



## Restoration of Bottomland Forests of NE Iowa

### BACKGROUND

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a voluntary, Federal assistance program of the US Department of Agriculture. Since 1985 the program conserves land and prevents soil erosion by paying farmers to plant their land to native grasses or trees. In return farmers must take the land out of production for a set period, usually 15 years, and receives a rental payment. This initiative specifically addresses CRP Conservation Practice 31- planting bottomland hardwoods.

### LOCATION

Financial incentives will be targeted to northeastern Iowa including the counties of Allamakee, Clayton, Delaware, Dubuque, Fayette, and Winneshiek.

### ISSUES BEING ADDRESSED

Various neotropical migratory birds use the forested habitat of NE Iowa as critical nesting areas or rest and refueling areas during migration. Of the 145 birds that nest in Iowa, 41 are neotropical migrants that prefer forests or forest edge habitat of the floodplains and bluffs of NE Iowa. Private lands offer the best opportunity for reestablishing bottomland forests in Iowa but the economics must be such that it is beneficial for the farmer to take the periodically flooded bottomland now cropped out of production and plant to trees.

### RESULTS

By the end of the project it is expected that 1,000 additional acres of NE Iowa bottomland will be planted to trees under the CRP program. In return farmers will receive \$150/acre sign up bonus, the cost share rate to cover costs of the trees and planting will increase from 50% to 75%, and a 15 year rental payment.

### OUTCOMES/ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Land that is now in crop but periodically flooded will be converted to trees. This will have multiple benefits including reduction of sediments and nutrients entering the streams as well as providing wildlife habitat.



### PARTNERS

Iowa Department of Natural Resources  
Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship  
Northeast Iowa RC&D Area

### CONTACTS

#### Project Contact

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### GRANT AMOUNT

\$ 100,000 NFWF  
\$ 450,000 Match

\$550,000 Total Project Cost

The Upper Mississippi Forest Partnership and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation have partnered to initiate the Upper Mississippi River Watershed Fund. The Foundation grants projects that benefit the forests of the Upper Mississippi while improving wildlife habitat and water quality.