



EAST TEXAS WETLANDS PROJECT

*A Cooperative Program Supporting Waterfowl
& Wetlands on Private Lands*



11942 FM 848
Tyler, Texas 75707
Phone: (903) 570-9626 / Fax: (903) 566-3273



GUIDELINES FOR LANDOWNERS

A. East Texas Wetlands Project (ETWP) Overview:

The ETWP provides East Texas landowners the opportunity for:

- Technical assistance &/or financial incentives; to
- Restore, enhance, &/or create natural or man-made wetlands & associated upland habitats; in
- Wetland habitats such as forested wetlands, riparian areas, emergent wetlands, moist soil areas, harvested croplands, or waterfowl food plots; to
- Increase biodiversity for waterfowl, other migratory birds (including Neotropical birds, shorebirds and wading birds), and related wetland wildlife.

Management practices available:

- Hydrology restoration, reforestation, plant propagation, vegetation management, site preparation, fencing to control grazing, wood duck nest boxes, and conservation easements.

Landowners, approved by the ETWP Committee, will enter into a Wetland Development Agreement (WDA) to assure project objectives are fulfilled for a minimum of 10 years.

B. General Guidelines:

1. Projects shall provide for protection, restoration, enhancement, and/or creation of wetlands along with appropriate adjoining habitat/buffer zones.
2. Projects shall involve a minimum of five (5) acres of surface water or 10 acres of bottomland hardwood reforestation.
3. Shallow surface water during an average year should be present from at least November 1 to March 1. A site-specific management plan will be developed and adhered to for each individual project site as some sites may require surface water for longer or shorter time.
4. To help ensure that waterfowl and other migratory birds receive the maximum benefits from projects funded by the ETWP, disturbance in and around project sites should be kept to a minimum during the winter season. It is recommended that hunting of each management unit be restricted to no more than three (3) mornings per week.

5. Project agreements shall be for a period of not less than 10 years with longer agreement periods for reforestation and special case projects.
6. Landowner/Cooperator contribution (cash and inkind services) to the project shall be an important consideration for project funding.
7. Habitat benefit to dollar cost ratios shall be a funding consideration (low cost, high value.)
8. Projects shall be constructed in such a manner that they will remain functional as planned for the length of the WDA (agreement.)
9. During any one calendar year, a Cooperator may receive a maximum of 75 percent of the total project construction cost under a WDA, not to exceed \$15,000. The cost share limit may be increased to \$30,000 if the WDA is 15 years or longer and the cost to the ETWP is equal to or less than \$50.00/acre
10. The representatives of the East Texas Wetlands Committee shall have the authority to approve special projects outside the normal cost share guidelines.
11. The Cooperator shall be responsible for routine operation and maintenance of the project and allow ETWP Representative ingress and egress to inspect and evaluate the project.
12. Ducks Unlimited, Inc. (DU) shall sign the initial WDA for the ETWP and fund the project using those funds available through the ETWP.

C. Wetland Development Agreements:

1. The minimum WDA will be for a term of 10 or 15 years duration on projects restoring or enhancing hydrology. For projects involving reforestation, the minimum term for a WDA will be 30 years. The WDA shall specify the responsibilities of the cooperator and ETWP.

D. Project Procedure:

1. Landowner/cooperator contacts are reported to the ETWP Project Biologist using a Technical Assistance Request Form.
2. A site visit will be conducted by the Project Biologist to evaluate the project's potential for the ETWP. Involvement of local personnel (e.g., NRCS District Conservationists or Resource Team Leaders, TPWD Private Lands Biologists, and USFWS "Partners" Biologists) will be utilized to expand the effectiveness and efficiency of the ETWP.
3. A topographic survey and project design will be completed by the Project Engineer and/or Project Engineering Technician in consultation with the Project Biologist.

4. After a WDA has been developed by the Project Biologist and signed by the Cooperator, a completed WDA Checklist/Proposal form shall be forwarded by the Project Biologist to the ETWP Committee for consideration.
5. The ETWP Committee shall review each project to ensure that it meets the program's criteria. Projects shall be approved based on their biological significance relative to the objectives of the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture, probable success of the project, and cost effectiveness.
6. Prior to signature of the WDA by DU, the ETWP Committee shall approve the project. No funds shall be allocated to a project by DU until a WDA has been signed by the Cooperator and DU.

E. Disbursement of Funds:

1. No funds shall be disbursed to the cooperator until project construction is substantially complete, the site inspected and the project is functional.
2. A final inspection of the completed project by the Project Engineer/Project Engineering Technician or a designated Project Representative shall be scheduled and completed prior to disbursement of funds.
3. A letter documenting project completion with all contractor invoices's attached shall be submitted by the Cooperator to the Project Biologist. The Project Biologist will approve all invoices and process the necessary paperwork prior to forwarding to DU for payment.
4. The Cooperator shall be responsible for payment to all contractors.

The East Texas Wetlands Project is funded and delivered by

Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
Texas parks and Wildlife Department
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service



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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REQUEST FORM

Ownership and Location

Owner/Operator: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Phone #(s): _____

Farm Name: _____ ASCS Farm #: _____

County: _____ Nearest Town/direction: _____

Directions to Property:

Referred to ETWP by:

Property Description (Summary):

Total Acreage:

Preferred Date(s)/Time(s) for On-Site Visit:

Landscape Baseline

Potential Project (acreage, habitat type):

Project Objectives:

Please return to: Bill Bartush – Regional Biologist, Ducks Unlimited, Inc. (Address at top of page)

The East Texas Wetlands Project is jointly funded and delivered by:
DUCKS UNLIMITED, INC.
TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE
U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE
USDA NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE