Loess Hills Development and Conservation Authority
712 S. Hwy. 6 & 59
Oakland, Iowa 51560-0189
Phone (712) 482-3029
Fax (712) 482-5590
Email: marylou@goldenhillsrcd.org

December 21, 2012

Vince Sitzmann
Division of Soil Conservation
Wallace State Office Bldg.
Des Moines, IA 50319

Dear Mr. Sitzmann:

The Loess Hills Development & Conservation Authority requested information on the programs and projects funded through the Environment First Fund from Hungry Canyons Alliance and the Loess Hills Alliance. Copies of their report are enclosed for your review.

The Hungry Canyons Alliance is concerned with stream stabilization projects in 23 western Iowa counties. Stream stabilization projects protect bridges and other infrastructure including roadways, utilities and pipelines. The focus of the Loess Hills Alliance is to protect special natural and cultural resources in the seven counties of deep loess bordering the Missouri River.

If you need further information, please contact myself or Liz Birkel-Leddy at Golden Hills RC&D.

Sincerely,

Bernie Bolton

Bernie Bolton
Chairman
Loess Hills Development and Conservation Authority

Enc.

All programs and services are offered on a non-discriminatory basis without regards to race, color, national origin, religion, age, marital status or handicap.

Hungry Canyons Alliance
712 S. Hwy. 6 & 59
Oakland, Iowa 51560-0189
Phone (712) 482-3029
Fax (712) 482-5590
Email: john@goldenhillsrcd.org

December 21, 2012

Vince Sitzmann
Division of Soil Conservation
Wallace State Office Bldg.
Des Moines, IA 50319

Dear Mr. Sitzmann:

The purpose of the Hungry Canyons Alliance (HCA) is to focus attention on the problems of, and develop solutions related to, stream channel degradation in the loess soil region of western Iowa. The primary goal of the HCA is to provide financial and technical assistance for streambed stabilization, protecting bridges and other infrastructure.

Enclosed are the following documents:

- A short written narrative describing the HCA program.
- A list of accomplishments for FY2012 and projected activities for FY2013.
- A list of projects that have been approved by the HCA and are in progress, including project number (the first two digits indicates the fiscal year during which the project was approved), county, location by stream, total cost of each project, and funds obligated for the project.
- A list of small structure projects, funded with interest earned on state and county funds, including project number (the first two digits indicates the fiscal year during which the project was approved), landowner name, county, location by stream, total cost of each project, and funds obligated for the project.
- The approved HCA budget for FY2013.
- A list and graph of federal, state, and local funds given to the HCA.

Each dollar invested in an HCA project protects on average more than $4.20 of property value and one ton of sediment. The HCA appreciates the funding received from the Environment First Fund and the opportunities it provides in the protection of public and private property.

We hope the governor and general assembly remain aware of the stream erosion problem that is globally unique to western Iowa and continue to place a priority on appropriating funds each year to the HCA. The federal government needs to see that the state of Iowa supports this program by providing matching funds.

We will be happy to provide additional information at your request.

Sincerely,

John T. Thomas, Project Director
Hungry Canyons Alliance

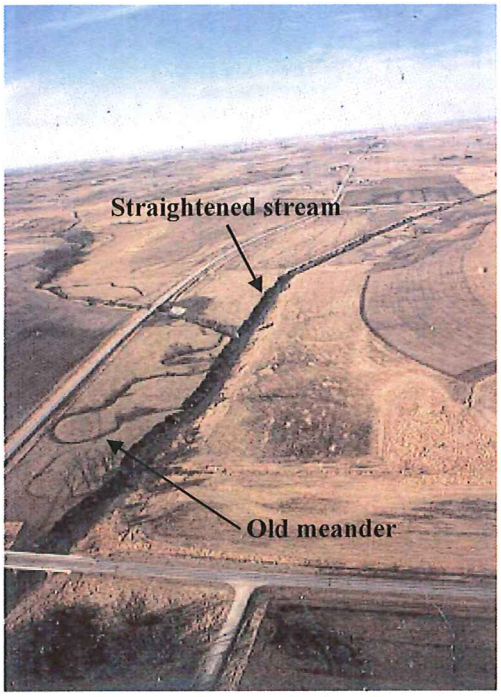
All Hungry Canyons programs and services are offered on a non-discriminatory basis without regards to race, color, national origin, religion, age, marital status, or handicap.

HUNGRY CANYONS ALLIANCE

The Problem

23 counties eligible for Hungry Canyons Alliance cost share.

The Hungry Canyons Alliance (HCA) was formed locally to research and implement solutions to the problem of stream channel erosion and degradation in a 23 county area of the deep loess soils region of western Iowa. Channelization of streams and land use changes during the first half of the 1900's caused stream channels to erode, causing an estimated $1.1 billion in damages to public and private infrastructure (bridges, culverts, utility lines, etc.), loss of farmland, and increased sediment loads. A survey of western Iowa bridges in 2000 revealed that 404 were endangered due to stream channel degradation. Golden Hills RC&D in Oakland, Iowa helped to form and currently provides office space and administrative assistance to the Hungry Canyons Alliance.

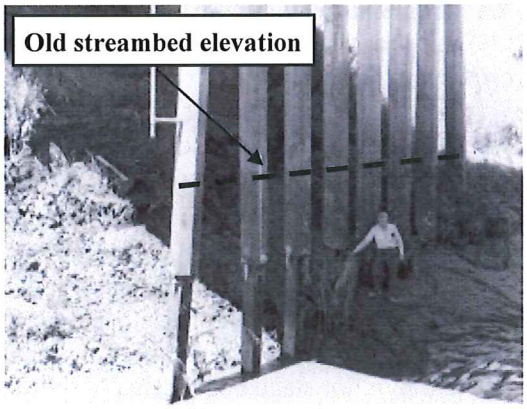


Straightened versus meandering stream. (Walnut Creek, Pottawattamie County).

