

Planning for Growth and Open Space Conservation

This webinar series is sponsored by:
USDA Forest Service
State and Private Forestry - Cooperative Forestry

Organized by
Rick Pringle, Susan Stein, Sara Comas, Susan Guynn (Clemson University)
and the
Forest Service National Open Space Conservation Group



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Streamed Through
the Computer

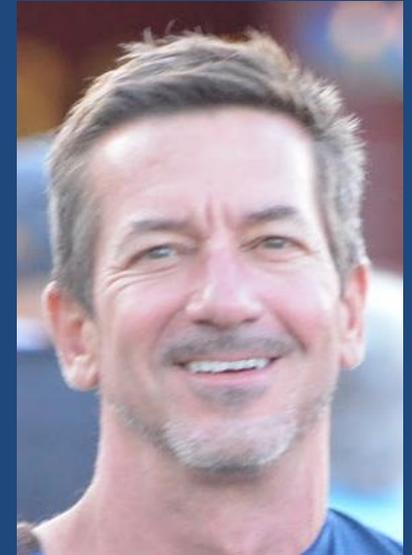
Session #9: Private Land Conservation Programs From the Farm Bill and Other Sources



Bruce Wight
*National Forester
Natural Resources
Conservation Service*



Katina Hanson
*Planning and Analysis Branch Chief,
Conservation and Environmental
Programs Division
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Karl Dalla Rosa
*Forest Stewardship
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US Forest Service*

Logistics – Q&A

- **Continuing Education Credits**
 - Attend entire presentation
- **Questions for speakers – chat pod**
- **Technical difficulties – chat pod or email Susan Guynn: SGUYNN@clemson.edu**

Getting to Know You!

Conservation Programs for Private Forest Owners



Bruce Wight
National Forester

USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service
Washington, DC

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Conservation Programs for Private Forest Owners

December 2012

Bruce Wight
National Forester
USDA-NRCS

For more
information:
www.nrcs.usda.gov
Click on "Programs"





Background

- NRCS works with landowners through conservation planning and assistance designed to benefit the soil, water, air, plants, and animals that result in productive lands and healthy ecosystems. This includes both:
 - Technical Assistance and,
 - Financial Assistance



Conservation Technical Assistance

Helping Landowners

- Maintain and improve private lands and their management
- Protect and improve water quality and quantity
- Develop and apply sustainable management systems
- Maintain and improve wildlife and fish habitat
- Explore opportunities to diversify their operations

Helping the Land

- Resource assessment
- Conservation practice design
- Resource monitoring
- Follow-up of installed practices



Conservation Financial Assistance

Helping Private Forest Landowners

- The 2008 Farm Bill featured many opportunities for non-industrial private forest (NIPF) owners.
- NRCS and our partners provide assistance to NIPF owners to apply conservation practices.

Helping Improve Forestland

- Restore forest ecosystems (e.g., thinning & planting)
- Improve water quality
- Reduce wildfire risks
- Develop, protect and enhance wildlife habitat
- Reduce noxious and invasive plants



Finding Conservation Financial Assistance

Working Lands Conservation



- Environmental Quality Incentives
- Wildlife Habitat Incentive
- Conservation Stewardship

Conservation Easements



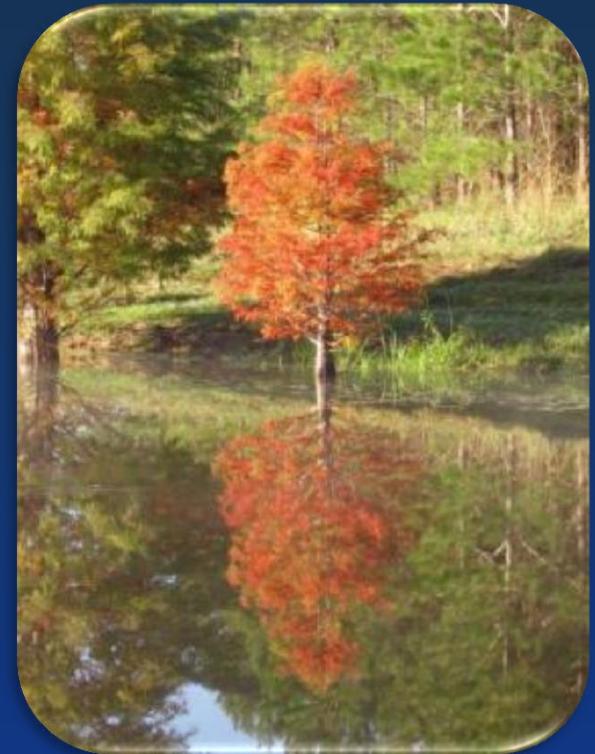
- Wetland Reserve
- Healthy Forest Reserve
- Farm and Ranchland Protection

For more information: www.nrcs.usda.gov Click on "Programs"

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Purpose: promote agricultural production, **forest management**, and environmental quality as compatible goals

- Assistance for a wide range of forestry-related conservation practices
- Applications accepted throughout the year
- Participants enter into a contract to implement one or more practices



Wildlife Incentive Program (WHIP)

Purpose: develop and improve wildlife habitat



- Addresses natural resource concerns
- Assistance to develop wildlife habitat, including T&E species.
- Land Eligibility: private ag. land, NIPF, Tribal land
- National and State level - can focus program on special areas, habitats, species

WHIP Focus: Working Lands for Wildlife

- Targets species whose decline can be reversed and will benefit other species with similar habitat needs
- Seven species identified through a collaborative process with partners
- Selection criteria:
 - Conservation on private land can influence species' outcomes
 - Species' needs are compatible with agricultural practices and rural land management
 - Viable core habitat areas can be protected and habitat recovery opportunities exist
 - Partnership opportunities exist
 - Endangered Species Act tools are in place to provide regulatory certainty
 - Habitat improvements benefit other species



Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

Purpose: encourages producers to increase stewardship

- Additional conservation activities and to maintain, improve, manage existing activities
- EQIP may be better option for some NIPF owners with significant resource concerns.
- Applicants must:
 - Meet the “stewardship threshold” for at least one resource concern and;
 - Address one additional priority resource concern



Finding Conservation Financial Assistance

Conservation Easements



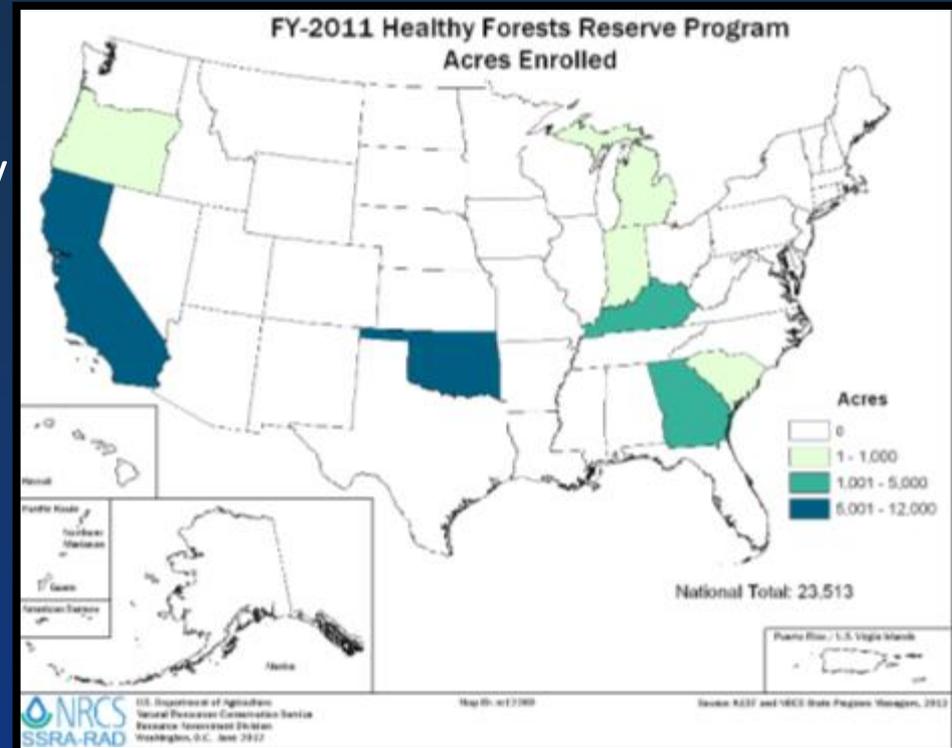
- Healthy Forest Reserve
- Wetland Reserve
- Farm and Ranchland Protection

