

# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist Quarterly Partners Report



**Tabitha Panas — Pottawattamie, Harrison, and Shelby County**

**July—September 2022**

This past quarter I have been working with landowners signing up for continuous CRP, helping to train new staff, writing wildlife plans, and working to re-enroll acres into the Iowa Habitat and Access Program, but a large part of my workload has been spent on EQIP related projects. Pottawattamie county especially has had a large number of EQIP applications for wildlife practices at around a dozen. I have been meeting with these landowners to determine where the program may be able to help. The majority of these landowners are interested in either pollinator habitat, brush management, or both. The recent attention given to the monarch has folks interested in helping our declining invertebrates and their associated grassland habitat.

Brush management is an important practice in the Loess Hills to help achieve a variety of habitat goals and it can look like a number of practices. It could be timber stand improvement or thinning the understory to allow sunlight to the forest floor for oak species that are not regenerating. It can be clearing cedars for prairie restoration or pasture enhancement. It can be treating invasive species like tree of heaven or black locust, two species that colonize and form dense monocultures. I have been working closely with our DNR Forester to assist landowners with some of these practices.



*Clockwise from top left— dense cedar stand forms a monoculture on previous pasture, old bur oak with invasive honeysuckle shrub crowding the base and preventing acorns from germinating, native dotted blazingstar (Liatris punctata) seen for the first time after EQIP brush management on cedar and dogwood, a dense stand of the invasive tree of heaven (Ailanthus altissima) that was so expansive the forester spotted it on aerial imagery.*

## Quarterly Achievements

- 98 Landowner Contacts
- 7 Wildlife Plans
- 7 Eligibility Checks
- 22 Site Visits w Landowner
- 7 Habitat Proposals
- 5 Status 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!**

### **Tabitha Panas**

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