



Wetlands

East Texas Wetland Management Calendar

January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
	Open GTR										Close GTR Structure
		Moist Soil Drawdown						Close Moist Soil Structure			
		Manipulate Units and Treat Undesirable Vegetation									
					Planting						
Levee Maintenance											

Green Tree Reservoir (GTR) – Standing water during the growing season will damage and eventually kill most desirable bottomland hardwood trees. Water should be released from GTRs before buds begin swelling on trees within the units. Thus, the timing of releasing water will vary from year to year. However, in most years, water should be off all trees by March 1. Conversely, in the Fall, water should not be put on trees until after the first hard freeze.

Moist Soil Units – The objective of the drawdown is to dry the unit out **slowly**, ideally taking 1.5–2 months to release all of the water in the unit. Drawdowns of moist soil units can begin as early as mid-March. If a flashboard riser is used to control water levels, one board should be pulled every 1–2 weeks. Once the desired plant communities have established and attained a height that can sustain flooding, water control structures can be closed. Once again, if your moist soil unit contains trees, do not put water on the trees until after the first hard freeze.

Manipulate Units and Treat Undesirable Vegetation – Moist soil units need periodic disturbance to maintain vigor and promote the desired seed-producing plant communities. Treatments such as discing, shredding, or prescribed burning can be very beneficial. Discing is typically needed once every 3–5 years. Shredding may be needed on an annual basis, depending on plant community development and nuisance vegetation. Nuisance vegetation (green ash, black willow, Chinese tallow tree, common buttonbush, cocklebur, sesbania, and cattail) is often best controlled using aquatic approved herbicides and/or shredding. These treatments are typically conducted June–September, however, timing of these treatments will vary from year to year.

Planting – If planting is desired, seed-producing annual plants such as barnyard grass, browntop millet, Japanese millet, or pink smartweed can be planted in wetland units. Seeds should be broadcast onto mud flats between June and August.

Levee Maintenance – The condition of the levee should be monitored year-round. During monitoring efforts look for areas that may be showing signs of erosion as well as encroachment of undesirable woody vegetation (green ash, black willow, Chinese tallow tree, and common buttonbush). Levees should be shredded at least once annually and all woody vegetation should be removed.

These management recommendations are very generalized, however, they do provide a basic timeline for management activities. Please consult your local TPWD biologist for site specific recommendations.

For additional information please contact:
Corey Mason
 TPWD - East Texas Waterfowl Biologist
 (903) 675-4177
 Corey.Mason@tpwd.state.tx.us

This Wetland Management Calendar is intended to be used as a guide for wetland managers who desire to efficiently and effectively manage their properties for wintering waterfowl. It can be used as a tool to help you reach your objectives of producing and maintaining a productive wetland. Please remember that wetlands are very dynamic and there is no generic management prescription that can be written to encompass all possible management scenarios.

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