

## Compatibility Determination

**Use:** Buried waterlines on grassland easements to provide livestock watering

**Refuge Name:**

Arrowwood Wetland Management District  
Audubon Wetland Management District  
Chase Lake Wetland Management District  
Crosby Wetland Management District  
Devils Lake Wetland Management District  
Huron Wetland Management District  
J. Clark Salyer Wetland Management District  
Kulm Wetland Management District  
Lake Andes Wetland Management District  
Long Lake Wetland Management District  
Lostwood Wetland Management District  
Madison Wetland Management District  
Sand Lake Wetland Management District  
Tewaukon Wetland Management District  
Valley City Wetland Management District  
Waubay Wetland Management District

**County:** all counties within the Districts

**Establishing and Acquisition Authority(ies):**

Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, Migratory Bird Conservation Act, Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Tax, North American Wetlands Conservation Act, Emergency Wetlands Resources Act

**Refuge Purpose(s):**

“...as Waterfowl Production Areas” subject to” ...all of the provisions of such Act [Migratory Bird Conservation Act] ...except the inviolate sanctuary provisions...” 16 U.S.C. 718(c) (Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp)

“...for any other management purpose, for migratory birds.” 16 U.S.C. § 715d (Migratory Bird Conservation Act)

“...for conservation purposes ... “7 U.S.C. § 2002 (Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act)

**National Wildlife Refuge System Mission:**

“The mission of the System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.”

**Description of Use:**

What is the use? Is the use a wildlife-dependent public use?

The activity requested involves burying waterlines to provide for livestock watering on areas encumbered by Service grassland easements in North and South Dakota. The buried waterline is a new use of the grassland easement because of the surface grass disturbance which would be considered an economic use. There are approximately 2,500 individual grassland contract holders in the two states. It is estimated that no more than 10% or 250 will ever make a request for a buried waterline. In those cases where additional water supplies are provided there is a better distribution of grazing on the easement tract and overall health and sustainability of the grass is improved. The waterlines are installed by either a chisel plow or narrow trenching (not exceeding 2 feet) equipment to a depth of 6-8 feet. Minor and very temporary disturbance to the grass is confined to an area no greater than 10 feet on either side of the pipe location. The waterlines are polyethylene pipe of approximately 2 inches in diameter. The disturbance to grass is minimal (generally not exceeding 1 acre of disturbance) in relation to the acreage involved in the easement tract (average 600 acres). The disturbance caused by the trench is immediately restored and with residual and seeded grasses, the activity disturbance is temporary within 1-2 years little to no evidence remains of the activity. The activity will be permitted with a Special Use Permit and stipulations provided to ensure special and limiting conditions are adhered to and restoration is complete. The waterline will deliver water to a holding tank and gravel pad causing permanent disturbance to grass on an area of approximately 60 feet by 60 feet, representing less than one-tenth of one acre or less than 0.00001 percent of the average grassland easement tract.

Where would the use be conducted?

The use will be conducted on grassland easements in all the Wetland Management Districts listed including both North Dakota and South Dakota. Generally the grassland easement tracts are native grassland areas that are used predominately for cattle grazing. There will be minimal or non detected disturbance to wildlife as a result of the activity and what does occur will be very temporary. The disturbance to the average grassland easement tract will represent less than 0.002 percent of the average easement tract.

**When would the use be conducted?**

The use will be conducted as a one time event in the summer season when frost no longer exists and conditions have dried sufficiently to minimize grass disturbance. There is little to no future maintenance.

**How would the use be conducted?**

The activity will be conducted with either trenching equipment such as a back hoe or a chisel plow. Disturbance will not exceed 2 feet in width or be less if the chisel plow is used.

**Why is this use being proposed?**

It will be the grassland easement holder requesting the use. The request will be to provide better water availability for improved grass utilization due to more equal grazing distribution. Buried waterlines for livestock watering is a cost effective and reliable alternative to traditional stock watering dams, especially in times of drought or low precipitation conditions.

**Availability of Resources:**

**Resource involved in the administration and management of the use:**

No additional management or administrative costs will be associated with this activity.

Special equipment, facilities, or improvements necessary to support the use: None

Maintenance costs: None

Monitoring costs: None

Offsetting revenues: None

**Anticipated Impacts of the Use:**

**Short-term impacts:**

There will be only temporary disturbance to the grass from the construction activities so all impacts will be short-term. In 1-2 years little to no evidence exists of the activity. There will be no indirect impacts associated with this activity.

**Long-term impacts:**

There will be no long term impacts associated with this activity.

**Cumulative impacts:**

The only cumulative direct impact will be the loss of grassland from the installation of water holding facilities, estimated to be approximately 360 square feet, representing 0.008 of an acre or 0.00001 percent of the average grassland easement (600 acres). There are no indirect impacts from the proposed activity.

**Public Review and Comment:**

The period of public review and comment began 8/9/2004 and ended 8/13/2004.

The following methods were used to solicit public review and comment:

Posted notices in public places.

Why was this level of public review and comment selected?

The proposed activity is considered minor, incidental, one-time with minimal temporary disturbance.

Summarize comments received and any actions taken or not taken because of comments received.

No comments were received.

**Determination:**

Use is compatible with the following stipulations.

**Stipulations Necessary to Ensure Compatibility:**

1. Soil, if removed through trenching, will be replaced in the same soil profile as it was removed. Topsoil will be replaced and all soils compacted.
2. Activity will occur during the time when soils are dry and equipment activity will have reduced impact to grasses and soils.
3. Any areas that are disturbed will be reseeded to the appropriate grass mixture if determined necessary for reestablishment by the Refuge Manager.

