

The Conservation Process: A Landowner's Perspective

**Tyler Fitzke
Landowner**

**Ele Nugent
Habitat Specialist
Rainwater Basin Joint Venture**

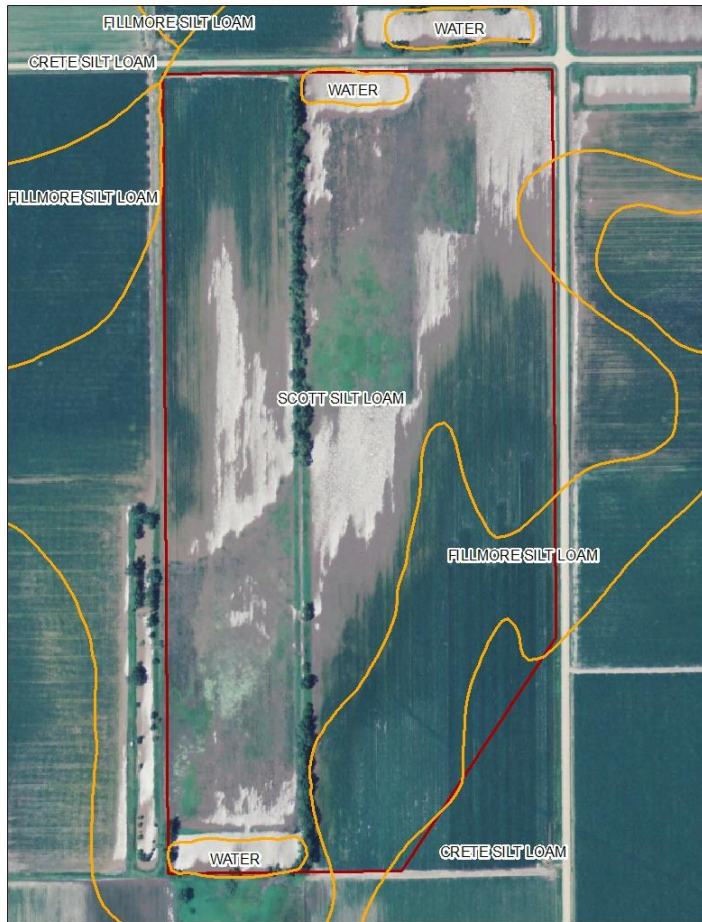
Property Background

- 80 ac
- Purchased in 2005
- Previously cropped
- Planned to plant grass in wetland for grazing & crop upland

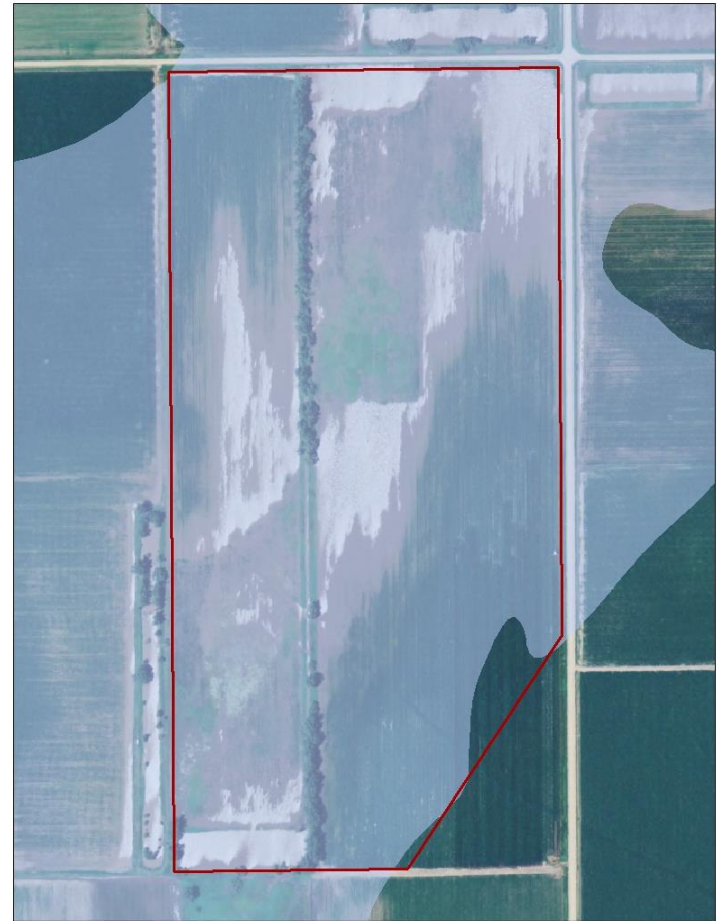


Property Background (cont.)

