



2001 Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

Customer Focus —

When Dan Bohlin first noticed the increase of wildlife on his 260-acre farm he credited the change to his new land management practices. Working with NRCS, Dan looked for ways to make his property work for him. Along his stream he installed a 14-acre riparian buffer complete with 6660 trees and shrubs and warm season grasses. Small wetland areas were restored to sedge marsh. It was the discovery of a prairie remnant with blazing star in full bloom that got Dan's attention. By clearing and burning brushy areas he began to encourage areas with prairie potential. On his oak savanna, buckthorn trees and other invasive plants were abundant. Through WHIP cost-share assistance he was able to clear these areas. The buckthorns are topped and the brush left for wildlife habitat. Through these efforts, the oak and black walnut savannas will thrive and the prairies will once again bloom on this farm in Grant County.



Dan Bohlin clearing buckthorn trees from his oak and black walnut savanna in Grant County.

Wisconsin Summary

Overview

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program for people who want to develop or improve wildlife habitat on private lands. It provides for both technical assistance and financial assistance through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

In Wisconsin, WHIP is emphasizing re-establishment of habitats for wildlife species that are on the decline. The habitats of main concern include grasslands and oak savannas. Special emphasis has been given to threatened and endangered species including the federally listed Karner blue butterfly. In addition, several miles of fish streams, primarily coldwater trout streams, have been restored. WHIP has provided funding for several Native American projects including the reestablishment of wild rice beds which not only provide harvestable food, but also important waterfowl habitat.

Accomplishments

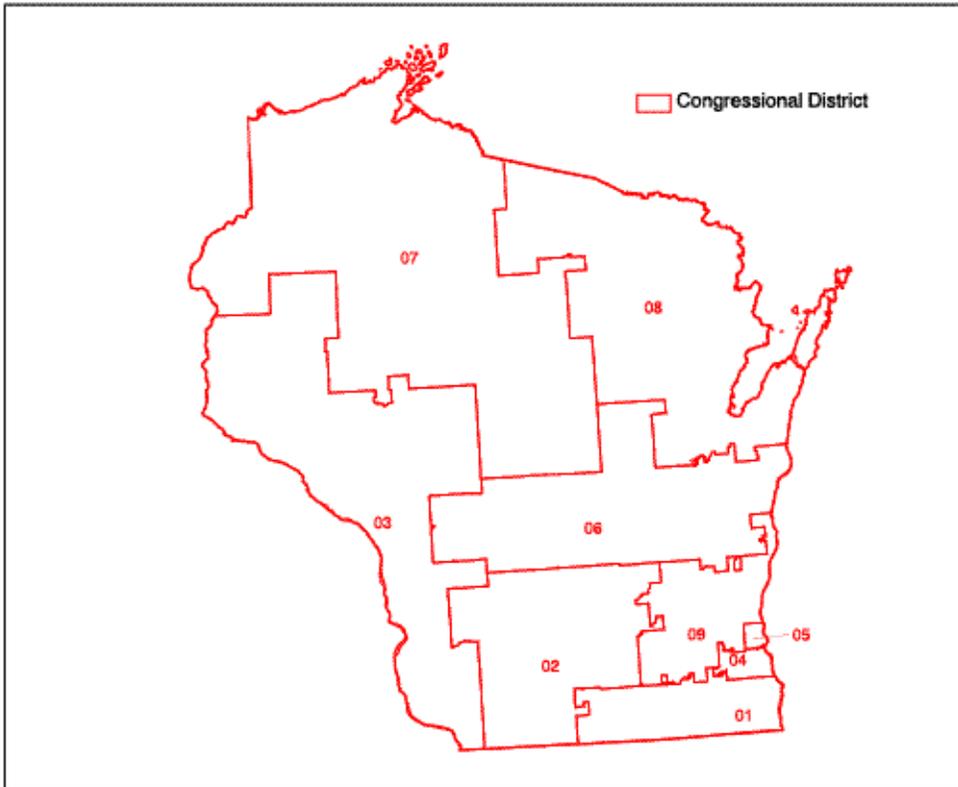
There are presently 250 active contracts in our state covering 6,500 acres. This includes over 5,000 acres of oak savannas and native grasslands, which are in the process of being restored, as well as 40 miles of fish stream habitat. In addition to NRCS cost sharing of \$620,000, conservation partners have contributed over \$900,000 for projects and landowners themselves have contributed over \$425,000.

Program Benefits

WHIP offers cost sharing for non-game species which is generally overlooked in other programs designed for game species. WHIP has made possible the accomplishment of some major projects, for example dam removal to restore fish passage, by working with both public and private conservation partnerships pooling resources.

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