

## New Categorical Exclusions for Soil and Water Restoration Wetland, Stream & Riparian Area Restoration

### Project: South Patrol Road Wetlands Restoration Unit: Midwin National Tallgrass Prairie

#### What Were The Restoration Needs?

The Midwin National Tallgrass Prairie, part of the former Joliet Army Ammunition Plant, is located in northeastern Illinois about 45 miles southwest of Chicago, and encompasses 18,000 acres, the largest parcel of protected open space in northeastern Illinois. Drain tiles were installed in wet areas by farmers in the last century. From 1940 to 1996 more of the tallgrass prairie and associated wetlands were drained to support Army Ammunition production and storage, and associated areas were planted with agricultural row crops.

#### What Activities Were Implemented?

A mosaic of native wetlands and tallgrass prairie species were planted following the removal, excavation or fill of drainage tiles and ditches. The project restored 410 acres of wet prairie and sedge meadow communities and 49 acres of mesic prairie community

#### What Are The Benefits of Restoration?

Restoration of the more natural hydrology and wetlands provides improved habitat for prairie and wetland wildlife, including Illinois threatened and endangered species and Regional Forester sensitive species.

#### Who Were The Partners?

Activities on the Midwin are implemented under the Illinois Land Conservation Act and the South Patrol Road project was mainly supported by non-profit organizations: The Wetlands Initiative, Openlands, and Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

**Before:**



**After:**

