

Preparing and Scoring MN CREP CP23 and CP23a Applications



Presentation Topics

- Revised RIM General Program
- Keys to Preparing a Successful Application
- Evaluating Potential Wetland Restoration Sites
- Identifying "Program Defined" Restorable Wetland Areas
- Scoring CP23 and CP23A Applications
- Eligibility and Scoring Group Exercise

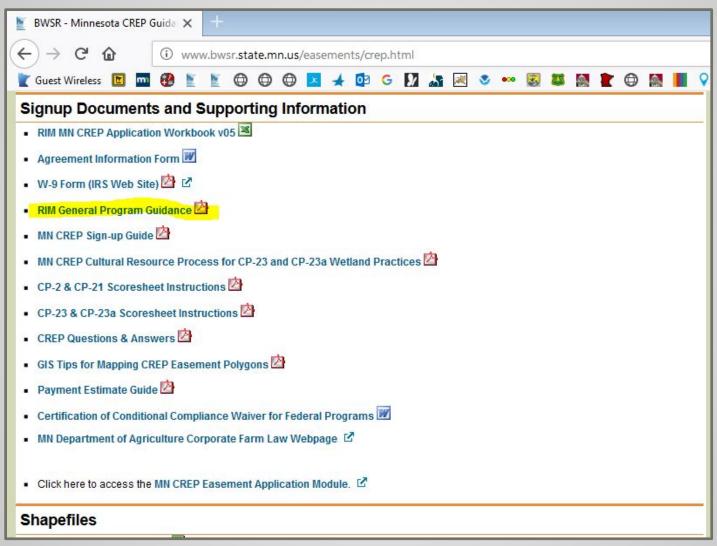




Revised RIM General Program Guidance



Revised RIM General Program Guidance





ENROLLMENT OF ADDITIONAL EASEMENT LANDS OUTSIDE OF CREP OFFER

- e.g. RIM-Only (RIM Roundout) Criteria (pages 3-5)
- Now includes:
 - Buffer Law Considerations
 - Clarifications to RIM-Only Criteria



ENROLLMENT OF ADDITIONAL EASEMENT LANDS OUTSIDE OF CREP OFFER

1. Existing CRP Land

- Limited to 50% of CREP Offer
- Must significantly improve benefits of CREP offer



ENROLLMENT OF ADDITIONAL EASEMENT LANDS OUTSIDE OF CREP OFFER

2. Other Lands

- Limited to 20% of CREP Offer
- Generally applies to non-crop enrollment options



ENROLLMENT OF ADDITIONAL EASEMENT LANDS OUTSIDE OF CREP OFFER

3. CP23a Additional Lands

- 4:1 to up to 8:1 increase in upland to wetland ratio
- Only applies when 4:1 of CREP offer is reached
- Does not apply to existing CRP
- Only applies to qualifying cropland acres



ENROLLMENT OF ADDITIONAL EASEMENT LANDS OUTSIDE OF CREP OFFER

4. Buffer Law Areas with Crop History

- Applies to areas that have a crop history but are not eligible for CRP enrollment
- Must be paid at RIM non-cropland rate



Revised RIM General Program Guidance











Keys to Preparing a Successful Application





- Quality of the application goes a long way to support scoring and funding decisions
- Good applications often require a fair amount of research and review of available information



Keys to Preparing a Successful Application

Application Checklist

AIR PHOTO AND/OR MAP DOCUMENTATION

ALL APPLICATIONS—Aerial photo displaying each of the following (suggested map groupings provided)

Map 1

- Proposed preliminary easement boundary and photo scale clearly shown. Section corners or centers should also be clearly identified.
- Planned dimensions and distances for easement area
- Location and boundary of other conservation easements contained within the proposed application area, if applicable
- Location and name or number of any public waters or public water wetlands that are within or adjacent to the proposed application area, if applicable
- Location of building sites or utilities (pipelines, power lines, telecommunications lines or cables) located within or adjacent to the planned easement area. Provide details where possible.

Map 2

Areas with crop history vs. no crop history; areas under existing CRP contract



Keys to Preparing a SuccessfulApplication

Application Checklist

APPLICATIONS WITH CP-23 AND/OR CP-23a—additional documentation:

Map 3

- Documentation identifying any drainage components (tile, ditches, pumps, etc.)
- Types and locations of basic wetland restoration strategies that are anticipated such as tile blocks, tile outlets, tile reroutes, pump removal, ditch plugs, embankments, scrapes, etc.
- Location of all program eligible drained/altered wetland areas. If the application contains eligible drained/altered wetlands that are unsuitable for scoring, identify them separately from scored wetland areas. If depressional (ponded) areas exist within wetland areas and are used in scoring, indicate them as well.

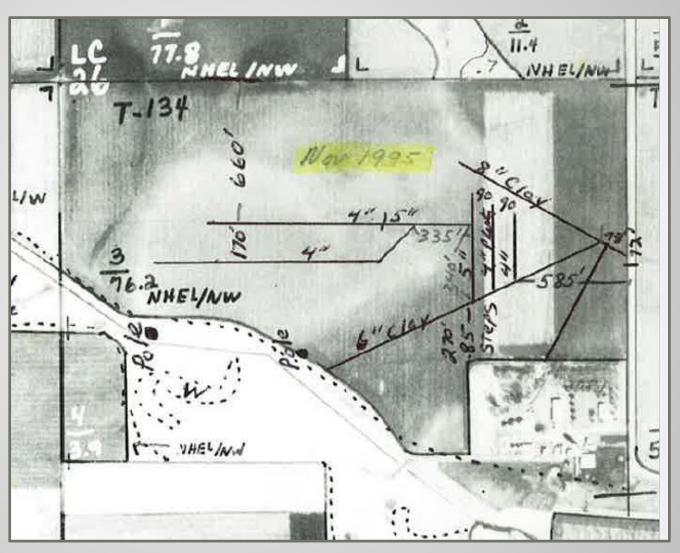
Map 4

- LiDAR information for application area
 - Think about scoring and how this information supports it
 - Some flexibility allowed depending on site



Keys to Preparing a Successful Application

Provide copies of actual tile maps when available



Questions?





