

# SAVE THE HABITAT

## IOWA NWTF STATE CHAPTER

### *STRATEGIC PLAN*



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**National Goals:** 4 Million Acres, 1.5 Million New Hunters; 500,000 Access Acres

**Mission:** The NWTF is dedicated to the conservation of the Wild Turkey and the Preservation of our hunting heritage.

**Vision:** More turkeys, More places to hunt, Preserving the hunt

**Values:** The IA-NWTF values ethical hunting, opening access to hunting, and educating others about hunting

### Strategic Habitat Conservation Issues for the Future

**Grassland/Open Woodland Quality** \*\*\*quantity, land conversion (loss of native grasses), non-native species\*\*\*

**Forest Habitat Quality** \*\*\*quantity, composition shift, invasives, loss of oak savannah\*\*\*

#### 25,000 Acres Conserved/Enhanced

- **Grassland/Open Woodland** – Improve 12,500 ac
- **Forest Habitat Improvement** – Improve 12,500 ac

#### Improve Public Hunting Access to 20,000 Acres

- 20,000 ac via land acquisitions, primarily through partnerships with CCBs & IDNR or via state access programs

- Identify five **Focal Landscapes**: *Loess Hills, Boone Forks-Middle Raccoon, Cedar River, Driftless, and MO-IA Oaks*
- Identify at least one **Focal Area** within each Focal Landscape for initial conservation delivery
- Enhance grassland/open woodlands, and forest quality in these focal landscapes through expanded partnerships
- Increase current project match from 2:1 to 3:1 on habitat conservation projects
- Increase current Super Fund balance by 50% to meet objectives for land acquisition projects AND habitat conservation projects
- Develop major gift program to fund conservation delivery

- Strengthen the current ranking criteria utilized for land acquisition funding requests received
- Increase current match rate of 15:1 on land acquisition projects to 20:1
- Increase current Super Fund balance by 50% to meet objectives for land acquisition projects AND habitat conservation projects

Establish annual checkpoints for acreage goals and current match rate

Establish annual checkpoints for acres purchased and current match rate

## HABITAT ENHANCEMENT OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

These overarching habitat enhancement objectives pertain to all of the Focal Landscapes identified for Iowa. Grassland/open woodland habitat is defined as habitat that has a canopy of 25-50% and a potential understory component of primarily native grasses, forbs, and shrubs. Forested habitats, outside of these oak savannah/open woodlands, would consist of forested areas with greater than 60% canopy.

### OBJECTIVES

1. Conserve and/or enhance 25,000 Acres of habitat within strategically identified focal landscapes
  - a. Improve the quality of 12,500 acres of Grassland/Open Woodland Habitat over the next ten years, or 1,250 acres annually for wild turkey nesting and brood-rearing habitat
  - b. Improve the quality of 12,500 acres of Forested Habitat over the next ten years, or 1,250 annually for wild turkey roosting, brood-rearing and loafing habitat

### STRATEGIES

1. Identify five habitat **Focal Landscapes**, including determination of the most pressing conservation issues in each focal landscape and potential improvement practices and partners, both traditional and non-traditional
  - a. Loess Hills, Boone Forks-Raccoon River, Cedar River, Driftless, and MO-IA Oaks
2. Identify acreage goals for habitat enhancement objectives within each of the selected **Focal Landscapes**
3. Identify at least one **Focal Area** within each **Focal Landscape** for initial conservation delivery
4. Improve quality and quantity of grassland/open woodland habitats within **Focal Landscapes** through expanded partnerships and the implementation of the habitat improvement practices listed below:
  - a. Conversion of non-native grass species (brome or fescue) to native warm-season grasses within areas adjacent to forested habitats or within oak savannahs
  - b. Native warm-season grass plantings including wildflowers and native forbs and legumes, when restoring grasslands/open woodlands
  - c. Use of prescribed burning to improve overall grass quality, health and vigor
  - d. Lightly disking grass stands to promote growth of annual weeds and forbs where applicable and of value for improving grasslands/open woodlands
  - e. Control of invasive grassland species to include removal of woody species (native and non-native) encroaching into grass savannahs, noxious weeds such as *Sericea Lespedeza*
5. Improve quality of forested acres within **Focal Landscapes** through expanded partnerships and implementation of the habitat improvement practices listed below:
  - a. Forest stand improvement practices to include: crop tree release, selective thinning or removal of undesirable species through mechanical or chemical removal methods, and selective harvest
  - b. Planting of native hardwood species and mast-producing trees and shrubs to improve wildlife forage when possible
  - c. Prescribed burning when feasible
6. Promote the use of prescribed burning to improve forest quality, grassland/open woodland quality and quantity

