



Gleason Hydrology Restoration

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is working cooperatively with local landowners to restore the natural hydrology of the watershed surrounding the Gleason Waterfowl Production Area (WPA) in Kearney County. Discussion between USFWS personnel and owners of nearby properties helped identify irrigation re-use pits that were no longer needed due to conversion from gravity irrigation to more efficient pivot irrigation systems. In 2003, the USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife program provided cost share and technical assistance to encourage the neighbors to fill these abandoned pits.

Merlyn Stadler agreed to have his 1/3 mile long pit, located adjacent to Gleason WPA, filled using silt that had washed into the wetland over several decades. Now that this large pit has been filled, natural run-off is able to reach the WPA, improving the wetland's hydrology.

Removing unwanted silt from the wetland encouraged the growth of plants that are valuable as food and cover for wildlife. Silt removal also increased the wetland's ability to store water, enhancing flood protection for neighbors. Three more pits within the Gleason WPA watershed boundary are expected to be filled yet this year.



Photos courtesy of USFWS

Top: Aerial of Gleason WPA.

Lower Left: Construction work on Gleason.

Lower Right: Stadler pit.