



# Continuous CRP

January 2015

## CP27 and CP28 - Farmable Wetlands and Buffers

Farmable wetlands are depressions within a crop field where water from irrigation or rainfall seasonally collects. When these areas hold water farming becomes difficult; crops get flooded out and equipment gets stuck. Often, landowners have to farm around them which cuts into productivity.

A large majority of farmable wetlands fall into the playa wetland category. Playas are ancient wind-formed, nearly circular small depressions with a layer of clay coating the bottom. The clay prevents water from seeping into the ground, even after years of being actively farmed.

Farmable wetlands that are not considered playas are often linked directly to the water table, meaning that inputs to crop production such as fertilizers and pesticides have a direct link to the groundwater.

When inundated, most farmable wetlands hold one to three inches of water but can be much deeper. They provide much needed rest stops for roughly 10 million migratory birds including 25 species of waterfowl, 27 species of shorebirds and 5 threatened

and endangered species such as whooping cranes.

Their seasonal nature means water levels are constantly fluctuating, creating bare mud flats attractive to shorebirds. Before long the bare soil will be vegetated by a flush of annual plants, which attract insects and provide a large seed crop, creating prime habitat for upland game brood rearing, pollinating insects, and song birds. They can also provide attractive browse and bedding areas for deer.

The Continuous CRP Program is one option to help stabilize income on these sporadically productive acres. Farmable Wetlands (CP27) and Farmable Wetland Buffers (CP28) are two practices that go hand-in-hand to help provide financial income on those “unproductive” acres.

In a CP27/CP28 enrollment, the wetland is allowed to fill with water. A buffer is seeded around the wetland to filter out excess nutrients and pesticides, prevent it from filling up with sediment, and provide additional wildlife cover.



*Playa wetland dominated by Pennsylvania smartweed (Polygonum pensylvanicum). This native plant provides an excellent food source for ducks and other waterfowl.*



*An example of a Farmable wetland (CP27) and Farmable Wetland Buffer (CP28) located in a crop field. These “unproductive” acres are now producing some income and wildlife.*

### INTERESTING FACT

**30ft** The minimum width of a wetland buffer to function efficiently.



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Areas of fields which flood out every few years resulting in a loss of production. Farmers have a steady income option with CP27/CP28 Farmable Wetlands and Farmable Wetland Buffers CRP.



American avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*) using a playa wetland.



An example of a CP27 and CP28 Farmable Wetland and Buffer practice that is providing excellent habitat for song birds, upland wildlife, pollinators, waterfowl and wetland species. This is also providing an annual payment with incentives to the landowner from year to year.

## Purpose

- Provides beneficial habitat for waterfowl, shore birds, and many other wildlife including ring-necked pheasant and pollinator species.

## Eligibility

- Acres must be cropland or considered planted to an agricultural commodity during four of six crop years. Years are determined by the Farm Bill.
- Eligible acres may be signed up on a continuous basis and do not have to wait for a sign up period as long as acres are available.
- Does not have to be Highly Erodible Land (HEL) to be eligible.
- Maximum size of wetland (CP27) is 40 acres with no minimum.
- Maximum size of wetland buffer (CP28) is no greater than 4 times the associated wetland acres. Minimum size is a width of 30' around associated wetland acres.
- Contracts may have a duration of 10 to 15 years.

## Rental Rate

- Annual payment based on the county soil rental rate established for the three predominate soils.
- Additional incentive of 20% above annual rental rate payment on all acres.

## Incentives

- One time sign up bonus payment (SIP) of \$100 per acre.
- Reimbursement payment of approximately 50% of costs for establishment and management practices.
- One time practice incentive payment (PIP) of approximately 40% for establishment costs once all the practices are completed and initial 50% reimbursement payment is made. Both of these payments together make up about 90% of the cost of establishment.

## Management

- Mid-Contract Management (MCM) is required at least once during the length of the contract.
- Haying and grazing are not allowed on CP27 or CP28 acres.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION



Through a partnership with Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, wildlife biologists are available to help provide wildlife habitat guidance, technical assistance on the available conservation programs and design seeding mixtures.

For further information visit [NebraskaPF.com](http://NebraskaPF.com) or call 844-733-3669.



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