

Reason---Farm Forum

From Arden Haner 34491 72nd st sw Douglas N D 58735

I support the current farm program with 2 exceptions . Reduce the CRP portion of the present program and delete the swampbuster provision.

CRP simply removed a generation of young farmers from Agriculture and opened new land to production in Brazil. No benefit to the consumer, or taxpayer.

Swampbuster denies my right to manage my property in providing for my family. Today it increases my costs for fuel, fertilizer, and chemical. I would rather see U.S.FISH AND WILDLIFE be placed and funded under THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR as it was designed in the beginning. I don't need their work and I should not be paying for it. With wheat at \$2 per bushel my wallet is thin enough. The dark side of this program is the fact that duck numbers are dropping because they can't survive in mud and cat tails. They need clean, open and moving water in order to be healthy and do well. This program don't fulfill their needs. The ducks have prospered with the plow.

Check the records. The great duck hunt by Lewis and Clark. Maybe the Bible story Jesus feeding the people duck on the mountain. I can't find either one.

The last part of the story has to do with the E.P.A. They beg for money to clean the air and water. The fact is global temperature is controlled by the sun and the salt in the ocean. Two thirds of panet earth is covered with salt water. The movement of salt at the equator sends warm currents out to heat the planet. Screw with that and you have a block ofc ice.

By Don Zolman



The dark side of CRP...

Why this supply-control policy backfired and helped unleash Brazil's crop expansion

In the late 1980s a government program was launched and hailed by conservation, environmental and farm groups alike. CRP, the Conservation Reserve Program, would solve all our problems. It would reduce soil erosion, improve wildlife habitat, lower surpluses and raise crop prices.

Nearly 20 years have passed since the start of CRP. Glowing assessments of what was accomplished can be heard from sea to shining sea. The reality, however, is quite different. CRP is a disaster — the most expensive and detrimental program in the history of American agriculture. CRP might as well stand for Constricting Rural Progress.

Many producers woke up the day after the first CRP bid to find half the ground that they farmed had been "rented" to the government. The feds were paying a \$20 per acre premium over cash rents at the time. I had a grain customer and friend who went from 1,500 acres to 700 acres with the swipe of a pen.

A year later he was out of business, one of thousands across the country who faced the same fate.

WHAT DID WE GET IN RETURN?
For one, the idling of these acres encouraged Brazil to increase acreage by 37 million to 40 million acres over the life of CRP.

Most of the millions of crop acres that came into production around the world supported more wildlife

than the acres we set aside.

Areas with huge CRP sign-ups lost fertilizer retailers, elevators, machinery dealerships, farmers, tax base, and in some cases schools and other public services. Cash rents were inflated artificially by government intervention.

I called and visited congressmen and senators explaining why

control in return for any benefits. Unfortunately erosion control wasn't the real reason behind CRP.

SUPPLY AND DEMAND

The "real" reason behind CRP was supply control. But supply control only works when you are the only one with the supply, or you control such a large percentage that you have

"Whenever our country tries to control supply, the result is usually new lands brought into production somewhere in the world."

I thought this program wouldn't work. It needed to be focused on environmentally sensitive areas and downscaled to 10 million to 15 million acres.

I had recently returned from Brazil and had witnessed the production potential firsthand. They said CRP was the answer to agriculture's problems. But none of them had stood in the middle of the Cerrado region of Brazil and seen with a farmer's eye the vast potential that lay there.

USDA has now changed the focus of CRP to where it should have been all along: Environmentally sensitive areas, wetlands, waterways and filter strips. Most of the erosion benefits of CRP could have been achieved by requiring producers on sensitive soils to use no-till and cover crops to protect the soil, instead of idling whole farms. We could have set up farm programs to require erosion

an effective monopoly.

We now sadly know that we are not the only ones who can produce grains and soybeans.

Whenever our country tries to control supply, the result is usually new lands brought into production somewhere in the world. Brazil alone, according to recent USDA estimates, has 420 million acres of arable land available for expansion. That's equivalent in farmland to almost 10 Iowas.

