

Meadow Farms: Wetland Restoration

From Abandoned Field to Functioning Ecosystem

Site Background: Meadow Farms is a 200-acre tract of land which lies on the Middle Peninsula between the Pamunkey and Mattaponi Rivers in King William County, VA. This area is known as Virginia's "River Country" and the Middle Peninsula's economy, tourism, and recreational opportunities



Erosion prior to restoration. 2005.

depend on this natural landscape. Meadow Farms was an abandoned agricultural field whose wetlands had been drained through the construction of field ditches. These ditches caused increased levels of erosion contributing to pollution of the Chesapeake Bay. The Nature Conservancy purchased a conservation easement on this privately-owned property in 2004 and began restoration efforts in 2006.



Meadow Farms 3 years after restoration efforts. 2009.



Filling field ditches in 2006.

Restoration: Approximately 70 acres of wetland were restored, as were the accompanying uplands. Restoration efforts included:

- filling field ditches and constructing a berm system
- creating several seasonal ponds
- planting over 54,000 trees
- a 10-year monitoring plan to ensure success of vegetation and hydrology



Trees were planted in 2007.

Status and Outlook: This project has improved wildlife habitat, water quality, and has increased flood storage. These newly restored lands can once more contribute to the natural beauty and functioning of Virginia's Middle Peninsula and will be protected by the conservation easement in perpetuity.



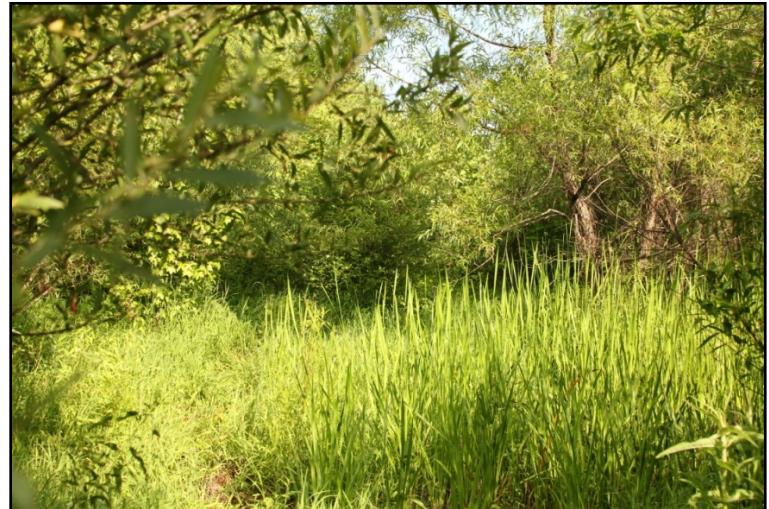
Meadow Farms before (left) and after (right) restoration efforts.



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More before and after pictures:



A comparison of the same view from within the eastern wetland cell looking south, before construction in 2006 (left) and after 9 years of growth in 2015 (right).



A comparison of the same view from the southern hillside looking north across restoration area, before construction in 2006 (left) and after 9 years of growth in 2015 (right).