The Solution

A proven, affordable solution to this problem is to build grade control structures in streams. Grade control structures (GCS) at regular intervals help streams stabilize by changing their longitudinal profile from an erosive steep incline to a stable stair-step pattern. Streambed stabilization is the key to preventing further erosion and protecting infrastructure. GCS design is largely dependent on drainage area. Small drainage areas can often be controlled with reinforced concrete box (RCB) or corrugated metal pipe (CMP) culverts with drop inlets and/or flume outlets. Large drainage areas are often controlled with weirs constructed with steel sheet pile, driven into the streambed, with a riprap and concrete grout slope immediately downstream, a riprap stilling basin downstream of the weir slope, and riprap covered banks. Both RCB/CMP and weir designs allow the stream elevation to drop in a controlled setting, restore lost stream grade, prevent further degradation, and reduce streambed slope upstream creating a calm backwater condition where silt can settle out, decreasing sediment loads and turbidity and increasing water quality. Sediment re-deposited upstream also helps support exposed bridge pilings.

The Savings



Bridge endangered by exhumation of pilings.

The HCA provides state and federal money available to the 23 counties through a cost share program for grade control structures (GCS). County governments provide a minimum of 20% match for each GCS. Since 1992, the program has provided $22.3 million in state and federal appropriations and the technical assistance needed to complete 338 GCS in 19 counties in western Iowa. Another 21 GCS are in progress. These GCS will protect an estimated $84.8 million in property value. It is estimated that 651.6 acres of land, equivalent to 22.8 million tons of sediment, will be protected from erosion by construction of the 359 GCS. HCA grade control structures, with an average cost of $65,000, protect approximately $236,300 in property per GCS. **For every $1 invested in HCA grade control structures, on average more than $4.20 of property value and one ton of sediment are protected from streambed degradation.** During FY 2012, the HCA

approved 10 GCS for cost share and completed construction on another 11.

A second HCA program provides funding to landowners where grade control is necessary to stabilize active gully erosion. This program is funded with the interest earned from state appropriations. This program has built 113, and approved another one, structures for a total cost share of $770,160.

The HCA has quarterly meetings at which issues concerning stream erosion and streambed stabilization are discussed. Regular attendees include county engineers, county supervisors, NRCS employees, SWCD commissioners, DNR fisheries biologists, engineer consultants, contractors, and landowners.

Over 1,000 GCS of all types have been constructed in western Iowa by county governments, the HCA, NRCS, NRCS-EWP, SWCD, Iowa DOT, cities, utility (water, gas, telephone, electric, etc.) companies, railroad companies, Army Corps of Engineers, Iowa DNR, and landowners. With so many GCS located in one area, western Iowa has been referred to as a "laboratory" for GCS design. Because western Iowa is still experiencing streambed degradation, the HCA is one of the unheralded leaders in innovative GCS research, design, and construction.

Top: Sheet pile weir with a 20:1 grouted riprap slope in Crawford County. Bottom: RCB flume with 25 feet of fall in Fremont County.

Matching Federal Funding for 2007-2008 Flood Recovery

Abnormally heavy precipitation throughout 2007 and 2008, particularly in May 2007 and June 2008, compounded by the ongoing channel instability, highly erodible loess soils, and steep stream gradients, maximized the erosive power of southwestern Iowa streams resulting in widespread stream channel damage endangering or destroying county road infrastructure. However, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), NRCS, HCA, and counties have all seen evidence that GCS have directly reduced infrastructure and channel damage costs and in numerous instances the number of FEMA and EWP Program claims. Infrastructure protected by GCS had no damage and the vast majority of GCS were undamaged. Although some GCS suffered minor damage, damages were minimal compared to the total loss of bridges that may have resulted without the GCS.

Federal NRCS-EWP funding was available, but required 25% local match. However, local governments were hurting financially. The HCA agreed to provide 10% match (using state cost share) for all EWP projects which provided grade control or were directly associated with existing GCS projects in order to complete as many projects as possible and reduce the counties' burden to 15% match. A total of 72 GCS projects were completed between September 2008 and January 2011 at a cost of **$12.83 million. The EWP program provided $9.50 million in cost share, the HCA $1.28 million, and the sponsor counties $2.05 million**. This influx of funding for construction came at the perfect time to also help stimulate western Iowa's economy.

HCA quarterly meetings served as important forums for the NRCS and county officials to discuss the EWP program. The HCA also provided technical assistance to the counties by documenting which aspects of past GCS designs have worked and what new techniques could be used to enhance performance of GCS.

HCA Research

Completed HCA research projects include design of GCS to provide fish passage and use of scrap tires in GCS. Ongoing research projects include aerial stream video and classification of western Iowa streams, knickpoint migration study, use of directional drilling in small watershed GCS projects, and a project to relate and monitor stage and discharge on western Iowa streams. Partners in these projects include: NRCS, Iowa DOT Highway Research Board, IIHR–Hydroscience and Engineering at the University of Iowa, Natural Resource Ecology and Management at Iowa State University, Civil Engineering at Iowa State University, Iowa DNR, US Geological Survey, and US Fish and Wildlife Service.

