



BURIED PIPELINE

The prolonged drought in Nebraska has drawn particular attention to the manner in which water is utilized. This holds true for agriculture as well as the agencies and organizations responsible for providing quality wildlife and wetland habitat. To help conserve the amount of water used in wetlands, the conservation practice of burying pipeline is becoming a standard practice on Waterfowl Production Areas and Wildlife Management Areas throughout the Rainwater Basin. Manually laying pipe above ground or pumping water through an open ditch from the well to the wetland were not efficient means of transporting water. Considerable staff time was devoted to laying the pipe and then picking it up again before any management practices, such as prescribed burning, could be implemented. When water was pumped through an open ditch, a considerable amount was lost due to seepage, before the water ever reached its target. Therefore, the primary objective of the public lands buried pipeline project was to increase the efficiency of groundwater delivery to wetlands on public lands in the Rainwater Basin area.

This project has benefited a total of 4,363 acres of wetland habitat owned by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ducks Unlimited, and the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission. A total of 20,714 linear feet (almost 4 miles!) of PVC pipe was buried, which included 20 individual pipelines on 17 public wildlife areas in 8 counties. Contributions for the buried pipeline project came from: Nebraska Environmental Trust, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Ducks Unlimited, Inc., and the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture.

