

Driftless Area Restoration Effort

Jeff Hastings, Project Manager



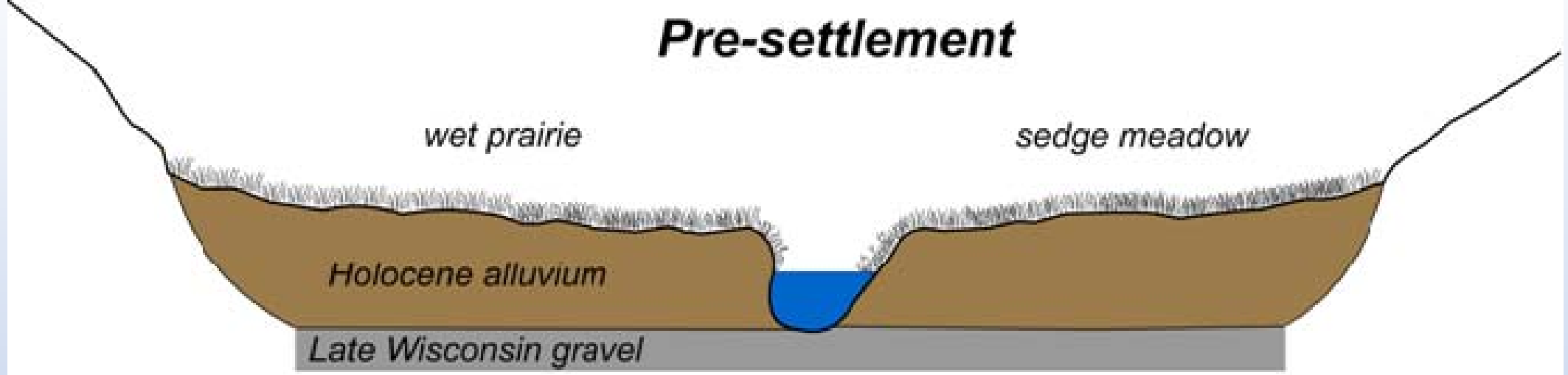


- How we use Farm Bill funding.
- Brief overview of RCPP.
- How we have made RCPP work for us.