For further information, please contact: John Thomas, Project Director, Hungry Canyons Alliance, Golden Hills RC&D Office, 712 S. Hwy. 6 & 59, P.O. Box 189, Oakland, IA 51560-0189 Ph: 712-482-3029 Fax: 712-482-5590 Cell: 402-250-3293 Email: john@goldenhillsrcd.org

Hungry Canyons Alliance

I. Project Overview

A. Purpose:

- Focus attention on the problems of, and develop solutions related to, stream channel degradation in the deep loess region of western Iowa.

B. Needs:

- 404 bridges susceptible to significant damage from stream degradation in 2000 (from correspondence with county engineers and Iowa DOT study).

C. Goals:

- Provide financial and technical assistance to construct grade control structures (GCS) in 23 counties in western Iowa.
- Conduct research and provide demonstration for members.

II. Progress Report (1992-2012)

A. HCA Structures as of 12-21-12:

1. GCS approved:	359
2. GCS completed:	338
3. GCS in progress:	21

B. HCA Costs as of 12-21-12:

1. Total costs:	$ 23,332,207
2. Total HCA cost share spent:	$ 16,317,342
3. Total HCA cost share obligated:	$ 1,098,300
4. Cost share per structure:	$ 48,512
5. Counties share of total cost spent:	$ 5,138,017
6. Counties share of total cost obligated:	$ 778,548

C. HCA Benefits as of 12-21-12:

1. Total property protected:	$ 84,828,833
2. Property protected per structure:	$ 236,292

For every $1 invested in Hungry Canyons Alliance grade control structures (GCS), an average of more than $4.20 of property value and more than one ton of sediment are protected.

Match for EWP Program:
Eighteen (18) western Iowa counties were declared eligible for federal disaster assistance due to severe rains in May 2007 and June 2008 which caused flooding and stream channel damage, endangering or destroying county infrastructure. The NRCS-EWP program provided cost share for new GCS and repairs to existing GCS. In order to complete as many EWP projects as possible while the money was available to western Iowa, the HCA agreed to provide 10% of the match, reducing the counties match to 15%, for any EWP projects which provided grade control or were directly associated with existing GCS projects. The state appropriated $100,000 to the HCA for FY10 specifically for this purpose.

D. EWP Structures and Costs as of 5-1-11:

1. GCS completed:	72
2. Total costs:	$ 12,837,731
3. Total HCA cost share spent:	$ 1,282,640
4. Total NRCS cost share spent:	$ 9,504,865
5. Total counties share spent:	$ 2,050,226

III. Funding Summary (1992-2012)

A. Total Appropriations:

1. Federal:	$ 11,944,394
2. State:	$ 10,401,334
3. Total:	$ 22,345,728
4. County share:	$ 6,780,065

B. Funds Needed:

Total needed to reach goal of protecting 180 bridges: $11.7 million

- Annual appropriations of $0.9 million ($0.45 million in state funds, $0.45 million in federal funds) for 12.9 more years (assuming no disastrous floods)

IV. Accomplishments of the Past Year

A. Approved cost share for 10 county GCS and 4 small GCS for landowners.

B. Completed construction of 11 county GCS and 6 small GCS for landowners.

C. Completed all EWP GCS and provided 10% match.

D. Held four successful quarterly meetings, including two tours.

E. Trip to Washington D.C. by HCA representatives to request funding for HCA program.

F. Published research paper about fish passage over GCS in western Iowa.

G. Continued research project with the University of Iowa's IIHR-Hydroscience and Engineering Department, to examine the mechanics of actively migrating headcuts and knickpoints for different flow conditions, done in partnership with the Iowa DOT Highway Research Board.

H. Continued research project with the University of Iowa's IIHR-Hydroscience and Engineering Department, to install a semi-permanent stream gage network on 11 ungaged streams in the deep loess area of western Iowa and develop stage-discharge relationships for these streams, done in partnership with the Iowa DOT Highway Research Board.

V. Strategy for the Coming Year

A. Continue to protect infrastructure and prevent soil loss by providing federal and state cost share to county governments and private landowners for stream erosion control projects.

B. Continue providing education to students and public about the fragility of loess soils and river channel stability and processes.

C. Continue cooperation with Iowa DNR Fisheries Division and US Fish and Wildlife Service to build grade control structures that allow fish migration.

D. Continue monitoring of initial five, and build at least one more, experimental, cost-effective, grade control structures called bored headcut basins, which control 30+ feet deep gully headcuts with small drainage areas in the Loess Hills in conjunction with the USDA-NRCS.

E. Continue research on the mechanics of headcut and knickpoint migration.

F. Continue to install a stream gage network and develop stage-discharge relationships for western Iowa streams.

G. Continue aerial classification of streams and with the help of GIS, locate areas of active erosion and determine the impact of HCA grade control structures. Copy aerial classification video onto DVDs and hand them out to counties and NRCS offices.

H. If requested, continue to provide technical assistance to Nebraska to help them form a grassroots organization like the HCA to provide cost share for streambed degradation there.