7. Promote USDA Farm Bill programs and active management on private lands through existing partnerships and participation in landowner workshops-field days
  - a. Support, through participation or funding, 5 landowner workshops each year, one in each ***Focal Landscape***
8. Increase funding support of conservation delivery in the state of Iowa
  - a. Increase annual Super Fund balance by 50%
  - b. Develop major gift program to provide funding support of NWTF conservation delivery in Iowa
9. Increase current project match from **2:1 to 3:1** (Partner : NWTF) on conservation projects.
  - a. Emphasize the need for improved match with our state and federal partners
  - b. Work with NWTF staff in development and field operations to garner major gifts to enhance conservation delivery within each ***Focal Landscape***

## **ACCESS ENHANCEMENT OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES**

Detailed below are the objectives pertaining to improving hunter access in the state of Iowa over the next ten years. These goals align well with habitat conservation efforts as well, since most access enhancement in Iowa is through land acquisitions for conservation purposes.

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. Improve Public Hunting Access to 20,000 Acres over the next ten years via fee title purchase (land acquisitions) through partnerships or through financial support of existing state-sponsored hunter access programs

### **STRATEGIES**

1. Strengthen the current ranking criteria utilized for land acquisition funding requests received
  - a. Conduct a thorough review of existing ranking criteria and work to align strategies for land purchases with NWTF goals and partner goals
2. Increase funding available for partnering on future land acquisitions presented to the NWTF for partnering
  - a. Increase current Super Fund balance by 50% to meet objectives for land acquisition projects
  - b. Work with NWTF staff in development and field operations to garner major gifts to support proposed land acquisition funding requests
3. Increase current match rate of 15:1 on land acquisition projects to 20:1
  - a. Emphasize the need for improved match with our local, state and federal partners. Including County Conservation Boards

