

### John Dudley Wetland Restoration Government Programs Work Both Ways



Figure 1: Cedar Encroachment in Reed Canarygrass

The restoration of the John Dudley property involved undoing much of what government programs have paid for over the past half century. John’s father utilized many ASCS (FSA) annual programs to build dikes, excavate ponds, and idle grasslands with the intention of improving wildlife habitat.

A lack of disturbance in the wetland has caused vegetation to evolve to a dense stand of reed canarygrass and an invasion of red cedar. While this can provide winter cover for upland birds, the nesting value is practically none.

John approached the Joint Venture about restoring the wetland to its original function and enhancing the habitat value for waterfowl and upland game.

Restoration will include removing dikes, which impacts the wetland hydrology by keeping water from freely flowing into and within the wetland. Cedar trees will be removed to enhance grassland value. Pits will be filled to allow shallow water to stand over a large area. This encourages wetland plant growth and seed production for spring migration waterfowl forage. Excavations will provide cattail control and provide for additional moist soil plant growth.

A management plan will be developed to disturb the vegetation through disking and burning. Periodic disturbance will keep the plant community in early successional stages which produces the best habitat.

Funding for the restoration is being provided by a Nebraska Environmental Trust grant, Fish & Wildlife Service funds, and landowner contribution.

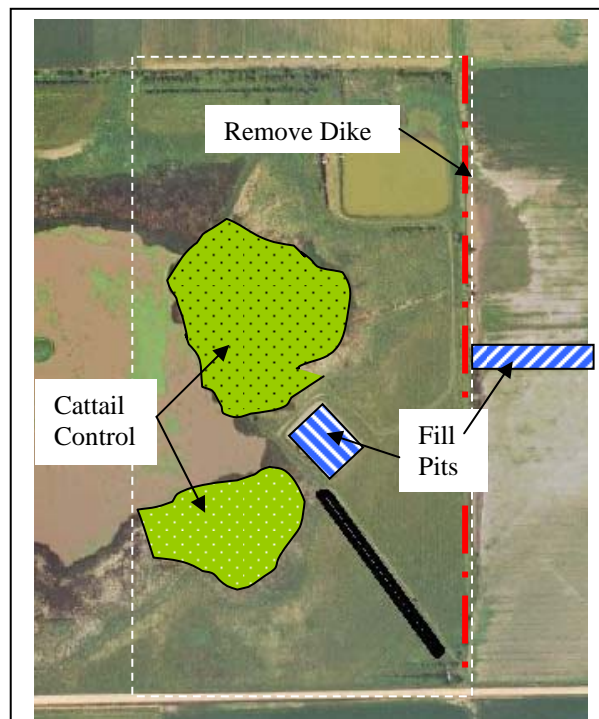


Figure 2: Aerial view of Dudley restoration project.