



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
AUDUBON NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
RR #1, BOX 16
COLEHARBOR, NORTH DAKOTA 58531



March 4, 1993

Dear Farming Cooperator:

Some of you have expressed some concern about alfalfa plantings in lieu of small grain plantings. In the past I have dealt with each individual separately due to individual needs and circumstances. To be fair to all we need to set some guidelines so that everyone is treated the same. At the same time the reason for farming on the Refuge is for Canada goose depredations and some food plots for resident wildlife. Below are some ideas and we encourage your comments.

Alfalfa is incorporated into the farming program for weed control, goose browse, crop rotations, reduce chemicals, and soil fertility.

- 1) Up to 18% of your total crop acres seeded to alfalfa will have the following stipulations:
 - you may hay 50% once after July 4
 - you may hay over 50% if for noxious weed control
 - alfalfa harvested for seed, Refuge gets 25% cleaned and bagged
- 2) If you plant over 18% of your total crop acres into alfalfa that percentage over 18% will have the following stipulations:
 - you may hay 100% once of those acres over 18% after July 4
 - alfalfa harvested for seed, Refuge gets 25% cleaned and bagged
- 3) Alfalfa establishment will have the following stipulations:
 - 1st year you may harvest cover crop for seed or hay, also you may take 100% of cutting alfalfa in the fall. It is recommended to cut cover crop for hay and cover crop should be seeded at half rate.
 - 2nd year you may hay 100% once of alfalfa after July 4
 - 3rd and subsequent years stipulations 1 and 2 above are followed.
 - year alfalfa field will be broken out to plant small grain you may hay 100% after July 4, then plow down second growth in the fall or if permissible burn down with chemicals. Same year another field will be seeded into alfalfa to keep the rotation going.

Sounds confusing but here is an example:

If you have 100 acres of croplands and you want to seed 25 acres into alfalfa for hay.

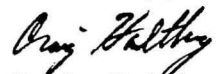
- year planted - cooperator gets 2 cuttings of hay or small grain harvest and one cutting of hay.
- second year - cooperator gets to cut 25 acres of alfalfa after July 4
- third year - cooperator cuts 50% of 18 acres after July 4, cuts 100% of 7 acres after July 4
- fourth and subsequent years - see third year
- year to be broken - cooperator gets 100% of alfalfa

I would like to emphasize that our main priority for farming on the Refuge is for wildlife depredations. We will continue to graze shorelines, burn islands, burn shorelines, and hay areas to attract geese because these practices seem to work quite well. To be up front we are trying to change the cropland system (due to chemical usage) and also to control wildlife depredations.

We need to continue winter wheat or rye rotations, seed permanent cover such as alfalfa in our weediest fields (geese like alfalfa), and, most important, work together to find solutions to lessen depredations on private lands. We all know that we have more geese today than 10 years ago and we also had depredations 10 years ago. Numbers ~~do~~ play a part but land use, I feel, plays a bigger part.

Let me know what you think.

Sincerely;



Craig Hultberg

concur: 

cc. John Fransen
Bill Wilson
Randy Nelson
Robert Voth
Vernon Edinger
Milt Suthers RO