



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge Northeast Montana Wetland Management District

Cooperative Agriculture Program Attention Ranchers

Refuge Seeks Agricultural Producers for Cooperative Agriculture Program

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is seeking agricultural producers for a Cooperative Agriculture Program on 5 Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA's) located in Sheridan, Daniels, and Roosevelt counties (Erickson WPA, Johnson Lake WPA, International Marsh WPA, Wigeon Slough WPA, and Flaxville WPA). Selected producers will have opportunity to partner with the refuge to graze between 100-1,000 acres of grass to meet conservation objectives.

Background

Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge and the Northeast Montana Wetland Management District were established to provide suitable refuge, feeding, and breeding grounds for migratory waterfowl. The Comprehensive Conservation Plan completed in 2007 identifies prescribed grazing as a management tool to provide suitable grasslands for breeding waterfowl. Cooperative agriculture producers will assist the refuge in implementing prescribed grazing to fulfill these habitat management objectives.

The Proposed Cooperative Agriculture Agreement

The selected producers will operate under a Cooperative Agriculture Agreement as a "cooperator" with the Service. Under this Agreement, the Service is proposing that the cooperator will be responsible for grazing specific areas for grassland habitat enhancement.

The refuge does not guarantee that the cooperator will have access to water for the grazing practices. Water conditions fluctuate year to year, depending on rainfall and snowpack levels. Cooperators will be notified if they need to deliver water to grazing areas yearly.

Applications

The application form and maps of the proposed grazing areas can be obtained by hard copy at the refuge office. Applications can be submitted via email (andrew_pettibone@fws.gov), mail, or in person at the Refuge Headquarters (223 North Shore Rd. Medicine Lake, MT 59247). Applications are due by January 30th, 2020.

For further information contact:

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