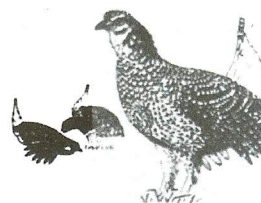




North Dakota Chapter

THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 1442 • BISMARCK, ND 58502



June 14, 1988

The Honorable Arland Stangeland
 House Agriculture Committee
 M-F Building
 403 Center Avenue
 Moorhead, Minnesota 56560

Dear Representative Stangeland:

The North Dakota Chapter of the Wildlife Society is an organization of nearly 400 natural resource professionals, including wildlife biologists, natural resource managers, administrators, educators, conservation law officers, and students. We have been involved in issues concerning North Dakota's natural resources for 25 years, with particular emphasis on protection, management and preservation of North Dakota's prairie wetlands.

On June 24, 1988 the House Agriculture Committee will be holding a hearing on general agriculture issues and the swampbuster and sod-buster provisions of the 1985 Food Security Act (FSA). While we will be unable to attend the hearing, I request that the following comments which are specific to Swampbuster provisions of the FSA be included in the record.

1. Wetland Determinations - The definition of wetlands under the FSA is appropriate and proven to be applicable to the glaciated pot-hole area of the United States. Administratively it is critical that the present definition remain as written. No further exemptions other than those already allowed should be developed. The use of "normal circumstances" should not be used to eliminate protection for wetlands because of their cropping history. Temporary wetlands are extremely important for their biologic and hydrologic values. Any change in the wetland definition, the exemptions, or "normal circumstances" will eliminate protection to a critical portion of the nation's wetlands. We support and encourage wetland determinations to be completed as soon as possible. Uncertainty and confusion may at least be partially reduced when a producer has a wetland determination completed on his farm. To make any changes in wetland exemptions, definitions, or in "normal circumstances" would be premature considering that wetland determinations have been completed on only a few farms.
2. Compliance - There has been virtually no enforcement of the compliance provisions of the FSA. Unfortunately, wetlands are continually being converted and farm subsidies continue to be paid to these same producers. Three changes would be appropriate to deal with

Dedicated to the wise use of all natural resources