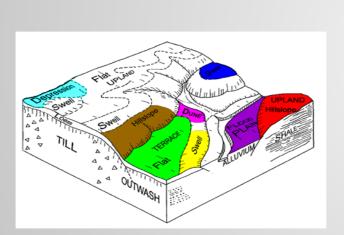


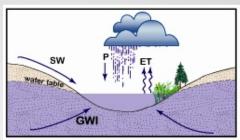




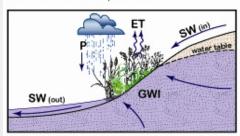


Varying Geomorphic Landscape Settings "Wetland Types" Within CREP Area

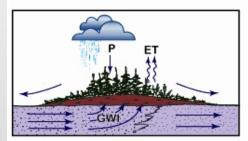




Ground Water - Depression

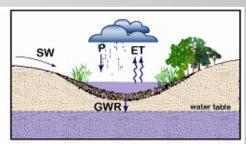


Ground Water - Slope

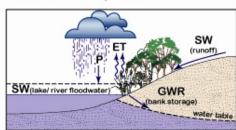


Ground Water - Extensive Flat

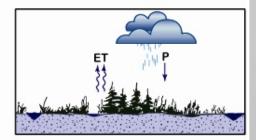
P = Precipitation ET = Evapotranspiration SW = Surface Water



Surface Water - Depression



Surface Water - Slope



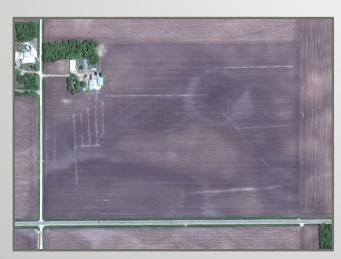
Surface Water - Extensive Flat

GWI = Ground Water Inflow GWR = Recharge to Ground Water

- Review All Available Resources
- Develop Effective and Manageable Easement Boundaries
- Things to Consider:
 - Locations and extents of drained and altered wetlands
 - Methods used to drain and alter site wetlands
 - > Property boundaries
 - > Restoration feasibility
 - Restoration strategies/methods needed
 - ➤ Identification of known or suspected restoration/ construction issues

Review of Available Resources

- Air Photos (ArcMap vs. Other)
 - Google Earth (1991 thru Current)
 - County Interactive GIS sites (Pictometry and Drainage Info.)
 - MHAPO (MN Historic Aerial Photographs Online U of MN or DNR Landview





Review of Available Resources

LiDAR Data (ArcMap vs. MnTOPO)



Review of Available Resources

Soils

Map Unit: 282—Hanska loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes

Component: Hanska (85%)

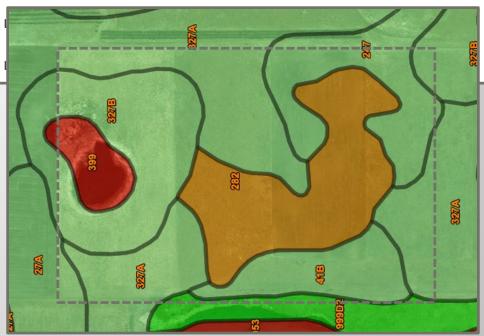
The Hanska component makes up 85 percent of the map unit. Slopes are 0 to 2 percent. This component is on terraces on till plains, outwash plains on till plains. The parent material consists of coarse-loamy glaciofluvial deposits over sandy and gravelly outwash. Depth to a root restrictive layer is greater than 60 inches. The natural drainage class is poorly drained. Water movement in the most restrictive layer is moderately high. Available water to a depth of 60 inches (or restricted depth) is moderate. Shrink-swell potential is low. This soil is not flooded. It is not ponded. A seasonal zone of water saturation is at 4 inches during April. Organic matter content in the surface horizon is about 7 percent. This component is in the R103XY001MN Loamy Wet Prairies ecological site. Nonirrigated land capability classification is 2w. This soil meets hydric criteria. The calcium carbonate equivalent within 40 inches, typically, does not exceed 18 percent.

Component: Lemond (10%)

Generated brief soil descriptions are created for major soil components. The

Component: Linder (5%)

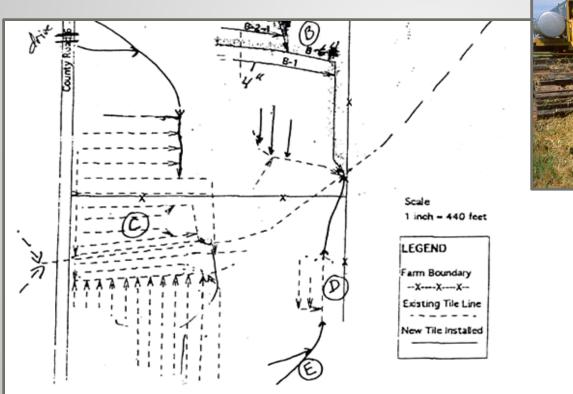
Generated brief soil descriptions are created for major soil components. The



