

Wetland Regulation in Rice County, MN

Wetland regulation in Minnesota can be a confusing topic, especially since wetlands come in many different types. Some wetlands are obvious, like a cattail marsh. Other wetlands are harder to distinguish, like a wet meadow, or a floodplain. A drowned out low spot in a field may also be considered a wetland if it meets a series of indicators. Even those who use their land for profitable income and have had to do some wetland permitting get confused once in a while in what is allowed or exempted from wetland regulations.

Before you dig, ditch, tile, fill, or excavate, it is important to identify the wetlands on your property and obtain the proper permits. The two most common wetland laws that pertain to work conducted in or around wetlands are the Wetland Conservation Act (state law) and Swampbuster (federal law).



The Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) was passed by the state of Minnesota in 1992. The WCA is administered by local government units, usually soil and water conservation districts (SWCD's), that receive oversight provided by the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). Enforcement is provided by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) conservation officers.

In Rice County, the Rice SWCD is the Local Government Unit (LGU) that administers the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act, except in the City of Lonsdale. This means that any work (tiling, ditching, filling, draining or excavating) being done in or around a wetland needs to be reviewed by the Rice SWCD Wetland Conservation Act administrator before work is started. **If you fail to contact the administrator, any wetland impacts caused by your actions may be subject to enforcement or replacement, which could cost you thousands of dollars. You could also be fined up to \$10,000 for non-permitted activities. Contractors also have a liability that can cost them up to \$1,000.**

The federal Swampbuster is a provision of the Food Security Act of 1985 and is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Swampbuster regulates farming and draining activities in wetlands. **If you are a landowner that is filing a 1026 with your local Farm Service Agency (FSA) or the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office for wetland review regarding Swampbuster, you must also get a review and approval from the Rice SWCD before you start your project so that your work is in compliance with the Wetland Conservation Act.** If you do not collect benefits from the Farms Service Agency (FSA), then you still need to contact the Rice SWCD regarding your wetland work.

Additionally, the wetlands on your property may also require permits from the federal Army Corp of Engineers and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Contact these agencies before you begin your project.

Wetlands are an extremely important resource that must be protected. Wetland benefits include water quality improvements, flood control, erosion control, wildlife habitat, recreation and carbon storage.

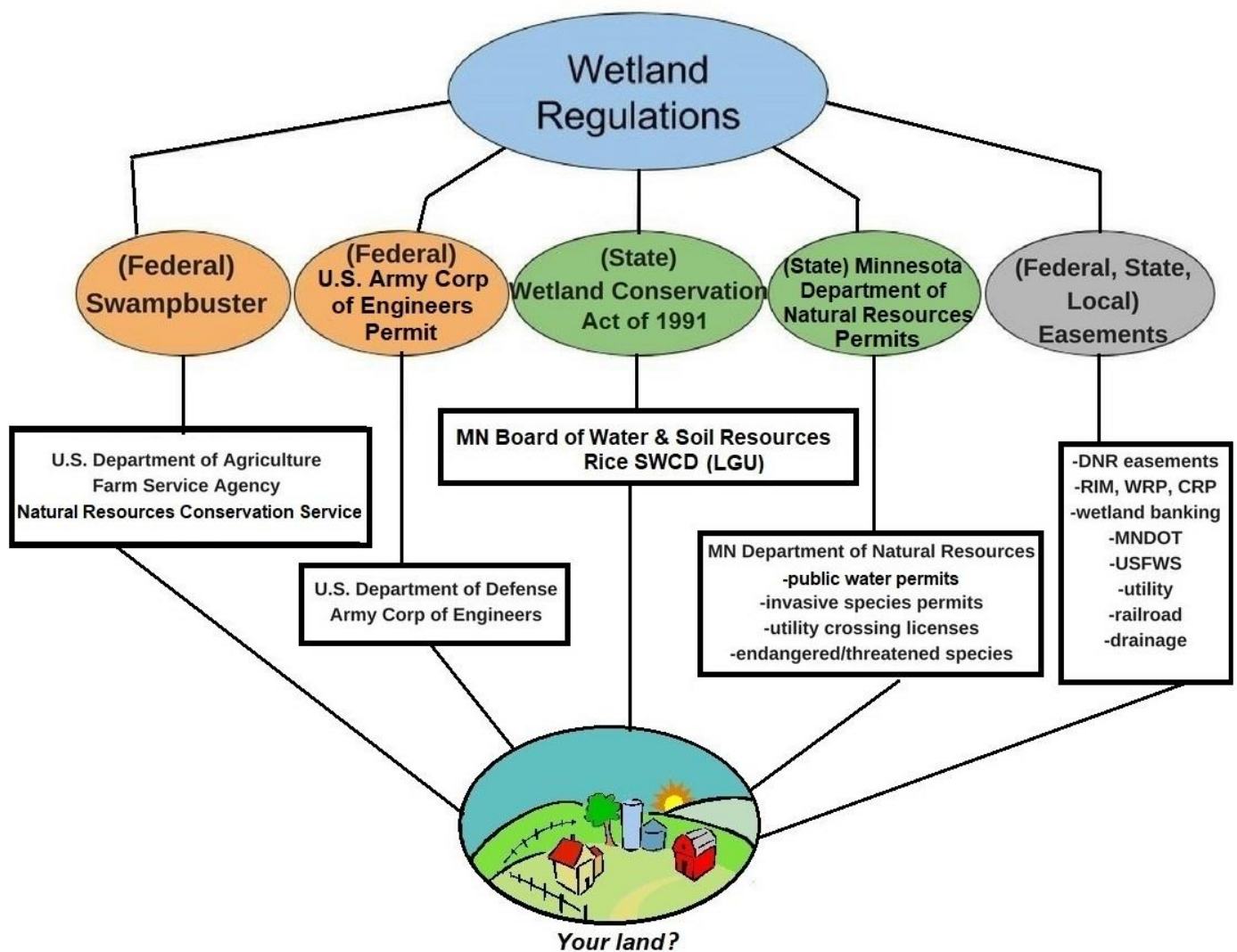
If you are planning on working in or around a wetland and would like to make sure your project is in compliance of state wetland regulations, please feel free to contact the Rice SWCD at (507) 332-5408 or email Allison.Henderson@riceswcd.org to get your project evaluated. Learn more about wetland regulations at our website www.riceswcd.org.





BEFORE YOU DIG, DITCH, TILE, OR FILL!
KNOW THE WETLAND
REGULATIONS IN RICE COUNTY

Wetland Regulations Affecting Rice County Landowners



Check regulations before you dig, ditch, tile, or fill!

Contact the Rice SWCD:



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