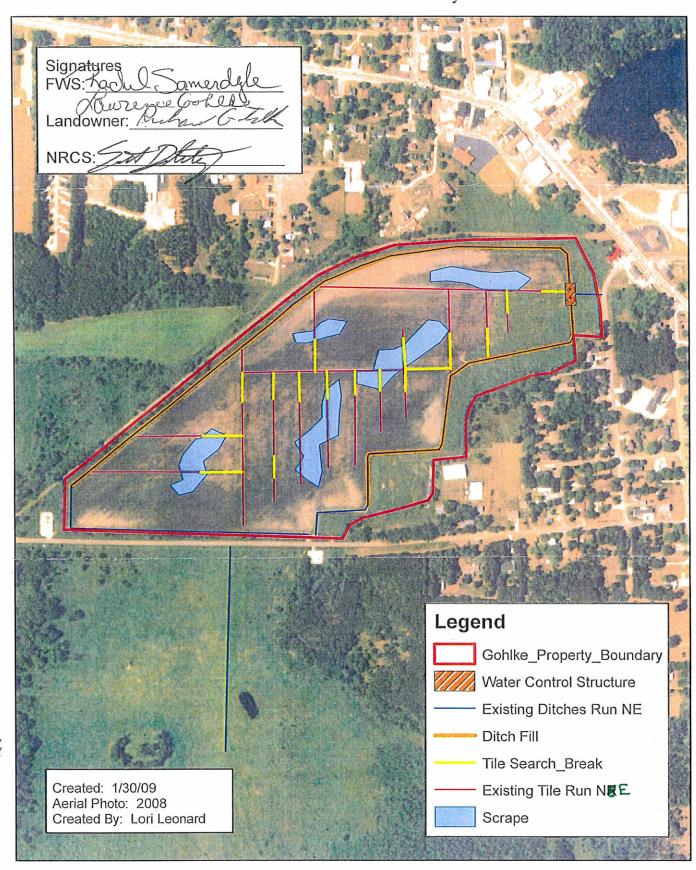


Richard & Lawrence Gohlke Preliminary Restoration Lan T.18N-R12E sect 17, 18, 8 Waushara County



1 inch equals 500 feet



Feet

1,720

860

1,290



215

430





Wetlands Reserve Program

Facts about 30-year and Permanent Easements

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is the nation's premiere wetland restoration program. In Wisconsin alone, over 45,000 acres have been restored and protected through WRP. The program has been successful, in part, because of the unique partnership between NRCS and the landowner. WRP offers landowners financial benefits for restoring and protecting their drained wetlands. In turn, the landowner agrees to allow NRCS the rights of access, management and monitoring in the easement area.

If you are considering enrolling your property in WRP, there are several important factors to consider. In essence, the federal government is buying most of the land rights to the easement area in order to maximize the functions and values of the wetland. This means that NRCS has the authority to undertake, at its own expense or on a cost share basis with the landowner, any activity to restore, manage and monitor the easement area including marking the boundary. NRCS may enhance the easement area in order to improve the wetland and other wildlife habitat (with the exception that it does not adversely affect a neighboring landowner or any non-easement lands).

Structures of any sort are not allowed on the easement area.



If you are considering enrolling your property into a Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) easement, please read and understand the following information prior to your enrollment. This fact sheet contains information on the rights you retain as a landowner and the restrictions placed on the easement area.

Landowners' Rights

The landowner retains four basic rights:

- the right to sell the property and pay taxes
- the right to private access (no public access unless navigable water is involved and a direct connection exists)
- the right to quiet enjoyment and recreational use including hunting, fishing, trapping and other quiet recreational uses. Game farms are not allowed.
- the right to subsurface resources provided no drilling takes place within the easement boundaries.

Restrictions

Permanent structures, of any kind, are not allowed on the easement area. Any existing structures must be removed prior to the recording of the easement. This includes things such as sheds, duck blinds, deer blinds, and campers. (Blinds existing on easements accepted prior to Oct. 1, 2000 are exempt, however no improvement or maintenance is allowed). Hunting blinds that are removed at the end of a hunting season are allowed.

Access roads within an easement boundary are not **guaranteed** to remain functional or passable. They may be allowed to remain with a compatible use permit, however, when selling property, these internal roads or trails should not be defined as <u>permanent</u> vehicle access.

Compatible Use Permits

Landowners may request compatible use permits for certain uses. Any activity that affects vegetation or alters wildlife patterns requires a compatible use permit. **Only** activities that are consistent with the long-term protection and enhancement of the easement area will be authorized. These permits will define specifically the activity, method, frequency, timing, intensity and duration of the compatible use and will be reviewed/approved annually. Some compatible uses include:

- timber harvest, in consultation with a professional forester and wildlife manager, if needed to achieve or protect wildlife habitat and wetland functions.
- haying, mowing or grazing *to maintain* wildlife habitat and wetland functions and values (once annually between July 15th and September 1).
- wildlife food plots with approved mix such as corn (no more than 50%), sorghum or sunflowers, not to exceed 5% of the easement area.
- mowing, for access roads or nature trails, and to manage and maintain structures such as embankments. Access roads and nature trails shall not exceed ten feet in width, nor be mowed shorter than three inches in height.

WRP easements have significant restrictions. They are a permanent or long term commitment. It is important that you completely understand the terms and conditions of the easement. Please take the time to discuss your enrollment with a WRP representative.

For more information about WRP, contact NRCS at your local USDA Service Center or on the web:www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov under Programs-Wetlands Reserve.

Monitoring the Easements

NRCS is required to monitor the easements through aerial photography annually and/or a site visit at least once every three years. Monitoring is necessary to ensure that full wetland functions and values are achieved and maintained, to detect any violations, to direct the course of management and to maintain a good working relationship between the landowner and NRCS. A point of access will be defined in the easement for purposes of monitoring and evaluation.

Weed Control: Noxious weed control is the responsibility of the landowner. Contact NRCS prior to weed control activities.

Process to Enroll in WRP

The application process takes time and includes:

- 1. Application
- 2. Site visit to determine eligibility.
- 3. Ensure no unenrolled lands will be affected by the restoration.
- 4. Easement boundary description
- 5. Ranking of applications
- 6. Selection of projects for funding
- 7. Preliminary Survey and Design
- 8. Real Estate Appraisal of easement area
- 9. Offer to purchase
- 10. Acceptance of offer
- 11. Title clearance
- 12. Easement recording
- 13. Final Title Policy
- 14. Payment for Easement
- 15. Final Survey and Design
- 16. Local, State and Federal Permits
- 17. Contracting for restoration
- 18. Construction
- 19. Management and Monitoring

This is a complex process can take up to more than a year to complete.



Wisconsin

January 2005