Soils



Wetland

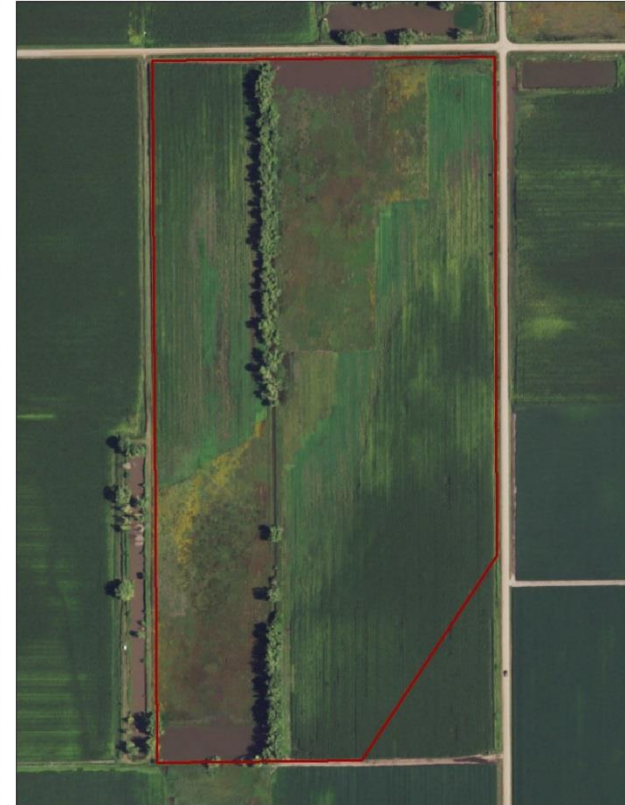


Property Background (cont.)

2010

2012

2014



Easement Enrollment

- Land payments difficult because so much flooding

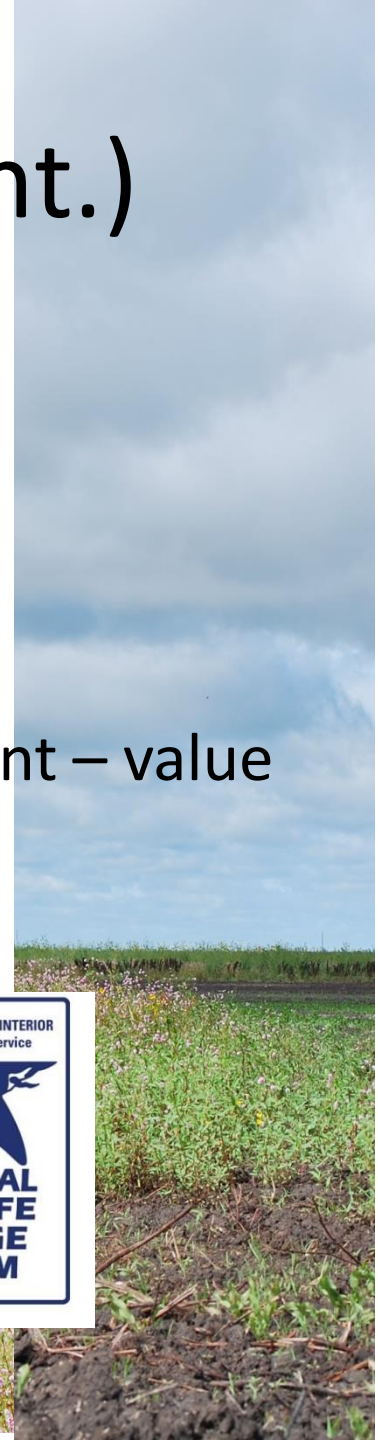
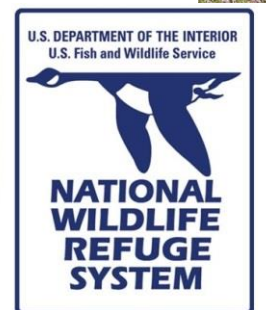
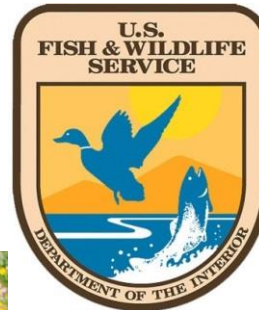


