

# Migratory Bird Habitat Initiative

## Expanding Habitat for Migrating Birds

*Helping People Help the Land*

## Louisiana Progress

October 7, 2010



### Landowner Response

**2,025** applications were received from landowners wanting to enroll **453,461** acres in the Migratory Bird Habitat Initiative in Louisiana.

**687** contracts have been obligated for **193,699** acres.

Shallow flood (average 2 inches) to create mudflat habitat beginning July 15.

### Background

The oil spill is adversely affecting marshes and coastlands used by shorebirds, waterfowl and other migrating birds.

Under the Migratory Bird Habitat Initiative (MBHI), farmers and ranchers in Louisiana are working with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to develop and enhance habitat for birds making their annual migration south.

Priority areas for MBHI in Louisiana are in Acadia, Allen, Avoyelles, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Caldwell, Cameron, Catahoula, Concordia, East Carroll, Evangeline, Franklin, Iberia, Jefferson Davis, Lafayette, Madison, Morehouse, Natchitoches, Ouachita,

Pointe Coupee, Rapides, Richland, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, Tensas, Vermilion, and West Carroll Parishes.

NRCS in Louisiana is providing support to landowners through two components—one for private agricultural lands and another for lands enrolled in NRCS' Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP).

Through the agricultural lands component, NRCS is providing payment incentives for flooding existing farmed wetlands, prior-converted croplands, or other lands that can provide immediate habitat.

The WRP component addresses food habitat needs for species expected to be significantly impacted on WRP easement land. It will provide habitat

features that are appropriate for the area and habitat management methods that are not currently in use.

In addition, NRCS is using its Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program to help producers enhance habitat by flooding fields and establishing or maintaining vegetation for cover and food.

NRCS works with several partners on this initiative, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, USA Rice, and the National Cotton Council.