

- After receiving approval of Part A, proceed with Part B. Part B requires specific information about site conditions, wetland design, construction specifications, vegetation establishment and management, monitoring requirements and other details of the project.
- The LGU reviews the plan and either approves, approves with conditions or rejects the proposal.
- If approved, complete the structural work, grading, and seeding as per the final plan.
- Have the LGU certify that the construction conforms with the approved project plans. At this point 15% of the wetland credits can be deposited.
- After the wetland is functional, have the LGU determine the resultant wetland type and size. Complete the credit deposit application.

Please note that the information in this brochure is only a summary. Contact the Environmental Services Department for more information.

This guide was developed by the Anoka Conservation District through the 2002 Agricultural Preservation Program and adapted for the residents of Stearns County by Stearns County Environmental Services.



This is a good example of a diverse buffer.

Brochures in the Series

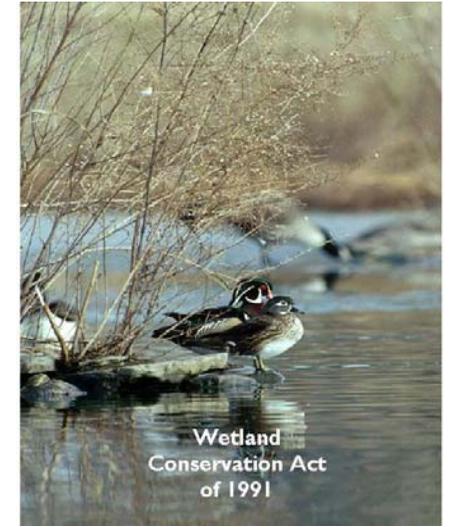
1. Purchasing & Developing Land
2. What's Regulated & Who Regulates
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All Stearns County Environmental Services programs and services are available without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or handicap. Copies of this brochure are available in their entirety at

www.co.stearns.mn.us



Wetland Banking



Brochure #6

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Information is current as of April, 2011

WHAT IS WETLAND BANKING?

Wetland banking is a process of tracking wetland and upland buffer credits that are designated for replacement of future wetland losses. These wetland credits may result from a prior replacement project with excess credits earmarked for banking, or from a wetland creation/restoration project done solely for the purpose of establishing wetland credits. Wetland banking allows wetland credits to be purchased from a State Wetland Bank account holder.



Who Controls Wetland Banking?

Wetland banking must conform to the requirements in the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA). Refer to the website: www.bwsr.state.mn.us/wetlands/index.html for a complete description of the wetland banking process.



The Local Government Units (LGU), such as Stearns County, must approve banking project plans and certify all deposits and withdrawals.

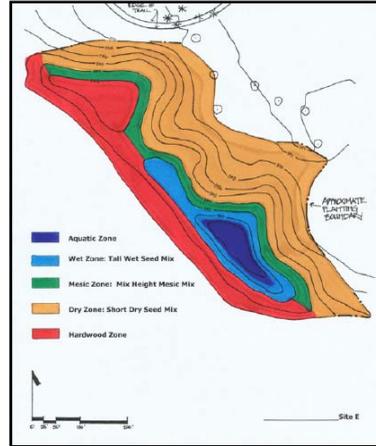
The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) maintains a record of deposits and withdrawals and oversees banking operations statewide.

The sale of credits is a transaction between the account holder and the user of credits.

How Can a Landowner Participate?

The Wetland Conservation Act Rules outline in great detail the necessary components of a banking plan. Information can be obtained from either the Stearns County Environmental Services Department or the BWSR website referred to above.

Application requirements include, but are not limited to: maps; topographic survey; design specifications drawn to scale; the size, type and location of wetlands; ownership and responsibility; a description of the methods to be used; Best Management Practices (BMPs) to be incorporated; and a full five-year monitoring plan.



Private consultants will be able to assist in plan development. For a list of consultants please contact Stearns County Environmental Services Department

Principles of Wetland Banking Projects

- Functional wetlands and buffers must result. Persons having expertise in site selection and construction should be involved while developing a banking plan.

- The restored or created wetland area must not be less than the wetland credits in the bank. This means that all wetland size determinations should be done conservatively. If it turns out that more wetland was restored or created than proposed, the banking plan can be amended.



- The purchase of wetland banking credits must go through the same sequencing process as direct replacement. The wetland type may be different but ultimately the LGU must be satisfied that functions and values have been replaced and approve the purchase of credits.



- Wetland banking is allowed for any impact subject to the requirements of part 8420.0522 of the WCA Rules, which emphasizes replacement as geographically close to the wetland impact as possible.

- A wetland cannot be restored for banking credit for ten years if it was previously impacted under an exemption.

- A perpetual conservation easement over the banked wetland is needed prior to deposit of credits.

Information on Deposits and Withdrawals

Deposits

- Wetlands restored or created without prior LGU approval are not eligible for deposit in the bank.

- A proposal to deposit a wetland in the bank undergoes the same scrutiny as a proposal to directly replace a wetland.

- The wetland restoration/creation must be done specifically for wetland banking and /or direct replacement purposes.

- The Technical Evaluation Panel will review banking projects to ensure that necessary wetland characteristics have developed before recommending them eligible for deposit.

- To ensure that only functioning wetlands are deposited, created or restored wetlands must be monitored for at least five full growing seasons.

- There is no maximum or minimum wetland acreage eligible for deposit.

- Replacement actions must be initiated within three years of approval or the banking plan must be resubmitted. Construction certification must be gained within five years of banking plan approval.



Withdrawals

- When using the wetland bank to replace wetland impacts, a replacement plan must be submitted.

- The proposed wetland impact must be determined unavoidable according to the sequencing process.

- The price of the credits is negotiated between the buyer and seller.

- Wetland impacts shall not begin until the approved wetland credits have been withdrawn from the wetland bank.

- Wetland credits may be transferred between accounts and held for future use or resale.

Recommended Steps to Establish a Wetland Banking Project

The WCA Rules contain all of the requirements for planning, approval, construction and monitoring wetland banking projects. A synopsis of the steps is shown below:

- Select a feasible location for the wetland to be restored or created for banking.
- Determine approximate wetland size and type to be created or restored and method.
- Submit "Wetland Bank Scoping Document Part A" to the LGU. This will be reviewed and feedback given regarding feasibility of the project and likelihood of success.