

For more information contact:

Scott Manley
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
4511 E. 43rd Street
North Little Rock, AR 72117
501-955-9264 or
Fax: 501-955-9266



The Nature Conservancy ARKANSAS FIELD OFFICE

Program Overview: The Nature Conservancy (TNC) offers a variety of conservation arrangements: management agreements; acquisition (including partial interests and fee title); land exchanges; conservation easements; retained life estates (donate home or farm for tax benefits while retaining lifetime use); bargain sales; donations; technical assistance for identification and management of natural resources through information transfers and site visits; and restoration and enhancement of bottomland hardwoods.

Eligibility: Any landowner.

Advantages: Creative and flexible conservation arrangements. Landowners can keep land and receive tax advantages through conservation agreements with TNC. TNC works through voluntary and nonregulatory private action.

Constraints: Though TNC can work with landowners with many types of land, TNC focuses on land with certain natural qualities (rare plants, animals, exemplary natural communities, migratory and resident songbirds). Site visits and technical assistance are available to landowners as time permits. Restoration of wetlands is possible as funds are available.

Program Mechanics: Contact the Arkansas Field Office in Little Rock at 501-663-6699 or the local offices listed below.

Additional Program Information: TNC is working on a large-scale conservation initiative in the Delta of Arkansas called the "Big Woods," which includes the floodplains of Bayou DeView and the Cache, lower White and lower Arkansas Rivers. TNC is working with landowners in this area to conserve, restore, expand, connect and sustainably use the forested wetlands. TNC provides field trips in the Delta for its members, and has been working with partners to plant native trees, host "Top Dollar for your Timber" workshops, and other habitat conservation projects.

For more information contact:

Jerry Hogan
Cache River/Bayou DeView Field Rep.
The Nature Conservancy
P.O. Box 22 (5545 Highway 14 East)
Waldenburg, AR 72475
870-579-2262

Courthouse Annex
260 Madison Street
Clarendon, AR 72029
870-747-5411

Leslee Spraggins
The Nature Conservancy
601 North University Avenue
Little Rock, AR 72205
501-663-6699

STATE OF ARKANSAS INDEX OF

COUNTY	University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission	Arkansas Forestry Commission
ARKANSAS	Phone: 870-946-3231 County Extension Building 1009 Liberty Drive DeWitt, AR 72042	DISTRICT OFFICE #3 Phone: 1-877-376-3553 771 Jordon Drive Monticello, AR 71655	DISTRICT #11 Phone: 870-673-2851 P.O. Box 272 Stuttgart, AR 72160
ASHLEY	Phone: 870-853-2080 Courthouse Hamburg, AR 71646	DISTRICT OFFICE #3 Phone: 1-877-376-3553 771 Jordon Drive Monticello, AR 71655	DISTRICT #1 Phone: 870-364-3524 P.O. Box 326 Crossett, AR 71635
BAXTER	Phone: 870-425-2335 County Services Building 206 West 8th Street Mountain Home, AR 72653	DISTRICT OFFICE #9 Phone: 1-877-297-4331 P.O. Box 729 Calico Rock, AR 72619	DISTRICT #7 Phone: 870-481-5501 P.O. Box 252 Midway, AR 72651
BENTON	Phone: 501-272-1061 Public Services Building 1204 SW 14th Street Bentonville, AR 72712	DISTRICT OFFICE #8 Phone: 1-877-967-7577 911 West B Street Russellville, AR 72801	DISTRICT #6 Phone: 501-986-0294 405 Arkansas Avenue Rogers, AR 72757
BOONE	Phone: 870-741-6168 201 North Main Harrison, AR 72601	DISTRICT OFFICE #8 Phone: 1-877-967-7577 911 West B Street Russellville, AR 72801	DISTRICT #7 Phone: 870-743-2210 P.O. Box 967 Harrison, AR 72601-0967
BRADLEY	Phone: 870-226-8410 100 East First Street Warren, AR 71671	DISTRICT #4 Phone: 1-877-836-4612 P.O. Box 110 Camden, AR 71711-0110	DISTRICT #3 Phone: 870-463-8505 345 Bradley 5-S Hermitage, AR 71647
CALHOUN	Phone: 870-798-2231 Administration Building First and Hunt Box 38 Hampton, AR 71744	DISTRICT #4 Phone: 1-877-836-4612 P.O. Box 110 Camden, AR 71711-0110	DISTRICT #3 Phone: 870-798-3835 P.O. Box 964 Hampton, AR 71744
CARROLL	Phone: 870-423-2958 909B Freeman Switch Road Berryville, AR 72616	DISTRICT #8 Phone: 1-877-967-7577 911 West B Street Russellville, AR 72801	DISTRICT #6 Phone: 870-423-2216 P.O. Box 133 Berryville, AR 72616
CHICOT	Phone: 870-265-8055 523 Highway 65 & 82 Lake Village, AR 71653	DISTRICT #3 Phone: 1-877-367-3553 771 Jordon Drive Monticello, AR 71655	DISTRICT #1 Phone: 870-364-3524 P.O. Box 326 Crossett, AR 71635
CLARK	Phone: 870-246-2281 501 Clay Street Arkadelphia, AR 71923	DISTRICT #3 Phone: 1-877-836-4612 P.O. Box 110 Camden, AR 71711-0110	DISTRICT #5 Phone: 870-246-5372 117 Forestry Circle Arkadelphia, AR 71923
CLAY	Phone: 870-598-2246 148 East Main Street Piggott, AR 72454	DISTRICT #1 Phone: 1-877-972-5438 2920 McClellan Drive Jonesboro, AR 72401	DISTRICT #11 Phone: 870-932-2251 P.O. Box 669 Jonesboro, AR 72403

COUNTY-LEVEL CONTACTS

Natural Resources Conservation Service and Conservation Districts	Consolidated Farm Services Agency	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Field Office Phone: 870-946-3331 1015 West Second Street DeWitt, AR 72042	Phone: 870-946-3331 1015 W. Second Street DeWitt, AR 72042	White River National Refuge Phone: 870-946-1468 P.O. Box 308 DeWitt, AR 72042
Field Office Phone: 870-853-9881 310 North Cherry Hamburg, AR 71646	Phone: 870-853-9881 310 North Cherry Hamburg, AR 71646	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635
Field Office Phone: 870-425-3527 406 Wade Street Mountain Home, AR 72653	Phone: 870-425-2250 406 Wade Street Mountain Home, AR 72653	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Field Office Phone: 501-273-2622 101 Northeast Third Street Bentonville, AR 72712	Phone: 501-273-2622 101 Northeast Third Street Bentonville, AR 72712	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Field Office Phone: 870-741-8600 410 North Walnut Suite 125 Harrison, AR 72601	Phone: 870-741-8600 402 North Walnut Street Harrison, AR 72601	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Field Office Phone: 870-226-6751 100 East First Street Warren, AR 71671	Phone: 870-226-6751 100 East First Street Warren, AR 71671	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635
Field Office Phone: 870-798-4297 217 Main Street P.O. Box 497 Hampton, AR 71744	Phone: 870-798-4296 217 Main Street P.O. Box 497 Hampton, AR 71744	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635
Field Office Phone: 870-423-2638 909C Freeman Switch Road Berryville, AR 72616	Phone: 870-423-2787 909D Freeman Switch Road Berryville, AR 72616	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Field Office Phone: 870-265-2608 P.O. Box 152 3219 Highway 82 & 65 Lake Village, AR 71653	Phone: 870-265-5312 Box 152 Lake Village, AR 71653	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635
Field Office Phone: 870-246-9816 Suite 2 1030 Village North Arkadelphia, AR 71923	Phone: 870-246-9816 Suite 1 1030 Village North Arkadelphia, AR 71923	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635
Field Office Phone: 870-598-2287 168 East Main Street Piggott, AR 72454	Phone: 870-598-2287 168 East Main Street Piggott, AR 72454	Wapanocca National Refuge Phone: 870-343-2595 P.O. Box 279 Turrell, AR 72384