Review of Available Resources

Drainage Information

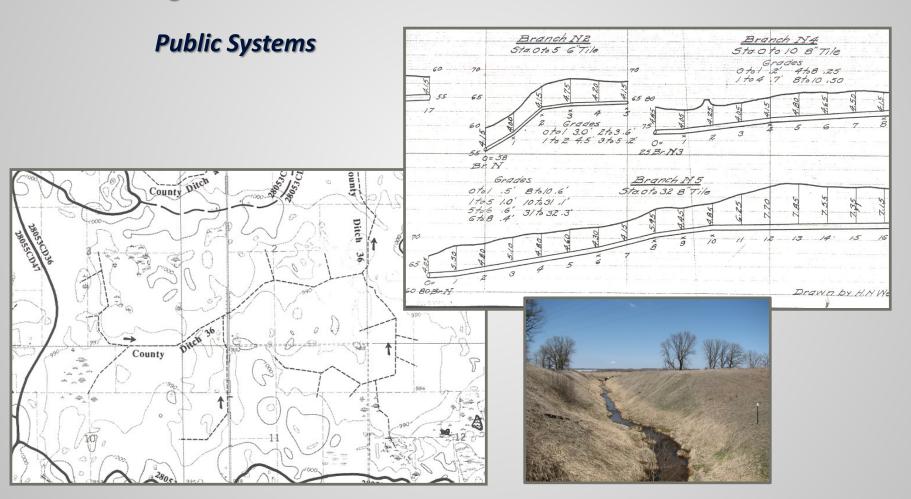
Private Systems





Review of Available Resources

Drainage Information



Review of Available Resources

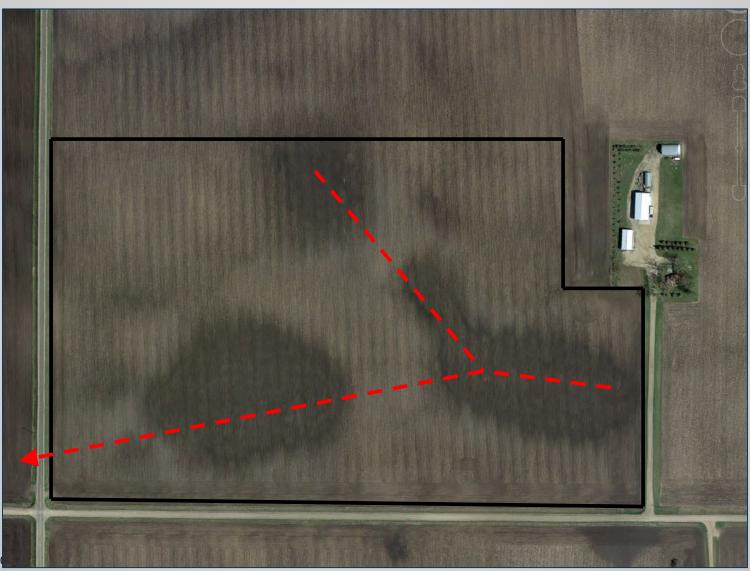
Others

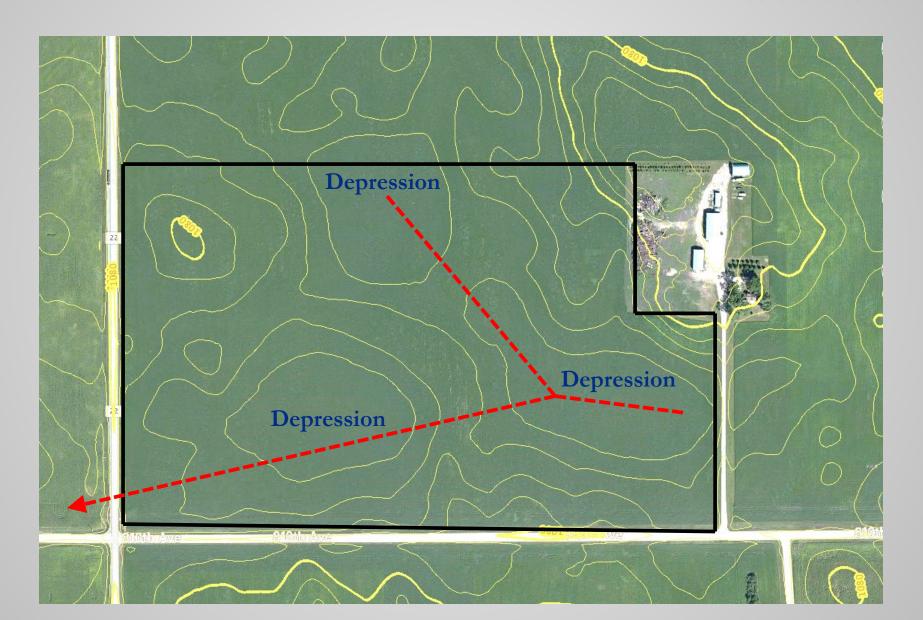
- ✓ Drained Wetland Inventories
- ✓ FWS National Wetland Inventories
- ✓ USDA Wetland Determinations
- ✓ On-Site Evaluations
- ✓ People (Landowner, Neighbors, Tilers, etc.)

