

Precision Agriculture and Conservation

These last three months were a very busy and very productive season of working with Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contracts, landowner meetings, conducting outreach, and getting more acres of habitat on the ground! I had opportunities to work with Pheasants Forever’s Precision Agriculture and Conservation Specialist (PACS), and in partnership, we successfully created two new wildlife CRP contracts. The PACS position provides an extremely valuable approach to implementing conservation on crop ground. Part of their role is to analyze yield data to define the areas in a field that are less productive or less profitable so that those acres can be put into conservation. Ultimately, this helps to improve the farmer’s bottom line and may even help to heal poor and unproductive soils. In my two projects with the PACS this quarter, we worked with farmers in Mills and Fremont counties to enroll parts of their ground into State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) CRP practices. Both sites are near the Missouri River bottom, where it is common to have poor soils with high sand content. Using soil-specific seed mixes, these acres will turn into large blocks of wildlife habitat along the Missouri River, where there is already an abundance of existing



Wet and sandy area in a field planted to soybeans that was assessed with precision agriculture to evaluate productivity over many years and determine whether CRP was an appropriate alternative to row crop.

public land managed for wildlife. This is an excellent example of how working with partners to achieve shared goals makes us far more productive. The PACS is a great partner for us to use as a resource for increasing the implementation of wildlife habitat acres and other conservation practices. The knowledge and tools that they bring to the table can make a huge difference in the way that farmers and landowners view how conservation practices can fit into their operations,

Quarterly Achievements

- 84 Landowner Contacts
- 34 Site Visits
- 7 Habitat Proposals and Management Plans
- 13 Conservation Plans
- 4 Field Days

especially when it can be paired with federal or state funding assistance. I expect that precision agriculture will only grow as a tool for conservation as we look for more optimal ways to “farm the best, conserve the rest”!

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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