

Wetland and Highly Erodible Lands

STAYING IN COMPLIANCE

Are you hearing about the possibility of low interest loans for tile drainage? Or thinking about drying up that wet spot in the field to make it more usable? Or how about removing that hedgerow so the fields are more workable?

Well here are some reminders to help you stay in compliance with the National Food Security Act and thus eligible for USDA program participation. In order to remain eligible for USDA/non-USDA programs, such as crop insurance payments, milk payments, loans, and cost assistance for conservation practices, **farmers must:**

1. Let the Farm Service Agency (FSA) know if you are going to crop any new land (purchased or leased), or bring new land into production
2. Stay out of wet areas, lowlands, pockets or depressions, flat wooded areas, and flood plains until NRCS has made wetland determinations and discussed wetland compliance requirements and options associated with that determination.
3. Not do any tiling, draining, filling, dredging, ditch clean-out, culvert replacement, pipe outletting, pond construction or clean-out, land clearing or pulling of stumps without contacting NRCS for wetland determinations.

Farmer's Responsibilities:

- You must ask for clarification if you do not understand something.
- You need to contact FSA to keep your HEL determinations and Wetland Certification (WC) up to date. Do this **BEFORE** plowing up new fields, clearing land, tiling, draining, or filling areas. This is required to help keep you in compliance.
- You must follow an approved Conservation Plan and ask ahead of time for changes to that plan.
- Check with NRCS **BEFORE** doing any clearing, tiling, filling, or draining. We can determine what is and isn't a wetland and what you can do in that wetland and still be in compliance.

NRCS Role:

- To help you protect natural resources.
- To help keep you in compliance with the HEL and wetland provisions of the Food Security Act and thus eligible for USDA benefits.
- To advise you of State and Federal environmental regulations and permits that are required in order for you to carry out your Conservation Plan.

We do not make the rules. We are here to assist you in following them. Please call NRCS or FSA at 824-9076 to schedule any needed assistance and before you get into trouble. It is easier and less costly to avoid a problem than to fix one, especially in wetland situations.