

## FOR FARMERS – BUY CREDITS

### **A new NRCS program to help Illinois farmers**

Magnolia is working with NRCS on a new program to help Illinois producers with wetland compliance issues.

Producers can purchase mitigation “credits” in order to comply with wetland conservation obligations and maintain eligibility for USDA programs. These “credits” are generated on large, NRCS-approved conservation projects, called “mitigation banks,” developed elsewhere in the state.



### **What are the uses for mitigation credits?**

With mitigation credits, producers can clear, drain or otherwise improve restricted wetlands on their property. Additionally, mitigation credits may be used to resolve existing wetland violations.

### **What are the advantages of buying mitigation credits?**

Purchasing mitigation credits is a one-time transaction that completely transfers compliance responsibility to the mitigation bank. The producer is no longer responsible for finding a suitable mitigation site, constructing a wetland project, and maintaining it in perpetuity.

### **Who determines how many credits I need?**

NRCS determines the amount of credits required. For example, if a landowner wishes to drain a one-acre wetland, he or she might need to purchase one credit from the mitigation bank.

### **Who maintains the land?**

Once credits have been secured and NRCS changes the wetland determination, the landowners may manage/maintain the land as they wish.

### **Is the program voluntary?**

The program is entirely voluntary and confidential. Producers always have the option of choosing not to convert protected wetlands or to mitigate impacts on their own land.

### **What is Magnolia?**

Magnolia is an environmental organization that develops different types of mitigation projects across the country. NRCS has contracted with Magnolia to develop the Illinois Conservation Exchange to assist the state’s producers with new wetland compliance provisions. Additional information can be found at our website: [www.mitigation.org](http://www.mitigation.org).

**To learn more or reserve credits, contact Mark Bernstein with Magnolia  
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