

## Wetland Mitigation Banking Grants: U.S. Department of Agriculture Announces Awards for Eight Projects (Including Arkansas)



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The United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (“NRCS”) issued a September 28th news release announcing it awarded \$5 million for eight new wetland mitigation banking projects.

One of the projects will be located in Arkansas.

The Clean Water Act requires mitigation for the disturbance or limitation of certain wetland or stream habitats. Wetland mitigation banking is the restoration, creation or enhancement of wetlands for purposes of compensating for unavoidable impacts to wetlands at another location. It is commonly used to compensate for wetland impacts from development. However, it can also be utilized for impacts from agriculture.

The NRCS wetland mitigation banking program is a competitive grants program that supports the development and establishment of wetland mitigation banks to make credits available for agricultural producers.

The September 28th NRCS news release states that the grants being awarded for the eight projects help conservation partners develop or establish mitigation banks. Such banks can assist agricultural producers in maintaining eligibility for United States Department of Agriculture programs.

The Arkansas project is being provided \$800,000 in funding from NRCS with partner funds of \$1,331,320. NRCS states that:

Minton Environmental Consultants (MEC) proposes to develop and establish an agricultural wetland mitigation bank in Arkansas. A new bank site in Arkansas will be restored on land that is currently owned by MEC in the Mississippi River floodplain. This new bank will restore bottomland hardwood wetlands using NRCS wetland restoration standards and specifications.

A copy of the news release, including a discussion of the Arkansas and other seven projects can be found [here](#).