

Pheasants Forever - *The Habitat Organization*

2008 Accomplishments

FOOD PLOTS

Seed was provided for the planting of hundreds of acres of food plots in area counties. Dozens of landowners planted corn, grain sorghum, sunflowers, or winter survival mix comprised of corn, grain forage sorghum, sunflowers and buckwheat. The food plots provide a winter food and cover source for wildlife. Since starting this program in 1999 the chapter has provided seed to hundreds of landowners which have planted thousands of acres of food plots for wildlife!

HUNTING GROUND MAINTENANCE

The chapter continued a clean-up campaign on twelve area public hunting grounds. Chapter volunteers pick up trash cut brush and perform other maintenance duties at these sites. Signs have been installed to identify chapter sponsorship and encourage user cooperation.

CONTROLLED BURNS

The chapters' burn crew has provided landowners with controlled burns several hundred acres in 2008. The burns were completed to prepare land for planting dense nesting cover or to reinvigorate existing prairies. By using fire properly landowners are able to reduce seedbed preparation costs and significantly improve plant vigor.

ALDO LEOPOLD EDUCATION

The chapter expanded its presence in this national program for 2008. We sponsored 8 Winnebago County educators in a seminar held at the Mosquito Hill Recreation Area. These seminars educate teachers in time tested conservation practices that the educators can then pass on to others for years to come. Recently, Wisconsin was #1 in the nation in providing Aldo Leopold Scholarships.

HUNTING MAPS

Our Chapter worked with the Winnebago Land and Water Conservation Department and the Wisconsin DNR to update the Pheasants Forever Public Hunting Maps that were created three years ago. New this year we incorporated Fond du Lac County public hunting lands on the back side of the new map for 2008. These maps are now available. The maps proved to be one of the most requested publications at DNR offices. These are the lands that have been purchased with Stewardship Funds, and also several that our chapter has assisted the DNR in purchasing.

CONSERVATION CORNER

With the help of the Oshkosh Area Foundation, displays were set up in area businesses to facilitate the distribution of conservation education literature. These displays provide a collection of brochures related to land stewardship, water quality, wildlife habitat, forest management and other natural resource issues to the general public.

YOUTH DAY

The chapter conducted our 10th annual learn-to-Hunt Program at RW ranch outside of Oshkosh. Nearly 70 young people from 12 to 18 years old were able to learn about game management, gun safety, law enforcement and were able to get hands-on target shooting instruction from local sharpshooters. Later that day the participants enjoyed a mentored pheasant hunt in a controlled, safe and fun setting. The Youth Hunt continues to be one of our most popular activities.

SPONSORSHIPS

The chapter sponsored the Winnebago Conservation Club, the Butte des Morts Conservation Club, the Oshkosh Hunter Safety Program, Lake Poygan Sportsman's Club and helped purchase equipment for the Wisconsin DNR to help promote efforts in environmental education, the protection of natural resources, and hunter education.

LAND ACQUISITION

In 2008, we completed our third land purchase. What makes this acquisition unique is that we partnered with several other area conservation organizations to make it happen. Coupled with the two previous purchases we will have permanently protected and restored 134 acres of superb wildlife habitat right in our own back yard using just over \$60,000 of chapter funds. All lands purchased will be converted from marginal lands to high quality prairie and wetland and managed for optimal wildlife

habitat. The lands will be open to public access for hunting, hiking, bird watching, etc. Late in 2008 the chapter completed the donation of our first land purchase to the people of Wisconsin to be enjoyed and protected forever.

TREE AND SHRUB PLANTING

The Habitat Committee held its tree and shrub planting sale for the fifth year, with 175 packs sold, each holding 40 various trees and shrubs that are beneficial for all classes of wildlife and birds. The evergreens give upland game excellent winter cover, while the shrubs provide food. The Cranberry can hold over 1000 berries on one plant and it is especially beautiful in the fall. The Red Osier Dogwood has a wonderful red color all winter, which is lovely against the white snow. Last year we received orders from all over the State of Wisconsin and one from Michigan.

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Mission Statement

Pheasants Forever is a non-profit organization dedicated to the protection and enhancement of pheasant and other wildlife populations in North America through habitat improvement, land management, public awareness, and education.

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