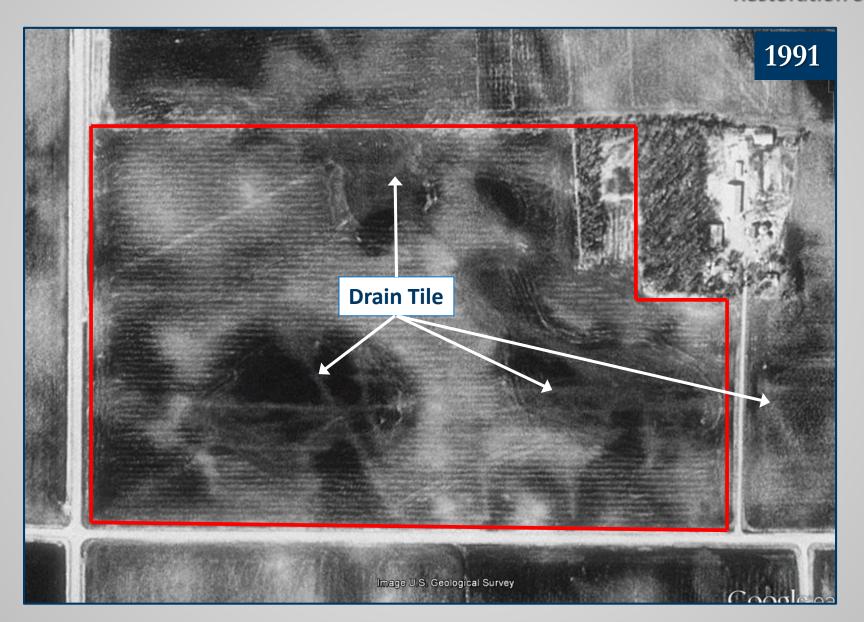


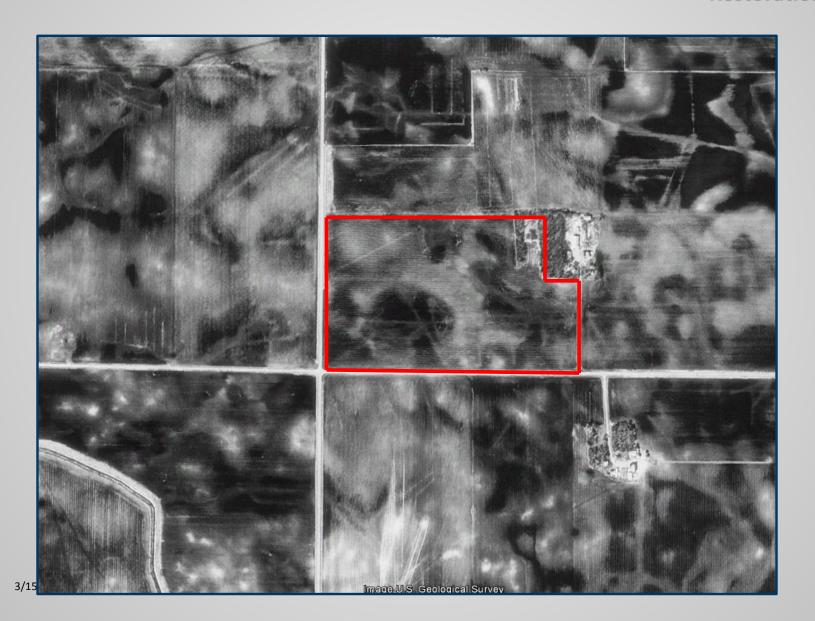
Example Scenario

Tile Info. Provided by Owner

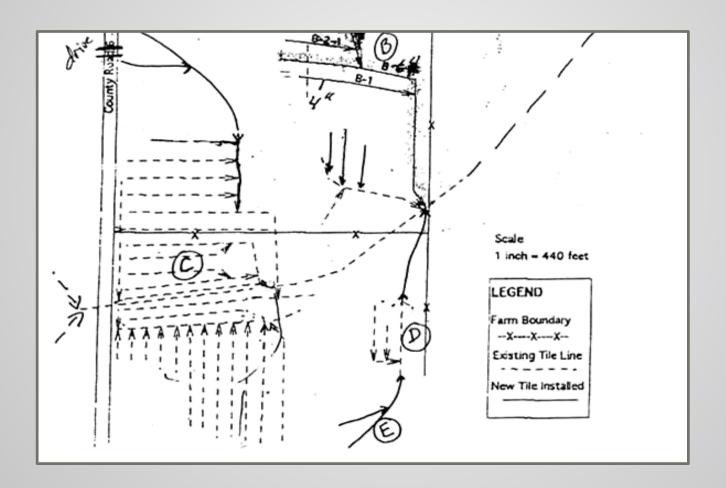


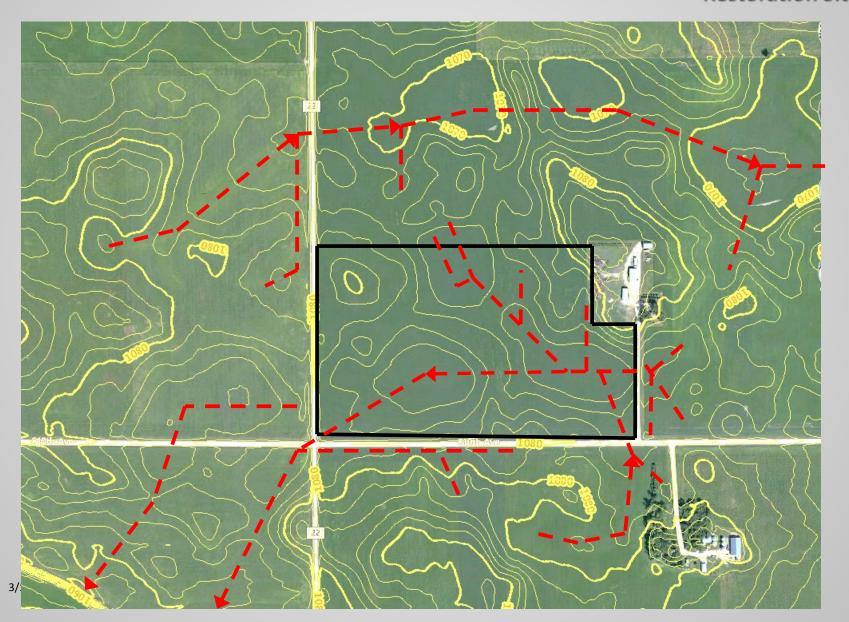






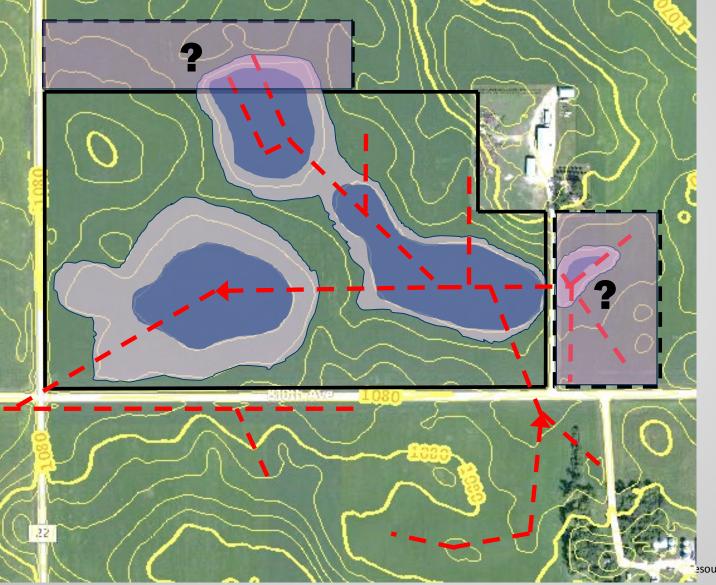
Ask for Tile Maps, etc.



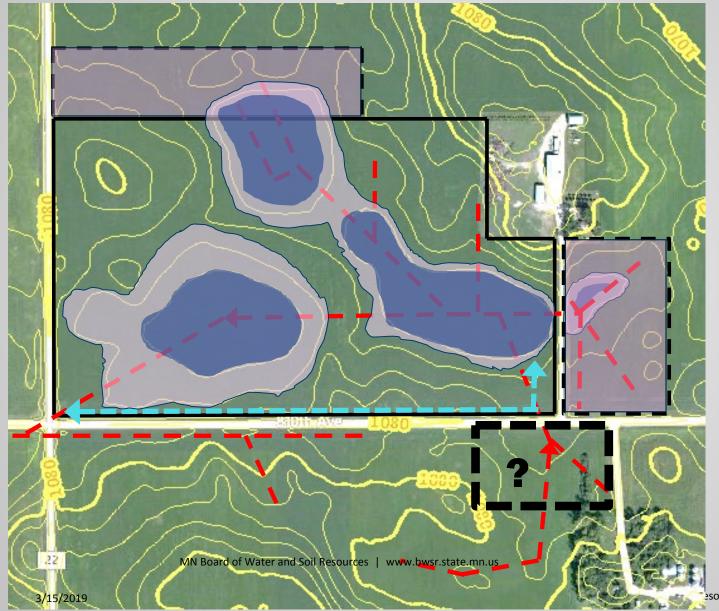


Evaluating Potential Wetland





While **Potentially** Eligible, **Would This Site Score** Well?