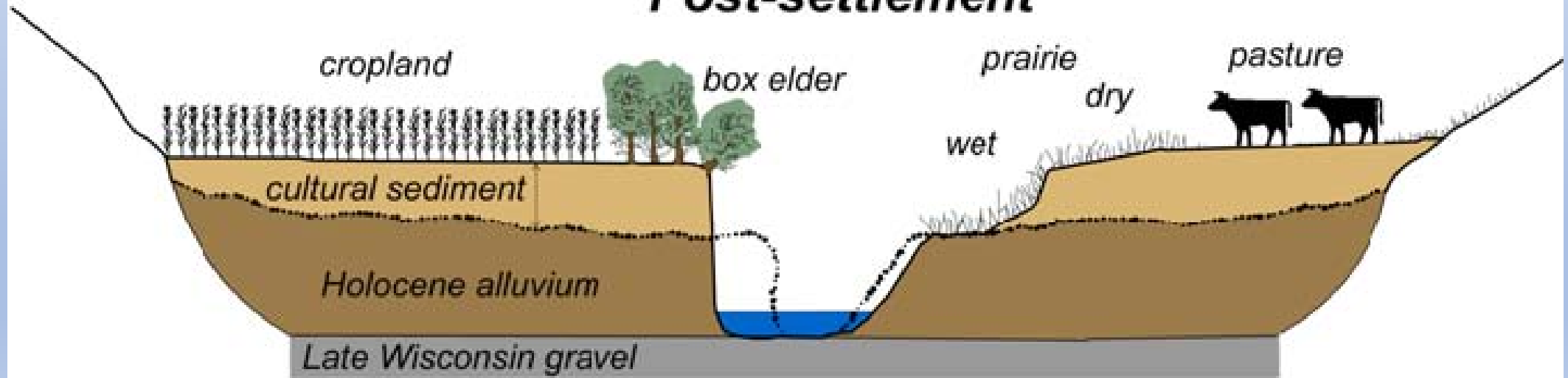




Pre-settlement



Post-settlement

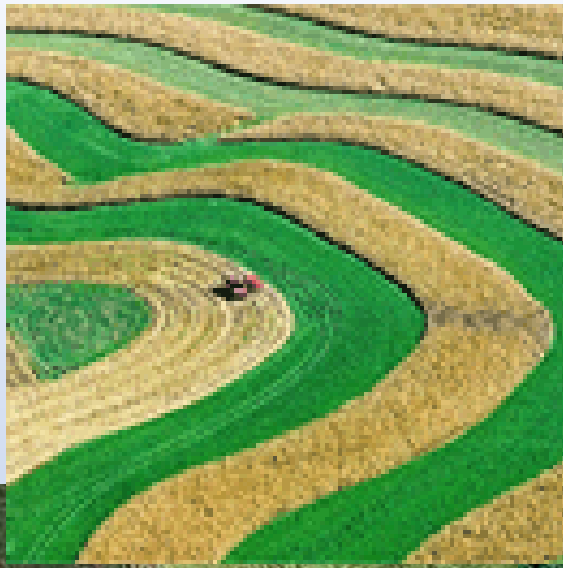




900 cu.yds.



Farm Bill dollars



Environmental Quality Incentives Program - EQIP

- The Environmental Quality Incentives Program is a voluntary program for people who want to install conservation practices on their land (must be a producer).
- 95% of our project are on private land where the state/county/Trout Unlimited holds and easement...





United States Department of Agriculture



Fiscal Year 2017 Wisconsin Annual Report



Wisconsin
Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service

wi.nrcs.usda.gov/



CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

TOP 40 EQIP OBLIGATED PRACTICES BY FINANCIAL INVESTMENT

(Includes all initiatives and special funding)

Practice	Practice Count (Number)	FY17 Obligation (Dollars)
Cover Crop	920	7,057,266
Waste Storage Facility	41	3,306,230
Streambank and Shoreline Protection	122	1,920,949
Fence	299	1,399,323
Lighting System Improvement	60	1,138,176
Heavy Use Area Protection	127	1,019,554
Waste Facility Closure	32	798,607
Prescribed Grazing	362	781,052
Waste Transfer	34	780,335
Sprinkler System	18	725,881
Grade Stabilization Structure	72	696,291
Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan - Written	85	673,655
High Tunnel System	70	620,371
Access Road	53	619,100
Livestock Pipeline	157	515,887
Roofs and Covers	9	463,203
Forage and Biomass Planting	126	462,145
Conservation Cover	104	421,453
Grassed Waterway	169	347,537
Mulching	252	339,370
Early Successional Habitat Development/Management	88	308,096
Pumping Plant	34	307,544
Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till	149	250,009

Driftless Area Landscape Conservation Initiative Proposal

A proposal to restore, improve, and protect the nationally significant fish and wildlife habitat of the Driftless Area, including working lands, woodlands, prairies, and cold water streams.



Photo by Jim Richardson @ Richardson Photography

*USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin.*

April 27, 2012

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

*6.5 million 5 years
1.5 million for stream restoration
Iowa – in 2017*

Restore watershed health to reduce delivery of sediment and nutrients and improve water quality to benefit Driftless Area rivers and streams

Building Capacity of groups to do more stream restoration projects.

Topics Covered:

Liability, Fund raising, Easements, Working with landowners, Experienced Chapters with less experience, Workdays, etc.



Workday



Experience vs. non experience



Project Development



Minnesota use private consultants



State DNR Fish Habitat
Crews & Private
Contractors

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP): Critical Conservation Areas

Three Competitive Pools

\$252M

- Critical Conservation Areas 35%
- National 40%
- State 25%



Map ID: m13190

Data Source:
U.S. Department of Agriculture,
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Resource Concerns for RCPP Projects

- Excess/Insufficient Water/Drought
- Water quality degradation
- Soil quality degradation
- Inadequate habitat for fish and wildlife (and invertebrates)
- Air quality impacts
- Degraded Plant Condition
- Energy
- Climate Change

Applications are judged on four main criteria.