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COUNTY	University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission	Arkansas Forestry Commission
CLEBURNE	Phone: 501-362-2524 104 Tulaka Boulevard Heber Springs, AR 72543	DISTRICT #9 Phone: 1-877-297-4331 P.O. Box 729 Calico Rock, AR 72519	DISTRICT #9 Phone: 501-362-2463 641 South 7th Street Heber Springs, AR 72543
CLEVELAND	Phone: 870-325-6321 501 Magnolia Box 386 Rison, AR 71665	DISTRICT #4 Phone: 1-877-836-4612 P.O. Box 110 Camden, AR 71711-0110	DISTRICT # 1 Phone: 870-348-5728 13240 Highway 79 Kinsland, AR 71613
COLUMBIA	Phone: 870-235-3720 County Building 206 West Calhoun Magnolia, AR 71753	DISTRICT #4 Phone: 1-877-836-4612 P.O. Box 110 Camden, AR 71711-0110	DISTRICT #4 Phone: 870-234-3485 200 Airport 980 Magnolia, AR 71753
CONWAY	Phone: 501-354-9618 Courthouse Box 460 Morrilton, AR 72110	DISTRICT #9 Phone: 1-877-297-4331 P.O. Box 729 Calico Rock, AR 72519	DISTRICT #9 Phone: 501-354-4572 P.O. Box 115 Springfield, AR 72157
CRAIGHEAD	Phone: 870-933-4565 P.O. Box 300 Jonesboro, AR 72403	DISTRICT #1 Phone: 1-877-972-5438 2920 McClellan Drive Jonesboro, AR 72401	DISTRICT #11 Phone: 870-632-2251 P.O. Box 669 Jonesboro, AR 72403
CRAWFORD	Phone: 501-474-5286 Crawford County Extension Office Van Buren, AR 72956	DISTRICT #8 Phone: 1-877-967-7577 911 West B Street Russellville, AR 72801	DISTRICT #6 Phone: 501-632-5471 P.O. Box 162 Rudy, AR 72953-0162
CRITTENDEN	Phone: 870-739-3239 County Office Building 116 Center Street Marion, AR 72364	DISTRICT #2 Phone: 1-877-734-4581 1201 North Highway 49 Brinkley, AR 72021	DISTRICT #11 Phone: 870-633-6693 P.O. Box 468 Forrest City, AR 72335
CROSS	Phone: 870-238-5745 Courthouse 705 East Union Avenue Wynne, AR 72396	DISTRICT #2 Phone: 1-877-734-4581 1201 North Highway 49 Brinkley, AR 72021	DISTRICT #11 Phone: 870-633-6693 P.O. Box 468 Forrest City, AR 72335
DALLAS	Phone: 870-352-3505 Courthouse Fordyce, AR 71742	DISTRICT #4 Phone: 1-877-836-4612 P.O. Box 110 Camden, AR 71711-0110	DISTRICT #5 Phone: 870-254-2429 2888 Highway 9 Carthage, AR 71725
DESHA	Phone: 870-222-3972 310 Oak Street Box 230 McGehee, AR 71654	DISTRICT #3 Phone: 1-877-367-3553 771 Jordan Street Monticello, AR 71655	DISTRICT #1 Phone: 870-364-3524 P.O. Box 326 Crossett, AR 71635

COUNTY-LEVEL CONTACTS

Natural Resources Conservation Service and Conservation Districts	Consolidated Farm Services Agency	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Field Office Phone: 501-362-2428 110-B Tulaka Boulevard Heber Springs, AR 72543	Phone: 501-362-2628 110-A Tulaka Boulevard Heber Springs, AR 72543	Cache River National Refuge Phone: 870-347-2614 Route 2, Box 126T Augusta, AR 72006
Field Office Phone: 870-325-6581 240 West Mockingbird Lane Rison, AR 71665-0302	Phone: 870-325-2630 702 Forestry Street Fordyce, AR 71742	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635
Field Office Phone: 870-234-1930 105-1/2 South Court Street P.O. Box 128 Magnolia, AR 71753	Phone: 870-921-4208 Highway 82 East Agriplex, Box 1 Lewisville, AR 71845	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635
Field Office Phone: 501-354-1815 207 Shady Lane P.O. Box 26 Morrilton, AR 72110	Phone: 501-354-2000 Highway 9 & Shady Lane P.O. Box 28 Morrilton, AR 72110	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Field Office Phone: 870-972-4655 Area Office Phone: 870-972-4714 615 South Main, Room 218 Jonesboro, AR 72401	Phone: 870-972-4671 P.O. Drawer 1600 Jonesboro, AR 72401	Wapanocca National Refuge Phone: 870-343-2595 P.O. Box 279 Turrell, AR 72384
Field Office Phone: 501-474-2281 101 South Seventh Street Van Buren, AR 72956	Phone: 501-646-8300 3913 Broken Hill Drive Fort Smith, AR 72401	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834
Field Office Phone: 870-739-3618 250 Pine Street Robbins Memorial Building Marion, AR 72364	Phone: 870-739-4464 250 Pine Street Marion, AR 72364	Wapanocca National Refuge Phone: 870-343-2595 P.O. Box 279 Turrell, AR 72384
Field Office Phone: 870-238-3285 1936 North Falls Boulevard Wynne, AR 72396	Phone: 870-238-3285 Box 247 Wynne, AR 72396	Wapanocca National Refuge Phone: 870-343-2595 P.O. Box 279 Turrell, AR 72384
Field Office Phone: 870-352-2630 702 Forestry Street Fordyce, AR 71742	Phone: 870-352-2630 702 Forestry Street Fordyce, AR 71742	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635
Field Office Phone: 870-222-4867 3303 Highway 65 North McGehee, AR 71654	Phone: 870-222-4867 3303 Highway 65 North McGehee, AR 71654	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635

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COUNTY	University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission	Arkansas Forestry Commission
DREW	Phone: 870-460-6270 Courthouse Box 510 Monticello, AR 71655	DISTRICT #3 Phone: 1-877-367-3553 771 Jordan St. Monticello, AR 71655	DISTRICT # Phone: 870-367-6767 UAM Box 3123 Monticello, AR 71655
FAULKNER	Phone: 501-329-8344 Courthouse 801 Locust Street Conway, AR 72032	DISTRICT #10 Phone: 1-877-470-3650 P.O. Box 38 Mayflower, AR 72106	DISTRICT #9 Phone: 501-679-2806 P.O. Box 10 Greenbrier, AR 72058
FRANKLIN	Phone: 501-667-3720 211 West Commercial Ozark, AR 72949	DISTRICT #7 & 8 Phone: 1-877-0478-1043 P.O. Box 23669 Barling AR 7292	DISTRICT #10 Phone: 501-667-4111 P.O. Box 122 Ozark, AR 72949
FULTON	Phone: 870-895-3301 107 Locust Street Box 308 Salem, AR 72576	DISTRICT OFFICE #9 Phone: 1-877-297-4331 P.O. Box 729 Calico Rock, AR 72519	DISTRICT #8 Phone: 870-895-2934 P.O. Box 661 Salem, AR 72576
GARLAND	Phone: 501-623-6841 501 Ouachita Hot Springs, AR 71901	DISTRICT #6 Phone: 1-877-525-8606 350 Fish Hatchery Rd. Hot Springs, AR 71913	DISTRICT #5 Phone: 501-984-5733 5047 Highway 7 North Hot Springs, AR 71909
GRANT	Phone: 870-942-2231 202 West Pine Sheridan, AR 72150	DISTRICT #4 Phone: 1-877-836-4612 P.O. Box 110 Camden, AR 71711-0110	DISTRICT #5 Phone: 870-942-3051 2372 Highway 167 South Sheridan, AR 72150
GREEN	Phone: 870-236-6921 Federal Building Room 205 201 West Court Street Paragould, AR 72450	DISTRICT #1 Phone: 1-877-972-5438 2920 McClellan Drive Jonesboro, AR 72401	DISTRICT #11 Phone: 870-932-2251 P.O. Box 669 Jonesboro, AR 72403
HEMPSTEAD	Phone: 870-777-5771 406 South Washington Street Hope, AR 71801	DISTRICT #5 Phone: 1-877-777-5580 P.O. Box 6740 Perrytown, AR 71801	DISTRICT #4 Phone: 870-777-7512 P.O. Box 625 Hope, AR 71801
HOT SPRING	Phone: 870-332-5267 1415 Smith Street Malvern, AR 72104	DISTRICT #4 Phone: 1-877-836-4612 P.O. Box 110 Camden, AR 71711-0110	DISTRICT #5 Phone: 870-332-2081 207 Airport Road Malvern, AR 72104
HOWARD	Phone: 870-845-7517 Courthouse 421 North Main Nashville, AR 71852	DISTRICT #5 Phone: 1-877-777-5580 P.O. Box 6740 Perrytown, AR 71801	DISTRICT #2 Phone: 870-286-2119 P.O. Box 134 Dierks, AR 71833

