

### Developing Quality Wildlife Habitat in SW Iowa

This quarter, I have had the pleasure of meeting with many landowners throughout the four-county area. Many of these landowners have shown a special interest in creating more suitable wildlife habitat and enhancing their existing CRP prior to re-enrolling next year. One specific landowner in Fremont County has close to an entire farm in CRP and was looking to strengthen all acres for wildlife. This landowner is passionate about pheasant and bobwhite quail habitat and was more than willing to put in the effort and funding necessary to improve his CRP. Throughout the process of working with this landowner, we decided on a location for a food plot and discussed prescribed burning on the existing CRP acres, with a focus on the pollinator seeding in order to promote plant diversity.

Not only have I been working with landowners on bettering their current habitat, I have also had the opportunity to work with many others who are just starting to show interest in wildlife habitat. Throughout the General CRP signup period, which ran from February 27 to April 7, our offices experienced an increase in foot traffic. Landowners have been stopping in to discuss their options for CRP and this has given me the opportunity to talk about CRP SAFE practices. The SAFE (State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement) programs are geared toward creating habitat blocks that meet specific needs for wildlife. In Southwest Iowa, the SAFE practices we work with are Pheasant Recovery, Quail, and Gaining Ground. I have mostly worked with the Gaining Ground practice, which provides great habitat for both pheasants and quail by committing acres to two different cover types and contains the option of establishing extra practices like food plots or shrub plantings to further enhance the habitat block. This practice is great for increasing wildlife habitat and it has been incredible to be a part of getting it on the ground.

I appreciate the support and help from everyone as I have been learning the ropes and establishing myself as a resource for landowners. I couldn't do it alone!

#### Quarterly Achievements

- 16 Landowner Contacts (+12 In-Field)
- 52 Site Visits
- 1 Conservation Plan
- 2 Articles Written
- 1 Outreach Event



Large block of well-managed native CRP with a beautiful view of the Loess hills, seen while out on a status review site visit

**Thank you so much for your support! Without this partnership, I wouldn't be able to provide assistance to landowners and positively impact conservation in Iowa!**

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