Under the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, authority to enroll new participants or enter new contracts for several conservation programs expired on September 30, 2012, including **the Healthy Forest Reserve Program (HFRP), and the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP).**

Healthy Forest Reserve Program (HFRP)

Purpose: restore and enhance forest ecosystems

- Easements, 30-year contracts, and 10-year cost share agreements:
 - Promote recovery of T&E species
 - Improve plant and animal diversity
 - Enhance carbon sequestration
- All private forest lands potentially eligible



Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)

Purpose: restore and protect wetlands

- Permanent or 30-year easements, 30-year contracts (Tribal lands only), restoration cost-share agreements
- Eligible lands include floodplain forests
- Governments not eligible
- Ownership change within 7 years – not eligible



Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)

Purpose: Help farmers and ranchers preserve their agricultural land

- Matching funds to “eligible entities” to purchase conservation easements
- Forest land is eligible for inclusion



NRCS Conservation Programs Questions?

For more information:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov> - **Click on Programs**

Contact:

Donna Perla, Acting Director Financial Assistance Programs, donna.perla@wdc.usda.gov

Mike Hubbs, Acting Director Easement Programs, mike.hubbs@wdc.usda.gov

Melvin Womack, Director Conservation Technical Assistance,
melvin.womack@wdc.usda.gov



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Farm Service Agency Conservation Programs

Katina D. Hanson

Planning and Analysis Branch Chief

Conservation and Environmental Programs Division

December 12, 2012



Relevant Programs

- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
- Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)
- Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP)
- Grassroots Source Water Protection Program (GSWPP)
- Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program (VPA-HIP)
- Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) – joint with NRCS
- Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP)

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

- A voluntary program for eligible landowners to receive annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish resource conserving covers on eligible cropland and marginal pastureland

| General Signup | Continuous CRP |
|---|--|
| enrollment through periodic competitive signups | environmentally desirable land devoted to certain conservation practices may be enrolled at any time |

Conservation Reserve Program: Continuous Signup

- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
- Farmable Wetlands Program (FWP)
- State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE)
- Highly Erodible Lands Initiative (HELI)

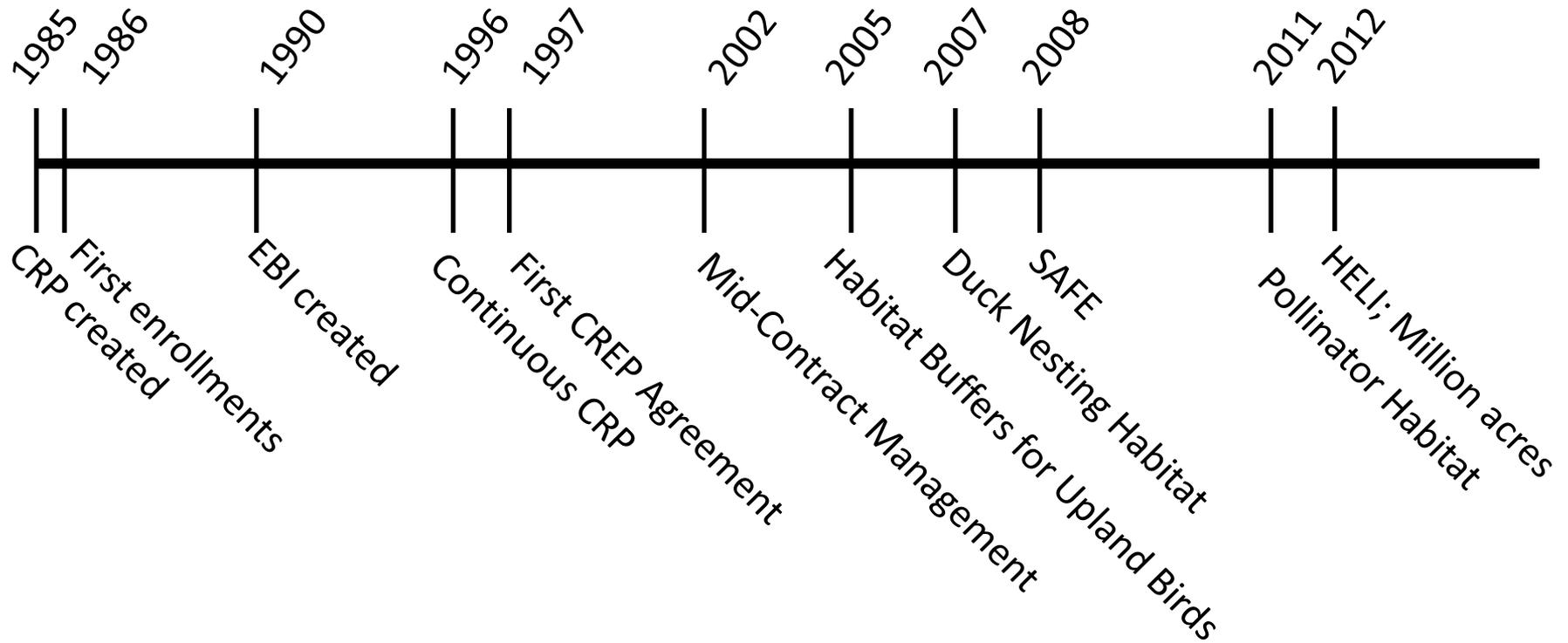


Conservation Reserve Program: Continuous Signup (Continued)

- Targeted Practices
 - Wetland Restoration
 - Duck Nesting Habitat
 - Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds
 - Pollinator Habitat
 - Longleaf Pine



Evolution of CRP Over Time



Conservation Reserve Program: General Signup Today

- Current enrollment: About 21.5 million acres
- Signup 43 (March 12 – April 13, 2012):
 - Received 48,000 offers on >4.5 million acres
 - 3.9 million acceptable acres
 - Minimum acceptable EBI score of 209
 - Average rental rate per acre = \$51