Hungry Canyons Projects in Progress as of 12-20-12

Federal Funds

Project #	County	Stream	Total Cost	Requested Share	County Share	Agreement Date
Federal Total			$ -	$ -	$ -	

State Funds

Project #	County	Stream	Total Cost	Requested Share	County Share	Agreement Date
06-1	Montgomery	Walnut Crk.	$ 150,000.00	$ 120,000.00	$ 30,000.00	12/31/2013
08-2 (2)	Mills	Farm Crk.	$ 340,765.80	$ 17,909.82	$ 280,765.80	9/30/2013
09-5	Woodbury	Lit. Sioux R. Trib.	$ 24,000.00	$ 15,000.00	$ 9,000.00	12/31/2013
10-4	Guthrie	Brushy Crk. Trib.	$ 50,825.00	$ 40,660.00	$ 10,165.00	12/31/2013
10-5	Guthrie	Lone Grove Crk.	$ 37,650.00	$ 30,120.00	$ 7,530.00	12/31/2013
10-6	Guthrie	S. Raccoon R. Trib.	$ 35,760.00	$ 28,608.00	$ 7,152.00	12/31/2013
10-7	Guthrie	Brushy Crk. Trib.	$ 25,625.00	$ 20,500.00	$ 5,125.00	12/31/2013
11-1	Woodbury	Dutch Crk. Trib.	$ 37,500.00	$ 30,000.00	$ 7,500.00	12/31/2013
11-6	Woodbury	Reynolds Crk. Trib.	$ 15,500.00	$ 12,400.00	$ 3,100.00	12/31/2013
11-9	Woodbury	Elliott Crk.	$ 13,600.00	$ 9,000.00	$ 4,600.00	12/31/2013
11-10	Woodbury	Big Whiskey Crk.	$ 14,800.00	$ 8,650.00	$ 6,150.00	12/31/2013
11-12	Ida	Soldier R. Trib.	$ 100,000.00	$ 80,000.00	$ 20,000.00	12/31/2013
12-1	Ida	Maple R. Trib.	$ 120,000.00	$ 96,000.00	$ 24,000.00	12/31/2013
12-2	Ida	Maple R. Trib.	$ 70,000.00	$ 56,000.00	$ 14,000.00	12/31/2013
12-3	Pottawattamie	Graybill Crk. Trib.	$ 6,800.00	$ 5,440.00	$ 1,360.00	12/31/2013
12-6	Crawford	Willow Crk. Trib.	$ 70,000.00	$ 56,000.00	$ 14,000.00	12/31/2013
12-7	Taylor	W. Fk. 102 R.	$ 376,000.00	$ 168,000.00	$ 208,000.00	12/31/2013
13-1	Montgomery	E. Nishnabotna R. Trib.	$ 37,500.00	$ 30,000.00	$ 7,500.00	12/31/2013
13-2	Pottawattamie	Mosquito Crk. Trib.	$ 27,612.00	$ 22,012.00	$ 5,600.00	12/31/2013
13-4	Carroll	W. Nishnabotna R.	$ 300,000.00	$ 200,000.00	$ 100,000.00	12/31/2014
13-5	Crawford	Paradise Crk. Trib.	$ 65,000.00	$ 52,000.00	$ 13,000.00	12/31/2014
State Total			$ 1,918,937.80	$ 1,098,299.82	$ 778,547.80	
Total Federal & State			$ 1,918,937.80	$ 1,098,299.82	$ 778,547.80	

Stream Profile Surveys

Project #	County	Stream	Total Cost	Requested Share	County Share	Agreement Date
Total			$ -	$ -	$ -	

Hungry Canyons Alliance Small Structure projects in progress as of 12-19-12

Project #	*Name*	*County*	*Location/Notes*	*Total cost*	*HCA Cost Share*	*Agreement Date*
12-129	Vincent Willey	Monona	Beaver Crk. Trib.	$ 56,950.00	$ 8,500.00	12/31/2013
Totals				$ 56,950.00	$ 8,500.00	

12/21/2012

Hungry Canyons Alliance
FY2013 Budget
July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013

I. Available funds	State	Interest	County	Federal
A. New appropriations ($200,000 to $380,000)	$ 393,750			$ -
B. Unexpended state appropriations (pre-FY2012)	$ 1,207,928			
C. Unexpended interest (5/24/11)		$ 181,521		
D. County fees reserves (5/24/11)			$ 198,063	
Total available funds	$ 1,601,678	$ 181,521	$ 198,063	$ -

II. Expenses from state and federal appropriations				
A. NRCS administration				
1. NRCS 5% administration				$ -
B. Available for projects				
1. HCA county structures	$ 1,477,632			$ -
C. HCA administration				
1. LHDCA administrative expenses from state appropriations (1.5%)	$ 5,906			
2. GHRC&D administrative expenses (5% of previous fiscal year approp.)	$ 17,813	$ 7,187	$ 10,000	
3. Staff (salary, benefits)	$ 15,656	$ 1,344	$ 58,000	$ -
D. Research and education				
1. Research, education, & development (GIS, special projects, stream table, other)	$ 3,000			
2. Stage-discharge study misc.	$ 9,000			
3. Knickpoint Study - HCA misc.	$ 1,000			
4. Aerial video reconnaissance - HCA	$ 5,000			
5. GIS to GPS, Classification - UofI-IIHR	$ 25,671			
6. Video development	$ -			
7. Road signs	$ 1,000			
8. Stream profile surveys	$ 10,000			
9. Experimental Bored Headcut Basin Terrace	$ 20,000			
10. Experimental Scrap Tire Structure	$ 10,000			
III. Expenses from interest fund				
A. Available for projects				
1. HCA small structures		$ 25,500		
IV. Expenses from county fees				
A. Administration				
1. Insurance			$ 550	
2. Supplies/equipment (computer, camera, cell phone, etc.)			$ 1,500	
3. Postage			$ 750	
4. Office / field assistants			$ 2,000	
5. Meeting expenses & travel			$ 2,000	
6. Conferences/training			$ 1,000	
7. Subscriptions, books, media			$ 150	
8. Miscellaneous (cards, awards, etc.)			$ 100	
B. Lobbying				
1. State Lobbyist			$ 7,500	
2. Lobbying trips (DC trip, Des Moines trip)			$ 5,000	
C. Services to counties				
1. Services (web page, maps, etc.)			$ 450	
V. Expenses from federal administration fund				
A. Administration				
1. LHDCA administrative expenses from federal appropriations (1.5%)				$ -
Subtotal of expenses (no county structures)	$ 124,046	$ 34,031	$ 89,000	$ -
Total budgeted expenses	$ 1,601,678	$ 34,031	$ 89,000	$ -