- **Innovations**

Drawing on all of the conservation tools, partners can creatively design projects and take advantage of innovative methods to achieve conservation goals.

- **Contributions**

RCPP brings more resources to an expanded private lands conservation effort. RCPP partner investments, including cash and in-kind contributions, match or exceed the federal investment in resource conservation activities.

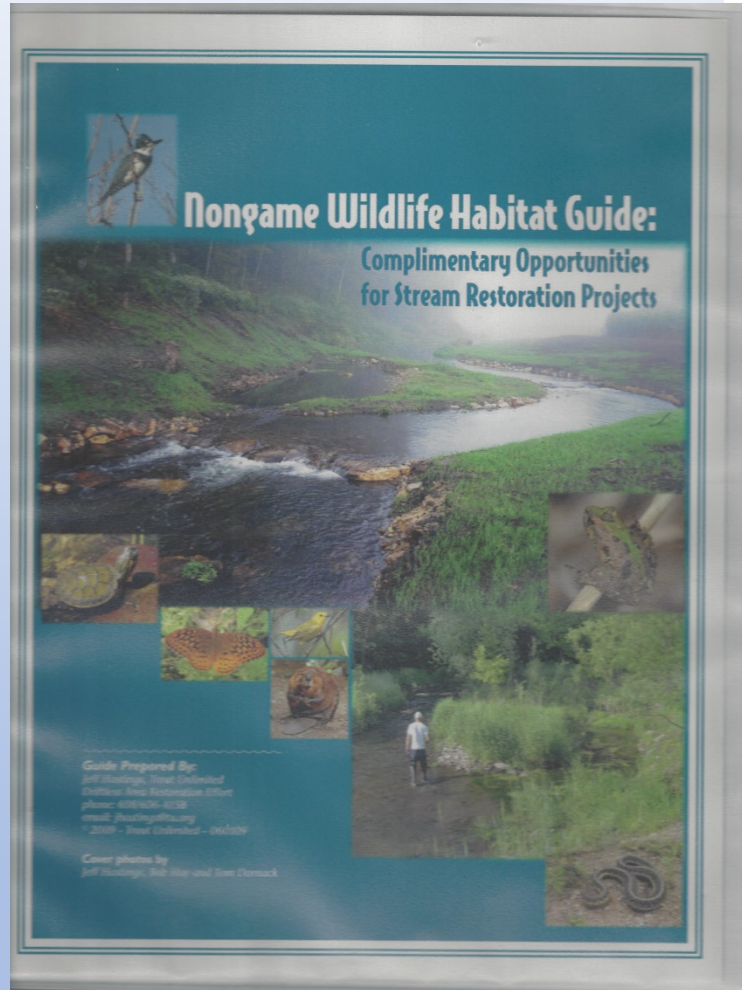
- **Solutions**

NRCS co-invests in mobilizing creative and workable solutions to agricultural production and natural resource management challenges. These solutions benefit agricultural operations as well as local economies and communities that depend on the quality of natural resources.

- **Participation**

RCPP is a platform for partners to engage with organizations that, while they may share common resource stewardship goals, may not have experience working with producers in a given community.

Innovation & Solution



Birds(Class Aves)

Birds are warm-blooded species that maintain stable internal body temperatures regardless of external influences. Because winters in the Midwest impact food availability for many birds, they migrate south to take advantage of warmer climates where access to food resources is not limited by cold temperatures, ice or frozen soils. This includes many of the riverine and wetland-associated birds. Most water-associated non-game bird species fall into the categories of insectivores

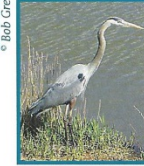
(which eat invertebrates including insects), piscivores (which eat primarily fish), or omnivores (more general predators, which eat a wide variety of prey including insects, fish, amphibians, reptiles and small mammals, along with wetland/aquatic vegetation and seeds). A wide variety of birds can be found along stream corridors, but are not dependent on these habitats alone.