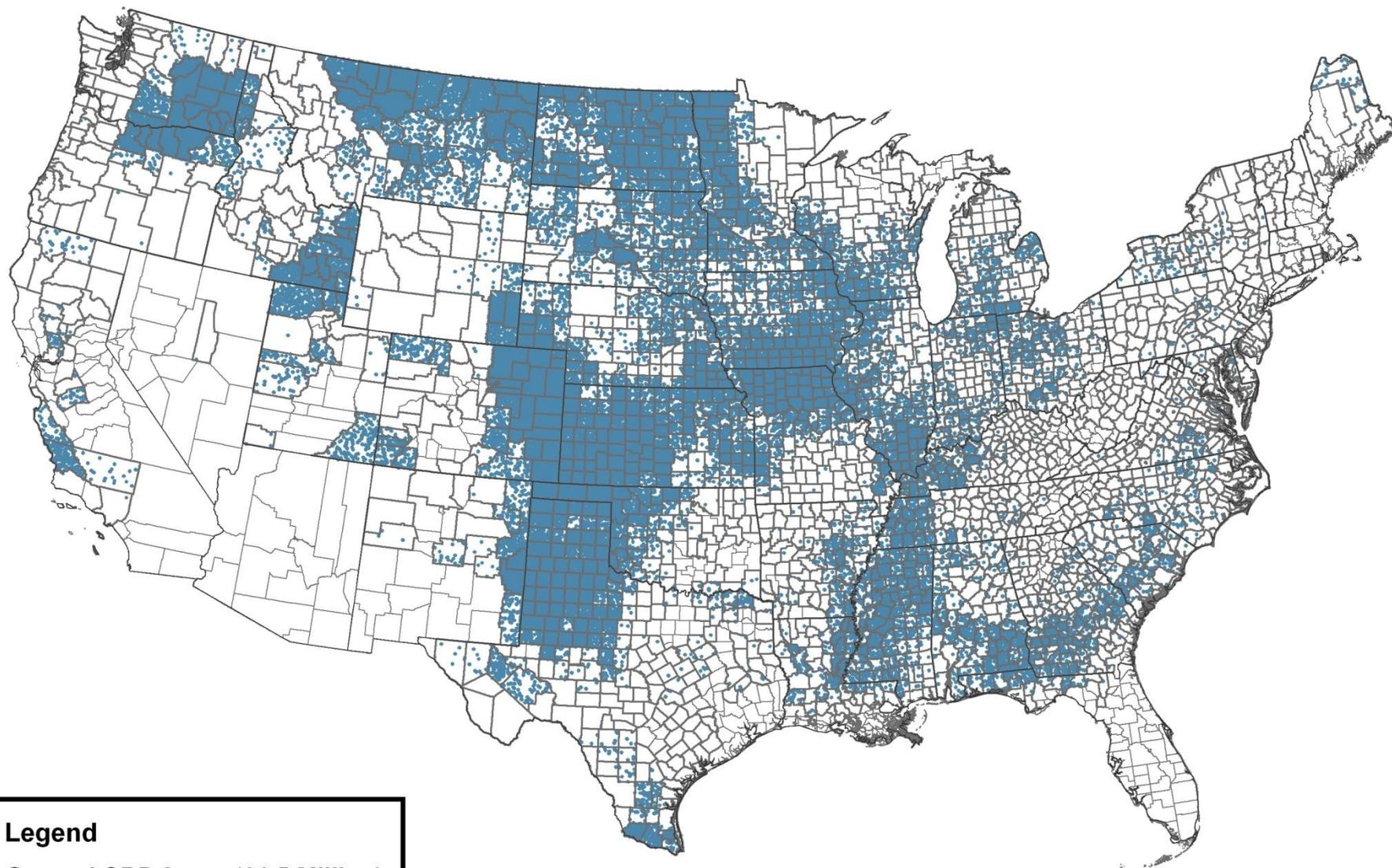


Conservation Reserve Program: Continuous Signup Today

- Current continuous CRP enrollment: Approximately 5.5 million acres

| | Approximate Acreage |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| CREP | 1.3 million |
| FWP | 340,000 |
| SAFE | 700,000 |
| HELI | 40,000 |
| Targeted Wetland Practices | 720,000 |
| Upland bird habitat buffers | 240,000 |
| Longleaf pine plantings | 120,000 |
| Other Continuous Practices | 2.0 million |

CRP General Signup



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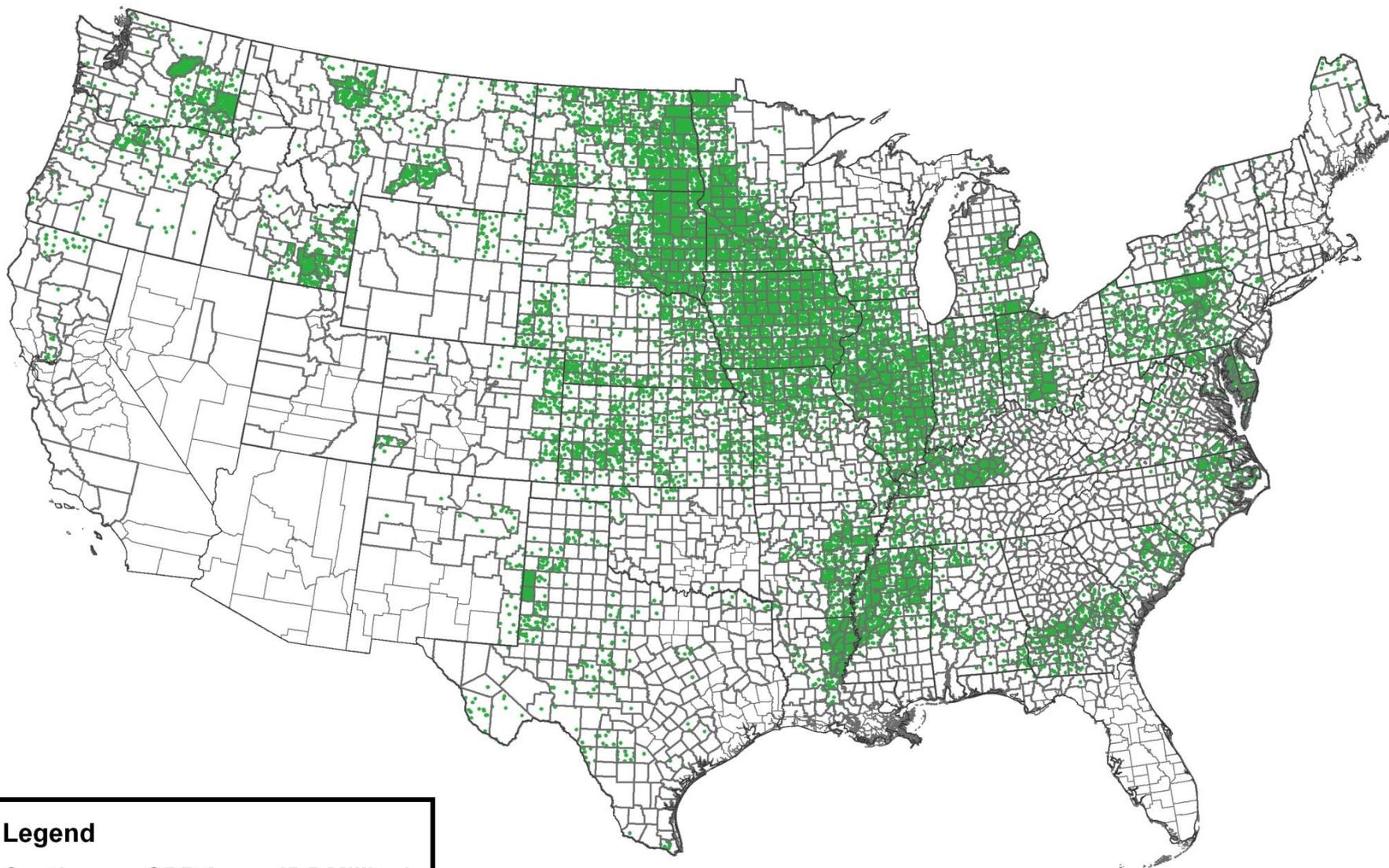
General CRP Acres (21.5 Million)

