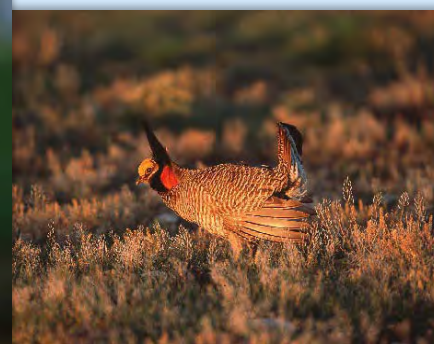


Midwest Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies Annual Directors' Meeting

June 28, 2011
Centerville, IA

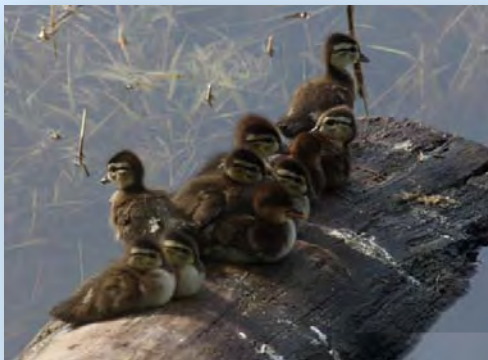


Thomas Christensen
Regional Conservationist - Central

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The NRCS Initiative Approach:

- Partnership driven and builds on existing locally led efforts
- Dedicated funding to accelerate implementation
- Science-based
- Assessment of performance and outcomes



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The NRCS Initiative Approach:

- Raise awareness to stimulate interest
- Target resources to optimize efficiency and effectiveness
 - Right Practices
 - Right Places
 - Right Results
- Utilize additional resources from partners to expand capacity
- Promote conservation implementation through a “systems approach”
- Dedicated funding in addition to base program = acceleration
- Monitoring, evaluation and modeling to determine outcomes

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NRCS Initiatives that address wildlife concerns:

- Great Lakes Restoration (EPA funded)
- Lesser Prairie Chicken
- Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds
- Ogallala Aquifer
- Sage Grouse



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NRCS Initiatives that address wildlife concerns:

- Great Lakes Restoration (EPA funded)
 - **Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin**
 - EQIP, WHIP, FRPP, EWP-FPE, and CTA
 - Invasive terrestrial species control
 - Near-shore ecosystem health
 - Wetland wildlife habitat restoration and protection
 - \$34 M allocated to States in FY 2010 (2 yr. funds)
 - \$71.9 allocated to States in FY 2011 (2 yr. funds)

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NRCS Initiatives that address wildlife habitat concerns:

- Lesser Prairie Chicken
 - Colorado, **Kansas**, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas
 - EQIP, WHIP, and GRP
 - Curb declines in population by reducing risks
 - Increase suitable habitat
 - Expand current range of the species
 - Improve health of rangelands
 - \$8 M allocated to States in FY 2010
 - \$11 M allocated to States in FY 2011

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NRCS Initiatives that address wildlife concerns:

- Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds
 - Arkansas, **Kentucky**, **Illinois**, **Indiana**, **Iowa**, Louisiana, **Minnesota**, Mississippi, **Missouri**, **Ohio**, **South Dakota**, Tennessee, and **Wisconsin**
 - CCPI (EQIP, WHIP, CSP) and WREP
 - Restore and protect wetlands
 - Reduce nutrient and sediment loads in streams that support aquatic wildlife
 - Enhance and restore wetland and upland wildlife habitats
 - \$32 M allocated to the States in FY 2010
 - \$40 M allocated to States in FY 2011

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NRCS Initiatives that address wildlife concerns:

- Ogallala Aquifer
 - Colorado, **Kansas**, **Nebraska**, New Mexico, Oklahoma, **South Dakota**, Texas, and Wyoming
 - EQIP
 - Reduce depletion of aquifer and river flows
 - Reduce threats to whooping cranes, piping plovers, and least terns by restoring streams and playas which provide aquifer recharge
 - \$13 M allocated in FY 2010
 - \$12 M allocated in FY 2011

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NRCS Initiatives that address wildlife concerns:

- Sage Grouse
 - California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, **North Dakota**, Oregon, **South Dakota**, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming
 - EQIP, WHIP, FRPP, WRP
 - Curb declines in population by reducing risks
 - Increase suitable habitat
 - Expand current range of the species
 - Improve health of rangelands
 - \$17 M allocated to the States in FY 2010
 - \$48 M allocated to the States in FY 2011

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How can MAFWA help?

Strategic Watershed Actions Teams (SWATs):

- Partner contributions are needed to fund SWATs in each initiative
- Partner assistance is needed in training and guidance for the SWATs to ensure consistent, high-quality technical assistance is provided

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How can MAFWA help?

Consistent Species Habitat Assessment Tools:

- NRCS needs landscape-scale electronic habitat assessment tools
- Assessment tools are needed across each initiative that all State agencies concur with

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How can MAFWA help?

Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Partner contributions are needed to fund monitoring and evaluation of each initiative's impacts on wildlife
- NRCS needs on-site, mid-level, and broad-scale monitoring and evaluation that all State agencies concur with and are willing to share data to show outcomes at the landscape scale

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How can MAFWA help?

Science and Technology:

- NRCS is striving to use the latest science-based technology to address wildlife concerns
- Species such as the Lesser prairie-chicken are lacking in research that clearly tells us what impacts the bird positively and negatively
- NRCS has begun to fund impartial science advisors to fill the research “gaps” and help us evaluate our conservation efforts in order to make adaptive management changes to our conservation practice standards that benefit the species. Partner contributions are needed to help fund science advisors in some initiatives

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How can MAFWA help?

Outreach and Information:

- Partner promotion of these initiatives is needed to expand participation
- MRBI CCPI and WREP Partner proposals will be needed in FY 2012
 - Eight MRBI Focus Area Watersheds have no partner projects

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How can MAFWA help?

Capacity building:

- Partner contributions are needed to work with other agencies and private enterprise to increase the support leveraged toward technical and financial assistance being provided through NRCS programs
- Partners can assist with increasing market based incentives and the promotion of economic benefits of wildlife conservation

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Questions?

