



Northern Iowa Wetland Complex



In 2008, Dale and Susan Helgeland placed 152 acres of cropped former pothole wetlands into the USDA-led Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP). The picture above left shows a portion of the land just after harvest of 2008, while the picture above right shows the property three years after restoration.

Three Iowa families with adjoining property lines recently combined efforts with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service and other conservation partners to restore pothole wetlands and upland prairie on former cropland and rough pasture, creating a 284-acre wildlife haven in northern Iowa.

- » The Helgeland family was the first to enroll their property into a permanent easement, in 2008, through the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP). Their 152-acre restoration was complete in 2012.
- » The DeWaards (72 acres) and Logemanns (60 acres), longtime family friends, enrolled their lands into the Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Program in 2011. Their restorations were complete in 2014.
- » The restorations included shallow water excavations, plugging surface drains, and drilling soil-specific native mixes containing species that would have been present prior to farming.
- » The native seed mixes used in the restorations included 50 to 70 species of grasses and forbs, depending on soil type.
- » The Iowa Department of Natural Resources played a major role in the WREP projects. They have since purchased the easements from the Helgelands and the DeWaards.
- » Ducks Unlimited, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, and US Fish and Wildlife Service also contributed to this unique complex.

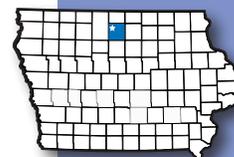
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Jason Moore

John Paulin

“When you put this many contiguous acres of core habitat together, it functions at a much higher level than just one small easement surrounded by row crops.”



John Paulin,
NRCS
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