Develop Effective and Manageable Easement Boundaries

- ✓ Be Conservative
- ✓ Consider Drainage System Needs
- ✓ Consider Restored Hydrology Impacts
- ✓ Utilize Program Flexibility
- ✓ Use Scoring as a Means to Negotiate Better Boundaries



Evaluating Potential Wetland Restoration Sites

Example Scenarios

Evaluating Potential Wetland Restoration Sites

Final Thoughts

- It often takes time to gather necessary information and to prepare a quality (complete) application
- Don't be intimidated by complex or multi-landowner projects they are important and often provide the best restoration outcomes
- Consult with BWSR and/or other resource professionals on sites that are questionable or difficult to evaluate – we are here to support you!

Questions?













Identifying "Program Defined" Restorable Wetland Areas



- For program purposes, drained wetlands that <u>cannot be</u> restored (hydrology) are still considered "minimally restored" upon establishment of vegetation. Therefore, <u>include</u> these areas when determining extents of restorable wetland area.
- Want to report <u>all</u> restored wetland acres via appropriate wetland practice within respective program conservation plans
 - Accomplishment reporting
 - Practice funding



- Restorable wetland acres need to be determined early in the application process
- Likely <u>well before</u> any survey work or meaningful assessment of a site's actual restoration potential can be performed





Appendix 1 – Determining the Extent of Restorable Wetland Acres as Part of CREP

The identification and evaluation of drained and altered wetlands is an important part of assessing CREP eligibility as well as preparing RIM and CRP conservation plans for funded applications. The following information addresses this important topic and is consistent with RIM program guidance, NRCS Conservation Practice 657 – Wetland Restoration, and NRCS CCRP CP23 and CP23A Eligibility Documents.

Drained/altered wetlands include all wetland areas where the hydrology, vegetation and/or soils have been altered or removed, adversely affecting the functions and values of the former wetland. This includes:

- Sites where no hydrologic manipulation has occurred other than farming (wetlands cropped under natural conditions). These areas will be considered restored upon establishment of hydrophytic vegetation.
- 2. Sites that have hydrologic manipulation (ditch, subsurface tile, fill, etc.). The goal is to restore these areas to their original pre-manipulation condition, where possible and practicable. When physical or legal reasons limit or prevent the restoration of original hydrology, hydrology restoration is still considered accomplished "minimally restored" upon establishment of hydrophytic vegetation within these areas.

Therefore, by definition, the total extent of drained, altered, and farmed wetland area(s) that are determined within an application area constitutes the area of restorable wetland when determining eligibility and when preparing respective program conservation plans.

Drained and altered wetland areas are best identified by first observing areas of mapped hydric soils. The NRCS Web Soil Survey will easily display for each identified parcel the extent and area of all hydric and non-hydric soil map units. It also will provide the classification of each map unit along with its hydric ratio. When attempting to identify wetlands through the presence of hydric soils, it is important to understand that many soil map units are typically composed of one or more soil types and will often contain inclusions of dissimilar soils that are not mapped. In other words, a map unit that is identified as being hydric may have small areas, or inclusions, of non-hydric soils within it. Conversely, a non-hydric map unit may have inclusions of hydric soils within it. The extent of these dissimilar inclusions, if they exist, varies with each map unit and also varies from site to site for the same soil map unit. In addition, mapping variances and errors do exist and defined map units may not always accurately represent the actual extents of a former wetland. Because of this, additional resources should be used in combination with soils to accurately determine the total extent of drained, altered, and farmed wetland area(s).

A list of resources to review and consider when identifying drained and altered wetland areas includes:

- NRCS Web Soil Survey
- Current and historic aerial slides and/or photos looking for wet signatures during wetter years
- LiDAR or other survey data
- USDA wetland determinations (identification of "PC", "FW", "W" and "FWP" wetlands)
- > Extent of known drainage or drainage signatures from photo reviews
- FWS National Wetland Inventory Maps
- Drained wetland inventories
- Onsite investigations to determine extent of suspected hydric soil inclusions
- Cropping history of the parcel
- Knowledge of landform type and depressional or wet areas that may exist (landowner discussions)
- Last but not least, sound professional judgment

It is important that for all CREP eligible acres that the RIM and CRP conservation plans be similar to each other. This allows for accurate reporting of program restoration accomplishments and simplifies the determination of cost-share/practice funds that will be available as conservation practices are being established/installed.

June 28, 2018 9

Signup Documents and Supporting Informa

- RIM MN CREP Application Workbook v05
- Agreement Information Form
- W-9 Form (IRS Web Site) 🖾 🗹
- RIM General Program Guidance
- MN CREP Sign-up Guide
- MN CREP Cultural Resource Process for CP-23 and CP-23a

Appendix 1

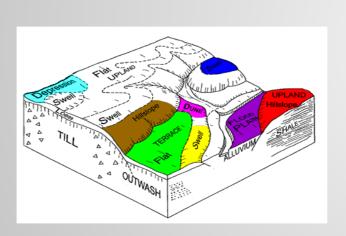
Available Resources/Tools

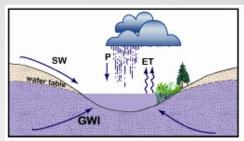
- NRCS Web Soil Survey (Hydric Soils or Non-Hydric Soils with Inclusions)
- Air Photos
- LiDAR or Other Survey Data
- USDA Wetland Determinations
- Drainage/Drainage Signatures

Available Resources/Tools - con't

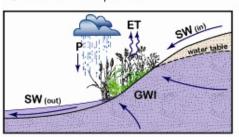
- NWI Maps
- Drained Wetland Inventories
- Onsite Field Work
- Landowner Discussions
- Sound Professional Judgement

Varying Geomorphic Landscape Settings "Wetland Types" Within CREP Area

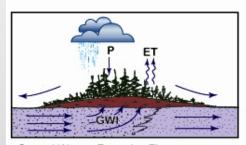




Ground Water - Depression

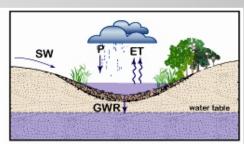


Ground Water - Slope

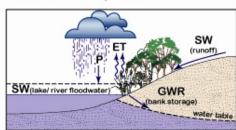


Ground Water - Extensive Flat

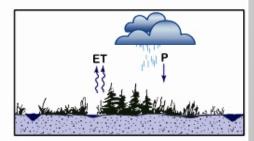
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Surface Water - Depression



