

Conservation Reserve Program

DUCK NESTING HABITAT INITIATIVE

Improve Wildlife Habitat | Enhance Recreation | Increase Duck Populations



Why Choose CRP? You Benefit. Land, Water and Wildlife Benefit.

The Duck Nesting Habitat Initiative provides vital habitat for critical wildlife species, including ducks and grassland birds. The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) provides farmers and landowners with initiatives like this to achieve many farming and conservation goals. Whatever the conservation challenge – soil conservation, water quality protection, or wildlife habitat enhancement – CRP is a proven land performance and management solution.

Why Are Duck Nesting Habitats Important?

The Prairie Pothole grassland-wetland complex is North America's duck factory, producing well over 50 percent of the continent's upland ducks. These include mallards, pintails, blue-wing and green wing teal, and gadwall. Through the Duck Nesting Habitat Initiative, 300,000 acres of wetlands and associated grasslands in Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota will be restored.

By adding to the creation of wetland complexes, landowners and farmers will not only provide critical habitat but additional public benefits from filtered runoff, recharged ground water, reduced downstream flooding, and improved drinking water.

Affiliated Practice:

CP-37 Duck Nesting Habitat

For more information about this individual practice, visit: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>

Photos provided by NRCS, Lynn Betts and Ron Nichols respectively



Duck Nesting Habitat Initiative Benefits

While duck populations have thrived over the past several years, the continual loss of nesting habitat remains a concern for future broods. Because ducks need both water and cover habitat to successfully raise their young, the decrease in available wetlands threatens to undo recent progress in establishing duck habitat and reduce duck populations.

The initiative is estimated to increase duck numbers by 180,000 birds annually as well as further CRP's large-scale achievements in protecting the country's wetlands and wildlife. Between 1992 and 2004 US Fish and Wildlife Service estimated that Prairie Pothole CRP grasslands and wetlands contributed 2 million additional ducks, a 30 percent increase to the country's flyways each year.

Financial Benefits

- 10-15 years of annual rental payments with an additional 20% Rental Rate Incentive
- Payments covering 90% of the eligible costs of establishing the wetland restoration practice
 - 50% from a Cost-Share Payment and
 - 40% from a Practice Incentive Payment (PIP)
- Sign-up Incentive Payment (SIP) up to \$150/acre
- Additional incentives may be available in your state under the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

Impact

- Increases duck populations
- Provides hydrologic storage that mitigates the impact from flooding
- Buffers around depressional wetlands provide habitat for grassland birds - a group of species that are in sharp decline
- Prairie Pothole Region (Northern U.S.) provides refuge for approximately 35 species of migrating and breeding shorebirds, such as the White-rumped Sandpiper, Long-billed Curlew, Dowitchers, and Lesser Yellow Legs
- Promotes carbon sequestration

For more information, contact your local USDA Farm Service Agency: <http://offices.usda.gov>

Photos provided by NRCS, Stephen Kirkpatrick, USFWS, Steve Hildebrand and Dana Dewhurst respectively