We need to heed the lesson that CRP has taught us. Idling millions of acres in the United States, in an attempt to control supply, will only control the ability of American farmers to compete. ①

Zolman is chief operating officer of a family corporation that owns and operates three grain elevators, and farms 3,800 acres of corn and soybeans near Warsaw, Ind.

Habitat obsession costs ducks

By Elroy Aune

GATZKE, Minn. — A recent Herald editorial argues that Minnesota should be putting resources into habitat rather than retaliating against North Dakota ("Minnesota should focus on habitat," Page 7A, April 18).

I tend to agree that North Dakota has to protect its resources in the way it feels is best.

But there wouldn't be this tension between the two states if Minnesota hadn't been working so hard and spending so much money on habitat for the past 40 years or so.

Before the big habitat restoration push, we had ducks, sharp-tailed grouse, pheasants, Hungarians and so on in hordes. The editorial called it, "Minnesota's once-legendary upland-game and waterfowl habitat."

We had small farmers on about every section or quarter-section of land here in northwestern Minnesota. My grandfather and others settled here in the late 1800s and early 1900s, and they said there was no wildlife here besides moose, a lot of wolves, rabbits and fish — a lot of fish.

The land was drained — not all over, but where economically feasible, for fields, roads, pastures, etc.

Then, came the influx of wildlife I mentioned earlier, along with deer, which also weren't here in the early years. Upland game had dry ground to nest on and grain to feed on. Ducks had great nesting areas in the pastures, hayfields and grass seed fields, where there wasn't a flood plain or danger of nests getting flooded out.

Also, they had feed, grain, short green grass (kind of like the golf course and park grass they like so well in big cities,) along with small livestock waterholes and ditches nearby for water sources.

Yes, life was grand here then, although it was tough to raise barley in those years. The ducks ate it all, if it couldn't be harvested right away.

And in the summer, people could go down to the river here and fish. Walleyes, northerns, sauger, catfish, buffalo fish, sturgeon. Every species of fish was here in the Red River at one time.

In the fall, there was excellent hunting. And with the exploding game populations came the predators — fox, mink, coons, coyote and so on.

They made for great trapping opportunities. Then, things started a slow change, at first. The Department of Natural Resources came in to manage the wildlife. Around that time, the environmental age started in a big way.

The first DNR people here had been raised locally or at least understood what was here for them to manage and how it all got here. They dealt well with the local people and asked questions from farmers and others. That has changed.

In my area right now, there are two or three of us left farming. I look at the surrounding land, which once was productive and full of wildlife but now is all tall, twisted, dead grass, cattails, brush, plugged ditches and sloughs (also known as west-Nile-infested mosquito hatcheries).

I don't have cattle anymore (too many environmental rules), but I do have ducks and geese nesting on my grass-seed fields. If the CRP and state land here had as many ducks nesting on it per acre as my few fields and county and township road edges do, there would be millions of ducks.

Why is it that all of the environmental wizards and DNR people in the big cities feel they need many square miles of rotting cattails and slough grass with no feed or dry ground in them in order to raise ducks? Look at what waterfowl like: dry farm fields with feed, golf courses, city parks and city lagoons. These places have something in common: The water either is moving or is changed regularly.

Where do you like to sit in water. In your bathtub or some rotten-smelling, bacteria infested slough?

By the way, there's no fish here anymore, either, they've been poisoned out or blocked out by this same wonderful management philosophy all the wetland crazies dwell on.

The fish, the ducks and the farmers used to get along just fine here. Now, with all the impoundments, plugged ditches and thousands of acres of sloughs and flood plain, along with the loss of virtually all the small farmers, we're where we're at today: no ducks.

If all the money that has been and will be spent on stupid flood-control and wetland projects could have been given to small farmers to stay in business, we wouldn't be fighting with North Dakota over ducks. We also wouldn't need the expensive huge, bloated bureaucratic mess called the DNR.

I am not a biologist or scientist, but I believe what I see and have seen. Since money and misinformed dreamers have taken control of managing nature in my area, I have seen a steady decline in wildlife.

Aune farms near Gatzke.