 1 Dot = 250

Note: Data as of October 2012

0 80 160 320 480 640 Miles

CRP Continuous Signup



Legend

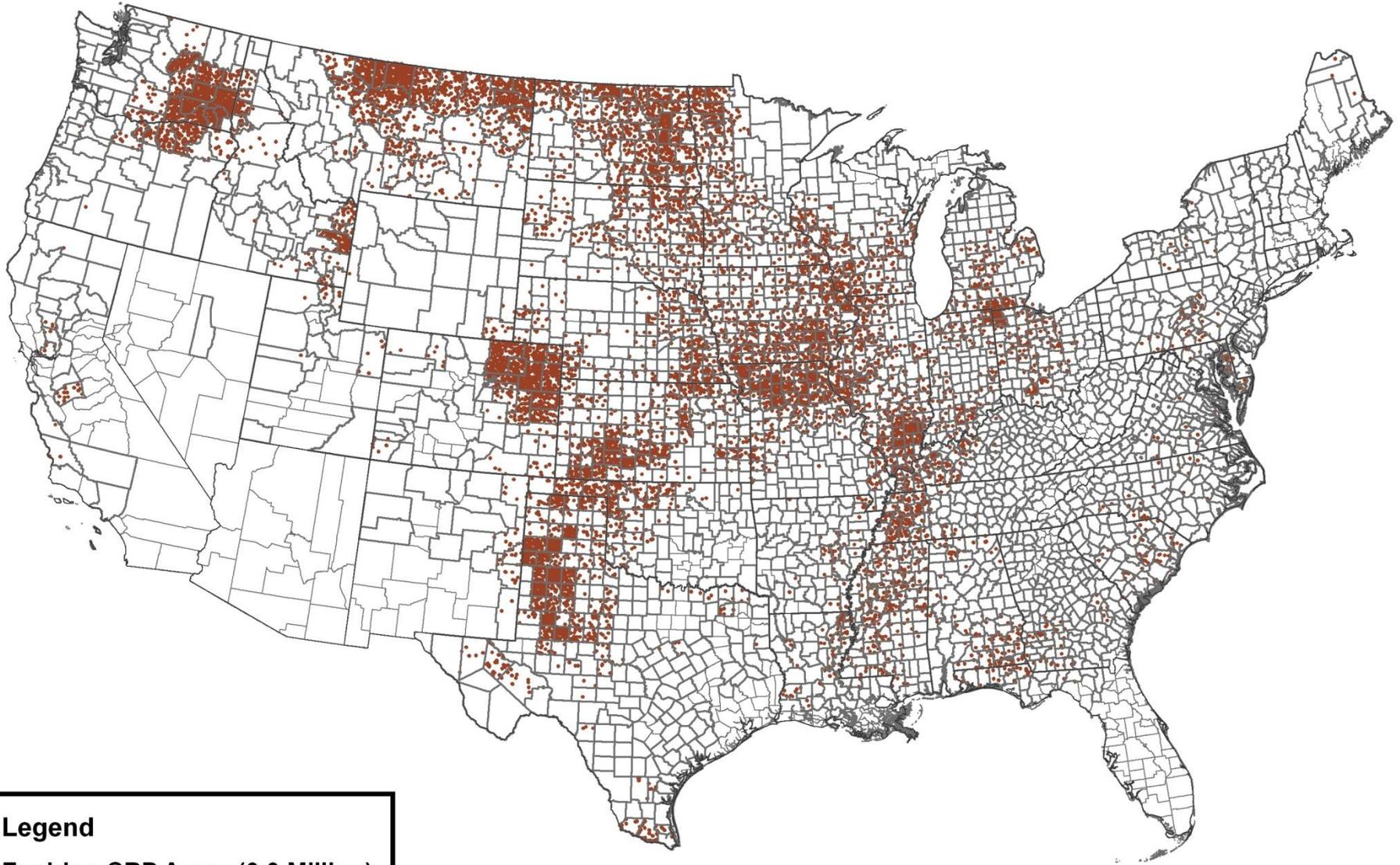
Continuous CRP Acres (5.5 Million)

 1 Dot = 250

Note: Data as of October 2012

0 80 160 320 480 640 Miles

FY 2013 Expiring CRP



Legend

Expiring CRP Acres (3.3 Million)

1 Dot = 250

Note: Data as of October 2012

0 80 160 320 480 640 Miles

Trends in Enrollments

Conservation covers established through CRP are approximately 90% grass and 10% trees

- Grass plantings have been trending toward native grass
- Tree plantings have been trending toward hardwood riparian buffers and longleaf pine restoration
- CRP enrollment is becoming more targeted over time



CRP Soil and Water Quality Benefits

- CRP protects soil productivity by establishing conservation covers on fragile cropland to reduce sheet, rill and wind erosion.
- CRP reduces the nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment leaving a field in runoff and percolate.



CRP Wildlife Benefits

- Since 1985, CRP has restored >2 million acres of wetlands
- Studies have shown that each year CRP provides habitat producing an estimated 2 million additional ducks in the Prairie Pothole Region

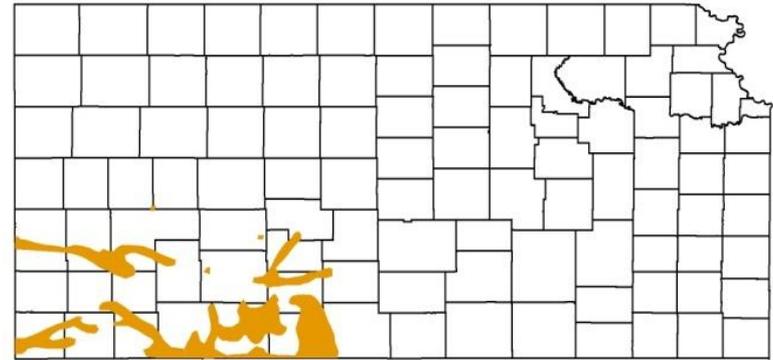


CRP Wildlife Benefits: KS Lesser Prairie Chicken (LEPC)

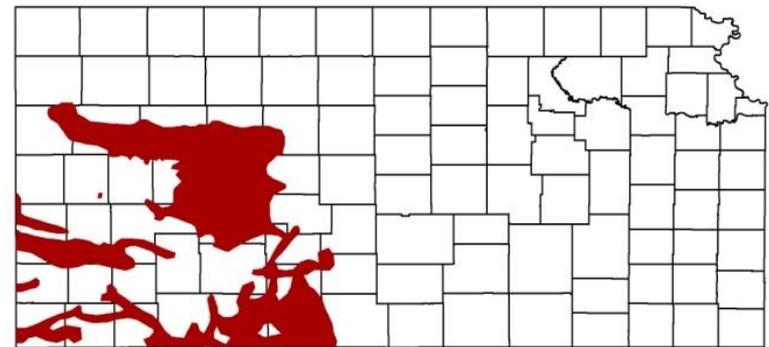
- Early General CRP plantings in Kansas were native grasses benefitting LEPC
- LEPC in Kansas have expanded their range in large part because of habitat created by CRP



KS LEPC Range Pre-CRP



KS LEPC Range Today



Direct Economic Benefits of CRP

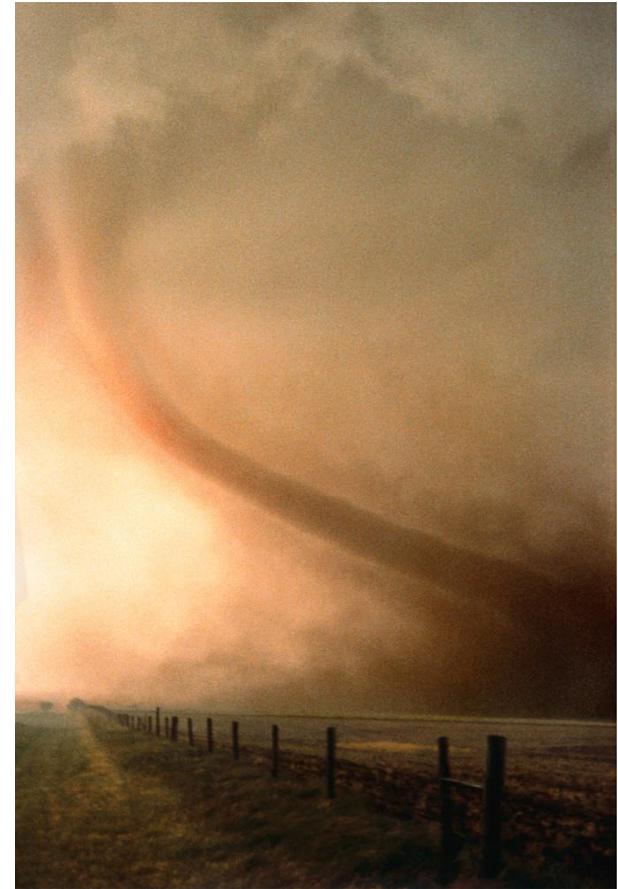
- Improved wildlife habitat through CRP has resulted in a direct increase in economic activity in rural areas through hunting and other recreational uses
- It is also estimated that over 50% of CRP enrollees allow recreational access to at least some portion of their CRP land



Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)

- Emergency funding and technical assistance for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters
- Also provides funding to carry out emergency water conservation measures in periods of severe drought
- Participants receive cost-share assistance of up to 75 percent of the cost to implement approved emergency conservation practices

*Limited Resource Producers receive up to 90%



Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP)

- Provides payments to eligible owners of nonindustrial private forest (NIPF) land in order to carry out emergency measures to restore land damaged by a natural disaster
- Tree cover must have been on the land immediately before the natural disaster
- Cost share may not exceed 75 percent of the cost of the emergency measures
- Funding availability is subject to appropriations



Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program (VPA-HIP)

- VPA-HIP provides block grants to states and tribal governments to encourage owners and operators of privately-held farm, ranch, and forest land to voluntarily make that land available for public access for wildlife-dependent recreation, including hunting or fishing
- Lands enrolled in VPA-HIP must provide appropriate wildlife habitat

Grassroots Source Water Protection Program (GSWPP)

- A joint project with FSA and the nonprofit National Rural Water Association (NRWA) designed to help prevent source water pollution in States through voluntary practices installed by producers and other landowners at the local level
- Uses onsite technical assistance capabilities of each State rural water association that operates a source water protection program in that State
- State rural water associations deliver assistance in developing source water protection plans within watersheds for the common goal of preventing the contamination of drinking water supplies

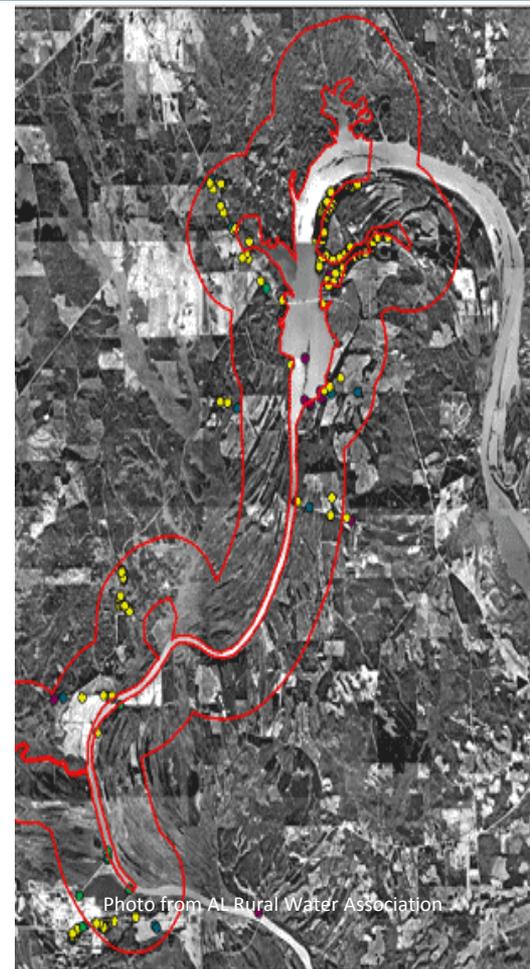


Photo from AL Rural Water Association

Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)

- Voluntary conservation program that emphasizes support for working grazing operations, enhancement of plant and animal biodiversity and protection of grassland under threat of conversion to other uses
- Participants voluntarily limit future development and cropping uses of the land while retaining the right to conduct common grazing practices and operations related to the production of forage and seeding



Photo from NJ NRCS

Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP)

- Provides financial assistance to owners and operators of agricultural and non-industrial private forest land who wish to establish, produce, and deliver biomass feedstocks
- Establishment and annual payments: for producers who enter into contracts to produce eligible biomass crops on contract acres within BCAP project areas

FSA Conservation Programs

National Office Contact Information

Farm Service Agency

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Conservation and Environmental Programs Division (CEPD)

1400 Independence Ave. SW, Room 4709-S, Stop 0513

Washington, D.C. 20250-0513

Phone: 202-720-6221

Fax: 202-720-4619

Website: www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation



Find Your Local FSA Office

Go to www.fsa.usda.gov and click State Offices

The screenshot shows the USDA FSA website interface. At the top, the USDA FSA logo is displayed alongside the text "United States Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency". Below the logo is a horizontal strip of images showing various agricultural scenes. A navigation menu is located below the images, with "State Offices" highlighted. On the left side, there is a search bar and a "Go" button, along with sections for "Browse by Audience" and "Browse by Subject". The main content area features a green header "State Offices" and a map of the United States with the text "Click On Your State" above it. The map is color-coded by region, and state abbreviations are labeled on each state. The text "Pacific Basin" is visible near Alaska. The bottom of the page shows the USDA and FSA logos.

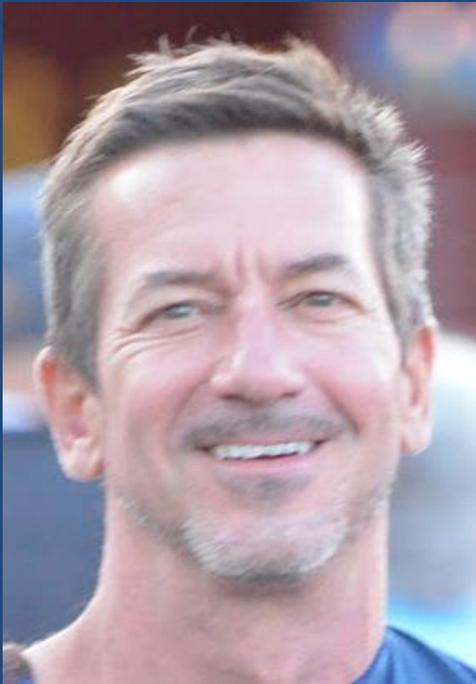


Questions?



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Karl Dalla Rosa

Forest Stewardship Program Director

US Forest Service



State and Private Forestry Cooperative Forestry Programs

*Working Across the Landscape with
States, Private Landowners and A
Diversity of Partners*

An "All Lands Approach"

December, 2012



Our Programs

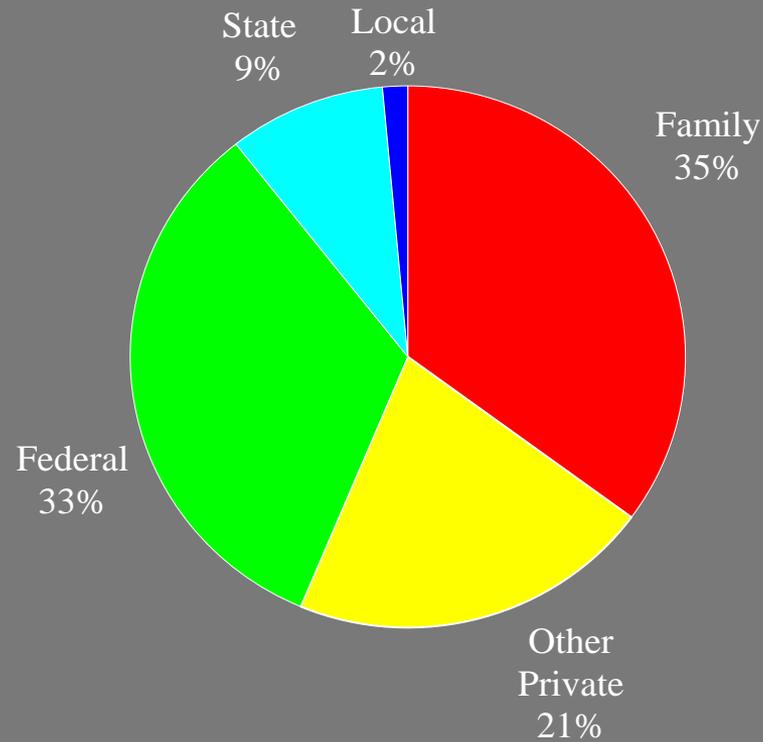
Forest Stewardship Program
Forest Legacy Program
Community Forestry Program
Urban and Community Forestry
Ecosystem Services



