

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (PFW) is to efficiently achieve voluntary habitat restoration on private lands through financial and technical assistance for the benefit of Federal Trust Species.



The PFW program at the Fergus Falls Wetland Management District (WMD) focuses its efforts on restoring drained prairie pothole wetlands and associated tallgrass prairie in the uplands to benefit waterfowl and other wetland birds as well as grassland dependent migratory songbirds. A typical project may include plugging drainage ditches, breaking drain tile, planting native prairie grasses and forbs, and/or removing invasive trees from the prairie.

Habitat restoration costs may be shared by any combination of governmental agencies, private organizations, and the private landowner. Wetland restorations receive highest priority and as a result the PFW program pays the majority of the costs to restore wetlands on participating landowners' property. The only eligibility requirements for the PFW program is that the land is privately owned and the landowner agrees to maintain the restored habitat for a minimum of ten years.

Since 1985, we have restored more than 2,057 wetlands on private land in the District (Otter Tail, Grant, Douglas, Wilkin, and Wadena counties), totaling more than 6,486 acres. We have also restored more than 3,989 acres of grassland habitat via prairie plantings and invasive tree removal since 1985.

Our PFW program is often bundled with the FWS's wetland and habitat easement programs that provide a payment to landowners to permanently protect wildlife habitat. We bring numerous partners to the table to accomplish the project and provide "full service" of the habitat restoration project from start to finish including surveys, design, construction supervision, and follow up seeding.

There are no sign-up periods; landowners can call our office at any time to initiate a project. Not all projects qualify for assistance, but calling for a site visit is the first step.

If you are interested in a habitat restoration project on private lands within our district, please contact:

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Before and after photographs:



Private Lands Wetland Restoration Sites