© Bob Gress
Solitary Sandpiper



© R. Jordahl
Yellow Warbler



© Bob Hay
Great Blue Heron



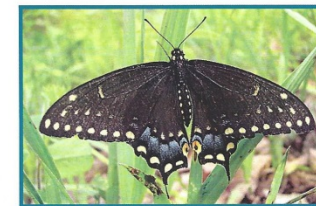
© J. Hastings
Not all trees are removed, only the invasive/shallow rooted trees

Shallow wetlands, low gradient shorelines of ponds, mud flats and backwater areas along streams provide excellent foraging areas for wading birds. Perches over the water are important for a variety of insect eating birds such as eastern kingbirds and for fish eaters like the belted kingfisher. Dead trees provide perching areas for hawks and other birds and can provide structure for nesting and foraging. Vertical banks can be important nesting habitats for bank swallows and kingfishers. Varied habitat structure (trees, brush and grasslands) in riparian habitats can provide a variety of nesting opportunities.

Invertebrates (protozoa, annelids, mollusks, arthropods, crustaceans, arachnids and insects)

This exceedingly diverse group of species is the backbone or base of the animal food chain and as a result is perhaps the most important. Providing for the life cycles of such a broad range of species may be best accomplished by replicating many of the macro and microhabitats that occur within an intact natural riparian community in the watershed or region where you are working. Providing standing and flowing water habitats with varied depths, temperatures, substrates and structures may be the best way to maximize aquatic invertebrate diversity. Some of these microhabitat features are likely to be naturally provided over time. Riparian and upland habitats should have varied vegetative structure and be planted with a diverse mix of species (forbs

and grasses). In order to achieve this, we are suggesting seed mixes that contain both native and exotic species (grasses and forbs) that have the greatest likelihood of achieving a varied herbaceous vegetation layer once established. We are purposefully including some exotic plant species, such as Kentucky bluegrass, because it provides a low-canopy structure that is valuable to a variety of non-game species from a thermoregulatory perspective. We include this species because we recognize that most of these properties will not receive management after they are initially planted. The establishment and maintenance of a diverse native planting typically requires significant management, especially in the early years, if a diverse plant community

