



Illinois Conservation Exchange

INTRODUCTION

Magnolia Land Partners is seeking landowner participation in a new conservation initiative. Illinois landowners with existing, low quality farmed, grazed or fallow wetland areas may qualify for payments in exchange for: (1) allowing restoration of the wetlands, and (2) long-term protection of those wetlands along with an upland buffer zone. Long-term management, with costs covered by Magnolia, will also be provided in accordance with a landowner-endorsed management plan.

HOW IT WORKS

Magnolia will pay landowners for the rights to restore and preserve the wetlands on their property. Improvements may include exotic plant control, weed spraying, removal of debris, livestock exclusion fencing, and wetland planting to restore the natural vegetation community. In some cases, Magnolia may pay landowners to preserve the existing healthy wetlands on their properties. Expired or expiring CRP and WRP properties may qualify for our program.



ECOLOGICAL BENEFITS

Wetland and upland buffer zone protection provides many benefits to landowners beyond simple financial benefits:

- Improved wildlife habitat (= better deer and game hunting);
- Improved breeding, brood rearing, cover and food sources for waterfowl (= better duck hunting); and
- Natural filtering of field runoff (= much improved water quality in local lakes and streams).



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS

1. Identification of Parcel.

Magnolia and the landowner will collaboratively map out possible conservation areas.

2. Execution of a Letter of Intent.

Magnolia and the landowner each sign a Letter of Intent (LOI) which states the intentions of both parties: (1) Magnolia's agreement to compensate the landowner in accordance with agreeable terms, and to restore and manage the wetlands and buffer zones in accordance with a management plan; and (2) the landowner's agreement to protect the wetland areas.

3. Execution of agreement.

The agreement is executed at the time and place agreed to by the parties, typically within 12 months of the LOI (following approval of the site).

4. Recording of the Easement.

The landowner, with assistance from Magnolia if requested, records the easement with a third party easement holder.

5. Payment of License Fee.

Payments are made to the landowner pursuant to the schedule agreed to by the parties.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How much are landowner payments?

Landowner payments vary by property, but are typically higher than comparable USDA conservation payments.

How are payments made?

Payments are typically made over a 2-5 year period as wetland "credits" are sold from the conserved property, per the terms of the agreement.

What form of long-term protection is required?

A USDA warranty easement deed or similar instrument is required to provide long-term protection for the restored wetlands.

Can I still hunt my property?

Yes.

**Contact us today at
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or email
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