Hungry Canyons Alliance

Funding Summary

1992 - 2013

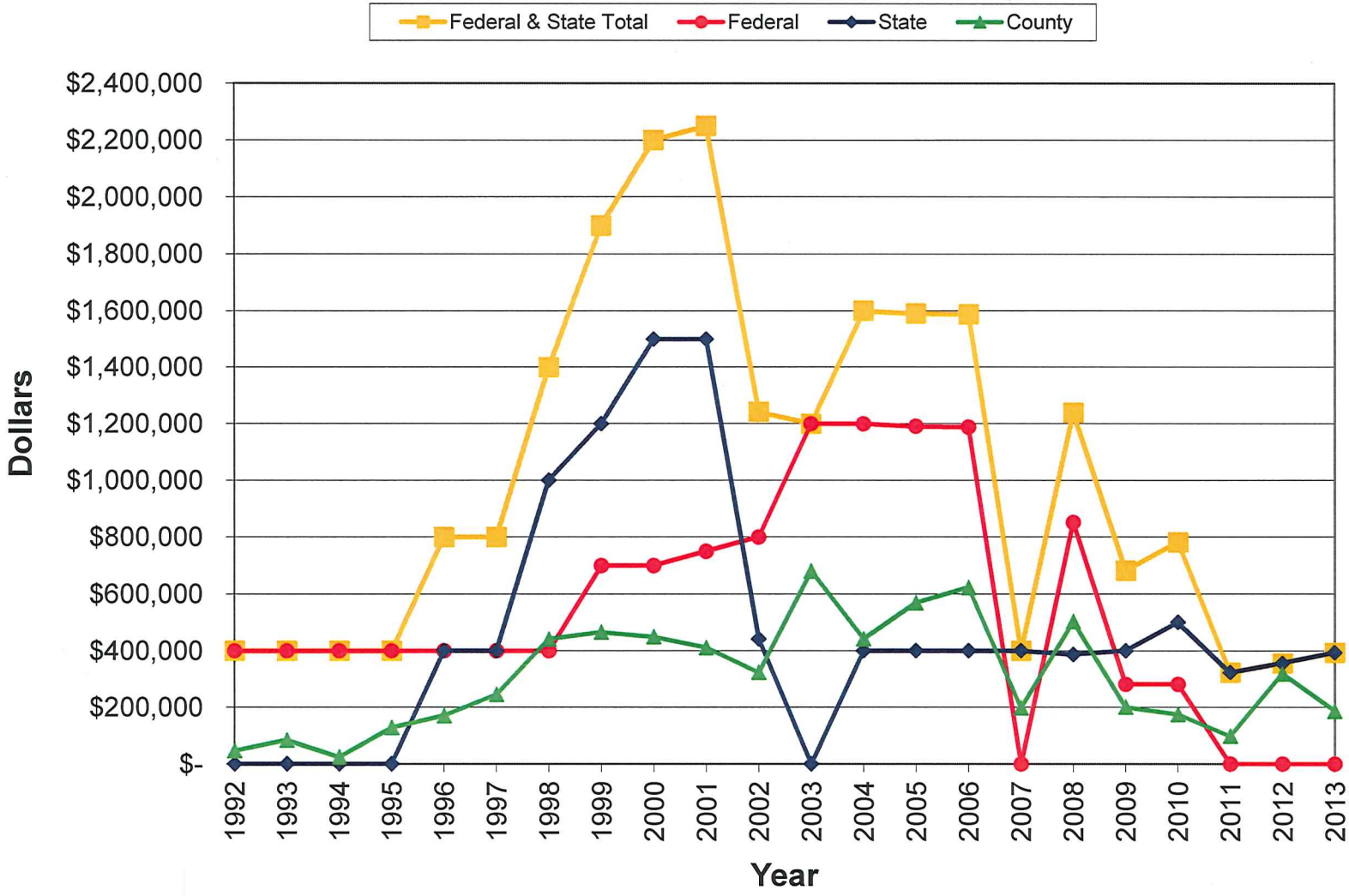
Year	Federal Funds Appropriated	State Funds Appropriated	County Share	County Fee	Total Contribution	County Total
1992	$ 400,000	$ -	$ 46,233	$ -	$ 446,233	$ 46,233
1993	$ 400,000	$ -	$ 84,694	$ -	$ 484,694	$ 84,694
1994	$ 400,000	$ -	$ 2,079	$ 22,000	$ 424,079	$ 24,079
1995	$ 400,000	$ -	$ 100,176	$ 28,000	$ 528,176	$ 128,176
1996	$ 400,000	$ 400,000	$ 142,382	$ 28,000	$ 970,382	$ 170,382
1997	$ 400,000	$ 400,000	$ 214,754	$ 30,000	$ 1,044,754	$ 244,754
1998	$ 400,000	$ 1,000,000	$ 412,602	$ 28,000	$ 1,840,602	$ 440,602
1999	$ 700,000	$ 1,200,000	$ 429,072	$ 36,250	$ 2,365,322	$ 465,322
2000	$ 700,000	$ 1,500,000	$ 405,453	$ 43,750	$ 2,649,203	$ 449,203
2001	$ 750,000	$ 1,500,000	$ 370,944	$ 40,000	$ 2,660,944	$ 410,944
2002	$ 800,000	$ 441,667	$ 267,603	$ 55,000	$ 1,564,270	$ 322,603
2003	$ 1,200,000	$ -	$ 643,244	$ 37,500	$ 1,880,744	$ 680,744
2004	$ 1,200,000	$ 400,000	$ 401,634	$ 40,000	$ 2,041,634	$ 441,634
2005	$ 1,190,400	$ 400,000	$ 526,263	$ 42,500	$ 2,159,163	$ 568,763
2006	$ 1,188,000	$ 400,000	$ 580,113	$ 42,500	$ 2,210,613	$ 622,613
2007	$ -	$ 400,000	$ 146,743	$ 51,000	$ 597,743	$ 197,743
2008	$ 851,994	$ 386,667	$ 446,910	$ 56,000	$ 1,741,571	$ 502,910
2009	$ 282,000	$ 400,000	$ 144,560	$ 56,000	$ 882,560	$ 200,560
2010	$ 282,000	$ 500,000	$ 119,037	$ 56,000	$ 957,037	$ 175,037
2011	$ -	$ 323,000	$ 41,350	$ 57,000	$ 421,350	$ 98,350
2012	$ -	$ 356,250	$ 261,360	$ 57,000	$ 674,610	$ 318,360
2013	$ -	$ 393,750	$ 129,360	$ 57,000	$ 580,110	$ 186,360
Total	$ 11,944,394	$ 10,401,334	$ 5,916,565	$ 863,500	$ 29,125,792	$ 6,780,065