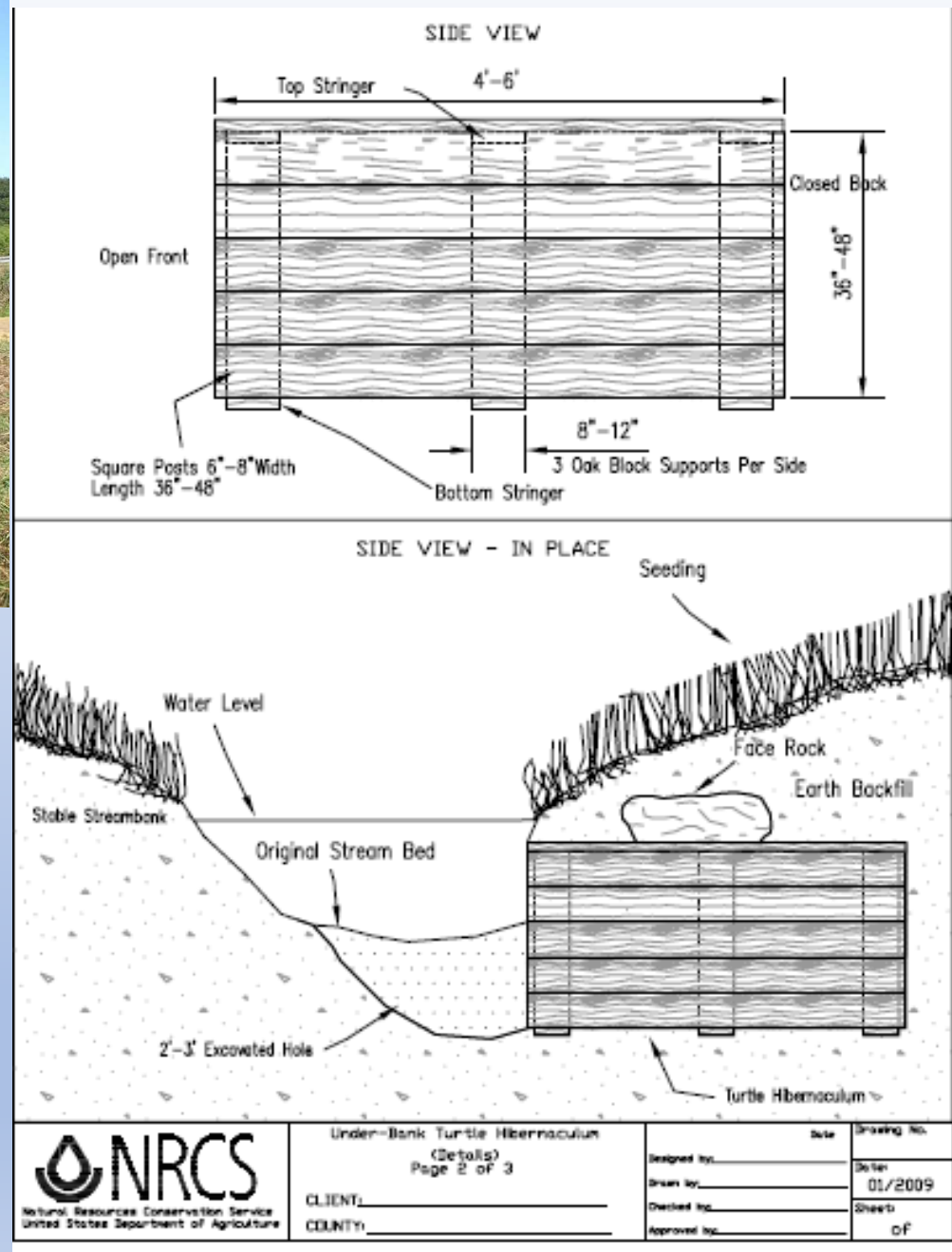


© Bob Hay
Black Swallowtail

with variable habitat structure is to be achieved. Where a project is attempting to improve conditions for one or more of the SGCN target invertebrates, such as a butterfly, seed mixes can include host plant seeds as appropriate. Having knowledge about these species and their specific habitat requirements, including host