# Iowa Focal Landscapes

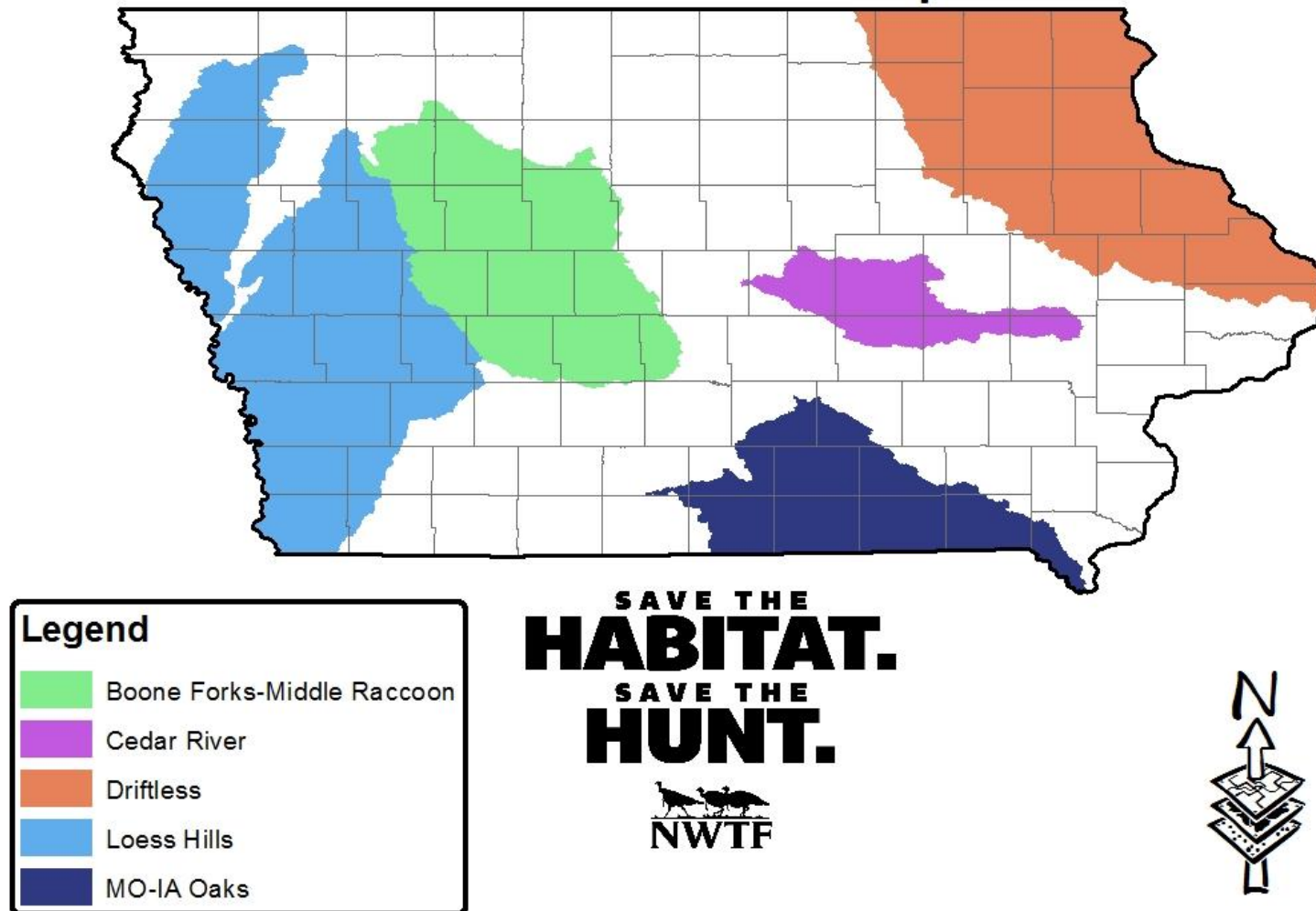
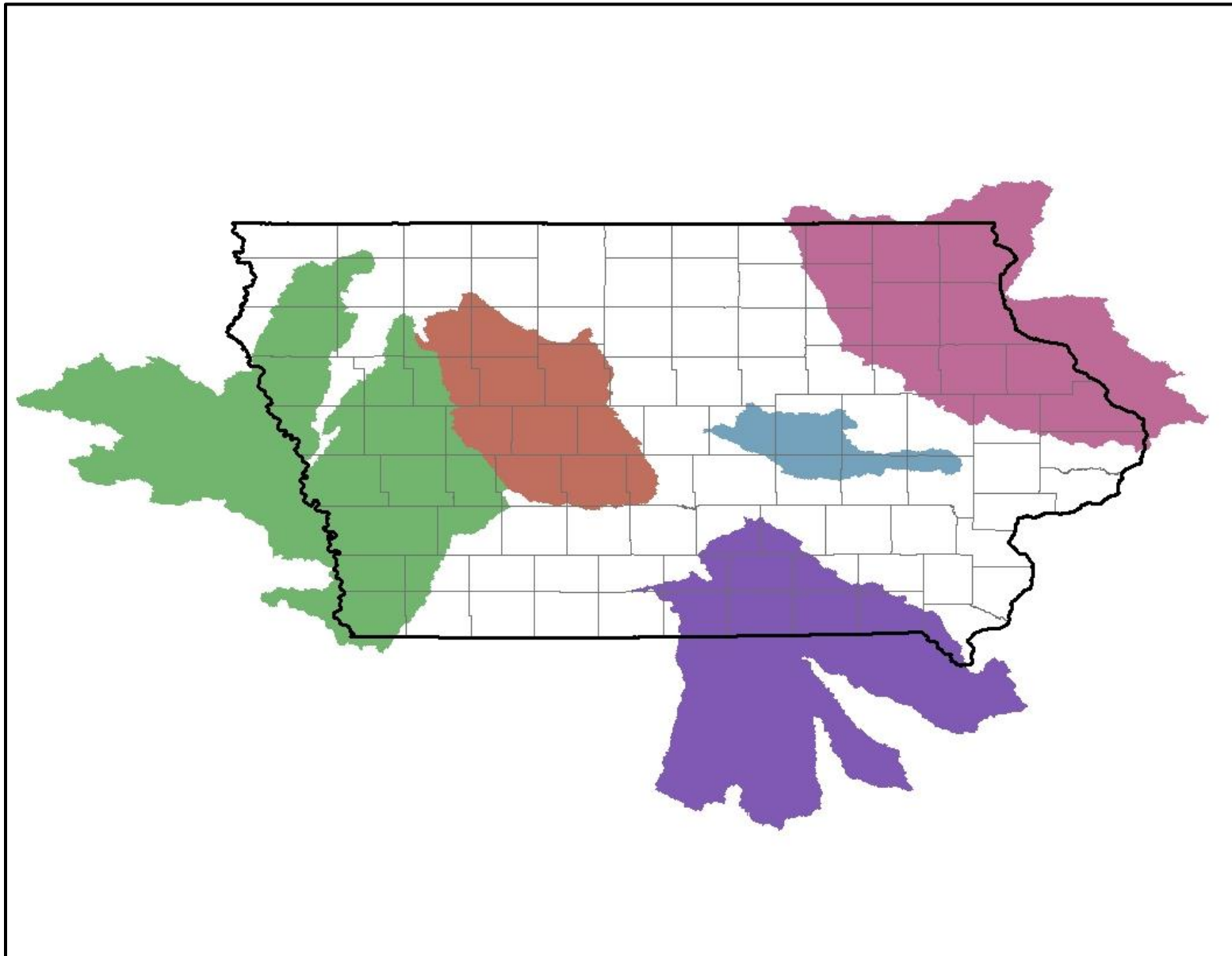


