

A Landowners' Guide to Montana Wetlands - 2008



Foreward

The purpose of this guide is to provide information for Montana landowners' informed use and management of their wetlands, bringing to life options for wetland protection, enhancement, and restoration. The basic wetland information, regulatory rules and contact information contained in this guide can provide a starting point for landowners to pursue the options and to contact agency and organization partners for technical and financial assistance. Agency personnel will find this guide useful when working with private landowners in need of information regarding management options available to them.

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HAVING A WETLAND



Agriculture, ranching, recreation, and wildlife habitat are all important land uses in Montana, and they often occur on or impact wetlands, lands where water is the dominant factor determining soil, plant and animal development. These impacts raise difficult questions on both large and small acreage operations all across the state: How can we balance the needs of property owners to farm, ranch, or build on their land while maintaining the beneficial functions of natural wetlands? How can we respect individual property rights and assure that traditional land uses continue while conserving both privately and publicly owned wetlands? Answers to these questions depend on landowners' understanding the many functions of wetlands and how our land-use choices affect these valuable resources.

“We need the tonic of wildness, to wade sometimes in marshes where the bittern and the meadow-hen lurk, and hear the booming of the snipe; to smell the whispering sedge where only some wilder and more solitary fowl builds her nest, and the mink crawls with its belly close to the ground.”

Henry David Thoreau