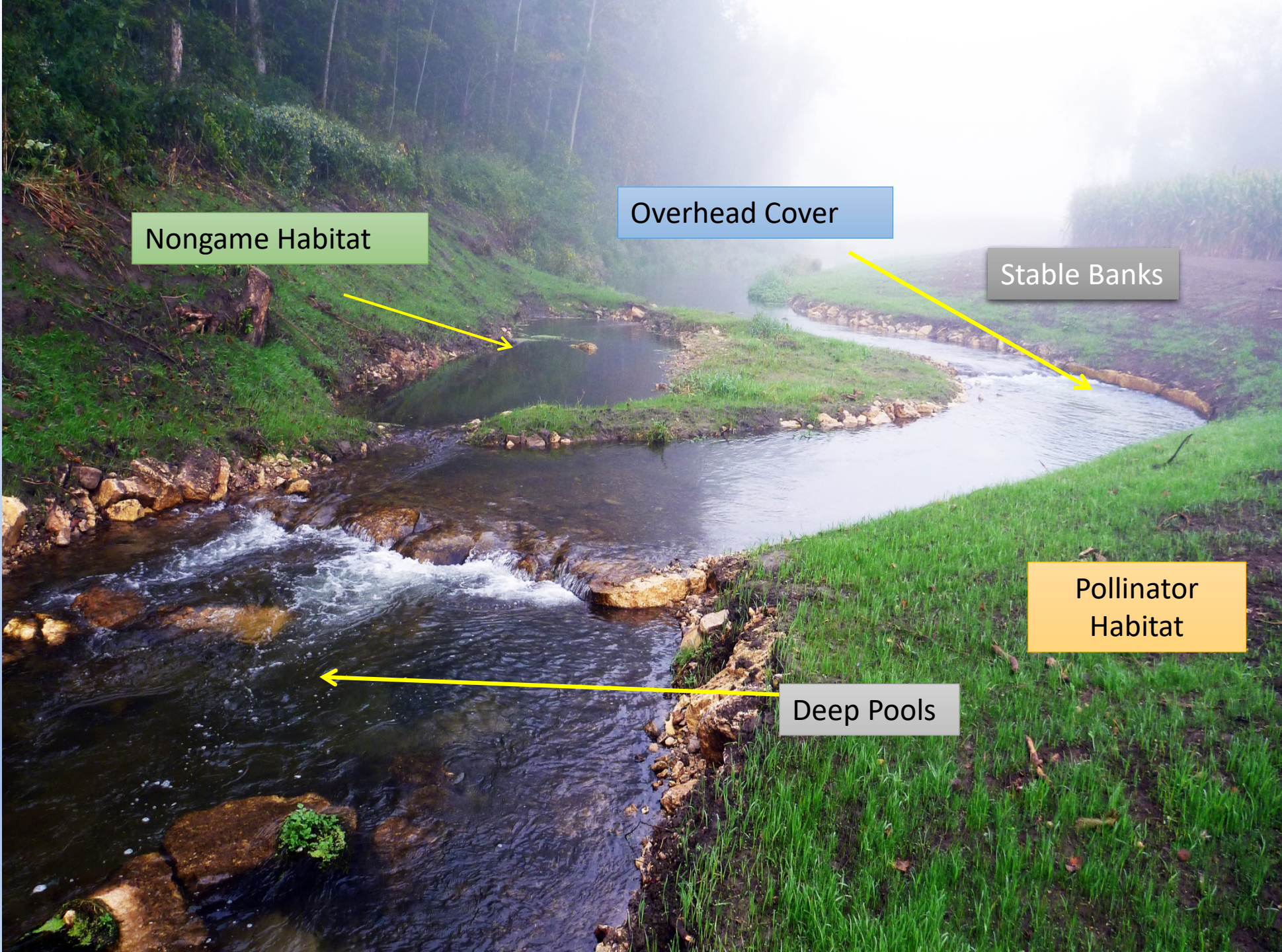
Standard Designs for
Natural Resources
Conservation Service
...now eligible for Farm Bill
dollars - EQIP





