United States Department of Agriculture

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

Montana State Producer Handbook

July 2008

Fact Sheet

Duck Nesting Habitat Initiative-

According to the 2008 Farm Bill

Background

The Duck Nesting Habitat Initiative is a practice under the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) for wetlands restoration to benefit duck nesting. This practice allows producers to restore up to 100,000 acres of wetland complexes in five states that are located outside of the recognized 100-year floodplain.
The practice will enhance duck nesting habitat on the most duck-productive areas of Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota.
The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) collaborated with US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to determine where enhanced nesting cover would have the greatest positive impact on duck populations.
Restoring wetland systems will also provide vital habitat for other wildlife species, filter runoff, recharge groundwater supplies, protect drinking water, and reduce downstream flooding.

Objectives

Counties affected by the initiative in Montana are Blaine, Daniels, Phillips, Roosevelt and Sheridan. The objective of the initiative is to restore wetlands and buffers located within these counties to:

- Provide nesting and brood-rearing habitat for ducks and other ground-nesting birds
- Restore and enhance water quality
- Reduce impacts of flood events
- Enhance wildlife habitat
- Reduce soil erosion

Signup Period

Signup began October 2, 2006, in Blaine, Daniels, Phillips, Roosevelt and Sheridan counties. Offers will be accepted under continuous signup criteria until the earlier of:

- December 31, 2007, or;
- Allocation of 8,000 acres is reached.

Eligible Land

This practice may be applied to:

- Areas designated by FWS as having dense populations of duck pairs (greater than or equal to 25 breeding duck pairs per square mile.) Areas that do not meet the density criterion of greater than or equal to 25 breeding duck pairs per square mile are **not** eligible for the Duck Nesting Habitat practice but may be enrolled under the CP23A, Wetland Restoration, Non-Floodplain practice.
- Cropland located outside the recognized 100-year flood plain of a permanent river or stream
- Cropped wetlands capable of being restored or enhanced and the associated buffer areas. The buffer to wetland ratio must, at a minimum equal 4 to 1 but shall not exceed 10 to 1

Eligibility

To be eligible for cost share, this practice shall:

- Be included in an approved conservation plan
- Be maintained for the life of the CRP contract
- Restoring the functional capability and values of the wetland ecosystem to a level determined by the participant in consultation with FSA and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) or a Technical Service Provider (TSP) including the following:
  1. preventing degradation of the wetland area and surrounding upland area from recurring
  2. increasing sediment trapping efficiencies
  3. improving surface and ground water quality
  4. preventing excessive erosion from recurring
  5. providing waterfowl and other wildlife habitat reducing flood flows.

Incentive Payments

A one-time wetland restoration incentive payment of up to 25 percent of the eligible cost of restoring the hydrology of the site is authorized. Other incentives, including Signing Incentive Payment (SIP) and Practice Incentive Payment (PIP) do **not** apply to this practice.

For More Information

Additional information may be obtained at local FSA offices or through the Montana FSA Web site at www.fsa.usda.gov/mt

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