COUNTY-LEVEL CONTACTS

Natural Resources Conservation Service and Conservation Districts	Consolidated Farm Services Agency	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Field Office Phone: 870-367-3446 Area Office Phone: 870-367-2473 130 Commerce Monticello, AR 71655-9105	Phone: 870-367-6266 Box 330 Monticello, AR 71655	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635
Field Office Phone: 501-327-6509 1111 Main Street, Room 233 Conway, AR 72032-5440	Phone: 501-327-6509 1111 Main St. Room 221 Conway, AR 72032-5440	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834
Field Office Phone: 501-667-4178 201 North Fourth Street Ozark, AR 72949	Phone: 501-667-4177 2720 West Commercial Ozark, AR 72949	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834
Field Office Phone: 870-895-3201 P.O. Box 187 Salem, AR 72576	Phone: 870-895-3357 P.O. Drawer 187 Salem, AR 72576	Cache River National Refuge Phone: 870-347-2614 Route 2, Box 126T Augusta, AR 72006
Field Office Phone: 501-624-2574 600Q Main Street Hot Springs, AR 71913	Phone: 501-624-2574 800-Q Main St. Hot Springs, AR 71913	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834
Field Office Phone: 870-942-2826 125 South Oak Street Sheridan, AR 72150	Phone: 870-942-3528 Box 8 Sheridan, AR 72150	White River National Refuge Phone: 870-946-1468 P.O. Box 308 DeWitt, AR 72042
Field Office Phone: 870-236-2446 205 West Court Street Paragould, AR 72450	Phone: 870-239-8586 201 West Court Street Paragould, AR 72450	Wapanocca National Refuge Phone: 870-343-2595 P.O. Box 279 Turrell, AR 72384
Field & Area Office Phone: 870-777-8800 2510 North Hervey, B & F Hope, AR 71801	Phone: 870-777-8800 2510 North Hervey Hope, AR 71801	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635
Field Office Phone: 501-337-7381 220 South Olive, Suite 1 Malvern, AR 72104	Phone: 501-337-7381 Box 763 Malvern, AR 72104	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635
Field Office Phone: 870-845-4121 121 W. Sybert Street Nashville, AR 71852	Phone: 870-845-4121 121 West Sybert Street Nashville, AR 71852	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635

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COUNTY	University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission	Arkansas Forestry Commission
INDEPENDENCE	Phone: 870-793-8840 1770 Myers Street Batesville, AR 72501	DISTRICT #9 Phone: 1-877-297-4331 P.O. Box 729 Calico Rock, AR 72519	DISTRICT #8 Phone: 870-793-2446 #1 Forestry Road Batesville, AR 72501
IZARD	Phone: 870-368-4323 Courthouse Lumen, Box 428 Melbourne, AR 72556	DISTRICT #9 Phone: 1-877-297-4331 P.O. Box 729 Calico Rock, AR 72519	DISTRICT # 8 Phone: 870-368-4545 P.O. Box 542 Melbourne, AR 72556
JACKSON	Phone: 870-523-7450 208-1/2 Main Street Newport, AR 72112	DISTRICT #1 Phone: 1-877-972-5438 2920 McClellan Drive Jonesboro, AR 72401	DISTRICT #11 Phone: 870-523-2201 P.O. Box 669 Jonesboro, AR 72403
JEFFERSON	Phone: 870-534-1033 County Extension Building 500 Idaho, Box 6896 Pine Bluff, AR 71601	DISTRICT #3 Phone: 1-877-367-3553 771 Jordan Drive Monticello, AR 71655	DISTRICT #1 Phone: 870-879-1333 P.O. Box 1865 Pine Bluff, AR 71603
JOHNSON	Phone: 501-754-2240 Courthouse Box 590 Clarksville, AR 72830	DISTRICT #8 Phone: 1-877-967-7577 911 West B St. Russelville, AR 72801	DISTRICT #10 Phone: 501-754-2741 P.O. Box 522 Clarksville, AR 72830
LAFAYETTE	Phone: 870-921-4865 7 Agri-Plex Drive Lewisville, AR 71845	DISTRICT #5 Phone: 1-877-777-5580 P.O. Box 6740 Perrytown, AR 71801	DISTRICT #4 Phone: 870-899-2917 P.O. Box 158 Stamps, AR 71858
LAWRENCE	Phone: 870-886-3741 1100 West Main Walnut Ridge, AR 72476	DISTRICT #1 Phone: 1-877-972-5438 2920 McClellan Drive Jonesboro, AR 72401	DISTRICT #8 Phone: 870-869-2176 HC 68 South Imboden, AR 72434
LEE	Phone: 870-295-7720 Courthouse Box 476 Marianna, AR 72360	DISTRICT # 2 Phone: 1-877-734-4581 1201 North Highway 49 Brinkley, AR 72021	DISTRICT #11 Phone: 870-633-6693 P.O. Box 468 Forrest City, AR 72335
LINCOLN	Phone: 870-628-4247 Extension Building 113 West Wiley Avenue Star City, AR 71667	DISTRICT #3 Phone: 1-877-367-3553 771 Jordan Drive Monticello, AR 71655	DISTRICT #1 Phone: 870-628-5332 Federal Building Room 208A Star City, AR 71667
LITTLE RIVER	Phone: 870-898-7224 Courthouse 351 North Second Ashdown, AR 71822-2753	DISTRICT #5 Phone: 1-877-777-5580 P.O. Box 6740 Perrytown, AR 71801	DISTRICT #2 Phone: 870-898-2304 1163 Hwy 108 Ashdown, AR 71822
LOGAN	Phone: 870-963-2360 15 Courthouse Building Paris, AR 72855	DISTRICT #7 Phone: 1-877-0478-1043 P.O. Box 23669 Barling, AR 7292	DISTRICT #10 Phone: 870-675-3415 P.O. Box 815 Booneville, AR 72927
LONOKE	Phone: 501-676-3124 Box 357 Lonoke, AR 72086	DISTRICT #10 Phone: 1-877-470-3650 P.O. Box 38 Mayflower, AR 72106	DISTRICT #11 Phone: 501-673-2851 P.O. Box 272 Stuttgart, AR 72160

COUNTY-LEVEL CONTACTS

Natural Resources Conservation Service and Conservation Districts	Consolidated Farm Services Agency	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Field Office Phone: 870-793-4164 Federal Building, 242 Batesville, AR 72501	Phone: 870-793-4164 490 College Street Batesville, AR 72501	Cache River National Refuge Phone: 870-347-2614 Route 2, Box 126T Augusta, AR 72006
Field Office Phone: 870-368-4413 1007 Highway 69 East, Room 103 Melbourne, AR 72556	Phone: 870-368-4413 1007 Highway 69 East, Rm 103 Melbourne, AR 72556	Cache River National Refuge Phone: 870-347-2614 Route 2, Box 126T Augusta, AR 72006
Field Office Phone: 870-523-2201 2117 Malcolm Newport, AR 72112	Phone: 870-523-8986 Box 638 Newport, AR 72112	Cache River National Refuge Phone: 870-347-2614 Route 2, Box 126T Augusta, AR 72006
Field Office Phone: 870-534-0561 100 8th Street, Room 2114 Pine Bluff, AR 71601	Phone: 870-534-3200 Room 2310 Federal Building Pine Bluff, AR 71601	White River National Refuge Phone: 870-946-1468 P.O. Box 308 DeWitt, AR 72042
Field Office Phone: 501-754-2800 701 Cline Road Clarksville, AR 72830	Phone: 501-754-2800 701 Cline Road Clarksville, AR 72830	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Field Office Phone: 870-921-4206 Highway 82 East, Box 1 Agri-Plex Lewisville, AR 71845	Phone: 870-921-4206 Highway 82 East, Box 1 Agri-Plex Lewisville, AR 71845	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635
Field Office Phone: 870-886-7791 1100 West Main Walnut Ridge, AR 72476	Phone: 870-886-7791 1100 West Main Walnut Ridge, AR 72476	Cache River National Refuge Phone: 870-347-2614 Route 2, Box 126T Augusta, AR 72006
Field Office Phone: 870-295-5211 28 Poplar Street Marianna, AR 72360	Phone: 870-295-5211 28 Poplar Street Marianna, AR 72360	Wapanocca National Refuge Phone: 870-343-2595 P.O. Box 279 Turrell, AR 72384
Field Office Phone: 870-628-4542 207 Jefferson, Room 203 Star City, AR 71667-1009	Phone: 870-628-5381 207 Jefferson, Suite 113 Star City, AR 71667	White River National Refuge Phone: 870-946-1468 P.O. Box 308 DeWitt, AR 72042
Field Office Phone: 870-898-3611 1021 North Constitution Ashdown, AR 71822	Phone: 870-898-3611 1021 North Constitution Ashdown, AR 71822	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635
Field Office Phone: 501-676-5116 23 South Third Street, Suite 1 Paris, AR 72855	Phone: 501-676-5116 23 South 3rd Street, Room 3 Paris, AR 72855	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Field Office Phone: 501-676-5116 1300 North Center, Suite F Lonoke, AR 72086-2847	Phone: 501-676-5116 1300 North Center Lonoke, AR 72086	White River National Refuge Phone: 870-946-1468 P.O. Box 308 DeWitt, AR 72042