Driftless Area Highest Area of Conservation Need

Cost
Effective



Nongame Habitat

Overhead Cover

Stable Banks

Pollinator
Habitat

Deep Pools

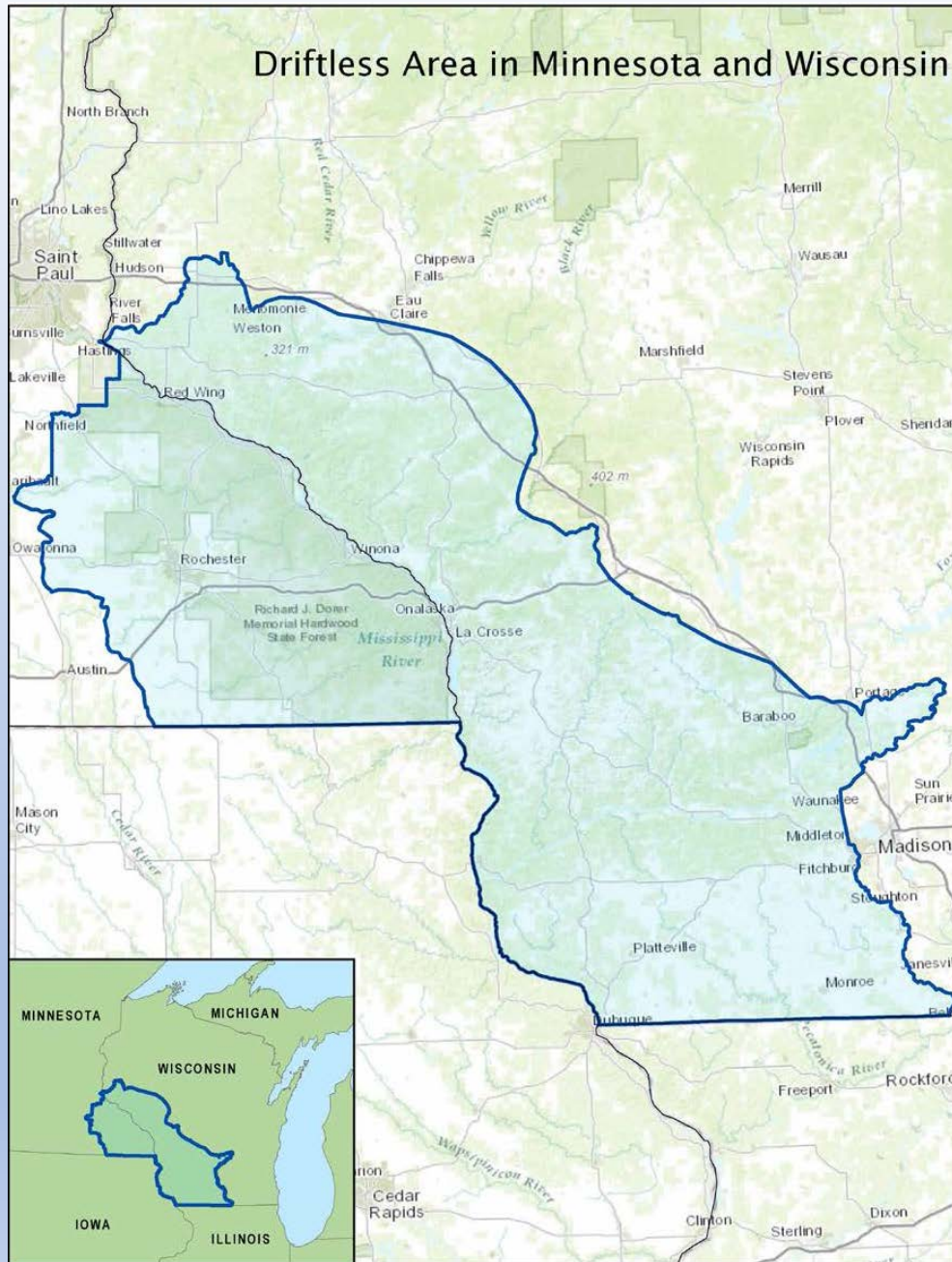


Contribution & Participation:
\$12M (five years), 50 partners



Funding Handout
River Protection Grants
EQIP
WI, IA & MN DNR
TU Chapters
Wal-Mart
Foundations