Forest Stewardship Program

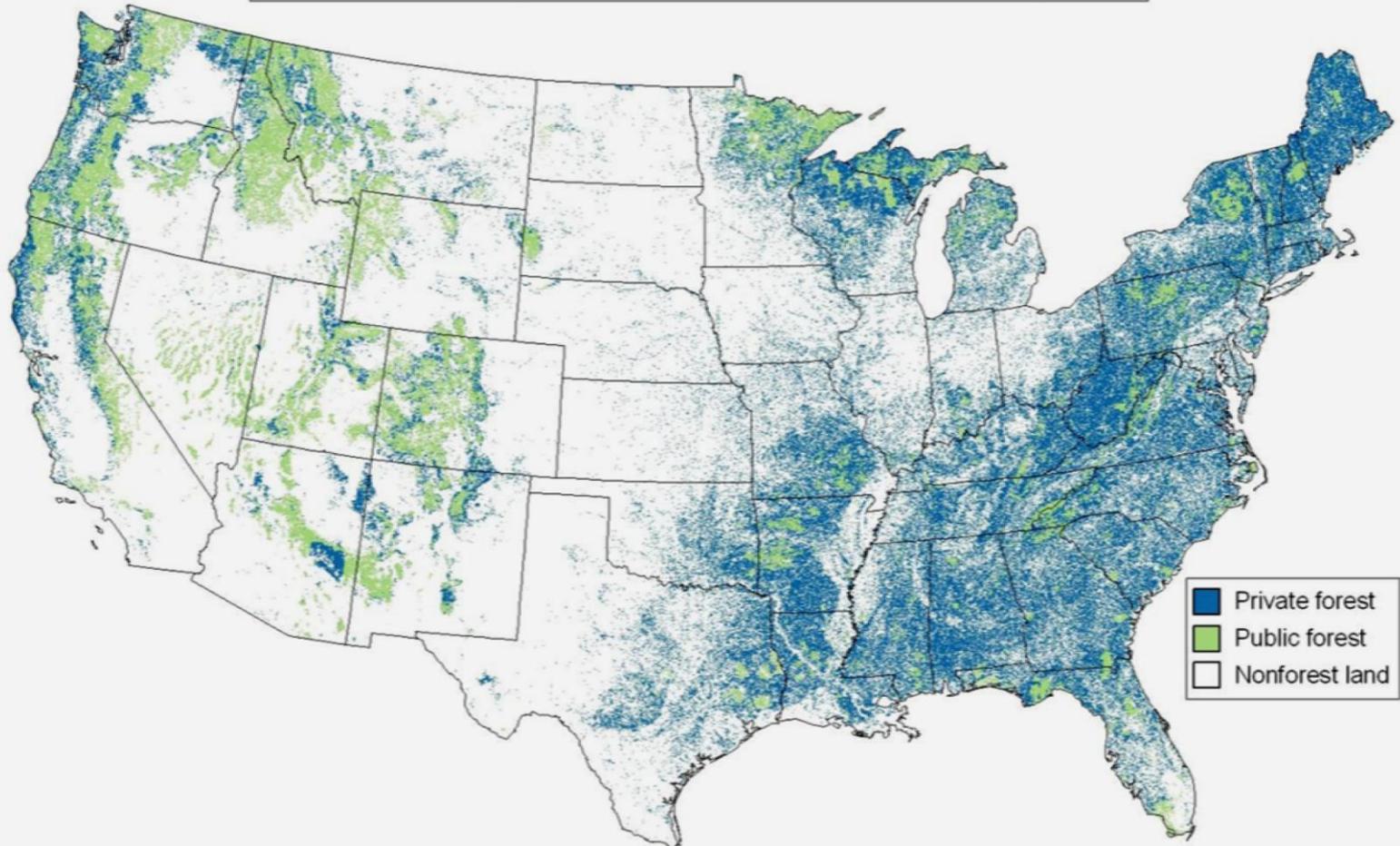
- Most extensive private forest landowner technical and planning assistance program in the U.S.
- Assistance delivery through state forest agencies and partners – NACD, ATFS, others.
- Forest Stewardship Plans, workshops, outreach, tools for landowners.
- 20 million acres currently under active Forest Stewardship Plans.

Forest Ownership in the U.S., 2006



U.S. Forest Service, National Woodland Owner Survey

Forest Ownership in the Coterminous United States, 2006



- Private forest
- Public forest
- Nonforest land

Data sources:

Forest area - USGS National Land Cover Database 2001
Ownership - CBI Protected Areas Database, Version 4.0
State and countries - ESRI Data & Maps 2006

Produced by:

USDA Forest Service, Northern Research Station
Forest Inventory and Analysis, Family Forest Research Center
Brett J. Butler (17-Oct-07)

Private Forest Landowners

(Data from National Woodland Owner Survey)

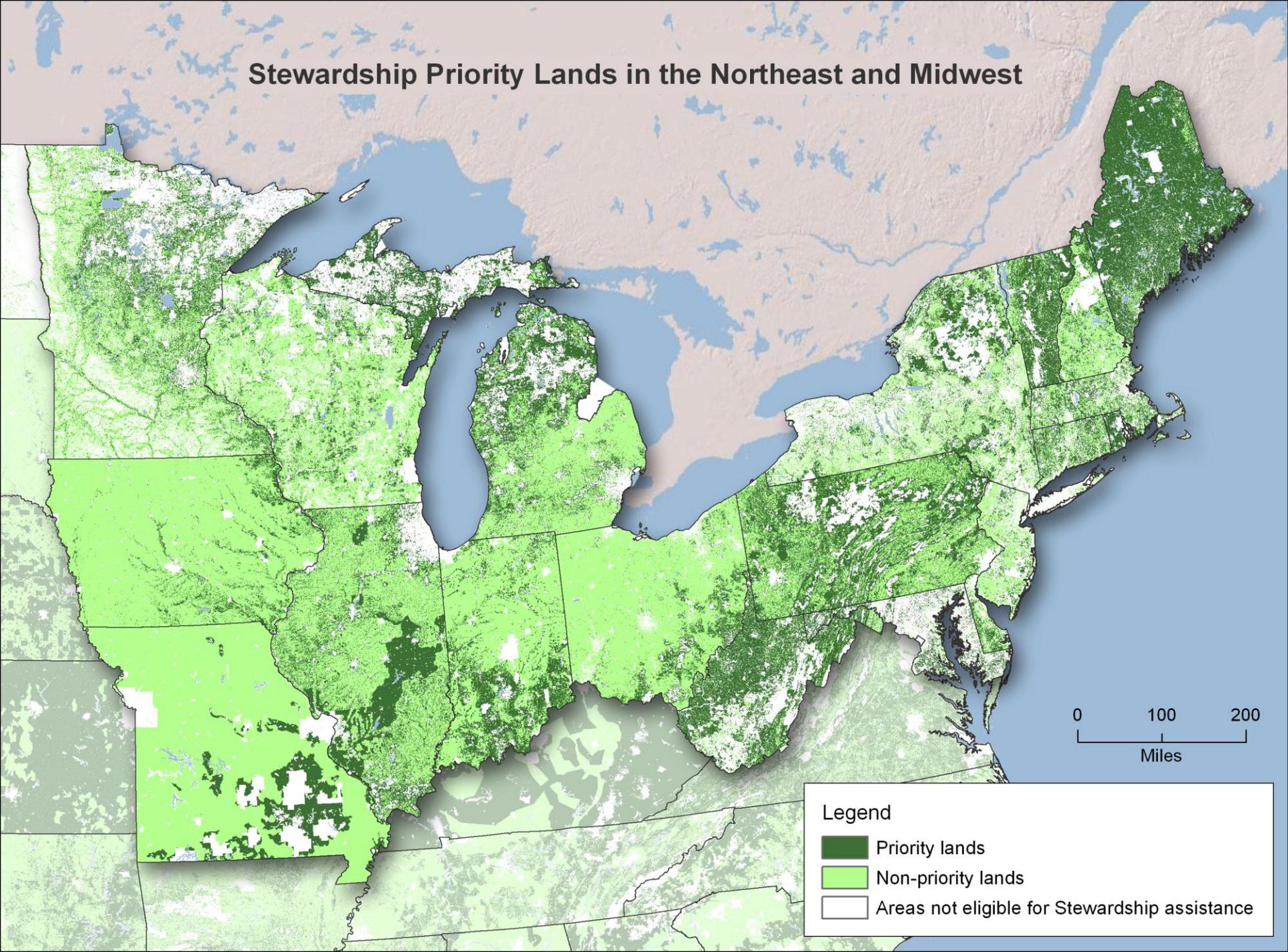
- More than half the forest land in the United States (423 million acres) is privately owned.
- 11.1 million owners of 1 acre or more of private forest land in the US.
- 92 percent (10 million owners) are classified as “family forest” owners.
- About 4.3 million owners with 10 acres or greater.
- One in 5 acres of family forest land is owned by someone who plans to sell or transfer some or all of their forest land in the next 5 years.