- Talked with Tim Smith at Husker Harvest Days
- Learned about conservation easements
 - Easement payment
 - 100% restoration cost paid for
 - 85% grazing infrastructure paid for



Easement Enrollment (cont.)

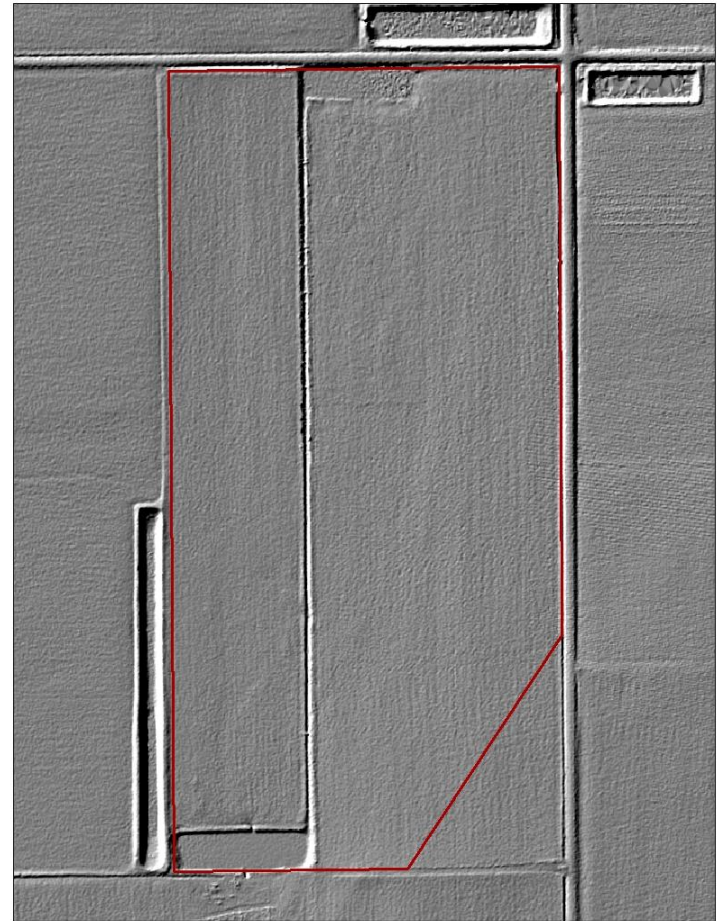
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service easement
 - Fewer restrictions than other easements
 - No building, draining wetland, or cropping
 - Grazing allowed
 - Easement payment = value without easement – value with easement
 - Held by Fish and Wildlife Service Wetland Management District
- Enrolled 72 ac
 - 8 ac not enrolled



Restoration

- Wetland restoration
 - Remove trees
 - Fill pits and ditch
- Upland & wetland seeding
- Conservation partners paid 100%

Elevation



Restoration (cont.)



Restoration (cont.)



Restoration (cont.)




Fitzke seeding Dec 2017

High Diversity Local Ecotype Prairie Restoration
light tillage/broadcast/seedbed packer
DU Tim Horst

Rd 308

Legend

 fitzke seeding

Google Earth

© 2017 Google

Rd F



1000 ft

Map by Tim Horst, Ducks Unlimited

Grazing Infrastructure

- Perimeter fence
- Livestock well and tank
- Conservation partners paid 85%
- I paid 15%
 - Installed fence
 - No out-of-pocket cost



Future Plans

- Graze
- Management
 - Prescribed burning
 - Tree control



Benefits

- Easement payment
- Grazing income
- Decreased chemical and fertilizer inputs
- Wildlife habitat
- Hunting opportunities



Project Partners

North American Wetlands Conservation Council



The Nebraska
Environmental Trust

preserving NATURAL NEBRASKA™ for future generations



NFWF



Thank you
Any questions?