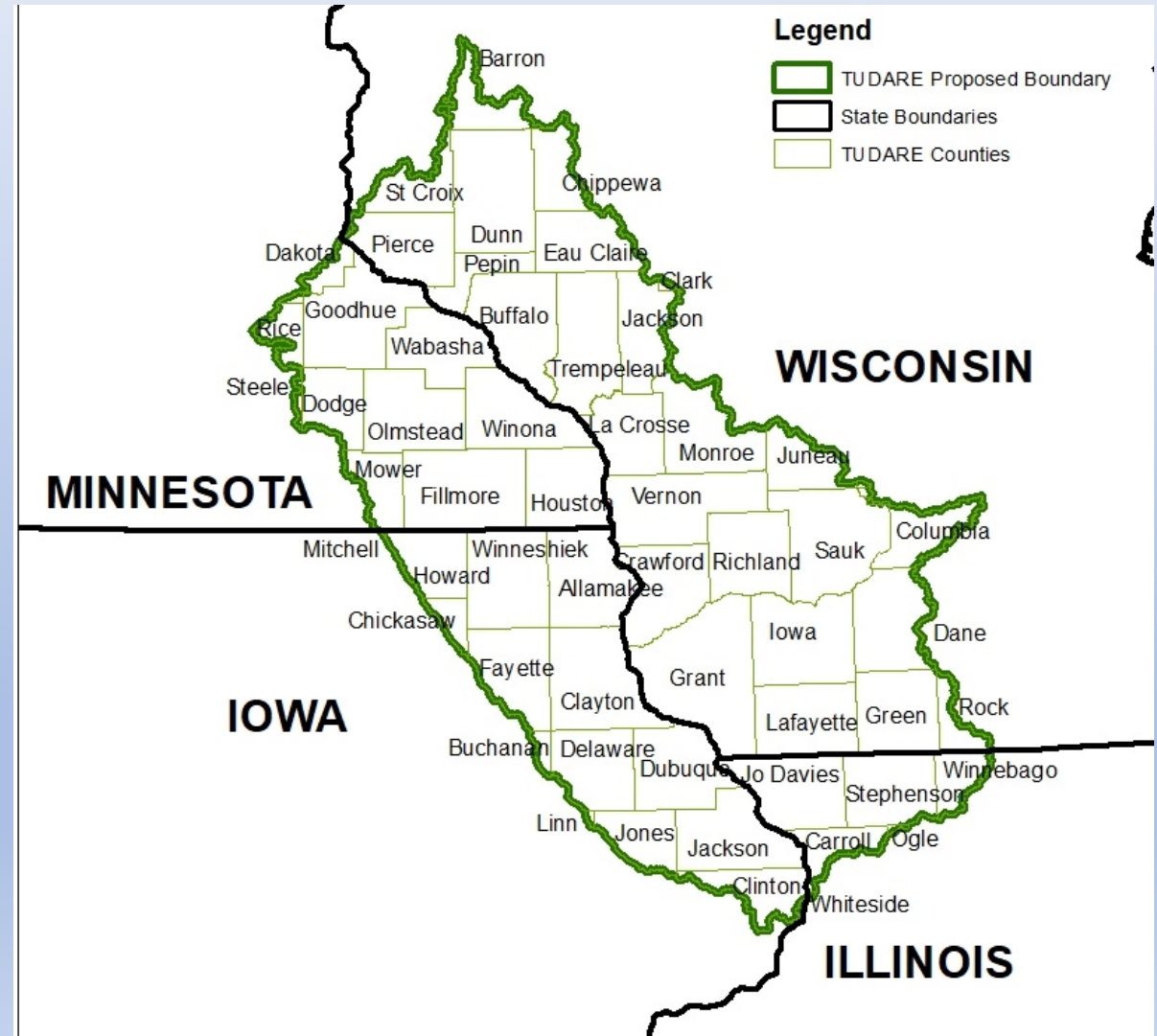
**\$2.9 Million Regional Conservation Partnership Program, RCPP
2016 – 2020**



**March sign-up 52
contracts..over \$1.4M+.**

Driftless Area Regional Conservation Partnership Program - Phase II

- ✓ \$9.2 Million - 5 years for cold-water restoration projects
 - ✓ Streambank stabilization
 - ✓ Critical area seeding
 - ✓ Stream Crossings
 - ✓ Brush Removal
 - ✓ Fencing
 - ✓ Habitat for both game and non-game species
- (\$1.4M for NRCS, \$324,000 in Technical Assistance)



County Field Office Staff (NRCS & LCD)



Technical Assistance dollars
for field offices and staff



Administration

- No funding for administration
 - Quarterly Reports
 - Semi Annual Progress Reports
 - Tracking of contribution
 - Technical Assistance reimbursements



Typical Driftless Brown Trout