

# Iowa Competitive State Wildlife Grant Project

## Restoration Incentives for Private Lands in the Driftless Region



Ruffed Grouse - Photo Credit Aaron Brees

Partnership with private land owners is vital for the success of conservation efforts across Iowa. Integrating creation of wildlife habitat into the land-use goals of private landowners expands the number of acres available to wildlife and creates habitat connectivity between private and public areas across the landscape. Habitat connectivity is important for increasing the diversity of species that can thrive throughout the state. In some cases the only factor inhibiting landowners from creating wildlife habitat is lack of direction for what type of habitat is needed and how to provide it.

### Project Goals:

- ◆ Provide financial incentives and technical assistance to private landowners
- ◆ Restore key habitat for species of conservation need
- ◆ Survey for Ruffed Grouse where observed in the past
- ◆ Document an increase in American Woodcock

### Restoration Accomplishments from 2009-2013

- ◆ Provided financial incentives to 76 landowners
- ◆ Developed 121 management plans to help private landowners provide young forest habitat important for Ruffed Grouse, American Woodcock, and other species of conservation need
- ◆ Conducted 6 training workshops with 116 attendees
- ◆ Provided one-on-one technical support to help landowners develop young forest habitat on their property
- ◆ One third of the landowners who attended training sessions worked with biologists and wildlife specialists to develop plans specific to their properties
- ◆ Completed 333 acres of edge feathering which creates thinner forest areas for species that are edge-dwelling
- ◆ Improved and maintained more than 1400 acres of aspen and timber and planted 390 acres of trees
- ◆ Surveyed Ruffed Grouse and redesigned survey techniques for this species to increase detection

### Wildlife Facts

- American Woodcocks and Ruffed Grouse live in early successional or young, thin forests and nest on the ground
- The American Woodcock uses its long beak to eat worms and insects from under the soil and has eyes high on its head to keep watch for predators while foraging
- The Ruffed Grouse is listed as a “Common Bird in Steep Decline” meaning although it is not rare, it has declined by 50% or more in the last 40 years.

Source: <http://www.allaboutbirds.org/Page.aspx?pid=1189>

American Woodcock - Photo Credit AJ Hands