Recent Program Advances

- Priority landscapes
- SMART
- Measuring outcomes
- Gateway to incentives
- Landscape Stewardship
- State Forest Action Plans



Stewardship Priority Lands in the Northeast and Midwest



0 100 200
Miles

Legend

- Priority lands
- Non-priority lands
- Areas not eligible for Stewardship assistance



General Information

5/1/2007 5/1/2017
 Plan Start Next Site Visit 6/6/2012 Plan Expiry

| | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| ABC123 Plan ID | In Progress Status | New Plan Type |
| Howard County County | Sally Forester Preparer | Patrick Approver Approver |
| 274.25 GIS Acres | 240 Forested Acres | N/A In Priority Land |

Plan Goals and Objectives

The Jones' primary management objective is to balance wildlife habitat protection and enhancement with long term income generation. Both goals can be realized through several careful timber harvests designed to: 1) increase the health and vigor of the forest, 2) improve both tree species diversity and age class diversity, and 3) focus growth on more valuable timber species such as red oak. These harvests will result in more food for mammals and birds while protecting important nesting, perching and den trees. The income from the harvests can be

[Report](#)
[Submit](#)
[More Actions ▾](#)



Plan Details

- [General Details](#)
- [Footprint](#)
- [Certifications & Restrictions](#)
- [Location](#)
- [Property Resource Conditions](#)
- [Landscape-level Activities](#)
- [Property Boundary](#)

Forest Management Schedule ?

[Add Plan Activity](#)



Stand Details (showing 1 to 5 of 7 stands)

← Previous [Next](#) →

| Stand | Existing Conditions | Desired Conditions | Add Activity |
|-------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| A | Edit | Edit | + |
| B | Edit | Edit | + |
| F | Edit | Edit | + |
| C | Edit | Edit | + |
| D | Edit | Edit | + |

Lines/Points (1 to 2 of 2)

| Feature Name | Feature Type | Add Activity |
|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Trail 1 | Line | + |
| Hunting Shelter | Point | + |



Mormont Mountain

Sally Forester
Plan Preparer

5/8/2012
Created On

274.25
GIS Acres

[Add Activity](#)

Cancel

Draw

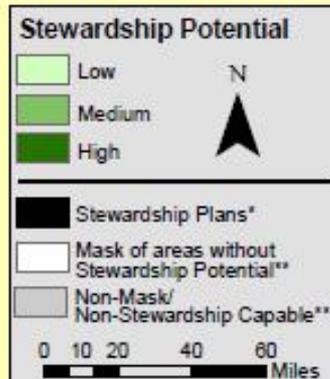
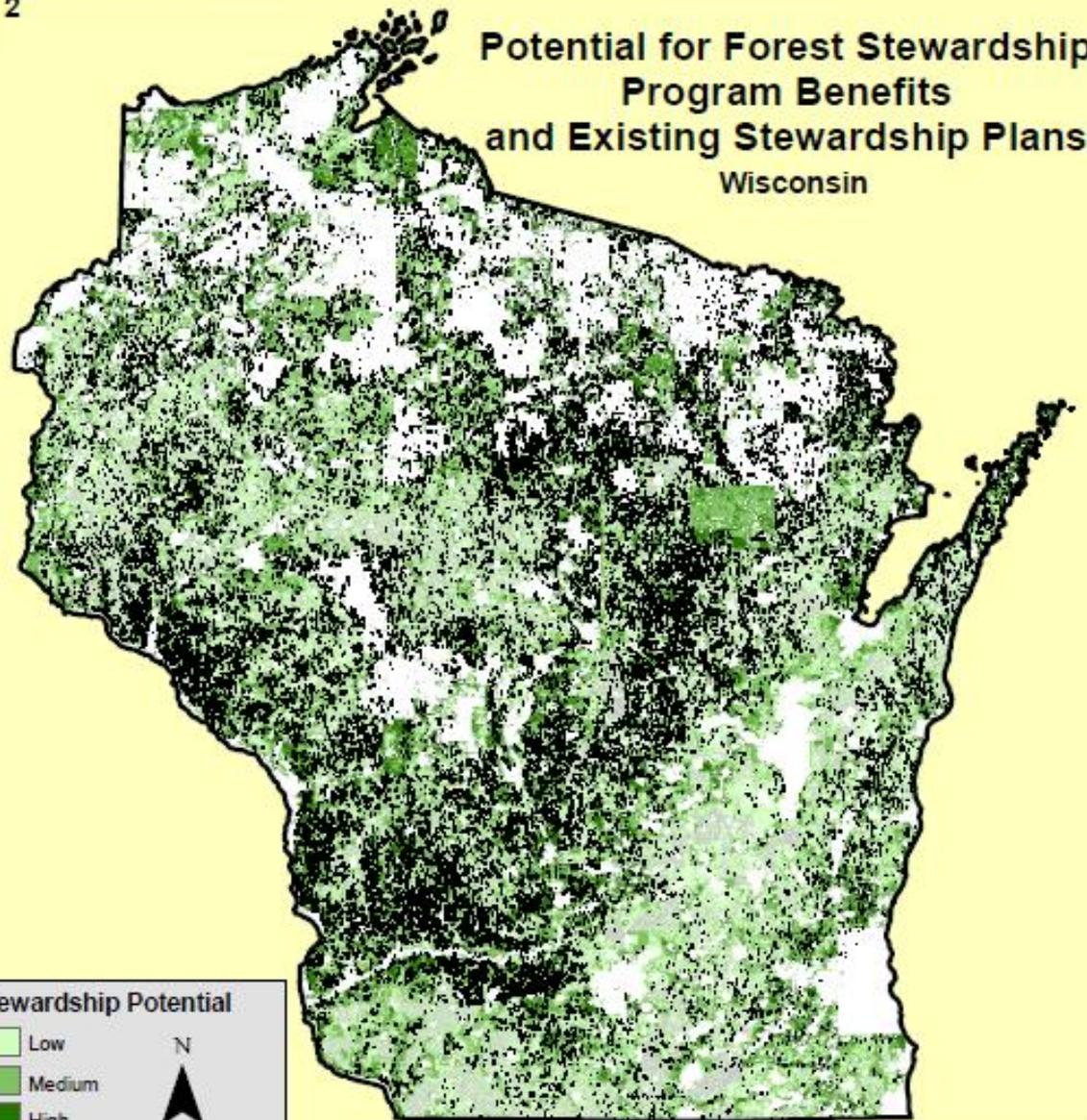
Save

