



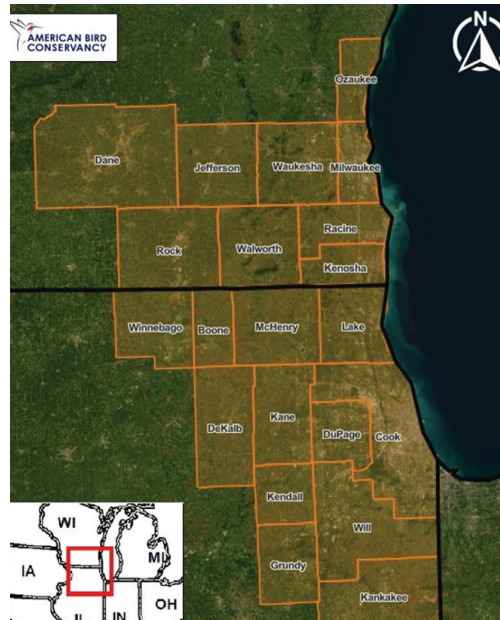
Improving Oak Ecosystem Health in the Great Lakes

Regional Conservation Partnership Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), American Bird Conservancy (ABC), and other key partners, are working together to improve oak ecosystem health in northeastern Illinois and southeastern Wisconsin. Through the NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), conservation planning and financial assistance is available to forest landowners located within high-priority areas of the Great Lakes region.

The goal of this RCPP project is to enhance oak ecosystem health while cultivating long-term benefits for Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), such as the Red-headed Woodpecker and Cerulean Warbler, both commonly found in high-quality oak systems. Forest landowners with established oak cover on their properties provide the best opportunity to create and maintain these habitats. Practices such as invasive species removal, forest thinning, and prescribed burning mimic the essential natural disturbances these ecosystems require to create and foster a habitat for wildlife to thrive in.

Financial assistance is available to help alleviate landowner costs for forest management practices, including those mentioned above. Those seeking financial and/or technical assistance through RCPP are encouraged to visit their local USDA Service Center. Please note that landowners with an existing Forest Management Plan (FMP) in place will receive priority funding; however, technical and cost-sharing assistance for forest plan development is also available.



Map highlighting the Wisconsin and Illinois project areas within the Great Lakes region.

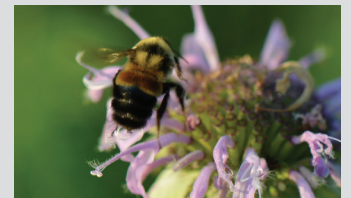
Landowners interested in learning more about the financial and technical assistance available through NRCS and/or developing a FMP are also encouraged to contact ABC foresters:

Jordan Winkenbach
jwinkenbach@abcbirds.org

or

Tommy Gunn
tgunn@abcbirds.org

For more information about RCPP, including how to apply, please visit your local USDA Service Center or the Wisconsin NRCS RCPP website at: www.nrcs.usda.gov/wi/rcpp



The RCPP project focuses on restoring habitat for the Red-headed Woodpecker, (top photo) by Danita Delimont, and Cerulean Warbler (second photo) by Dan Behm. It benefits other wildlife species like the rusty-patched bumble bee, (third photo down) provided by the University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum, while utilizing land management techniques such as prescribed burning, (bottom photo) provided by Oak Savannas.

