This quarter is one of my favorites as the new seedings are starting to show some life and the grassland birds are starting to sing. The farmers starting to hit the fields as well as looking around at their resource concerns that seem to have show up over the fall and winter months.

These last few months, I have spent a fair amount of time checking newer seedings to ensure the landowners that their seedings are taking shape the way they should be. Along with seed checks, the fields offices have had handful of new EQIP projects take shape. I also had the pleasure to work on habitat proposal promoting cp21 (filter strips) that would help with water quality and wildlife habitat. This practice slow runoff from fields, trapping and filtering sediment, nutrients, pesticides and other potential pollutants before they reach surface waters.

Conservation Programs	Acres Impacted
CRP	68.68
EQIP	49.60
CSP	1.6
IDALS	160
IHAP	99.8
Total	**379.64**

This photo is of a 2nd growing season CP42 project in Fremont County. The landowner was able to mow a few times the first year.

Contacts & Conservation Plans

- Landowner contacts = 76
- Total site visits = 26
- Habitat proposals = 63
- Conservation plans = 11
- Practice checkout = 4
- NRCS seed plan review = 16

Thank you to all our partners!

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Outreach Opportunities

This quarter, Mills CCB,NRCS,IDALS, and SWCD hosted four educational events in my coverage area about pollinators. These events covered the habitat needs and importance of pollinators, honey bees, and monarch butterflies. Additionally, we planted trees and pollinators plots at the Fremont Mills school with the student assistance.

Topics that I covered included the importance of pollinators, their habitat requirements and how to establish and maintain pollinator and monarch habitat. A key point I talked about was that regardless of the size, backyard gardens to large acre fields, every bit of habitat can be beneficial to pollinators. As for the 2nd graders, we talked about how Iowa's landscape has changed and how pollinators impact the food that they eat everyday. The exercise we used was building tacos with ingredients that require pollination. Then we removed them to show what would be left without pollinators providing their ecological services.

These are the students that were present at he pollinator field day in Mills County.

Outreach & Education	Amount
Presentations & Articles Delivered	8

Quarter Highlight — WRE, EWP, WRP in Fremont County

Photo Credit: Jon Reese

Photo Credit: Jon Reese

The pictures above feature a wetland complex along the Missouri river that has used many wetland programs over the last 15– 20 years and is currently providing flood relief this year. The top picture is a great example of the program providing the needed relief from the level set back in 2012. A lot of the wet area inside the levees are using wetland programs to help migrate the impacts of the flood waters. These programs allowed landowners to take low, wet areas out of production, and in turn, improve his overall profitability on his operation. This project was a win-win for the landowner, wildlife, soil health and water quality.

Training/Conference Type	Description
WRE Training	This NRCS training was a refresher for conservation planners about how to use the WRE planning tools.
CRP Training	This training allowed staff to understand the new processes and worksheets that were released for the current CRP sign up.
Pheasants Forever Regional meeting	This meeting was a great opportunity to learn about new programs and discuss current programs and the implementation of common practices such as cover crops and native plantings.

If anyone wishes to discuss habitat projects or knows others who are interested; please contact me at the information below.

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