= Estimated amount of federal appropriation, not known until appropriation bill passage

= This figure is not completely known until the end of the fiscal year

= This figure is only an estimate until projects are completed

Hungry Canyons Alliance Funding



FY-2012 LOESS HILLS ALLIANCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

The Loess Hills Alliance Executive Committee received a large decrease in available funds in FY-2011 the funding was reduced again in State FY-2012. We did our best to use those funds wisely as well as leverage with funds from other sources. The funds were used as follows:

- $23,250 was made available for administrative purposes such as board meetings and secretarial expenses.
- $33,000 was allocated equally to the three standing committees – Economic Development, Protection, and Stewardship.

The Executive Committee did, in fact, help fund one Board Approved-Committee Applied (BACA) grant in 2011 that was delayed due to the flooding along the Missouri River and continued to completion in 2012.

- Board Approved-Committee Applied (BACA)--$33,600 It is a grant to the Economic Development Committee Project titled Recreation Promotion in the Loess Hills. This was completed in 2012.

In addition to the above monetary items, the Executive Committee is working to promote our services through multiple venues.

- A new Comprehensive Plan was completed and put to use in 2012. This has been done to bring better focus to the actions of the Loess Hills Alliance and bring new energy to reach goals.

- An updated Loess Hills Alliance web site is near completion. This will increase public awareness of the Loess Hills region and resources. It will also allow for better communication between committees and Loess Hills Alliance members. This web site goes hand in hand with the recently completed Comprehensive Plan.

- The Loess Hills Alliance hosted a Legislative open house in Des Moines to showcase projects that have been done through the different committees as well as a collaborative effort with other organizations, municipalities, counties, private land owners, and agencies working within the region.

We also have to step back occasionally and make certain the work of all the Loess Hills Alliance committees falls within the parameters of our mission statement which is: *To protect the natural and cultural resources of the Loess Hills while ensuring economic viability and private property rights through the creation of a common vision for Iowa's Loess Hills* and go hand in hand with the Comprehensive Plan.

Cara Morgan
Loess Hills Alliance Chairman

Loess Hills Alliance
Economic Development Committee
FY 2012 Annual Report

MISSION

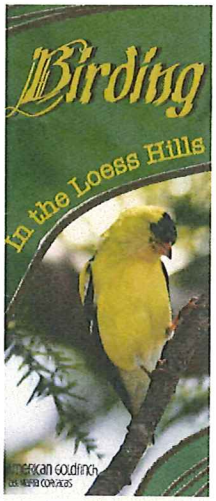
The Economic Development Committee worked this year to meet the goals set forth in our mission. It is our endeavor to enhance the economy of the Loess Hills region by:

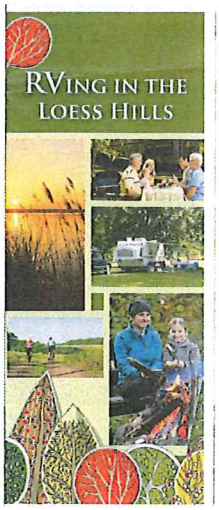
*Providing grant assistance to small businesses and community attractions as decided by committee members.
*Increasing visitor traffic at recreation facilities, events and area attractions.
*Offering education and technical assistance to business and government agencies.

The committee consists of representatives from economic development, conservation, recreation, convention and visitors bureaus, elected officials on local and federal levels, and small businesses and tourist attractions. The committee meets monthly at a central location.