**Justification:**

There will be minimal and temporary disturbance to the grassland resources protected by

the Service's easement by this activity. The use will not detract from or materially interfere with the mission or purpose of the NWRS. It is an economic use and as such the activity will benefit the Service mission and purpose through better management of the grassland community by providing improved grazing distribution.

If the proposed use is an economic use of refuge natural resources, how would it contribute to the purposes of the refuge or the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System?

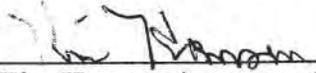
The activity of providing water for livestock grazing will contribute to the mission by providing improved grazing distribution and better range management of the grassland resources protected by the Service's easement.

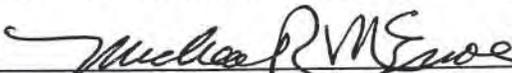
**Text of Public Notice:**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is soliciting public comments on whether to allow buried waterlines to provide for livestock watering on Service Grassland Easements in North and South Dakota. The activity will cause minor and temporary disturbance to the grassland area. Restoration will be ensured through stipulations defined in a Special Use Permit agreed to by the landowner. Through better distribution of livestock grazing the health and sustainability to the grasslands will be better ensured. People wishing to provide comments can do so by August 13th by submitting them to the Wetland Habitat Office, 3425 Miriam Avenue, Bismarck, ND 58501. For more information contact Lloyd Jones at (701) 355-8529.

## Compatibility Determination

Signature: Refuge Manager:

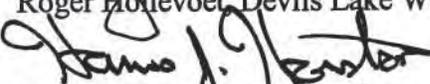
  
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 Kim Hanson, Arrowwood Wetland Management District (Signature) 8/17/04 (Date)

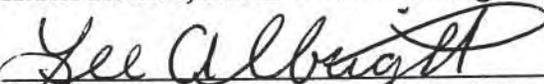
  
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 Mike McEnroe, Audubon Wetland Management District (Signature) 8/17/04 (Date)

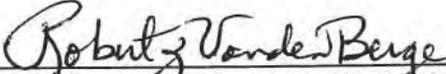
  
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 Mick Erickson, Chase Lake Wetland Management District (Signature) 8/17/04 (Date)

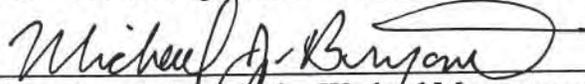
  
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 Tim Kessler, Crosby Wetland Management District (Signature) 8/17/04 (Date)

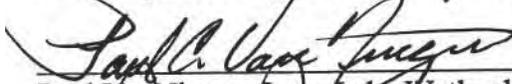
  
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 Roger Hollevoet, Devils Lake Wetland Management District (Signature) 8/17/04 (Date)

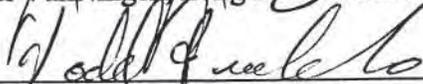
  
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 Harris Hoistad, Huron Wetland Management District (Signature) 8-17-04 (Date)

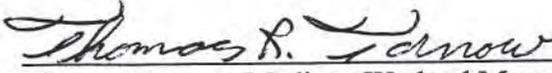
  
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 Lee Albright, J. Clark Salyer Wetland Management District (Signature) 8-17-04 (Date)

  
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 Bob VandenBerge, Kulm Wetland Management District (Signature) 8/17/04 (Date)

  
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 Mike Bryant, Lake Andes Wetland Management District (Signature) 8/17/04 (Date)

  
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 Paul VanNingen, Long Lake Wetland Management District (Signature) 8/17/04 (Date)

  
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 Todd Frerichs, Lostwood Wetland Management District (Signature) 8-17-04 (Date)

  
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 Thomas Tarnow, Madison Wetland Management District (Signature) 8-17-04 (Date)

Gene Williams 8-17-04  
Gene Williams, Sand Lake Wetland Management District (Signature) (Date)

Jack Lalor 8/18/04  
Jack Lalor, Tewaukon Wetland Management District (Signature) (Date)

Kory Richardson 8-18-04  
Kory Richardson, Valley City Wetland Management District (Signature) (Date)

Larry D. Martin 17 Aug. 2004  
Larry Martin, Waubay Wetland Management District (Signature) (Date)

Review: Regional Compatibility Coordinator Lloyd Jones 8/18/04  
Lloyd Jones (Date)

Review: Zone Supervisor Rod Krey 8/18/04  
Rod Krey (Date)

Concurrence: Regional Chief Rick Coleman 8/19/04  
Rick Coleman (Date)

Mandatory 10- or 15- year Re-Evaluation Date: 2019

**ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION CHECKLIST**  
**Refuges and Wildlife**  
**Region 6**

Project Description: Buried waterlines for livestock watering on grassland easements in North and South Dakota

Submitted by: Wetland Managers on 16  
 Districts \_\_\_\_\_

**EFFECTS**

	Short Term	Long Term	Magnitude
Wetlands	Y	N	- Minor
Uplands	Y	N	+ Minor
T & E Candidate Species	N	N	0
Other Wildlife	N	N	0
Cultural Resources	N	N	0
Water Quality	N	N	0
Water Quantity (conserve= + deplete = -)	N	N	0
Air Quality	N	N	0
Socio-Economic	N	N	0
Compatible?	Y	Y	
Cumulative Impacts	Y	N	- Minor

Y=Yes; N=No; +=Beneficial; -=Detrimental; 0=None

**Decision**

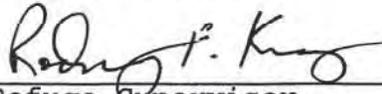
X Project is categorically excluded from NEPA documentation

Start environmental assessment (EA)

BY 16 Wetland Managers, signatures on CD  
 Project Leader

Date

Concur

  
 Refuge Supervisor

8/15/20  
 Date