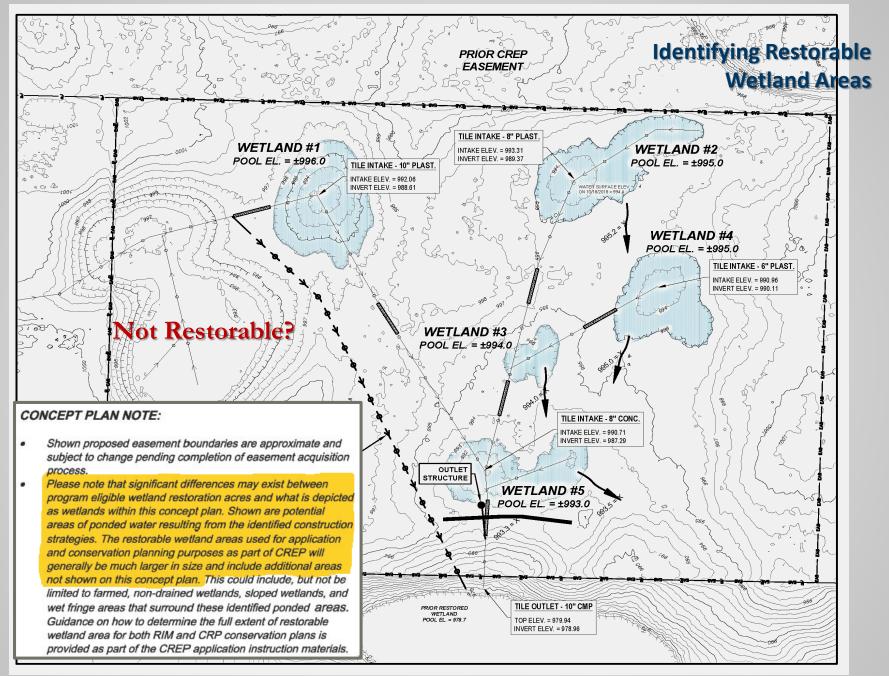
Surface Water - Slope



Surface Water - Extensive Flat

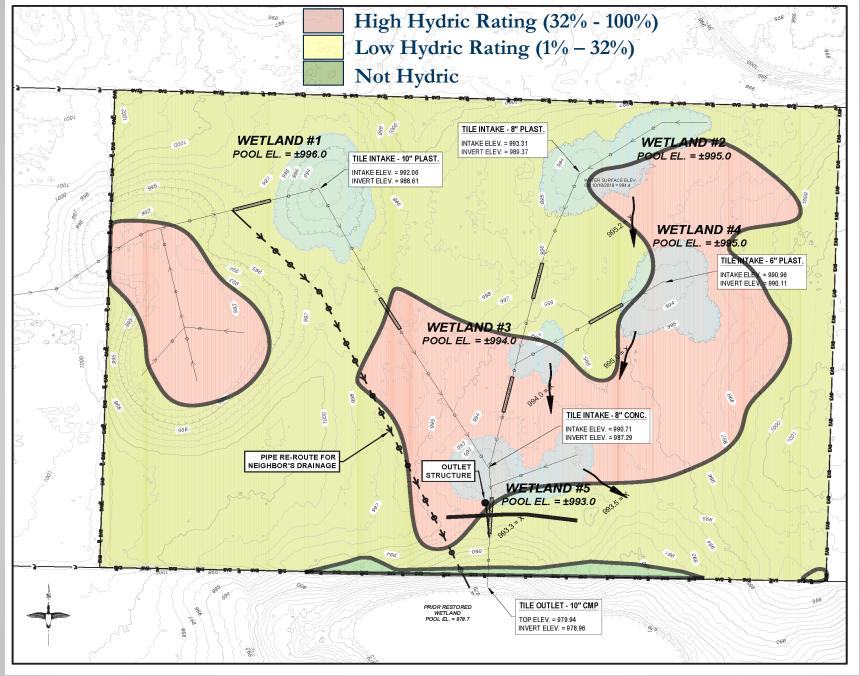
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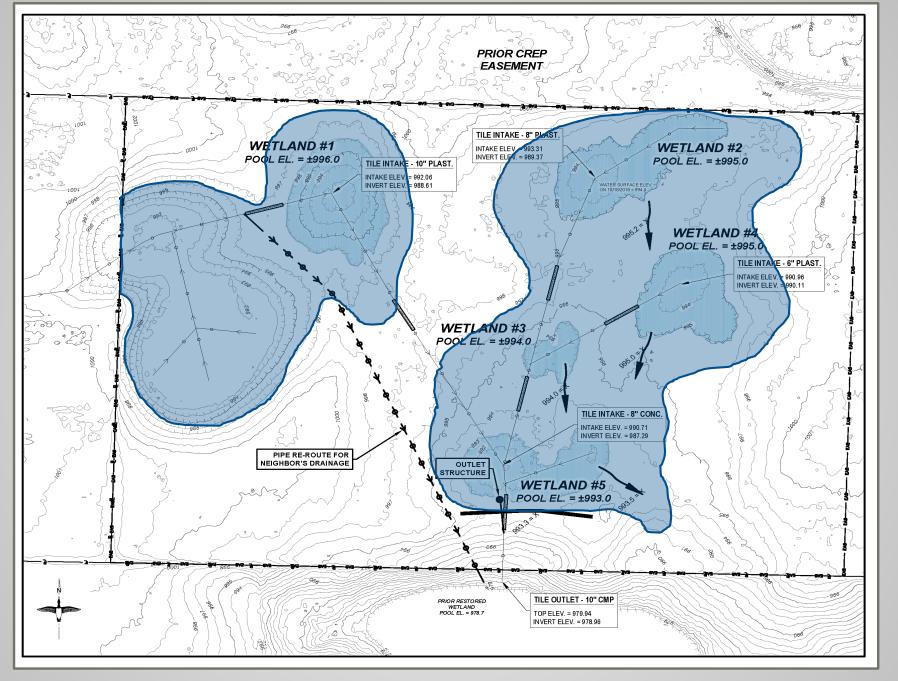
Example Scenario













- > Some adjustments to these defined areas may be made upon finalizing easement boundaries and learning more about the site.
- However, these same general areas and processes should be used for defining wetland restoration practice areas/acres when preparing conservation plans for both RIM and CRP



What if acreage differences occur between the CRP contract and RIM easement?



Questions?

















Why are MNCREP applications scored?















Why are MNCREP applications scored?