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COUNTY	University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission	Arkansas Forestry Commission
MADISON	Phone: 501-738-6826 102 Gaskill Huntsville, AR 72740	DISTRICT OFFICE #8 Phone: 1-877-967-7577 911 West B Street Russellville, AR 72801	DISTRICT #6 Phone: 501-738-2037 Route 5, Box 220 Huntsville, AR 72740
MARION	Phone: 501-449-6349 Courthouse Box 386 Yellville, AR 72687	DISTRICT OFFICE #9 Phone: 1-877-297-4331 P.O. Box 729 Calico Rock, AR 72519	DISTRICT #7 Phone: 870-449-4800 650 Highway 202 West Yellville, AR 72687
MILLER	Phone: 870-779-3609 400 Laurel, Suite 319 Texarkana, AR 75502	DISTRICT #5 Phone: 1-877-777-5580 P.O. Box 6740 Perrytown, AR 71801	DISTRICT #4 Phone: 870-772-7572 Route 19 Box 1520 Suite AF Texarkana, AR 71854
MISSISSIPPI	Phone: 870-762-2075 Courthouse, 217 Chickasawba Blytheville, AR 72316	DISTRICT #1 Phone: 1-877-972-5438 2920 McClellan Drive Jonesboro, AR 72401	DISTRICT # 11 Phone: 870-932-2251 P.O. Box 669 Jonesboro, AR 72403
MONROE	Phone: 870-734-3397 261 Madison Street Clarendon, AR 72029	DISTRICT #2 Phone: 1-877-734-4581 1201 Highway 49 Brinkley, AR 72021	DISTRICT #11 Phone: 870-867-2251 P.O. Box 272 Stuttgart, AR 72160
MONTGOMERY	Phone: 870-867-2311 Courthouse Box 430 Mount Ida, AR 71957	DISTRICT #6 Phone: 1-877-525-8606 350 Fish Hatchery Road Hot Springs, AR 71913	DISTRICT #2 Phone: 870-867-2013 11 Forbes Rd Mount Ida, AR 71957
NEVADA	Phone: 870-887-2818 532 West First South Box 549 Prescott, AR 71857-0549	DISTRICT #4 Phone: 1-877-836-4612 P.O. Box 110 Camden, AR 71711-0110	DISTRICT #4 Phone: 870-899-2917 Route 3, Box 102B Rosston, AR 71858
NEWTON	Phone: 501-446-2240 Courthouse Box 433 Jasper, AR 72641	DISTRICT OFFICE #8 Phone: 1-877-967-7577 911 West B Street Russellville, AR 72801	DISTRICT #7 Phone: 870-429-6281 Route 1, Box 411 Western Grove, AR 72685
OUACHITA	Phone: 870-837-2288 Courthouse 145 Jefferson Street Camden, AR 71701	DISTRICT #4 Phone: 1-877-836-4612 P.O. Box 110 Camden, AR 71711-0110	DISTRICT #3 Phone: 870-836-7386 P.O. Box 955 Camden, AR 71701
PERRY	Phone: 870-889-2661 Courthouse P.O. Box 300 Perryville, AR 72126	DISTRICT #6 Phone: 1-877-525-8606 350 Fish Hatchery Road Hot Springs, AR 71913	DISTRICT #9 Phone: 501-889-2661 Route 2, Box 64 Perryville, AR 72126
PHILLIPS	Phone: 870-338-8027 Courthouse Box 684 Helena, AR 72342	DISTRICT #2 Phone: 1-877-734-4581 1201 Highway 49 Brinkley, AR 72021	DISTRICT #11 Phone: 870-633-6693 P.O. Box 468 Forrest City, AR 72335

COUNTY-LEVEL CONTACTS

Natural Resources Conservation Service and Conservation Districts	Consolidated Farm Services Agency	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Field Office Phone: 501-738-6321 Box 1228 P.O. Box 799, Highway 23 & 412 Huntsville, AR 72740	Phone: 501-738-6321 Box 1228 Huntsville, AR 72740	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Field Office Phone: 870-449-6356 P.O. Box 307 100 East Wichersham Yellville, AR 72687	Phone: 870-425-2250 406 West Wade Ave. Mountain Home, AR 72653	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Field Office Phone: 870-773-3531 3019 East 9th Texarkana, AR 75502	Phone: 870-773-3531 3023 East 9th Texarkana, AR 75502	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635
Field Office Phone: 870-563-3207 3137 Keiser, Highway 140 West Osceola, AR 72370	Phone: 870-563-3207 Box 9 Osceola, AR 72370	Wapanocca National Refuge Phone: 870-343-2595 P.O. Box 279 Turrell, AR 72384
Field Office Phone: 870-747-3342 605 Madison Street Clarendon, AR 72029-2824	Phone: 870-747-3342 1300 South Main Clarendon, AR 72029	White River National Refuge Phone: 870-946-1468 P.O. Box 308 DeWitt, AR 72042
Field Office Phone: 870-867-2671 137 West Street Mount Ida, AR 71957	Phone: 870-867-2441 Box 346 Mount Ida, AR 71957	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Field Office Phone: 870-887-3210 204 East Pine Street Prescott, AR 71857	Phone: 870-777-8800 2510 North Hervey Hope, AR 71801	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635
Field Office Phone: 870-836-2089 Room 127 P.O. Box 302 Jasper, AR 72641	Phone: 870-836-2089 Room 127 402 North Walnut Street Harrison, AR 72601	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Field Office Phone: 870-836-2089 351 Washington, Room 215 Camden, AR 71701	Phone: 870-836-2089 351 Washington, Room 218 Camden, AR 71701	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635
Field Office Phone: 501-889-2715 Van Dalsem Building, Box 266 Perryville, AR 72126	Phone: 501-327-6509 1111 Main Street Room 221 Conway, AR 72601	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Field Office Phone: 870-338-6651 617 Walnut Street, Room 217 Helena, AR 72342-3231	Phone: 870-338-6651 617 Walnut Street, Room 223 Helena, AR 72342	White River National Refuge Phone: 870-946-1468 P.O. Box 308 DeWitt, AR 72042

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COUNTY	University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission	Arkansas Forestry Commission
PIKE	Phone: 870-285-2161 County Office Building Box 297 Murfreesboro, AR 71958	DISTRICT #5 Phone: 1-877-777-5580 P.O. Box 6740 Perrytown, AR 71801	DISTRICT #2 Phone: 870-285-2424 P.O. Box 218 Murfreesboro, AR 71958
POINSETT	Phone: 870-578-4490 302 Main Street Harrisburg, AR 72432	DISTRICT #1 Phone: 1-877-972-5438 2920 McClellan Drive Jonesboro, AR 72401	DISTRICT #11 Phone: 870-932-2251 P.O. Box 669 Jonesboro, AR 72403
POLK	Phone: 501-394-6018 211 DeQueen Street Mena, AR 71953	DISTRICT #6 Phone: 1-877-525-8606 350 Fish Hatchery Road Hot Springs, AR 71913	DISTRICT #2 Phone: 870-389-6608 P.O. Box 312 Hatfield, AR 71945
POPE	Phone: 501-968-7098 105 West B Street Box 579 Russellville, AR 72811	DISTRICT #7 & 8 Phone: 1-877-478-1043 P.O. Box 23669 Barling AR 7292	DISTRICT #10 Phone: 501-331-3040 P.O. Box 313 Dover, AR 72837-0313
PRAIRIE	Phone: 870-256-4204 Courthouse Box 407 Des Arc, AR 72040	DISTRICT #2 Phone: 1-877-734-4581 1201 North Highway 49 Brinkley, AR 72021	DISTRICT #11 Phone: 870-673-2851 P.O. Box 272 Stuttgart, AR 72160
PULASKI	Phone: 501-340-6650 2901 West Roosevelt Rd. Little Rock, AR 72204	DISTRICT #10 Phone: 1-877-470-3650 P.O. Box 38 Mayflower, AR 72106	DISTRICT #10 Phone: 501-868-4330 27320 Highway 10 Roland, AR 72135
RANDOLPH	Phone: 870-892-4504 2500 U.S. Highway 62 West Pocahontas, AR 72455	DISTRICT #1 Phone: 1-877-972-5438 2920 McClellan Drive Jonesboro, AR 72401	DISTRICT #8 Phone: 870-892-8774 5939 Highway 93 Dalton, AR 72455
SALINE	Phone: 501-776-5672 Extension Complex 1605 Edison Avenue Benton, AR 72015	DISTRICT #10 Phone: 1-877-470-3650 P.O. Box 38 Mayflower, AR 72106	DISTRICT #5 Phone: 501-778-7733 1605 Edison Avenue, #10 Benton, AR 72015
SCOTT	Phone: 870-637-2173 100 West 1st Street Box 7 Waldron, AR 72958	DISTRICT #6 Phone: 1-877-525-8606 350 Fish Hatchery Road Hot Springs, AR 71913	DISTRICT #10 Phone: 501-637-3021 P.O. Box 669 Waldron, AR 72958
SEARCY	Phone: 870-448-3981 211 Federal Building Box 328 Marshall, AR 72650	DISTRICT #9 Phone: 1-877-297-4331 P.O. Box 729 Calico Rock, AR 72519	DISTRICT #7 Phone: 870-448-5014 HC 75, Box 21B Marshall, AR 72650
SEBASTIAN	Phone: 501-782-4947 B1091 4th Ave. Fort Chaffee Barling, AR 72923	DISTRICT #7 Phone: 1-877-478-1043 P.O. Box 23669 Barling AR 7292	DISTRICT #10 Phone: 501-928-4688 P.O. Box 11 Huntington, AR 72940