BACA

The committee completed the BACA project that allowed videography, advertising, tear off maps, and brochures to be made showcasing the entire Loess Hills region. The videos will be available on YouTube and can be utilized to show and promote attractions in the Loess Hills. Copies of the videos are also being made available to each county in the region for self promotional purposes. The tear off maps will be placed at welcome centers, hotels, etc. so the recreational maps of the area can be picked up and utilized by travelers. The advertising was placed in The Throttler and Birdwatcher and Iowa Outdoors magazines. Brochures were made featuring birding, motorcycling and RVing. The brochures will also be available on the Loess Hills Alliance website.

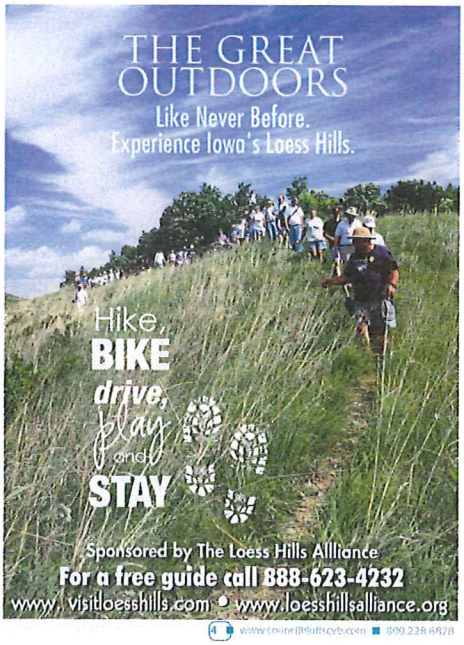




ADVERTISING

The committee places a high priority on advertising the Loess Hills businesses and attractions. The advertising was placed in numerous publications that allow information about the Loess Hills to reach into others states as well as here in Iowa. Once again an ad

was placed in the Western Iowa Tourism Region Cooperative Advertising Insert. This is distributed to 515,000 homes as a newspaper insert in MN, SD, NE, KS, MO and central Iowa. Ads were also placed in:
Sioux City Visitors guide
Council Bluffs Visitors Guide
Omaha World Herald (July & August inserts)
Our Iowa
Iowan



FULFILLMENT

The Western Iowa Tourism Region receives and fulfills requests for information about the Loess Hills and the Alliance. For the Fiscal Year running July 1, 2011-June30, 2012 fulfillment pieces mailed on behalf of the Alliance was 5,643

Loess Hills Alliance
Maintaining the Balance

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Please call ahead if you need to fax
E-mail: lha@longlines.com

Loess Hills Alliance
Protection Committee Projects Report
FY 2012

Loess Hills Alliance and other non-profit organizations are working in the region to balance development and permanent protection. Together, these organizations partner to restore native vegetation, protect cultural resources, educate landowners and the public and minimize human impact to significant areas. We all strive to promote the unique history and characteristics of the landscape.

The Protection Committee allowed $33,000 to be offered for grants this year. Listed here are projects funded by the *Protection Committee* of the LHA from FY 2012.

2012 RFP Funded Projects

1. Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation: $25,000 toward the Dahm Acquisition in Monona County Little Sioux SLA of 120 acres of native prairie remnant and oak savanna.
2. The Nature Conservancy: $8,000 toward a 1,065 acre Loess Hills Conservation Easement in the Bur Oak SLA in Mills County.

LHA Stewardship Committee: 2012 End of Year Report

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American Great Outdoor Initiative (AGO Initiative)

In 2011 the President announced a plan to conserve the outdoor spaces of the country. The Loess Hills is one of two areas in Iowa chosen for this Initiative. As part of this initiative the Loess Hills Alliance (LHA) Stewardship Committee has partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Golden Hills RC&D to provide a cost-share opportunity to landowners. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is providing $75,000 to be used to restore remnant native prairie and oak savannas in the Loess Hills. Golden Hills RC&D is partnering with them to administer those funds. The Stewardship Committee is contributing $5,000-$7,500 to Golden Hills RC&D for their administration services. The private lands positions talked to landowners about this opportunity and filled out the AGO rankings which were due December 7th, 2012. There were 29 applications submitted for approximately 484 acres. Six members from the Stewardship Committee will be meeting to go over the rankings and deciding which projects will be funded.

Private Lands Positions

The Loess Hills Alliance continues to provide support for 3 private lands positions working in the hills ($7,500 per county covered) In partnership with the Iowa DNR, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, National and local Pheasants Forever and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, these positions are providing outreach and technical assistance to private landowners on conservation planning and implementation. Here are some of the accomplishments from the past year:

Randy Phelan - Plymouth/Woodbury

Landowners personally contacted (Total- Site Visits and Contract work) = 373 -- Loess Hills Landowners = 74
Loess Hills Conservation Reserve Program (10 yr contracts) plans developed = 56 plans for 2070 acres
Burn Plans = 23 plans written
Loess Hills Grassland Reserve Program permanent easements = 4 tracts for 2 landowners for a total of 363.2 acres
Loess Hills Environmental Quality Incentives Program ranking Brush control = 14 rankings
Loess Hills American Great Outdoors Red Cedar control applications/ranking = 14 rankings/11 submitted, 228 acres
Wetland Reserve Program monitoring completed = 31 contracts
Mailings = 4 CRP mailings to 159 landowners
Presentations = 5 CRP workshops with 29 participants in attendance
Press Releases = 4