23% of easements containing drained wetlands as part of prior Minnesota CREPs had no wetland restoration work conducted because:

- Enrollment boundaries were limiting
- Restorations were infeasible to consider
- Offsite impacts to adjoining lands and drainage infrastructure would have occurred



Scoring Guidance

Wetland Condition	CREP Eligible	Criteria for Scoring
Farmed (Cropped) – FW's	Yes	Must Establish Vegetation
Effectively or Partially Drained/Altered	Yes	Must be able to Effectively and Substantively Restore Wetland Hydrology and Vegetation
Previously Restored	Yes	Must be Functional or able to be Made Functional. Score to prior restored condition.



Important Considerations

- Scoring applies to the entire proposed RIM easement area
- Adjoining MNCREP applications can be scored as a group when these easements are needed to restore a common, shared wetland (i.e. same score applies to all applications)
- Continue to provide supporting information and maps to support scoring in Sections B, C and D



Important Considerations

- > Yes, we understand a small part of scoring is subjective
- > Fewer issues with scoring in more recent batching periods
- Just as many applications have had their score increased vs. decreased as part of our review



What are the four most common issues we see when reviewing scoring of CP23/CP23a MNCREP applications?

- Drained wetlands identified and scored as being substantially restorable appear not to be
- Non-depressional wetlands included and scored as being depressional
- Wetlands to be restored are scored as being drained/altered yet no drainage or other information is provided to support this
- Size of largest restorable basin is overestimated



Section A. Restoration Benefits – Maximum Score 50 points

Factors Affecting Section Scoring

- Landscape (Type of Wetlands Being Restored)
- Number and Size of Restorable Wetlands
- Functional Gain from Identified Restorations
- Extent of Upland Buffer Included

Two Parts of the Section (can only score in one area)

- Depressional Wetland Landscape Setting
- Non-Depressional Wetland Landscape Setting



MN CREP CP23 and CP23A



Environmental Benefits Scoring Sheet Instructions

4/14/17

Scoring is a primary means of comparing the environmental benefits of each submitted application for MN CREP. To properly compare the merits of one application to another requires that they be scored following a consistent process. As individual practice types have targeted enrollment acres as part of MN CREP, only applications of like practice types will be scored against each other.

To ensure consistency, the following instructions have been prepared as a guide to completing the scoring sheet for the above referenced eligible MN CREP conservation practice. Please carefully read these instructions for each Section prior to combetine the form.

There are four Sections within the document which should be scored. Check the appropriate checkbox or checkboxes within each Section, as instructed. Left click your mouse on a checkbox to activate it. The score sheet automatically calculates the score. If an "Error" message appears, too many checkboxes are activated for that Section. Uncheck the incorrect checkboxes to clear the "Error" message.

A. RESTORATION BENEFITS (maximum score 50 points):

This is the primary scoring Section of the form. It is used to define the extent of anticipated restoration benefits or outcomes that will be achieved should an application be accepted and funded into MN CREP. It represents both the benefits of restoring drained and altered wetlands along with the associated adjoining upland buffer. The purpose of the scoring criteria within this Section is to identify the number and size of wetlands that can be restored, the associated functional gain that can be expected, and the extent of upland nesting and other wildlife habitat that will be included as a buffer around the wetlands.

This Section is divided into two parts that represent two different wetland landscape settings often associated with wetland restoration projects. The first part represents the restoration of drained and altered depressional wetlands. The second part represents the restoration of drained and altered non-depressional wetlands. Scoring of an application within this Section can only occur in one of these wetland landscape settings. Generally, the restoration of depressional wetlands provides greater functional value and therefore higher scoring. Definitions and examples of depressional and non-depressional wetlands are included in the definitions Section below.

When completing the scoring sheet, a landscape setting based on the characteristics of the site needs to be determined. Refer to the county hydric soils list for guidance on determining landscape position (depressional, floodplain, flats, swales etc.) by hydric soil map unit and hydric criteria. General hydric criteria are provided in the CP23 and CP23A CCRP Practice Eligibility and Suitability Worksheets.

If an application contains restorable drained and altered wetlands in both depressional and non-depressional landscape settings, choose the landscape setting that provides the greatest score. An error message will occur if attempting to score both depressional and non-depressional wetlands within a scoring sheet.

April 14, 2017



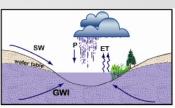
Score A. RESTORATION BENEFITS (maximum score capped at 50) **Total Upland: Effectively** Size of Largest **Partially** Wetland Condition → **Farmed Only Wetland Ratio** Basin (acres) Drained Drained Check one Check one Check one Check one Check one No. of (if applicable) (if applicable) (if applicable) (if applicable) (if applicable) **Basins** 1 □ 10 F 6 □ 3 ┌ 0 < 6 < 1:1 Restorable □ 10 2 口 15 **5** □ 7 6-10 ≥ 1:1 Depressional T 7 3 **20** T 14 **11-20** 15 厂 6 ≥ 2:1 Wetlands ┌ 8 □ 17 F 9 4 T 25 ≥ 3:1 (Basins) □ 30 □ 21 □ 11 □ 10 5 31-40 T 25 ≥ 4:1 口 24 T 13 6 35 > 40 □ 30 ≥ 7 T 40 □ 28 T 15 CP23 OR Total Upland: **Effectively** Partially Wetland Condition → Farmed Only **Wetland Ratio** Drained Drained Check one Check one Check one Check one Wetland (if applicable) (if applicable) (if applicable) (if applicable) Acres < 10 **5** □ 3 □ 1 < 1:1 □ 0 Restorable Non-□ 9 □ 6 T 2 10 - 40 ≥ 1:1 Depressional □ 8 口 4 F 6 41 - 80 T 12 ≥ 2:1 Wetlands F 6 T 16 T 11 □ 8 81 - 120 ≥ 3:1 □ 20 □ 14 □ 8 ≥ 121 T 10 ≥ 4:1

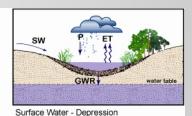


Definitions



- Depressional Wetlands
- ****
- Non-Depressional Wetlands
- ****
- Farmed Only Wetlands
- **√**
- Drained Wetlands
 - > Effectively Drained
 - > Partially Drained
- ? Basin
- Size of Largest Basin
- Total Upland to Wetland Ratio



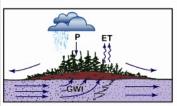


Ground Water - Depression

SW (out)