COUNTY-LEVEL CONTACTS

Natural Resources Conservation Service and Conservation Districts	Consolidated Farm Services Agency	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Field Office Phone: 870-285-2424 Kelly Street, Box 178 Murfreesboro, AR 71958	Phone: 870-845-4121 121 West Sypert Street Nashville, AR 71852	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635
Field Office Phone: 870-578-2444 405 Brooks Avenue Harrisburg, AR 72432	Phone: 870-578-2444 Box 379 Harrisburg, AR 72432	Wapanocca National Refuge Phone: 870-343-2595 P.O. Box 279 Turrell, AR 72384
Field Office Phone: 501-394-1782 508 Seventh Street Mena, AR 71953	Phone: 501-394-1782 508 Seventh Street Mena, AR 71953	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Field Office Phone: 501-968-3497 420 North Hampton, Suite B Russellville, AR 72801-8240	Phone: 501-968-3497 420 North Hampton Russellville, AR 72801	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Field Office Phone: 870-255-3573 110 Industrial Street Hazen, AR 72064	Phone: 870-255-3573 Box 526 Hazen, AR 72064	Cache River National Refuge Phone: 870-347-2614 Route 2, Box 126T Augusta, AR 72006
Field Office Phone: 501-771-2387 2500 McCain Boulevard, Room 206 North Little Rock, AR 72116	Phone: 501-758-2544 NBA Building, Suite 201 4000 McCain Boulevard North Little Rock, AR 72116	White River National Refuge Phone: 870-946-1468 P.O. Box 126T Augusta, AR 72006
Field Office Phone: 870-892-3325 308 Camp Road Pocahontas, AR 72455	Phone: 870-892-3325 306 Camp Road Pocahontas, AR 72455	Cache River National Refuge Phone: 870-347-2614 Route 2, Box 126T Augusta, AR 72006
Field Office Phone: 501-778-2521 1210 Old Hot Springs Highway Benton, AR 72015	Phone: 501-778-2521 1210 Old Hot Springs Highway Benton, AR 72015-3764	White River National Refuge Phone: 870-946-1468 P.O. Box 308 DeWitt, AR 72042
Field Office Phone: 501-637-3633 115 Rice Road P.O. Box 242 Waldron, AR 72958	Phone: 501-637-2552 Box 1433 Waldron, AR 72958	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Field Office Phone: 870-448-3184 P.O. Box 163, Room 115 Marshall, AR 72650	Phone: 870-448-3182 Box 130 Marshall, AR 72650	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Field Office Phone: 501-646-6255 3913 Broken Hill Drive Fort Smith, AR 72903	Phone: 501-646-8300 3913 Broken Hill Drive Fort Smith, AR 72903	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704

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COUNTY	University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission	Arkansas Forestry Commission
SEVIER	Phone: 870-584-3031 115 North 3rd Street Room 212 DeQueen, AR 71832	DISTRICT #5 Phone: 1-877-777-5580 P.O. Box 6740 Perrytown, AR 71801	DISTRICT #2 Phone: 870-642-6614 309 Collin Raye Drive DeQueen, AR 71832
SHARP	Phone: 870-994-7363 Courthouse Highway 167, Box 70 Ash Flat, AR 72513	DISTRICT #9 Phone: 1-877-297-4331 P.O. Box 729 Calico Rock, AR 72519	DISTRICT #8 Phone: 870-994-2188 P.O. Box 26 Ash Flat, AR 72513
STONE	Phone: 870-269-3336 County Extension Building HC 70, Box 17 Mountain View, AR 72560	DISTRICT #9 Phone: 1-877-297-4331 P.O. Box 729 Calico Rock, AR 72519	DISTRICT #7 Phone: 870-269-3441 P.O. Box 1290 Mountain View, AR 72560
ST. FRANCIS	Phone: 870-261-1730 Courthouse 313 South Izard, Box 747 Forrest City, AR 72335	DISTRICT #2 Phone: 1-877-734-4581 1201 North Highway 49 Brinkley, AR 72021	DISTRICT #11 Phone: 870-633-6693 P.O. Box 468 Forrest City, AR 72335
UNION	Phone: 870-864-1916 307 American Road Suite 100 El Dorado, AR 71730	DISTRICT #4 Phone: 1-877-836-4612 P.O. Box 110 Camden, AR 71711-0110	DISTRICT #3 Phone: 870-863-7051 P.O. Box 427 El Dorado, AR 71730
VAN BUREN	Phone: 501-745-7117 Wilmington Building Box 157 Clinton, AR 72031	DISTRICT #9 Phone: 1-877-297-4331 P.O. Box 729 Calico Rock, AR 72519	DISTRICT #9 Phone: 501-745-2933 P.O. Box 988 Clinton, AR 72031
WASHINGTON	Phone: 501-444-1755 2536 North McConnel Avenue Fayetteville, AR 72704	DISTRICT OFFICE #8 Phone: 1-877-967-7577 911 West B Street Russellville, AR 72801	DISTRICT #6 Phone: 501-442-8627 2780 Garland Avenue Fayetteville, AR 72703
WHITE	Phone: 870-268-5394 County Office Building 411 North Spruce Searcy, AR 72143	DISTRICT #2 Phone: 1-877-734-4581 1201 North Highway 49 Brinkley, AR 72021	DISTRICT #9 Phone: 501-742-5446 P.O. Box 379 Kensett, AR 72082
WOODRUFF	Phone: 870-347-2556 502 North 3rd Street Augusta, AR 72006	DISTRICT #2 Phone: 1-877-734-4581 1201 North Highway 49 Brinkley, AR 72021	DISTRICT #11 Phone: 870-633-6693 P.O. Box 468 Forrest City, AR 72335
YELL	Phone: 501-495-2216 Highway 10 East Box 249 Danville, AR 72834	DISTRICT #6 Phone: 1-877-525-8606 350 Fish Hatchery Road Hot Springs, AR 71913	DISTRICT #10 Phone: 501-495-7751 P.O. Box 496 Danville, AR 72833
STATE OF ARKANSAS	Rex Roberg Phone: 501-671-2334 P.O. Box 391 Little Rock, AR 72203	David Long 1-877-972-5438 Rob Holbrook 501-219-4317	Garner Barnum Phone: 501-664-2531 3821 Roosevelt Road Little Rock, AR 72204
	United States Army Corps of Engineers	Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission	The Nature Conservancy
STATE OF ARKANSAS	Robert Moix Phone: 501-324-5027 P.O. Box 867 Little Rock, AR 72203	Mina Marsh Phone: 501-324-9150 323 Center Street Little Rock, AR 72201	Leslie Spraggins Phone: 501-663-6699 601 University Avenue Little Rock, AR 72205

