

What is a Playa Lake?

Playa lakes are naturally occurring depressions found in western Kansas and other parts of the Great Plains. Most people refer to them as lagoons or buffalo wallows. These playa lakes or lagoons can be difficult to farm, since they flood from time to time. Many crops have to be re-planted two or three times, and if a crop is grown on them, it may flood prior to harvest. Some farmers have indicated they only received one crop in 10 years in these low-lying areas.



PLAYA LAKE IN CROPLAND

Benefits to Protecting Playas

The benefits to protecting playas through playa conservation programs are numerous. These playas provide vital habitat for many wildlife species such as migratory waterfowl and shorebirds, sandhill cranes, upland game birds, and other game and non-game species. Playas also recharge groundwater supplies, and protect drinking water. The associated

grass buffers filter runoff from crop fields and slow the sedimentation of the playa.



PLAYA WITH NEWLY PLANTED BUFFER

Conservation Reserve Program CP23A

CP23A is a Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP) practice that is administered through the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) and provides a landowner the option of protecting playas and providing the benefits described above. This program requires a native grass buffer to be planted around the playa, which cannot exceed a 4 to 1 buffer to playa ratio. In addition, this program provides an annual rental payment for all acres enrolled along with 50 percent cost share assistance of eligible practice installation costs. The program also offers a wetland restoration incentive payment that is equal to 25 percent of the cost of restoring hydrology of the site. Local Farm Service Agency (FSA) Offices or

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Offices can provide more details.

Playa Lake Signup Incentive Program

The Playa Lake Signup Incentive Program (PLSIP), administered through the Kansas Dept. of Wildlife & Parks (KDWP), offers a one-time signup incentive payment to those landowners who establish a CP23A (Wetland Restoration, non-floodplain) contract through USDA's Continuous Conservation Reserve Program. This one-time incentive payment will pay \$15 for each acre of playa and buffer contracted through your CP23A contract. This incentive payment will only be provided to those landowners who secure a CP23A contract.



PLAYA LAKE AFTER SPRING RAIN EVENT

The Playa Lake Signup Incentive Program is administered by the KDWP through the Landowner Incentive Program (LIP). Other partners in the project are Playa Lakes Joint Venture, Conoco/Phillips Petroleum, Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams, USDA Farm Service Agency and Natural Resource Conservation Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and cooperating landowners.



**TYPICAL PLAYA LAKE IN WESTERN
KANSAS**

Landowners who participate in PLSIP retain all recreational rights to their land. A KDWP LIP representative will review applications and assist with enrollment and contracts.

Photos provided by PLJV, Darryl Birkenfeld, and Chris Berens.