SW(take/river floodwater) GWR

Ground Water - Slope



Surface Water - Slope

Ground Water - Extensive Flat Surface Water - Extensive Flat

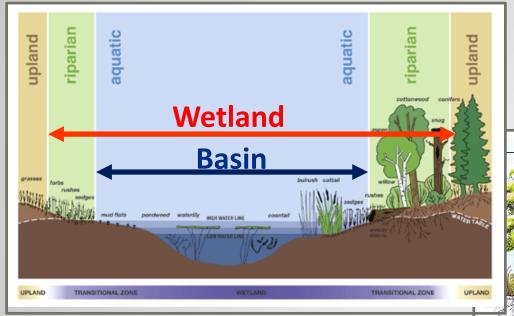
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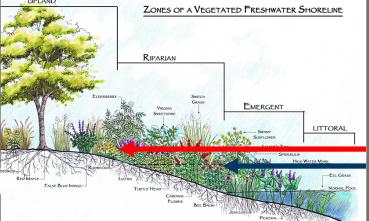


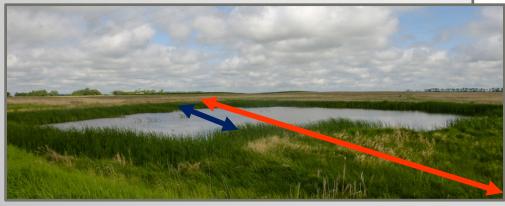


Definitions

Basin - The basin shall be determined as the area of restored ponded water (temporary or permanent) under normal conditions of a depressional wetland. The basin size is not necessarily the same as the restored wetland size. The size of the restored wetland would typically be larger and includes the full extents of restored wetland hydrology and vegetation, including fringe areas that do not normally pond water. Under this definition, a defined wetland area could contain more than one depressional basin within it. A depressional area that is split by a proposed embankment shall be allowed to be considered as multiple basins only when said embankment is necessary to achieve restoration and is feasible and practicable to construct.









Depressional Wetlands - Basins









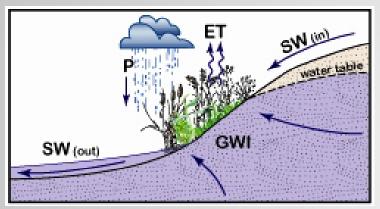








Non- Depressional Wetlands (Not Basins)







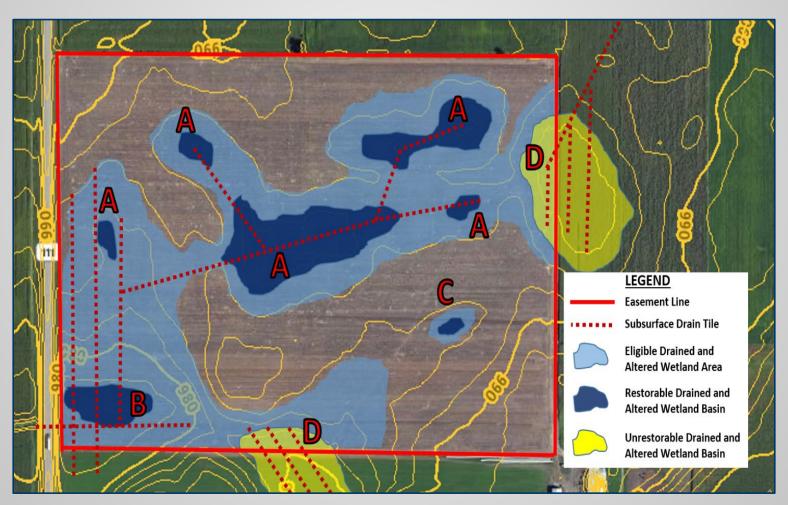








Multiple basins within a common defined wetland area





Definitions

<u>Size of Largest Basin</u> – Refers to the size of the largest depressional wetland <u>basin</u> than <u>can be restored</u> as part of the application (see basin definition).





Definitions

<u>Total Upland to Wetland Ratio</u> – Refers to the ratio of all upland acres to the total drained and altered wetland acres determined for the application.

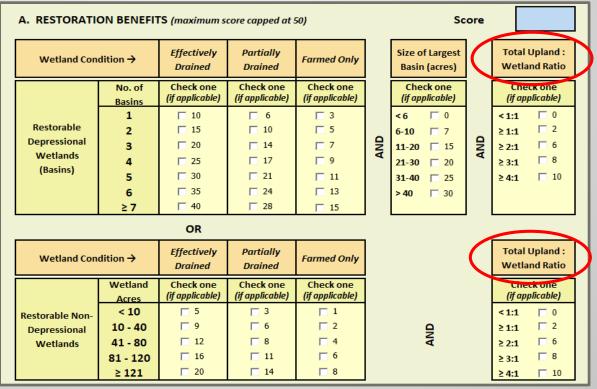
Use professional judgement when balancing the need to appropriately report and identify wetland acres with how that affects

scoring

Practice/ Cost-Share \$

VS.

Score

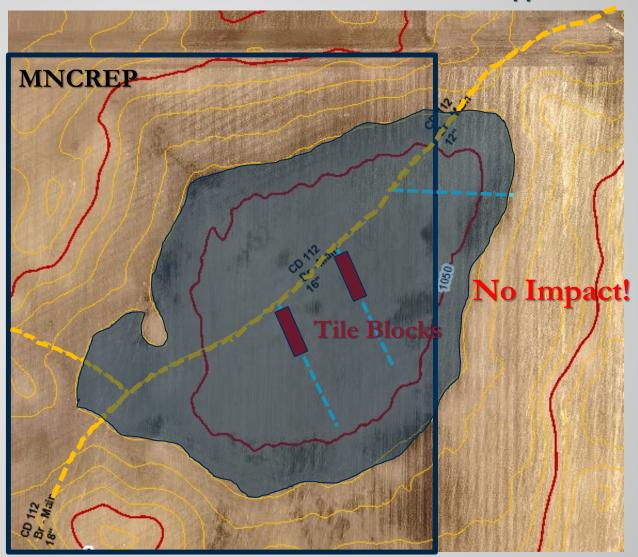




How much restoration must occur before a drained wetland can be considered scoreable?

Would this limited restoration action allow this wetland basin to be scored?

No



Prior Converted - Drained and Altered Wetlands:

Can planned sediment removal from a farmed, natural depressional wetland allow it be scored as a "restorable effectively drained basin"?







Important Considerations

Are current Scoring thresholds going to remain for upcoming batching periods?

TBD

Questions?

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