

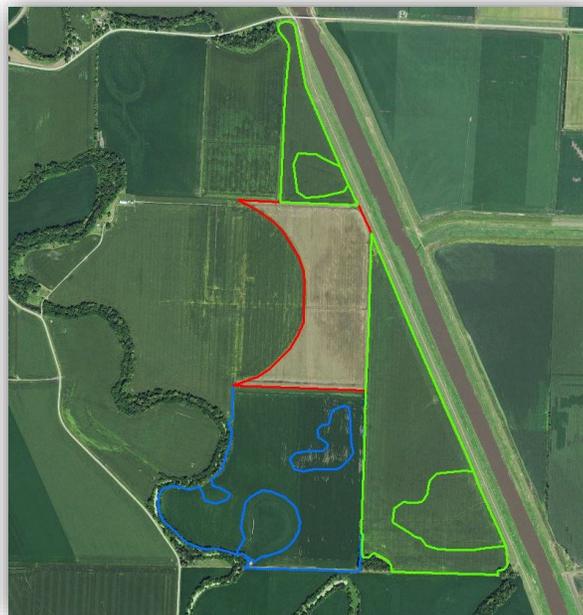
Water & Wildlife Win

There may be no time in Iowa’s long history that water quality has been a primary focal point for so many industries, agencies, and members of the public. Mutual interests of diverse groups have driven the conversation towards conservation efforts to improve water quality. Through the Conservation Reserve Program producers can remove marginal ground from production eliminating nutrient inputs on those acres.

Intensive agricultural production is prominent in close proximity to major drainage systems and rivers exiting towards the Missouri River in Western Iowa, and conservation efforts here are crucial. Producers in these vulnerable areas are taking steps to improve water quality through signing up for CRP. The Farmable Wetlands Program (FWP) experienced huge demand among farmers with the wettest ground that often requires replanting due to flooding. This quarter I was able to help producers enroll 557.72 acres of FWP over the last three months.

Not only do these programs help improve water quality, but they provide incredibly valuable habitat to wildlife. Working with two separate landowners who were already bordered by 70 acres of CRP, the two signed up for an additional 284 acres of FWP. This new complex totaling 354 acres of restored wetlands contains a former oxbow of the Little Sioux River and is adjacent to a Bald Eagle’s nest.

Practice	Total Acres
CP1—HELI	43.6
CP2—HELI	138.14
CP8A—Grass Waterway	2.55
CP9—Shallow Water Areas for Wildlife	2.18
CP15A—Contour Grass Strips	2.57
CP21—Filter Strips	95.21
CP23—Wetland Restoration	146.06
CP27—Farmable Wetland Program Cropped Wetland	120.42
CP28—Farmable Wetland Program— Buffer	437.3
CP33—Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds	54.28
CP42—Pollinator Habitat	422.38
Total	1464.69



← 33.38 Acres in the Loess Hills



Local SWCDs

Thank you to all our partners!

Mixing It Up

The best mixes are designed by people who truly understand how individual species fulfill niches, and how that presents itself in a local context. Pheasants Forever Farm Bill Biologists do just that, identifying and designing mixes that meet the needs of landowners while providing the greatest ecological benefit. Ensuring mixes fit the specific needs of each site is one of the most important steps to ensure a landowner is successful with their CRP. A landowner's success with conservation programs like CRP may ultimately determine how likely they are to pursue future technical assistance through the USDA. Pheasants Forever biologists continue to help navigate the complexities of seed mixes, reducing barriers and bringing producers firmly into the fold of conservation.



Diverse seedings maximize benefits for soil, water, and wildlife

Left: CP42 pollinator habitat with high diversity Right: Silver Spotted Skipper nectars on Pitcher Sage

When CRP debuted in the mid-80's conventional wisdom favored planting single species and low diversity seed mixes. As time has gone on and our understanding of prairie reconstruction and grassland ecology has grown immensely through research as well as trial and error. Today's prairie practitioners highlight the underlying importance of using high diversity seed mixes to maximize conservation benefits.

Designing and planting diverse seed mixes allows us to address resource concerns and ecological needs to the fullest extent. Having a high diversity of both plant and insect communities provides maximized habitat and nutritional resources to birds and other wildlife. Seedings that feature many species have increased tolerance to extreme weather conditions, both drought and excessive rainfall while also providing the most benefits to the soil health and water quality. Like adding more instruments to a symphony to create a richer sound, increasing the number of species in a seed mix holistically addresses ecological needs and creates richer communities.



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Loess Hills Alliance Report



Nicholas Salick — Harrison, Monona, & Pottawattamie Counties July - September 2016

By the Numbers

Completed 45 projects for
1464+ acres this quarter!

Customer Interactions

Interaction Type	FY17 Qtr. 1	In the Loess Hills
Phone call or email	105	25
Meeting (walk-in)	29	4
Meeting (scheduled)	7	3
Site visit with landowner	12	4
Site visit without landowner	17	3
Total	170	39

Outreach

Outreach Effort	Total Delivered	Delivered in Loess Hills
Partner Meetings	10	3
Habitat Proposals	14	5



David Sutherland (University Nebraska Omaha) teaches the group diagnostic characteristics of native flora species.

Photo Credit: Michelle Biodrowski



A state threatened Blanding's Turtle found in Harrison County near wetlands.

Photo (and finding) credit: Nicholas Salick

Trainings

Training Type	Outcomes
Threatened & Endangered Species Training	Meeting and exceeding agency standards for incorporating T&E species' needs into management activities and the conservation planning process.
ISU Palmer Amaranth Training	Palmer Amaranth continues to be an emerging nuisance within the state of Iowa. We focused on identifying the plants, minimizing exposure, and management activities that reduce prevalence.
Platte River Prairie Field Days	Hosted by The Nature Conservancy, this workshop focused on prairie restoration techniques, grass-land ecology, and identification of native species

Nicholas Salick
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist
Harrison, Monona, & Pottawattamie counties

2710 IA-127
Logan, IA 51546

(262) 352-2851
nsalick@pheasantsforever.org