

# Focus On Pheasants

MONTHLY UPDATE



MAY \ JUNE 2012

## (NEW) SOUTH CENTRAL FOP

The "Ag and Pheasants" Landowner Workshop and Habitat Tour was a success in the new Focus area. We hosted a landowner workshop on June 7th in Beaver City to promote FOP incentives available to landowners .

Also during this time 7 FOP contracts were drafted, totaling 600 acres of Mid-contract management actives to occur on CRP lands within the Focus Area

Crow Count Surveys - This spring, we set up 5 survey routes in the SC FOP area. All of these routes have been surveyed once, and we are hoping to get a second survey count completed on each of these routes by May 15th. Route 1 - 12.25 crows/stop (range 2-23) Harlan, Route 2 - 19.8 crows/stop (range 2-41) Harlan, Route 3 - 39.8 crows/stop (range 17-55) Furnas, Route 4 - 26.85 crows/stop (range 10-57) Furnas, Route 5 - 50.3 crows/stop (range 21-93) Furnas

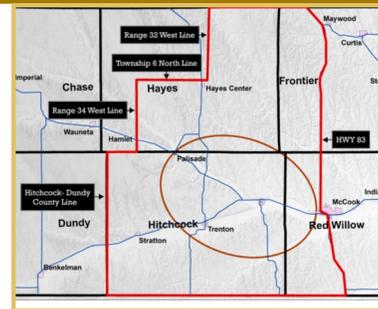


South Central FOP area.

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## SOUTHWEST FOP



New Southwest FOP area

### SPOTLIGHT

#### Feather Rufflers: Pheasant Tracker

The Feather Rufflers (Derek Homan, Greg Miller, Justin Ekstein) partnered with [Dr. Mehmet Can Yuran](#) of the [Cyber-Physical Network Lab](#) and [T. J. Fontaine](#) of the [Nebraska Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research](#) to explore developing new and cheaper hardware that satisfied complex and restrictive constraints for the monitoring of pheasants.

The team built a prototype PCB (Printed Circuit Board) which they named PheasantTracker that uses GPS to track a pheasant's location with data collected by strategically placed remote stations several times a day. The team came very close to meeting the constraints (weight, power efficiency) while keeping the cost to a fraction of what is commercially available. The team's success will be built upon and will help in future research. <http://csc.unl.edu/InnovationLab/showcase/>

## ONEBOX FOP

The Custer County FOP decided to use funds this year to install 30' x 50' wildlife shrub blocks on existing and new habitat projects throughout the county. Throughout the year, the shrubby cover provided by shrub thickets like American plum, chokecherry and buffalo berry are used by many forms of wildlife, but are especially important to quail and pheasants. When these shrubs grow 3' to 5' in height, get to be at least 1,500ft<sup>2</sup>, provide bare ground and are so thick you can't walk through them; they provide excellent habitat.

Working with various conservation partners and through a variety of programs including CRP, Corners for Wildlife, FOP and local PF projects we managed to till, plant and spray over 125 new shrub blocks in Custer County this spring totaling over 33,000 shrubs!



FOCUS ON PHEASANTS

### HARLAN RESERVOIR FOP

On June 6th we hosted a Habitat Tour at Harlan Reservoir FOP. The objective was to observe results of past and current management techniques used to manage the grasslands around the lake. If you would like to view the habitat tour booklet is located at [www.focusonpheasants.org](http://www.focusonpheasants.org).



### SHERMAN WMA FOP

On April 10 and 11, a prescribe burn was conducted on 200 acres around the lake. Currently we are grazing some of the burn areas to promote early succession habitat and to set back the cool season grasses. Sherman WMA FOP has also started on noxious weed control where issues have risen around the lake.



We will be hosting an FOP tour on July 11th to look at the results of different grassland management techniques that have been completed around the lake.

### BRANCHED OAK PL FOP

Currently we have been working with several landowners in the focus area on creating management plans. We are hoping to have decision from landowners this summer on the potential CRP upgrades.





## BRANCHED OAK WMA FOP

Field staff have been busy planting food plots throughout the area, many sites were not tilled into stubble. Thistle checks were made and infestations were light this year so far. Our local coop sprayed a number of our fields in preparation for food plot or native grass seeding. Some spraying of poison hemlock and small tree infestations took place. A disked grassland site (20 acres) in unit 9 was overseeded and a disked site in unit 6 (7 acres) was interseeded by drill and local ecotype harvested grass seed. A 5 acre plot in unit 6 and a 7 acre plot in unit 9, both former crop fields were seeded to native grass and forbs collected from local ecotype locations. Cattle began grazing about 160 acres in unit 5 on the south east native prairie site.



## JOHNSON CO FOP

The Johnson County FOP has a total of 181.4 acres that are in the process of conversion into CRP (CP1, CP2, and CP25), SAFE acres, and pollinator strips. 72.9 acres were burned in April and then the regrowth was treated with Glyphosate. This property will require further chemical treatment to suppress both smooth brome and Serecia prior to fall seeding of CP1, CP2, and CP25 seed mixtures. 52.9 acres were also burned in April and will be chemically treated twice before fall inter-seeding 5.8 acres of pollinator and 47.1 acres of CP1 seed mixes. The other 61.4 acres will be grazed or hayed in the fall prior to a chemical treatment, and fall seeding of SAFE acre seed mixture that will consist of brood rearing, nesting, and winter habitat.



## HICKORY RIDGE WMA FOP

Habitat Share contractors completed two diskings of approximately 60 acres of grassland at Hickory Ridge WMA in April. They have returned to interseed high diversity forb mixtures on these sites.



In addition, we are currently implementing a grazing program on 103 acres of grassland. Short duration, high intensity grazing is being used to improve plant structure and increase diversity.



Please visit the Focus on Pheasants website to learn more:  
[www.FocusonPheasants.org](http://www.FocusonPheasants.org)

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