Introduction

Landowners in Nebraska have the opportunity to restore wetlands on their property along the Missouri River floodplain through the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service’s Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Program (WREP).

This voluntary program offers both financial and technical assistance to landowners and Tribes wishing to restore wetlands and increase wildlife habitat.

In 2004, Nebraska was the first state to gain approval from NRCS to implement this program. Since that time, over 121 contracts have been enrolled into WREP.

To date, WREP has committed to restore over 13,337 acres of wetlands and uplands within Nebraska. NRCS has provided over $24 million in funding for the program in the state.

Program Goals

The goals of the Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Program are:
• Restore 18,800 acres of wetlands along the Missouri River floodplain in Nebraska.
• Create a wildlife habitat and floodplain corridors to link wetlands and non-wetlands together. These areas will help disperse habitat opportunity to reduce wildlife disease and provide increased recreational opportunities.

The Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Program sign up area extends the entire Missouri River corridor bordering the eastern edge of Nebraska.

Benefits

Wetlands provide many benefits, which include:
• Act as a water quality filter;
• Reduce flooding;
• Recharge groundwater;
• Provide fish and wildlife habitat;
• Provide educational or recreational opportunities;
• Reduce flooding by absorbing high river flows.

Partners

• Landowners
• Natural Resources Conservation Service
• Nebraska Environmental Trust
• Ducks Unlimited
• Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
• U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
• U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
• The Nature Conservancy
• Lewis and Clark Natural Resources District
• Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District
• Lower Platte South Natural Resources District
• Nemaha Natural Resources District
• Omaha and Winnebago Indian Tribes

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