WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT DIRECTORY

COUNTIES OF COVERAGE

Region	Name	Phone	Email
1	Craig Bonner	(419) 280-3915	Craig.Bonner@dnr.ohio.gov
2	Matt Conner	(419) 607-7446	Matthew.Conner@dnr.ohio.gov
3	Matt Vitullo	(419) 346-4962	Matthew.Vitullo@dnr.ohio.gov
4	Jacob Stutz	(220) 212-7548	Jacob.Stutz@dnr.ohio.gov
5	Vernon Snyder	(330) 556-8358	Vernon.Snyder@dnr.ohio.gov
6	Sean Finke	(419) 236-8838	Sean.Finke@dnr.ohio.gov
7	Justin Coffman	(614) 309-4614	Justin.Coffman@dnr.ohio.gov
8	Emilee Hardesty	(614) 314-1315	Emilee.Hardesty@dnr.ohio.gov
9	John Morton	(614) 403-6353	John.Morton@dnr.ohio.gov
10	Michael Saylor	(937) 260-7449	Michael.Saylor@dnr.ohio.gov
11	Caleb Shields	(937) 301-0052	Caleb.Shields@dnr.ohio.gov
12	Ashley Dawson	(740) 326-8534	Ashley.Dawson@dnr.ohio.gov
13	Amme Redington	(740) 326-8568	Amme.Redington@dnr.ohio.gov

Want to learn more?

Scan Here

https://bit.ly/3Rg8bbF

* This material is based upon work supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, under Regional Conservation Partnership Program Agreement number PPA-2944-A-1284, Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In addition, any reference to specific brands or types of products or services does not constitute or imply an endorsement by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for those products or services. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Supporting Agencies

CONSERVATION ON PRIVATE LANDS

Photo provided by: Jimmy Giannone

Good for Wildlife, Good for Producers

New opportunity for Ohio landowners:

Ohio farmers and landowners have a new opportunity to improve their land, support wildlife, and receive conservation funding through the Wildlife Habitat Initiative.

What is the Wildlife Habitat Initiative?

The Wildlife Habitat Initiative (WHI) is a new conservation program that offers incentive payments to eligible landowners/tenants who implement practices that improve wildlife habitat. The program focuses on supporting habitat for grassland birds, pollinators, and other native wildlife.

- Funding: Provided through the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) under the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP).
- Leadership: Led and managed by the National Bobwhite & Grassland Initiative (NBGI), supported by NRCS and the Ohio Division of Wildlife.
- Technical Assistance: Provided by the Ohio Division of Wildlife and the NBGI Foundation (NBGIF).

Who can apply?

To qualify, landowners/tenants must:

- Be eligible for USDA farm programs.
- Have a current farm record and a valid farm number with the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

How do I start?

Project planning can begin anytime. Contact a Wildlife Management Consultant to get started today - see back page for contact information.

How do incentive payments work?

Landowners/tenants receive payments for completing approved conservation practices.

- Payments cover 95% of the standard cost for each practice.
- Practices that establish or enhance grassland and/or pollinator habitat will be given priority.

How do contracts work?

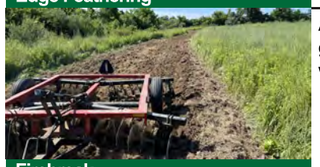
- Contracts will be administered by the NBGI and signed digitally.
- Contract terms range from 1-4 years.
- Most contracts are finalized within 3 months, so that work can begin quickly.

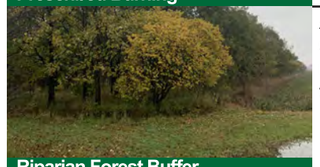
Where can I get help?

Wildlife Management Consultants are available to help you explore conservation options and create a custom plan for your land.

See back page for contact information.

Conservation Choices: Many conservation practices benefit both wildlife and producers. While even production-focused practices can help wildlife, small adjustments can make an even greater impact. Here are a few examples:

Conservation Practice	What Is It	Benefits To Wildlife	Benefits To Producers
Brush Management	The management or removal of woody (nonherbaceous or succulent) plants including those that are invasive and noxious.	Removes invasive or excessive woody vegetation, which allows native grasses and forbs to thrive. This creates better food sources, nesting areas, and cover for a variety of wildlife species.	Controls woody plants that compete with desirable vegetation, improving forage availability and accessibility for livestock. It also enhances overall land productivity and supports healthier, more resilient ecosystems.
Brush Pile	A mound or heap of woody vegetative material constructed to furnish wildlife cover.	Provides essential cover and shelter for a variety of wildlife species. Offers protection from predators and harsh weather. Creates microhabitats that support insects and fungi, thereby contributing to a healthy and diverse ecosystem.	Enhances biodiversity and supports natural pest control. Also repurposes excess woody material from woody vegetation removal, saving time and resources while contributing to healthier, more productive land.
Grass and Wildflower Planting	Establishing and maintaining permanent native grass and wildflower cover.	Supports wildlife and pollinators by establishing and maintaining permanent vegetative cover like native grasses and wildflowers. Provides nesting, brood-rearing, and shelter while also enhancing food availability for a variety of species.	Reduces soil erosion, improves soil health, and enhances water quality on lands not actively used for crops or grazing. Provides habitat for pollinators and other wildlife. Supports overall ecosystem services that can improve long-term land productivity.
Multi-Species Cover Crop	Grasses, legumes, and other forbs planted for seasonal vegetative cover.	Provide food and shelter for a variety of wildlife species, including birds, pollinators, and beneficial insects. Also improves habitat diversity by enhancing soil health and supporting the growth of native vegetation.	Improves soil health by increasing organic matter, enhancing soil structure, and boosting water infiltration and retention. Reduces erosion, suppresses weeds, and improves nutrient cycling, leading to healthier crops.
Successional Habitat	Manage plant succession to develop and maintain early successional habitat to benefit desired wildlife and/or natural communities.	Creates vital cover, nesting areas, and food sources for a variety of wildlife species, including birds, pollinators, and small mammals. Supports species that depend on young forests, native grasses, and wildflowers.	Improves forage availability and grazing conditions for livestock, while enhancing pollinator and wildlife habitat. These practices can increase overall land productivity and support ecosystem services that benefit agricultural operations.
Edge Feathering	A habitat management technique used to create a transitional zone between a forest and an open area, like a field or grassland.	Provides food, protection from predators, and safe travel corridors. Enhances biodiversity and encourages greater use by a variety of grassland and forest-edge wildlife.	Improves crop yields by increasing sunlight at field edges, reduces deer browsing by providing natural forage, enhances soil health through diverse plant species and reduced disturbance, and supports natural pest control and native pollination.
 Firebreak	A permanent or temporary strip of ground cleared to bare soil or planted with fire-resistant vegetation	Helps reduce the spread of wildfires, protecting critical habitats and preventing the loss of biodiversity. Firebreaks also promote the growth of fire-adapted plant species, benefiting wildlife by enhancing food and shelter availability.	Reduces wildfire spread, helps contain prescribed fires, and protects crops, livestock, and infrastructure. Improves soil health and land productivity.
Hedgerow Planting	Establishment of shrubs in a linear design to provide cover and food for wildlife.	Provides essential habitat for a wide variety of wildlife, offering food, shelter, and corridors for movement.	Provides natural windbreaks that protects crops, reduces soil erosion, and improves water retention. Offers habitat for beneficial wildlife, such as pollinators and pest predators, enhancing biodiversity and supporting land sustainability.

Conservation Practice	What Is It	Benefits To Wildlife	Benefits To Producers
Herbaceous Weed Treatment	The removal or control of herbaceous weeds including invasive, noxious, prohibited, or undesirable plants.	Reduces invasive plant species that outcompete native vegetation, thereby restoring habitat for native wildlife. Promotes the growth of native grasses and forbs, while improving food and cover availability. Supports diverse wildlife populations.	Enhances pasture and rangeland health by reducing invasive species that compete with desirable vegetation. Improves forage quality and quantity. Thus, boosting livestock productivity and supporting overall ecosystem resilience.
Natural Communities	Reestablishment of abiotic (physical and chemical) and biotic (biological) conditions necessary to support rare or declining natural assemblages of native plants and animals. Examples include glades, oak savannahs, and grass prairies.	Creates critical habitats for wildlife, supporting species that rely on these ecosystems for survival. Enhances environments, promotes biodiversity, improves ecosystem health, and provides vital resources for a range of native species.	Can increase the resilience of agricultural lands to extreme weather events. Restorations also help boost long-term land productivity and sustainability.
Native Pasture Planting	Establishing drought resistant native perennial plants suitable for pasture and hay production.	Provides essential food and cover for a variety of species. Promotes biodiversity by enhancing the structural diversity of plant communities, which supports a wide range of wildlife, from insects to birds and small mammals.	Improves forage productivity, leading to healthier livestock and increased production efficiency. Reduces soil erosion, improves water infiltration, and enhances overall land sustainability, benefiting both the producer and the environment.
Prescribed Burning	Planned fire applied to a predetermined area.	Helps maintain and restore native habitats by promoting the growth of plants that provide food and shelter for wildlife. Reduces invasive species, enhances plant diversity, and creates a healthier ecosystem that supports a range of wildlife species.	Helps improve forage quality by promoting the growth of beneficial grasses and controlling invasive species, leading to healthier pastures for livestock. Reduces the buildup of dead plant material, enhancing soil health and nutrient cycling.
 Riparian Forest Buffer	An area planted to trees and/or shrubs located adjacent to and up-gradient from a watercourse or water body.	Provides critical habitat for wildlife by offering shelter, food, and corridors for movement. Buffers also help improve water quality, benefiting aquatic species and creating a healthier ecosystem overall.	Reduces soil erosion, improves water quality, and filters pollutants before they reach waterways. Enhances soil health, supports biodiversity, and can increase the overall productivity and sustainability of agricultural operations.
Tree/Shrub Establishment	Establishing woody plants by planting, direct seeding, or through natural regeneration.	Provides essential habitat for wildlife by offering shelter, nesting sites, and food sources. Contributes to improved biodiversity, supporting a wide range of species, including birds, mammals, and pollinators.	Improves soil health, supports erosion control, and enhances water quality. Diversifies farm income through potential agroforestry practices, and increases resilience to extreme weather conditions.
Upland Habitat Management	Provide and manage upland habitats and connectivity within the landscape for wildlife.	Provides food, cover, and space needed by upland wildlife species to thrive. Helps improve habitat conditions by managing vegetation and land features that support the life cycles of native birds, mammals, and other upland species.	Enhances habitat for game and non-game species, which can lead to increased recreational opportunities and potential income. Supports overall ecosystem services that can improve long-term land productivity.
Windbreak/Shelterbelt	Establishing, enhancing, or renovating windbreaks, also known as shelterbelts, which are single or multiple rows of trees and/or shrubs in linear or curvilinear configurations.	Provides critical cover, nesting habitat, and travel corridors for a variety of wildlife species. Improves habitat connectivity across agricultural landscapes, supporting greater biodiversity and resilience.	Protects crops and livestock by reducing wind erosion, conserving soil moisture, and shielding against harsh weather. These practices can also improve energy efficiency and increase overall land productivity.