COUNTY/STATE-LEVEL CONTACTS

Natural Resources Conservation Service and Conservation Districts	Consolidated Farm Services Agency	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Field Office Phone: 870-584-3111 309 Collin Raye Drive DeQueen, AR 71832	Phone: 870-584-3537 309 Collin Raye Drive DeQueen, AR 71832	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635
Field Office Phone: 870-994-7335 Court Road, Room 11A, Box 6 Ash Flat, AR 72513-0006	Phone: 870-994-2006 P.O. Box 277 Ash Flat, AR 72513	Cache River National Refuge Phone: 870-347-2614 Route 2, Box 126T Augusta, AR 72006
Field Office Phone: 870-269-5354 Stewart Building, 100 Martin Street P.O. Box 1288 Mountain View, AR 72560	Phone: 870-269-3726 Box 1288 Mountain View, AR 72560	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Field Office Phone: 870-633-3055 623 North Division Forrest City, AR 72335	Phone: 870-633-0467 Box 1575 Forrest City, AR 72335	Wapanocca National Refuge Phone: 870-343-2595 P.O. Box 279 Turrell, AR 72384
Field Office Phone: 870-863-8634 113 Madison Avenue, Suite C El Dorado, AR 71730	Phone: 870-836-2089 351 Washington Street Room 218 Camden, AR 71071	Felsenthal National Refuge Phone: 870-364-3167 P.O. Box 1157 Crossett, AR 71635
Field Office Phone: 501-745-5161 Highway 65, Box 848 Clinton, AR 72031	Phone: 501-745-5161 Box 59 Clinton, AR 72031	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Field Office Phone: 501-521-4520 2898 Point Circle, #3 Fayetteville, AR 72703	Phone: 501-521-4520 2898 Point Circle, Box 2 Fayetteville, AR 72703	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Field Office Phone: 501-268-5866 505 South Elm Street Searcy, AR 72143	Phone: 501-268-5888 505 South Elm Street Searcy, AR 72143	Cache River National Refuge Phone: 870-347-2614 Route 1, Box 126T Augusta, AR 72006
Field Office Phone: 870-347-2593 310 Sycamore Street Room 4 Augusta, AR 72006-2650	Phone: 870-347-2593 310 Sycamore Street Room 4 Augusta, AR 72006-2650	Cache River National Refuge Phone: 870-347-2614 Route 1, Box 126T Augusta, AR 72006
Field Office Phone: 501-495-2441 Highway 10, Route 1, Box 161 Danville, AR 72833	Phone: 501-495-2441 Box 9 Danville, AR 72833	Holla Bend National Refuge Phone: 501-229-4300 Route 1, Box 59 Dardanelle, AR 72834-9704
Paul Brady Phone: 501-324-5209 700 West Capitol Avenue Little Rock, AR 72201	Clayton Parr Phone: 501-324-5457 700 West Capitol Avenue Little Rock, AR 72201	Tom Edwards 870-255-3812 Melvin Tobin 501-523-4473

APPENDIX A: AGENCY DESCRIPTIONS

Farm Service Agency (FSA)

(formerly Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS))

The Farm Service Agency, is an agency in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. FSA is assigned responsibility for:

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) – As a long-term conservation program designed to enhance environmental and wildlife benefits by conserving our natural resources through converting eligible cropland to trees or other permanent vegetative cover.

Sod-Swampbuster Provisions – FSA administers the conservation provisions relating to Sod-Swampbuster provisions compliance. Unless exempted, producers who plant any agricultural commodities on highly erodible land, or who convert wetlands for production purposes, may be ineligible for any program benefits or payments on all farms in which they have an interest.

Stewardship Incentive Program (SIP) – SIP is a Forest Service Program. FSA is responsible for providing the administrative service for SIP. The program offers cost-share to landowners to establish, manage, and maintain or restore forestlands for timber production, fish and wildlife habitat enhancement, soil erosion, and water quality protection and other outdoor recreational opportunities.

Other FSA Program Responsibilities:

- ❖ Production Adjustment Programs (wheat, rice, feed grains, and cotton acreage reduction and efficiency payments, peanut poundage quotas).
- ❖ Agricultural Price Support Programs. Price Support Marketing Loans Loan Deficiency Payments
- ❖ Federal Crop Insurance
- ❖ Farm-Related Agricultural Credit Programs formerly performed by the Farmers Home Administration
- ❖ Other programs related to farm services as may be assigned.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

(formerly SCS)

The Natural Resources Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture helps individuals, groups, organizations, cities and towns, and county and state governments reduce the costly waste of land and water resources and put these natural assets to good use. The guiding principle is the use and conservation treatment of the land in harmony with its capabilities and needs.

The NRCS mission covers three major areas: soil and water conservation, natural resource surveys, and community resource protection and management. The help NRCS

provides is technical and in some cases financial. All assistance is given within the conservation objectives, guidelines and priorities of USDA. NRCS also provides some technical assistance to other countries.

To carry out its mission, NRCS has a nationwide network of conservation specialists to help people understand and protect the land and water resources while they use them beneficially. The NRCS staff includes soil conservationists, engineers, soil scientists, agronomists, biologists, economists, foresters, geologists, landscape architects, plant materials specialists, cartographers, environmental specialists, recreation specialists, social scientists and archeologists.

NRCS focuses its assistance on nonfederal land. Land users get help from NRCS mainly through the nearly 3,000 locally organized and locally run conservation districts in the United States. At the district level, NRCS conservationists provide on-site assistance and call upon all of the agency's expertise in solving specific problems of land users specifically regarding wetlands, technical assistance and information is available from NRCS for:

- ❖ Making wetlands determinations for wetland protection and management programs.
- ❖ Developing conservation plans for protecting and managing wetlands.
- ❖ Providing income-producing alternatives for use and management of wetlands.
- ❖ Developing standards and specifications and designing and installing conservation measures, including wetland restoration, creation and enhancement.
- ❖ Providing information on plant materials for wetland planting.
- ❖ Providing soil surveys and information for identifying, planning, and managing wetlands.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

“The mission of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service is to conserve, protect, and enhance the nation's fish and wildlife and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.” However, within that broad mission an emphasis is placed on the fish and wildlife-related resources encompassed by the phrase “federal trust resources.” These natural resources are those for which the ultimate responsibility has been statutorily reserved to the federal government, and in this case, those that specifically involve the USFWS. Principal among these are: (1) migratory birds, including game and non-game species; (2) threatened and endangered species; (3) interjurisdictional fisheries, e.g., salmon; and (4) wetland habitats. Two primary factors have led to the commitment to and involvement of USFWS in promoting wetland stewardship on private lands. They are: (1) the critical importance of wetland conservation to the maintenance of many migratory bird populations, especially waterfowl; and, (2) the fact that most of the nation's wetlands are currently and will always be in private ownership. Thus, USFWS has recognized that the stewardship of wetland resources on private lands is a necessary ingredient to successful accomplishment of its mission, and it is resolved to promote that stewardship in partnership with the private landowner.

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC)

The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission is responsible for managing the state's fish and wildlife resources to provide sustainable public hunting and fishing opportunity. The objective of the Commission is to control, manage, restore, conserve and regulate Arkansas' abundant fish and wildlife resources. The mission of the Commission's Wildlife Management Division is, *"to preserve, protect, and enhance Arkansas wildlife populations and their habitat for public benefit."* As such, the Commission is especially concerned with the conservation and restoration of wetlands given their current and historical importance as habitat for the majority of Arkansas' fish and wildlife species, most notably waterfowl. The Commission's wetland efforts are guided by the habitat restoration goals of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, an international effort to restore waterfowl populations to the average levels of the 1970s by the year 2000. Arkansas is part of the NAWMP's Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture, and calls its program "Private Lands Program."

Arkansas Forestry Commission (AFC)

The mission of the Arkansas Forestry Commission is, *"to protect and develop forestry resources of the state."* As well, the Forestry Commission offers a variety of technical assistance and technical service programs to promote sound forest management on private nonindustrial forest lands.

Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission (ASWCC)

The mission of the Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission is, *"to manage and protect our water and land resources for the health, safety and economic benefit of the state of Arkansas."*

Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission (ANHC)

The Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission is responsible for conducting inventories and protecting habitat of rare species and identifying and protecting the most natural biological communities in the state. Inventories are conducted by ANHC staff or data collected by others may be consulted. Protection is provided through the state environmental review process, through voluntary management agreements with interested landowners, or through acquisition of partial rights (easements) or fee title in high priority lands from willing sellers. The agency has no zoning or condemnation authority. The ANHC recognized the special values of wetlands and places high priority on conservation of entire wetland systems, particularly in cooperation with other agencies and interested private landowners.

