



## THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

5410 Grosvenor Lane • Bethesda, MD 20814-2197  
Tel: (301) 897-9770 • Fax: (301) 530-2471

# 1995 FARM BILL: WILDLIFE POPULATIONS

Healthy wildlife populations are a symbol of good land stewardship and sound agricultural practices. They are an asset to landowners and rural communities by offering hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing. Habitat that provides benefits to fish and wildlife also helps control erosion and protect water quality.

## GOAL

Stabilize and rebuild wildlife populations.

## WILDLIFE STATUS

**Shrinking grassland nesting habitat has led to the reduction of many different species of north American birds.**

- ◆ More than 90% of the original tallgrass prairie has been converted to agriculture during the last two centuries.
- ◆ Breeding bird surveys indicate that endemic species, such as the lark bunting, bobolink, and grasshopper sparrow have declined by 25-65% over the last three decades.

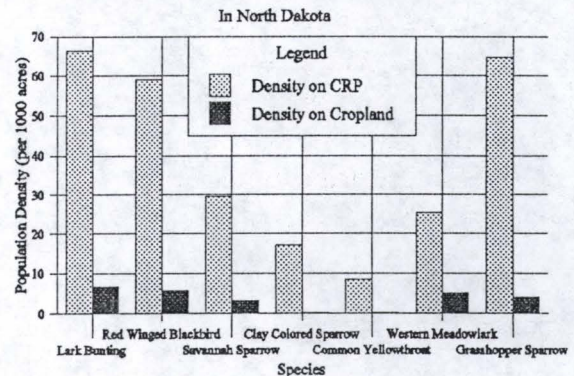
**Wetlands loss has resulted in habitat loss and fragmentation for a large number and wildlife species.**

- ◆ Natural wetlands once occupied 11% of the contiguous states, but now occur on 5%.
- ◆ 900 species of wildlife in the US require wetland habitat.
- ◆ 1/3 of North American bird species rely directly on wetlands for some resource.

## THE FARM BILL CAN HELP

**Widespread fish and wildlife population declines are reversible by habitat restoration. Fish and wildlife species are rebounding under the Conservation Reserve Program.**

## Effect of CRP on Grassland Birds



- ◆ Pheasant populations have doubled in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and other states with large CRP acreages.
- ◆ The FWS's Breeding Bird Survey shows that grasshopper sparrows, lark buntings and eastern meadowlarks are increasing in areas with high CRP enrollments.

**Wetlands restoration enhances fish and wildlife populations.**

- ◆ Restoration of wetlands enhances migratory bird and other wildlife populations.

## ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- ◆ Proper management will avoid listing of threatened and endangered species.
- ◆ The USDOJ and USDA credit the CRP with approximately \$8.6 billion in wildlife related benefits.
- ◆ Waterfowl hunting generates \$1.6 billion annually.