

Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist Quarterly Partners Report



Tabitha Panas — Pottawattamie, Harrison, and Shelby County

January - March 2023

Spring is in the air and folks are busy planning for the next growing season. I have been working with farmers who will not only be planting crops but also planting habitat in the Conservation Reserve Program in the upcoming months. The most popular CRP practices I am seeing are native seeding filter strips and other upland bird habitat practices that are in Continuous CRP.

We have also been busy working on our applications received from the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). The first round of applications has been selected and projects are beginning. I am working with landowners on brush management, prescribed fire, and native seedings. You may have noticed my landowner contacts were way up this quarter, and I credit that all on the weather beginning to warm up and our customers getting eager to get conservation on the ground.

Spring is also a big time for prescribed fire. While prescribed burns can be conducted at any time of the year, spring is a popular time due to the benefits to grasslands. Burning has been more difficult the past couple of years due to drought, and Iowa has experienced wildfires that we are not used to. While we are seeing some promising rainfall, many land managers still believe the effects of the drought will be felt this year and prescribed fire practitioners should proceed with extra caution.



Photo taken March 4th at the 3rd annual Pollinator Palooza held at the Council Bluffs Library. Laura Monson, SWCD Education Coordinator, and I held a habitat table complete with a butterfly craft and a monarch selfie station that ended up making a debut on the local news. Over 700 participants came through the event and I was able to connect with a handful of landowners interested in habitat, one of which has since applied for pollinator habitat through EQIP.

Quarterly Achievements

- 146 Landowner Contacts
- 6 Outreach Delivered
- 18 Site Visits w Landowner
- 4 Habitat Proposals
- 5 Wildlife Plans
- 2 Burn Plans
- 5 Conservation Plans
- 5 Status Reviews
- 2 Seed Plan Reviews

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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