Delete

Relating On-the-Ground Accomplishments to Priorities

Map 2

Potential for Forest Stewardship Program Benefits and Existing Stewardship Plans Wisconsin



| Stewardship Potential | Forest | | Non-forest | | Total | |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|-----------------------|------------|------------|
| | Acres | % of Total Forest | Acres | % of Total Non-Forest | Acres | % of Total |
| High | 3,268,627 | 30% | 822,218 | 7% | 4,090,845 | 18% |
| Medium | 5,091,209 | 50% | 4,582,644 | 35% | 10,073,853 | 42% |
| Low | 2,278,065 | 20% | 7,288,344 | 58% | 9,566,409 | 40% |
| Total | 11,337,901 | 100% | 12,503,206 | 100% | 23,841,107 | 100% |

Measuring Outcomes

- National Plan Monitoring Program
 - Started in 2008



- Performance-based Allocation
 - Priority Areas Benefited



Gateway to Assistance and Incentives

- EQIP
- State tax abatement programs
- Forest Certification – ATFS and FSC
- Offset Markets
- Ecosystem Services Markets
- Biomass Energy Production



Planning for Success

- 1 Select a project area
- 2 Engage the community
- 3 Draft the project roadmap
- 4 Secure community and financial resources
- 5 Support landowners and inform the public
- 6 Share your success



LANDSCAPE STEWARDSHIP

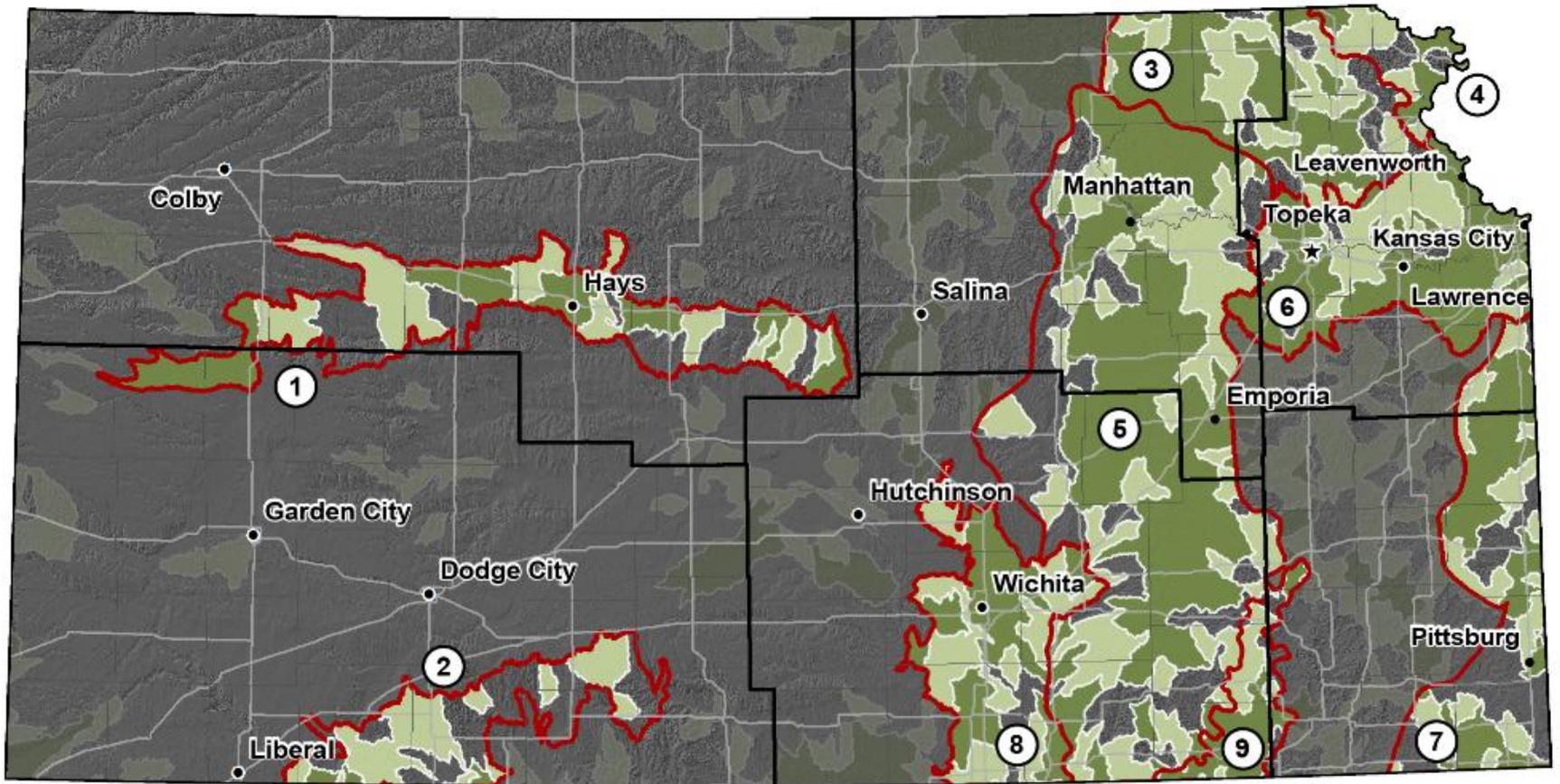


Increasing the

State Forest Action Plans

- 2008 Farm Bill – Amends Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act.
- SFAs replace Statewide Forest Stewardship Plans.
- All lands, landscape based, integrated program delivery.
- Focus on priority places and issues.
- Lots of variation state to state.

<http://www.forestactionplans.org/>



Priority Landscapes
 Moderate-High Priority
 High Priority

KFS Districts
 Counties
 Major Highways

• Cities
 ★ State Capital

0 25 50 100 mi



- ① Smoky Hill
- ② Cimarron Breaks
- ③ Loess and Glacial Drift Hills

- ④ Missouri River Corridor
- ⑤ Flint Hills
- ⑥ I-70 Metro Corridor

- ⑦ Wooded Plains
- ⑧ Greater Wichita & Southern Arkansas River
- ⑨ Cross Timbers



Forest Stewardship Program

<http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/fsp.shtml>

Helping Private Forest Landowners Develop Plans for the Sustainable Management of their Forest

National Association of State Foresters

<http://www.stateforesters.org/about/who-we-are>

Karl R. Dalla Rosa

Forest Stewardship Program Manager

kdallarosa@fs.fed.us

Questions and Answers

Ask questions through the chat pod

Session #10

Conservation Planning Tools for Land Use Planners and Natural Resource Professionals

Wednesday, January 30 at 2:00 pm Eastern

Sarah Reed – *Colorado State University and Wildlife
Conservation Society*

Ryan Scherzinger – *American Planning Association*

Rob Baldwin – *Clemson University*



Future Webinar Topics

- Many new topics being planned for 2013
 - An All Lands Approach to Ecosystem Services: Water Focus
 - Greening Grey Infrastructure Projects: Federal Highway's *Eco-Logical*, I-90 Snoqualmie Pass East Project
 - Forest Legacy and Conservation Easements: A closer look at monitoring and enforcement
 - City and County Open Space Conservation Programs

Give us your feedback!

www.fs.fed.us/openspace/webinars

Or Contact

Susan Stein – sstein@fs.fed.us

Sara Comas - scomas@fs.fed.us

Rick Pringle – rpringle@fs.fed.us