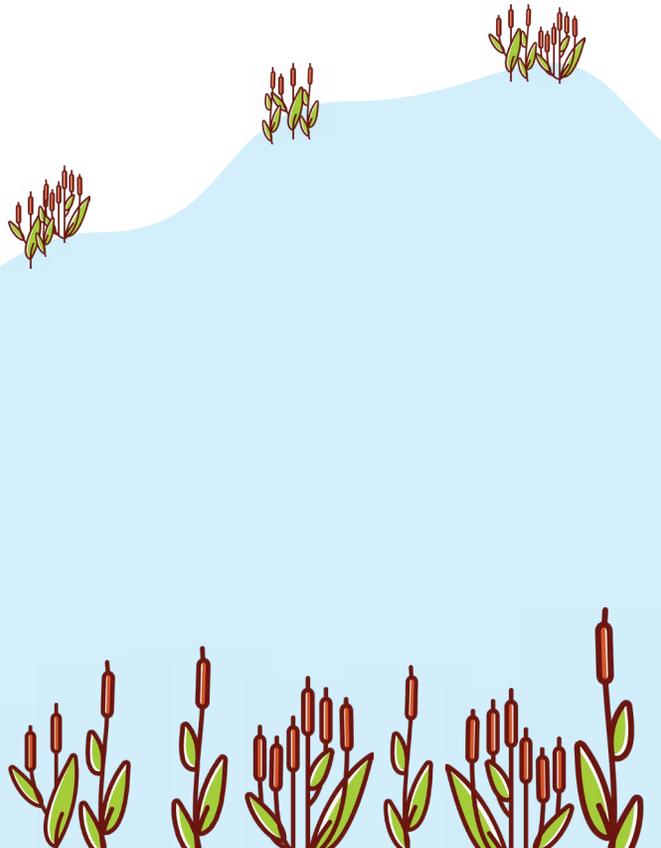


## What is wetland mitigation banking?

Wetland mitigation is the replacement of lost wetland functions that result from being filled or drained. Mitigation can be achieved through restoration, enhancement, creation, or (in exceptional circumstances) preservation of wetlands.

A wetland bank functions similarly to a financial bank - "credits" are placed in the bank in the form of restoration, creation, enhancement or preservation of wetlands. When unavoidable impacts to wetlands occur through construction of roadway projects, those impacts are then "debited" from the wetland bank. Bank credits can be roughly defined as the net increase in wetland area and/or ecological function provided by a bank site.



### Additional Information

For more information on SDDOT's wetland mitigation banking program or to find out if your property would be suitable for wetland mitigation, you can visit the SDDOT website or call one of the numbers below.

[sddot.com/business/environmental/wetland/default.aspx](http://sddot.com/business/environmental/wetland/default.aspx)



# Wetland Mitigation Banking

Wetlands provide important ecological functions and services to our state including wildlife habitat, flood attenuation and water storage, groundwater recharge, sediment retention, and nutrient cycling. The South Dakota Department of Transportation's (SDDOT) mitigation banking program seeks to meet wetland mitigation requirements and replace functions lost from impacts occurring as part of their transportation projects.

SDDOT is required to mitigate impacts to wetlands and other waters resulting from transportation projects and is often a condition to complying with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. SDDOT is in the process of developing wetland mitigation bank sites across the state of South Dakota. Wetland mitigation banking enables SDDOT to efficiently use agency resources by reducing permitting time, mitigating wetland loss from multiple projects in one location, and reduces the uncertainty whether mitigation will be successful in offsetting project impacts.



**SDDOT**  
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Pierre, SD 57501  
605.773.4336



**HDR Engineering**  
6300 Old Village Place  
Suite 100  
Sioux Falls, SD 57108  
605.977.7740

## Mitigation Banking Process



1

SDDOT **identifies a site** through a variety of ways including contact from a landowner, resource agency, or during other project right-of-way discussions. SDDOT may also identify properties from aerial photos and make contact with the landowner.



2

Prior to purchasing property, SDDOT would get **preliminary approval** from the USACE to determine whether the site would be considered for a wetland banking site.



3

SDDOT would begin working with the landowner to **purchase the site** fee title or an easement.



4

A prospectus would be developed that allows the USACE and various resource agencies to **review the general mitigation development plan**.



5

A **Site Development Plan would be drafted** that will describe:

- ownership of the mitigation bank site;
- proposed operation of the bank;
- baseline conditions of the site;
- proposed construction, restoration, monitoring, management, and long-term management plans;
- quantifiable performance standards related to vegetation, hydrology, and other factors;
- draft financial assurance document and draft conservation easement.



6

After approval of the Site Development Plan, **final design of the site** would occur and construction may begin.



7

**Monitoring of the site** would occur for 5 to 10 years after construction.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Who pays for wetland mitigation?

SDDOT is responsible for all aspects of planning, developing, and maintaining the wetland mitigation site. This includes purchasing property or restrictive easements, construction, and monitoring.

### What kind of sites are suitable for wetland mitigation banking?

Land that was formerly a wetland (perhaps drained, dredged, ditched or filled) that can be restored to a healthy, self-sustaining wetland is the most cost-effective type of land and has the best chance for success. We will evaluate all inquiries, but prefer tracks with potential to restore 30 acres of wetland or more in order to improve efficiency and the improve the ecological viability of the wetland site.

### How does SDDOT protect the wetland mitigation site?

SDDOT will either buy the property outright (fee title) or can place a perpetual easement on the property that will remain in the name of the landowner but will have various encumbrances. Compensation for the property is based on fair market value of the land, which will be appraised prior to any negotiations.

### What is the duration of the easement what type of encumbrances would be included in an easement?

Wetland easements would be perpetual. Typical activities prohibited within the wetland mitigation easement area include:

- Construction or placement of structures
- Removal of soil, excavating, farming or mining
- Building of roads or paths for vehicular use
- Cutting of trees or plants, or spraying, except for maintenance purposes
- Operation of motorized vehicles on the easement (except for maintenance).

### Could I still graze or hay within the easement?

Grazing and haying may be allowed as part of a maintenance plan, but it would be at the discretion of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and SDDOT.

### Is hunting allowed within the easement?

Hunting is still permitted within the easement area as long as any easement encumbrances are still adhered to (for example, no motorized vehicles).

