



Livestock Watering Ponds

Pasture Management and Biodiversity

Well-managed pastures not only provide forage and water for livestock—they can also provide excellent habitat for waterfowl, grassland-nesting birds, pollinators and some species at risk.

With a growing interest from consumers to buy local from environmentally sustainable farms, managing pastures to support both livestock and wildlife makes good economic and environmental sense.

As our weather changes and we experience warmer seasons and less precipitation, once dependable water sources may no longer provide a guaranteed supply of water. Ducks Unlimited Canada has solutions.

Benefits

Pastures provide a mix of habitats, including grass, wooded areas, streams, ditches and wet areas or wetlands. These smaller wet areas can often be restored or managed as dependable sources of water for livestock.

It also makes good sense to limit access to wet areas where livestock may be more prone to contracting foot rot or eating low-quality forage than what grows in better and drier soil elsewhere in the pasture.

Finally, restored pasture ponds also increase on-farm wildlife biodiversity by providing habitat for breeding waterfowl, aquatic birds like American bitterns and soras, amphibians like leopard frogs and green frogs, and songbirds such as tree swallows.





Creating or Restoring a Pond

Restoring a quality watering pond on your pasture requires expertise. Factors including soil types, slopes and gradients, drainage ditches, field tiles, size and shape—as well as provincial and federal environmental regulations—need to be understood and considered.

Generally, pond sites should be two to three feet in depth and one to two acres in size. A shallower pond encourages the growth of wetland plants, which limits algae production and minimizes wave action, keeping the water cleaner while also providing shade and minimizing evaporation.

Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) builds these ponds with excavation or by plugging drainage ditches, constructing earthen dykes or undertaking a combination of all three. DUC also uses rock spillways to regulate water flows. Fencing should be installed to manage livestock access to the pond.

Costs

Costs for pond construction or restoration can vary widely depending on site, size and type of construction. In general, the cost to construct a site is approximately \$10,000 per acre. Fencing and watering systems would be additional costs.

Assistance Available

- ① Environmental Sustainable Agriculture Program (*administered by the New Brunswick Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries*)
 - ⊕ Can provide 75 per cent cost share of eligible costs (\$50,000 over life of CAP). Please consult with the department for details and application.
 - ⊕ DUC can provide full services to assess sites, obtain permits and construct the project.
- ② New Brunswick Wetland Restoration Program
 - ⊕ On projects that meet criteria as a wetland restoration project, DUC covers 100 per cent of project costs.
 - ⊕ Projects must be a minimum of 2.5 acres
 - ⊕ Landowners sign a conservation agreement to maintain the site as a wetland for a 30-year period.
 - ⊕ DUC provide full services to assess sites, obtain permits and construct the project.



For more information, please contact:

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