

CONSERVING WETLANDS

Wetlands have a natural ability to store carbon, keeping it from being released into the atmosphere. These areas also conserve biodiversity, improve water quality and can help manage droughts and floods. In many areas, wetlands have been removed for agricultural use, but it's important to note that wetland restoration is helpful for mitigating the effects of climate change, like flooding, drought, sea-level rise and biodiversity loss. In places where there are no wetlands left to conserve, consider restoring wetlands on your farm. Avoid draining wetlands on your farm to maintain this beneficial ecosystem.

Implementation Tips

- Avoid draining wetlands. They are an important carbon sink and wildlife habitat.
- Restore or enhance wetlands.
- Increase the native plant diversity in or around wetland areas.
- Partner with conservation organizations to receive assistance from technical experts on how to restore wetlands that have been drained or altered on your farm.
- Consider improving habit features that will attract important species to your wetland and increase biodiversity (e.g., log piles, snags, rock piles).

Resources

- **Webpage:** Agriculture Programs, Ducks Unlimited Canada (dfc-plc.info/COW1)
- **Webpage:** Restoring Wetlands, Growing with Nature (dfc-plc.info/COW2)
- **Factsheet:** Wetland Restoration and Rehabilitation, Ontario Nature (dfc-plc.info/COW3)
- **Factsheet:** proAction Environment Resources, Dairy Farmers of Canada (dfc-plc.info/COW4)
- **Research Study:** Drever, C.R., Cook-Patton, S.C., Akhter, F., Badiou, P.H., Chmura, G.L., Davidson, S.J., Desjardins, R.L., Dyk, A., Fargione, J.E., Fellows, M., Filewod, B., Hessing-Lewis, M., Jayasundara, S., Keeton, W.S., Kroeger, T., Lark, T.J., Le, E., Leavitt, S.M., LeClerc, M.-E., Lemprière, T.C., Metsaranta, J., McConkey, B., Neilson, E., St-Laurent, G.P., Puric-Mladenovic, D., Rodrigue, S., Soolanayakanahally, R.Y., Spawn, S.A., Strack, M., Smyth, C., Thevathasan, N., Voicu, M., Williams, C.A., Woodbury, P.B., Worth, D.E., Xu, Z., Yeo, S., Kurz, W.A., 2021. Natural climate solutions for Canada. Science Advances 7, eabd6034. (dfc-plc.info/COW5)

Benefits



Carbon sequestration



Increased resiliency to the effects of climate change



Improved soil health



Enhanced biodiversity



Estimated return on investment
Medium



On-farm emission mitigation potential +

“We restored the wetlands in the back corner of our field. It prevents topsoil erosion, it helps us manage water, especially during drought, and it preserves the natural habitat. Water plants started growing... We didn't put them in, they came in naturally when the habitat was there for them. Since then, we've put in even more plants, shrubs and trees to increase biodiversity. Farming is a long game; even small changes now will make huge differences tomorrow.”

— Mary Ann, a dairy farmer in Ontario

WETLANDS

can cool the surrounding atmosphere by

1 to 3°C

on hot summer days.