



## News Release



For Immediate Release

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### **FSA State Executive Director Bruce Nelson Encourages Participation in Farmland Wetlands Programs**

*Bozeman, MT* – Bruce Nelson, State Executive Director for the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) in Montana encourages eligible producers to sign up for the Farmable Wetlands Program (FWP) beginning Aug. 3, 2009 at the local FSA county office.

“The Farmable Wetlands Program provides a resource for eligible producers to restore wetlands and reduce downstream flood damage, improve surface and groundwater quality and recharge groundwater supplies,” states Nelson. “Wetlands also provide vital habitat for many wildlife species including migratory birds.”

The 2008 Farm Bill has provided additional incentives to producers who enroll land in FWP. All new signups for FWP will be eligible for a \$100 per acre Signing Incentive Payment, a Practice Incentive Payment of 40 percent of the cost of installing the practice in addition to the 50 percent cost-share payment for the cost of installing the practice, and a per acre Payment Rate of 120 percent of the calculated rental rate.

Eligible acreage includes farmed and prior converted wetlands that have been impacted by farming activities. The maximum acreage for enrollment of wetlands and buffers is 40 acres per tract. A producer may enroll multiple wetlands and associated buffers on a tract as long as the total acreage does not exceed 40 acres.

FWP contracts are from 10 to 15 years in exchange for annual rental payments, one-time incentive payments, and cost-share for installing necessary practices.

FWP is a voluntary program to restore up to 100,000 acres in Montana of farmable wetlands and associated buffers by improving the land’s hydrology and vegetation. Eligible producers can enroll eligible land in FWP through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) – Continuous Signup. Currently 145 acres are enrolled in FWP in Montana.

Contact your local FSA office for further information on management activities on CRP or logon to the Montana FSA website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt>.