

Wetland Areas

Under the ALUS pilot project, landowners can enroll their wetlands and receive an annual payment based on their type of agricultural and environmental use.

Wetlands are natural features on farms that hold spring-season, semi-permanent or permanent water. These include potholes, sloughs, bogs, fens, marshes and swamps, and have saturated soil conditions over a long enough period of time during the year to maintain water-loving vegetation (such as rushes, cattails, sedges and other forbs) and wildlife habitat. These wetlands must have less than 10 acres of open water to be eligible. Anything over this size would be considered a water body, and the landowner may then be eligible for ALUS payments under the riparian area category.

Single wetlands, wetland complexes that are connected by permanent cover, and wetlands created by plugging existing drains are all eligible for the following payment rates:

\$15.00 per acre when the landowner signs an ALUS contract to maintain the wetlands with no agricultural use and leave it in its natural state without burning, draining, filling, or clearing.

\$7.50 per acre when the landowner signs an ALUS contract to maintain or enhance the wetlands, but can also hay between July 15 and August 31. Burning, draining, filling, or clearing are not allowed.

\$5.00 per acre when the landowner signs an ALUS contract to maintain or enhance the wetlands, where grazing will be permitted after July 1 if off-site watering is available.

Landowners who have any questions about their eligibility or the criteria for wetland areas should contact local ALUS representatives for more information.

Why Wetlands?

Wetlands are a very important landscape resource. They serve as habitat for waterfowl and many other species, store water and help regulate water levels, and also act as a natural filter to help clean impurities from water. At the same time, they are also a natural resource on the Prairie landscape that contributes to its biodiversity.

Studies have estimated that 70% of wetlands have been lost. The ALUS project will help to maintain the ones that remain, and could encourage the re-establishment of lost wetlands.