

Contact Us

The Wet Spot in the Field

Women, Food & Agriculture Network
info@wfan.org
www.wfan.org
515-460-2477

National USDA Conservation Service
www.ncrs.usda.gov
1-888-526-3227

Fish and Wildlife Service
www.fws.gov
1-800-344-WILD

Your state specific Department of Natural Resources



Put it to work as a wetland

More Than Just *Wet* Land

As a landowner, you want your land to be productive. Wet spots in your field take the most work to drain, yet produce the weakest crops. You can put those spots back to work for you by turning them into wetlands.



Unlock the hidden potential within the wet spots on your land.

Wetlands do a lot of work for your land. They reduce soil erosion, offer flood control, provide habitat for wildlife migration, and improve water quality. In fact, wetlands are so valuable that they receive public protection. You can even be paid to maintain wetlands on your land.

What is a Wetland?

Wetlands are not ponds. They are low areas that usually hold water and have a variety of plants growing around the edges or through them. They can be any size and offer benefits, such as:

- Slow runoff water
- Reduce erosion
- Improve water quality
- Filter pollutants
- Provide flood control
- Support plant and animal life

More Reading

<https://store.extension.iastate.edu>

- Restoring Iowa Wetlands
- Wetlands, Wildlife and You
- Managing Iowa Habitats: Fen Wetlands

<http://www.iowanaturalists.org>

- Iowa Wetlands

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Restoring Wetlands

Many landowners have areas that were once wetlands but have been tilled or modified so that they hold less water than they once did. In this case, you can restore the wetland by breaking drain tiles or installing non-perforated tile to carry upstream tile water to the restored wetland.

Constructed Wetlands

New wetlands can also be constructed in areas where they may not have been before. This is often done in areas where excess drainage or surface water can easily be trapped and retained, creating a new wetland.

What about mosquitoes?

Don't worry. A functioning wetland will attract enough predators like dragonflies to take care of mosquitoes. Mosquitoes that carry West Nile virus don't hatch from wetlands, but rather emerge later in the summer from stagnant water.

How to get started?

A good place to start is talking with a conservation specialist at a USDA Service Center, the Department of Natural Resources or the US Fish and Wildlife

Service. They all work together to protect wetlands using public funds. Ask them about non-profit organizations that may be able to help you with longer term, legal protection or payment. See the contact list on the back for more specifics.

Fen Wetlands

Fens are a rare type of wetland formed from alkaline water moving through mineral soils. They shelter more than 200 plant species, including many that are endangered. Fens can take thousands of years to form and are valuable as environmental indicators.

Ephemeral Wetlands

Ephemeral wetlands are wet only for a few weeks or months and are mostly dry during the summer. These are more easily drained and therefore fewer ephemeral wetlands remain. They are valuable places for frogs and salamanders to carry out their life cycles.