University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service

The mission of the Cooperative Extension Service Agriculture and Natural Resources program of the University of Arkansas is, *"The Cooperative Extension Service, University of Arkansas, helps people improve their lives and plan for the future through an educational process that uses research-based knowledge to focus on issues and needs of agriculture, natu-*

ral resources, and communities in an environmentally sound manner." The Cooperative Extension Service Agriculture and Natural Resources programs are a vibrant, well recognized, and valued asset in every county in the state of Arkansas and:

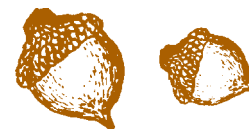
- ❖ Serve as the first point of access for information, technology, and their application to issues of agriculture, community, and economic development.
- ❖ Delivers high quality research-based educational programs, focused on the needs of local agricultural producers, community leaders, elected officials, families, youth and the public.
- ❖ Provides proactive leadership in assisting local and state leaders identify and address critical issues in community development, economics, agriculture production and environmental stewardship.
- ❖ Builds bridges, networks, and partnerships between agricultural producers, consumers, elected officials, community leaders and a wide diversity of other organizations to address critical issues confronting Arkansas.
- ❖ Utilizes advanced technology and information systems to deliver information and educational programs more effectively, to provide greater access to information resources, and to demonstrate technology that will enable our clientele to be more effective and productive.

Ducks Unlimited (DU)

The mission of Ducks Unlimited is, *"to fulfill the annual life cycle needs of North American waterfowl by protecting, enhancing, restoring, and managing important wetlands and associated uplands."* The objective of the Arkansas Partners Project is to return waterfowl to their northern breeding grounds physically conditioned for maximum reproductive success.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC)

The Nature Conservancy is an international, nonprofit, science-based membership organization. The Conservancy's mission is, *"to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. The Conservancy approaches habitat conservation in a nonconfrontational way."*



APPENDIX B: WETLAND DEFINITIONS

A common perspective is essential for productive communications between technical assistance providers and private landowners. The following definitions, and clarifying examples, have been developed for application for Arkansas' wetland conservation needs.

WETLAND RESTORATION is defined as the rehabilitation of a degraded wetland, or the re-creation of a wetland habitat on a hydric soil area that was originally a naturally functioning wetland. This term is frequently used to refer to the restoration of hydrology coupled with establishment of self-sustaining, native vegetation. Inasmuch as Arkansas' original wetlands were predominantly bottomland hardwoods, this usually implies reforestation as the primary revegetation activity. However, a broad interpretation needs to be utilized in working with landowners in order to encourage their efforts toward partial wetland restoration. For example, the restoration of hydrology coupled with planting of and/or management for herbaceous, moist soil vegetation may not be self-sustaining without active manipulation, but this clearly represents a substantial partial restoration of wetland functions and values. Additionally, the winter flooding of rice fields represents a partial restoration of wetland hydrology by mimicking the function of seasonal ponding of rainfall that was historically provided by many of these areas.

WETLAND ENHANCEMENT is defined as the improvement, maintenance, and/or management of existing wetlands for a particular function or value. Some agencies technically consider anything less than a full hydrologic restoration and revegetation with only native species requiring no future management to be "enhancement." This can even carry negative connotations in instances in which managing for particular wetland functions might be perceived as being at the expense of other potential functions. Although wetland management activities which degrade natural wetland types should be avoided (e.g., the conversion of a forested wetland to a dead timber reservoir), enhancement activities which add to the provision of wetland functions on degraded sites should be encouraged wherever possible. Also, because the broad interpretation of "existing wetlands" would include farmed and prior converted wetlands, any of the multitude of enhancement activities which could be undertaken there could also be considered to be partial wetland restoration.

WETLAND CREATION is defined as the conversion of a nonwetland area into a wetland where a wetland never previously existed. Wetland creation is uncommon in Arkansas, in part because the majority of the Delta was once a forested wetland and contains hydric soils. Caution must be exercised in considering wetland creation projects in the state because much of the lands which did not historically include wetland habitats are unsuitable for wetland creation due to inappropriate soils or similar reasons.

CONSTRUCTED WETLANDS are specifically designed to treat both nonpoint and point sources of water pollution. Artificial wetlands specifically constructed for treatment of agricultural pollutants (such as runoff from livestock or poultry operations) or wastewater (e.g., tertiary sewage treatment, or from specific domestic or industrial sites) are becoming increasingly common in Arkansas. This guide provides contacts for assisting with agricultural application of constructed wetlands. However, dealing with the potential range and complexity of applying this developing technology is beyond the intended scope of this guide.

APPENDIX C: WETLAND COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

In selecting voluntary options for wetland conservation and management, private landowners need to be aware of applicable federal, state and local requirements and conditions for use and management of wetlands. The following fact sheets in this section contain information on wetland regulations and exemptions. At the federal level, these requirements include:

(A) **SECTION 404 OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT (CWA)**. Section 404 requires a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including most wetlands. "Wetland Fact Sheet #20" provides information regarding exemptions from Section 404 permit requirements, many of which were implemented for the benefit of the agricultural community. Also, many wetland restoration practices are now encompassed by the Corps' Nationwide Permit #27 addressing "Wetland and Riparian Restoration and Creation Activities" as described in the Federal Register/ Volume 56. No. 228.

General Permit #27 – Wetland and Riparian Restoration and Creation Activities. Activities in waters of the United States associated with the restoration of altered and degraded nontidal wetlands and creation of wetlands on private lands accordance with the terms and conditions of a binding wetland restoration or creation agreement between the landowner and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the Natural Resources Conservation Service; or activities associated with the restoration of altered and degraded nontidal wetlands, riparian areas and creation of wetlands and riparian areas on U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands, federal surplus lands (e.g. military lands proposed for disposal). Farmers Home Administration inventory properties, and Resolution Trust Corporation inventory properties that are under federal control prior to being transferred to the private sector. Such activities include, but are not limited to: installation and maintenance of small water control structures, dikes and berms; backfilling of existing drainage ditches; removal of existing drainage structures; construction of small nesting islands; and other related activities. This nationwide permit applies to restoration projects that serve the purpose of restoring "natural" wetland hydrology, vegetation, and function to altered and degraded nontidal wetlands and "natural" functions of riparian areas. For agreement restoration and creation projects only, this nationwide permit also authorizes any future discharge of dredged or fill material associated with reversion of the area to its prior condition and use (i.e. prior to restoration under the agreement) within five years after expiration of the limited term wetland restoration or creation agreement, even if the discharge occurs after this nationwide permit expires. The prior condition will be documented in the original agreement, and the determination of return to prior conditions will be made by the federal agency executing the agreement. Once an area is reverted back to its prior physical condition, it will be subject to whatever the Corps regulatory requirements will be at the future date. This nationwide permit does not authorize the conversion of natural wetlands to another aquatic use, such as creation of waterfowl impoundments where forested wetland previously existed (Sections 10 and 404).

While minimizing application and permitting processes, this general permit must be requested and does not represent an exemption. In all cases, you should exercise caution when undertaking practices which may require a 404 permit. If there is any doubt or concern, be sure to consult with the appropriate Corps of Engineers Office (see Index of State-Level Contacts).

(B) THE FOOD SECURITY ACT OF 1985 (and amendments). This act and its amendments provides that landowners who receive U.S. Department of Agriculture program benefits must comply with the wetland and highly erodible land requirements. Any person who plants an agricultural commodity on a wetland that was converted after December 23, 1985, or converts a wetland after November 28, 1990, is ineligible for USDA program benefits. “Wetland Fact Sheet #19” provides additional information pertaining to these “Swampbuster” provisions. In addition, farmers who plant agricultural commodities on “highly erodible land” must do so according to an approved conservation plan.

In Arkansas, there are currently no state or local permitting requirements that are not already a part of the Section 404 (e.g., CWA Section 401 certification by the state; see Wetland Fact Sheet #24.) or Farm Bill processes for activities might be encountered during normal wetland restoration or conservation practices implemented on private lands.

Check with your local Corps district office if you are unsure whether your ongoing or planned activities occurring in wetlands are regulated under the Section 404 program.

Check with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly the Soil Conservation Service) before clearing, draining, or manipulating any wet areas on your land to make sure you maintain your farm program benefits.



Wetlands on Agricultural Lands: Section 404 and Swampbuster

Farmers who own or manage wetlands are directly affected by two important federal programs: (1) Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, which requires individuals to obtain a permit before discharging dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including most wetlands, and (2) the Swampbuster provisions of the Food Security Act, which withholds certain federal farm program benefits from farmers who convert or modify wetlands. Together, these two programs have helped to reduce the rate at which wetlands are converted to agriculture and other uses.

