

Public Notice:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is soliciting public comments for several draft Compatibility Determinations related to activities on lands protected by Service easements in North Dakota, South Dakota and Montana. The draft determinations consider the issuance of permits to:

- allow construction activities on easement lands to commence prior to the formal issuance of a right-of-way permit or the completion of an easement exchange when those actions have been approved but not yet administratively completed.
- allow rehabilitation or burying of underground infrastructure including pipelines, electric cables, communication lines, natural gas lines, water lines and other below ground utility-type lines.
- graze livestock on FmHA conservation easements following an approved grazing plan
- cut and remove grasses and forbs for hay production on grassland and FmHA conservation easements
- authorize long-term drainage and filling of easement protected wetlands to resolve property damage or health/safety issues
- authorize the addition or expansion of temporary or long-term ranching facilities within grassland, wetland and FmHA conservation easements. Facilities on easement lands could include dugouts, water tanks, calving/livestock facilities, shelterbelts or other improvements that are essential to ranching operations
- permit local, county and tribal highway departments to conduct maintenance of an existing right-of-way (ROW). The use, if authorized, will result in partial drainage and/or filling of wetlands or conversion of upland areas on Service administered lands
- authorize temporary filling or drainage of easement protected wetlands to address health/safety issues and property damage

People wishing to provide comments can do so by submitting them to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, **SAND LAKE NWR, 39650 SAND LAKE DRIVE, COLUMBIA, SD 57433** by **MAY 6, 2015**. Copies of the draft compatibility determinations are also available at this office. For more information, contact **DON SODERLUND @ 605-885-6320 ext. 18**.