FIGURE 1. MAP OF IOWA NWTF FOCAL LANDSCAPES



**FIGURE 2. MAP OF IOWA NWTf FOCAL LANDSCAPES AND SURROUNDING STATES**

**Table 1. Focal Landscapes Costs Summary**

Loess Hills	Annual Delivery		10 Year Goals		NWTF Costs	Partner Costs
Grassland/Open Woodland	Acre	Average cost \$400.00 / acre	Acre enhanced	Average cost \$400.00 / acre		
	350	\$140,000.00	3,500	\$1,400,000.00	\$350,000.00	\$1,050,000.00
Forest Habitat Improvement	Acre	Average cost \$300.00 / acre	Acre enhanced	Average cost \$300.00 / acre		
	150	\$45,000.00	1,500	\$450,000.00	\$112,500.00	\$337,500.00
Totals	500	\$185,000.00	5000	\$1,850,000.00	\$462,500.00	\$1,387,500.00

Boone Forks-Middle Raccoon	Annual Delivery		10 Year Goals		NWTF Costs	Partner Costs
Grassland/Open Woodland	Acre	Average cost \$400.00 / acre	Acre enhanced	Average cost \$400.00 / acre		
	150	\$60,000.00	1,500	\$600,000.00	\$150,000.00	\$450,000.00
Forest Habitat Improvement	Acre	Average cost \$300.00 / acre	Acre enhanced	Average cost \$300.00 / acre		
	250	\$75,000.00	2,500	\$750,000.00	\$187,500.00	\$562,500.00
Totals	400	\$135,000.00	4000	\$1,350,000.00	\$337,500.00	\$1,012,500.00

Cedar River	Annual Delivery		10 Year Goals		NWTF Costs	Partner Costs
Grassland/Open Woodland	Acre	Average cost \$400.00 / acre	Acre enhanced	Average cost \$400.00 / acre		
	200	\$80,000.00	2,000	\$800,000.00	\$200,000.00	\$600,000.00
Forest Habitat Improvement	Acre	Average cost \$300.00 / acre	Acre enhanced	Average cost \$300.00 / acre		
	250	\$75,000.00	2,500	\$750,000.00	\$187,500.00	\$562,500.00
Totals	450	\$155,000.00	4500	\$1,550,000.00	\$387,500.00	\$1,162,500.00

Driftless	Annual Delivery		10 Year Goals		NWTF Costs	Partner Costs
Grassland/Open Woodland	Acre	Average cost \$400.00 / acre	Acre enhanced	Average cost \$400.00 / acre		
	250	\$100,000.00	2,500	\$1,000,000.00	\$250,000.00	\$750,000.00
Forest Habitat Improvement	Acre	Average cost \$300.00 / acre	Acre enhanced	Average cost \$300.00 / acre		
	300	\$90,000.00	3,000	\$900,000.00	\$225,000.00	\$675,000.00
Totals	550	\$190,000.00	5500	\$1,900,000.00	\$475,000.00	\$1,425,000.00

MO-IA Oaks	Annual Delivery		10 Year Goals		NWTF Costs	Partner Costs
Grassland/Open Woodland	Acre	Average cost \$400.00 / acre	Acre enhanced	Average cost \$400.00 / acre		
	300	\$120,000.00	3,000	\$1,200,000.00	\$300,000.00	\$900,000.00
Forest Habitat Improvement	Acre	Average cost \$300.00 / acre	Acre enhanced	Average cost \$300.00 / acre		
	300	\$90,000.00	3,000	\$900,000.00	\$225,000.00	\$675,000.00
Totals	600	\$210,000.00	6000	\$2,100,000.00	\$525,000.00	\$1,575,000.00



Summary (All FAs)	Annual Delivery		10 Year Goals		NWTF Costs	Partner Costs
Grassland/Open Woodland	Acres	Average cost \$400.00 / acre	Acres enhanced	Average cost \$400.00 / acre		
	1,250	\$500,000.00	12,500	\$5,000,000.00	\$1,250,000.00	\$3,750,000.00
Forest Habitat Improvement	Acres	Average cost \$300.00 / acre	Acres enhanced	Average cost \$300.00 / acre		
	1,250	\$375,000.00	12,500	\$3,750,000.00	\$937,500.00	\$2,812,500.00
Totals	2,500	\$875,000.00	25000	\$8,750,000.00	\$2,187,500.00	\$6,562,500.00

**Table 2. Access Enhancement Costs Summary**

Access	Annual Goals		10 Year Goals		NWTF Costs	Partner Costs
Land Acquisitions	Acres	Costs = \$3,000/ac	Acres	Costs = \$3,000/ac	Approx. = \$400/ac	Approx. = \$2,600/ac
	2,000	\$6,000,000.00	20000	\$60,000,000.00	\$8,000,000.00	\$52,000,000.00
Totals	2,000	\$6,000,000.00	20,000	\$60,000,000.00	\$8,000,000.00	\$52,000,000.00