The federal agencies involved (EPA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) are actively seeking to coordinate their activities and to clarify the relationship between the program. For example, “prior converted croplands” have been excluded from regulation under Section 404 to be consistent with Swampbuster — and one wetland identification can be used for both the Section 404 program and the Swampbuster program.

Section 404 Provisions

Most routine ongoing farming activities do not require Section 404 permits. This is perhaps the most important information for farmers regarding the Section 404 program. Section 404 permitting requirements apply only to discharges of dredged or fill materials in wetlands, streams, rivers, and “other waters of the United States.” In general, farming activities that do not occur in wetlands

or other waters of the United States or do not involve dredged or fill material do not require Section 404 permits.

In addition, many normal farming, silviculture, and ranching activities that involve discharges of dredged or fill materials into waters of the United States are exempted from Section 404; that is, they do not require a permit. In order to be exempt, the farming activity must be part of an ongoing farming operation and cannot be associated with bringing a wetland into agricultural production or converting an agricultural wetland to a nonwetland area.

Swampbuster Provisions

Similar to the Section 404 program, the Swampbuster program generally allows the continuation of most farming practices so long as wetlands are not converted or wetland drainage increased. However, certain activities such as clearing, draining, or otherwise converting a wetland are activities addressed by the Swampbuster program. The program discourages farmers from altering wetlands by withholding federal farm program benefits from any person who:

- Plants an agricultural commodity on a converted wetland that was converted by drainage, dredging, leveling, or any other means (after December 23, 1985).
- Converts a wetland for the purpose of or to make agricultural commodity production possible (after November 28, 1990).

For more information, contact the EPA Wetlands Information Hotline at 1-800-832-7828 (contractor operated).



Exemptions to Section 404 Permit Requirements

In general, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act requires permits for the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands. However, certain activities, detailed below, are exempt from permit requirements under Section 404(t).

Exemptions

You do not generally need a permit under Section 404 if your discharges dredged or fill material are associated with normal farming, ranching, and forestry activities such as plowing, cultivating, minor drainage, and harvesting for the production of food, fiber, and forest products or upland soil and water conservation practices. This exemption pertains to normal farming and harvesting activities that are part of an established, ongoing farming or forestry operations.

Activities Not Exempt

If an activity involving a discharge of dredged or fill material represents a new use of the wetlands and the activity would result in a reduction in reach or impairment of flow or circulation of regulated waters, including wetlands, the activity is not exempt. Both conditions must be met in order for the activity to be considered nonexempt. In general, any discharge of dredged or fill material

associated with an activity that converts a wetland to upland is not exempt, and requires a Section 404 permit.

Examples

- Activities that bring a wetland into farm production where the wetland has not previously been used for farming are not considered part of an established operation, and therefore require a permit.
- Introduction of a new cultivation technique such as disking between crop rows for weed control may be a new farming activity, but because the farm operation is ongoing, the activity is exempt from permit requirements under Section 404.
- Planting different crops as part of an established rotation, such as soybeans to rice, is exempt.
- Discharges associated with ongoing rotations of rice and crawfish production are also exempt.

To find out whether specific activities are exempt, contact your local Corps or EPA office. **Ask for a free copy of "Agriculture and Wetlands: A Compilation of Factsheets"** when you call the EPA Wetlands Information Hotline (contractor operated).

Exempt Activities under the Clean Water Act, Section 404(f)

- Established (ongoing) farming, ranching, and forestry activities (plowing, seeding, cultivating, harvesting food, fiber and forest products).
- Minor drainage.
- Upland soil and water conservation practices.
- Maintenance (but not construction) of drainage ditches, dams, dikes, and levees.
- Construction and maintenance of irrigation ditches, farm or stock ponds.
- Construction and maintenance of farm and forest roads, in accordance with best management practices.



Section 401 Certification and Wetlands

This fact sheet describes state and eligible tribal authority under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (CWA). It also discusses how EPA can assist states and tribes in taking more active roles in making wetland decisions and how states and tribes can use their water quality standards in Section 401 certifications to protect wetlands.

State/Tribal Authority under Section 401

Under Section 401, states and tribes can review and approve, condition, or deny all federal permits or licenses that might result in a discharge to state or tribal waters, including wetlands. The major federal licenses and permits subject to Section 401 are Section 402 and 404 permits (in nondelegated states), Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) hydropower licenses, and Rivers and Harbors Act Section 9 and 10 permits. States and tribes may choose to waive their Section 401 certification authority.

States and tribes make their decisions to deny, certify, or condition permits or licenses primarily by ensuring the activity will comply with state water quality standards. In addition, states and tribes look at whether the activity will violate effluent limitations, new source performance standards, toxic pollutants, and other water resource requirements of state/tribal law or regulation.

EPA Assistance to States

In 1988, the National Wetlands Policy Forum recommended that states "make more aggressive use of their certification authorities under Section 401 of the CWA to protect their wetlands from chemical and other types of alterations." In response, in 1989, EPA issued guidance to states on applying

Section 401 certification to protect wetlands. A year later, EPA issued guidance on developing water quality standards specifically for wetlands. Wetland water quality standards are important because they are the primary tool used in water quality certification decisions. Twenty states and tribes have been awarded State Wetlands Protection Grants to support use of Section 401 Certification to protect wetlands.

Status of State Actions

Over the past several years, states have made progress in applying Section 401 certification to wetlands. Some states rely on Section 401 certification as their primary mechanism to protect wetlands in the state. In addition, most states denied or conditioned Section 401 certification for some Section 404 nationwide permits general permits to reduce certain problematic losses in their states. In particular, many states denied certification of nationwide Permit 26 because they believe that individual review of projects in isolated and headwater wetlands is critical to achieving CWA goals in their states.

EPA asked states to develop or improve their wetland water quality standards by the end of September 1993. Wisconsin is now using its wetlands standards in Section 401 certification decisions on wetlands. Other states are using their Section 401 authority to condition some of the more than 300 dams that are coming up for relicensing by FERC. Section 401 certification allows states to address associated chemical, physical, and biological impacts such as low dissolved oxygen levels, turbidity, inundation of habitat, stream volume and fluctuations, filling of habitat, impacts on fish migration, and loss of aquatic species as a result of habitat alterations.



NOTES

Section 401 Certification and Wetlands (cont'd)

For more information, contact the EPA Wetlands Information Hotline (contractor operated) for copies of the following:

- Wetlands and 401 Certification, 1989.
- Water Quality Standards for Wetlands, 1990.
- Statement of Martha G. Prothro, May 1992.
- *PUD No. 1 of Jefferson County and City of Tacoma, petitioner v. Washington Department of Ecology et al.*, 114 S. Ct. 1900 (1994).

How can water quality standards protect wetlands?

Water quality standards have three primary components: designated uses, criteria to protect those uses, and an antidegradation policy. States designate uses based on the functions and values of their wetlands. At a minimum, these uses must meet the CWA goals to protect and propagate fish, shellfish and wildlife, and for recreation in and on the water. States may also designate uses associated with unique functions and values of wetlands such as floodwater storage and groundwater recharge.

States also adopt criteria to protect those uses. Criteria can be general narrative statements such as "maintain natural hydrologic conditions, including hydroperiod, hydrodynamics and natural water temperature variations necessary to support vegetation which would be present naturally." Criteria may also include specific numeric values, such as a dissolved oxygen concentration of 5.0 mg/l.

State antidegradation policies include provisions for full protection of existing uses (functions), maintenance of water quality of high-quality waters, and a prohibition against lowering water quality in outstanding resource waters. In addition, a state's antidegradation policy addresses fill activities in wetlands by ensuring no significant degradation occurs as a result of the fill activity.

Narrative criteria in conjunction with antidegradation policies can provide the basis for addressing hydrologic and physical impacts to wetlands (not discerned through numeric criteria) caused by nonpoint source pollution, storm water discharges, groundwater pumping, filling, and other sources of wetland degradation. When combined with a strong implementation policy, wetland water quality standards can provide the basis for such tools as best management practices, monitoring programs, and mitigation plans, as well as serve as the primary basis for Section 401 certification decisions.

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For additional copies of this guide or more information on wetland conservation, please contact your USDA service center or any Arkansas Game and Fish Commission office. This guide is also available on the web at www.mawpt.org.

This guide and implementation of the programs described herein will contribute to the goals of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. This guide was developed through a cooperative effort among state, federal and private agency personnel.