Matt Allen - Harrison/West Pottawattamie

Landowners personally contacted = 353 Quality (January-June) and 208 Quality (July-December) (Total-Site Visits, People Coming into the office, Contract work, phone calls) (Dates split due to new reporting form)
Loess Hills Landowners personally contacted = 174 (Included in Total)
Habitat Plans Completed (Total-WHIP, CRP, EQIP, REAP) = 79 on 1883.3 acres
Loess Hills Habitat acres Implemented for General & Continuous CRP = 346.8 acres (906.1 acres total)
Loess Hills EQIP = 4 possible applications
Loess Hills American Great Outdoors Initiative = 10 Applications/ranking of 166 acres, 33 Landowners contacted (Included in total contacts)
Total Wetland Reserve Program monitoring completed = 15 contracts
Mailings = 7 mailings 2518 Letters on General CRP/CRP Meetings, MCM, "What I Do"
Presentations = 3 CRP/MCM Meetings, Pheasant Populations, LHA Involvement in Prairie Restoration, 2 Landowner Help Desks of 350+ contacts

Derek Christoffel - Monona (January-mid June)

Landowner Contacts = 77
Habitat Plans Completed = 3 plans
Loess Hills WHIP = assisted 3 landowners with cedar removal info & reviewed contracts
Burn Plans = 13 plans written/reviewed
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) = 4 General CRP contracts, 6 Continuous CRP contracts
Assisted with 2 days of the Loess Hills Fire Training Exchange
Mailings = 45 letters on CRP enrollment and re-enrollment
Presentations/Assist = Prairie Seminar and Reese Homestead Dedication

Seth Moore - Fremont/Mills (January-mid June)

Loess Hills Landowner Contacts = 20
Loess Hills habitat plans = 2 plans for 72 acres
Loess Hills EQIP Applications = 3 contracts for prescribed burning, oak savanna restoration, or invasive species control
Laid out 9.7 acres of brush management in Fremont County
Performed vegetation checks on Oak Savanna restoration sites
80 wildlife habitat management contacts
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) = 61 contracts planning assistance, 13 contract reenrollments, 129 flooded contracts reviewed vegetation, and 48 General CRP reenrollments - 13 in Loess Hills
Mailings = 50 Wetland Restoration Flyers, 50 Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) Postcards, 600 CRP MCM Flyers
Presentations = 2 CRP/MCM field days, Loess Hills Prairie Restoration, and Conservation Field Day for 100 4th and 5th graders

Jeremy Yost - Fremont/Mills (September-December)

Landowner Contacts = 35 property visits, Developed and handed out 50 AGO tri-fold brochures door-to-door
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) = 61 contracts planning assistance, 13 contract reenrollments, 12 flooded contracts reviewed vegetation, 15 flooded CRP seeding plans, resend 21seeding plans, MCM status reviews
Loess Hills American Great Outdoors Initiative = 8 Applications/ranking of 89.8 acres
Participated in AGO rankings meeting
Mailings = 30 AGO letters to landowners
Presentations/Coordinate = 6th grade outdoor classroom day on Fremont County endangered species, 5th grade Conservation field day
Assist with development of Sidney High School outdoor classroom

Loess Hills Fire Coordinator Position - Kyle Lapham

The Loess Hills Alliance, in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy, hired Kyle Lapham in July of 2010 to initiate an effort to educate and involve Volunteer Fire Departments in the Loess Hills Landform in the use of prescribed fire as an ecosystem restoration tool. The premise is that the more Volunteer Fire Departments that are trained and engaged with public and private land-owners, the more strength we have as the Loess Hills Alliance in getting our objectives of landscape level restoration accomplished. These are some of Kyle's accomplishments from the past year:

Rx fire planning with private landowners on 391 acres; Mills CCB on 43 acres; IDNR State Parks on 391 acres; HCCB on 224 acres; Plymouth CCB on 811 acres; Pott CCB on 497 acres; IDNR wildlife on 863 acres; TNC & Private landowners on 145 acres
Scouted units in Fremont Co, and Monona Co but will not have time to complete burn plans for the TREX
Coordinating with private landowners, LHFS, and HCCB about getting a burn unit accomplished with VFD involvement
Contacted 6 VFD's about participation in 2012 TREX: Smithland, Akron, Mondamin, Tabor, Oak Township and Crescent
Assisted Pott CCB with fall prescribed fire season
Coordinated quarterly Fire Partner Meetings, Fire Planning Party/Workshops (Feb & Dec), S130/190 Field Days at Hitchcock Nature Center (March & October)
Participated on Fire Learning Network & Iowa Rx Fire Academy Conference calls
Coordinated several Webinars for LHA website & Agren Rx Fire planning tool
Presentations = 2 at the Loess Hills Prairie Seminar, Safety Update to Treynor VFD

Loess Hills Fire Training Exchange (TREX)

Loess Hills Fire Coordinator Kyle Lapham led the Loess Hills Prescribed Fire Training Exchange for two weeks in April 2012. There were 38 fire fighters that attended from 10 different agencies around the country to learn from each other, meet training needs and build skill while completing much needed burning in the hills. This event educated firefighters on prescribed fire planning and implementation while also learning about the local ecology and land use practices. They treated 1,800 acres through 16 different burns. The burns stretched throughout the 200-mile long Loess Hills, including the Loess Hills State Forest, Broken Kettle Grassland Preserve, Loess Hills Wildlife Area, Stone State Park and Farm Creek Public Wildlife Area. With feedback from this first exchange future training's can be improved. We are planning to host another exchange in 2013 with tentative dates set for April 8th-April 19th.

Respectfully submitted by
Matt Allen and Maria Sieck – LHA Stewardship Committee Co-chairs