



HABITAT · HERITAGE · HARMONY

20

23

ANNUAL REPORT



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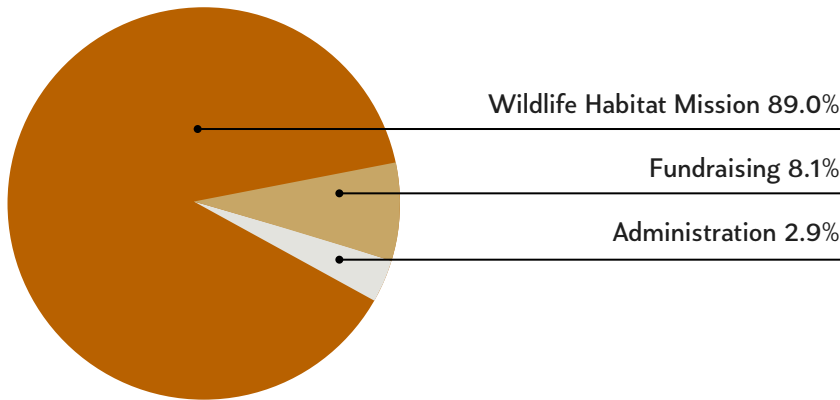
23

ANNUAL REPORT

MISSION STATEMENT

Pheasants Forever’s Mission is to conserve pheasants, quail and other wildlife through habitat improvements, public access, education and conservation advocacy.

WHERE YOUR DOLLARS GO



FINANCIAL DATA | FISCAL 2023

Revenue	\$114,651,918
Mission Spending	\$97,647,578
Total Spending	\$109,739,308

ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 1982

26.5 MILLION+
ACRES IMPACTED

580,400+
HABITAT PROJECTS

1,810
LAND ACQUISITIONS

229,846
ACRES ACQUIRED
& MADE PUBLIC



MARISSA JENSEN



INVESTING IN HABITAT, HERITAGE AND A LANDSCAPE IN HARMONY

In 2023, leaders from the Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever team worked on the organization's strategic plan.

Since you are reading this annual report, I will assume you know and believe in our MISSION, which is to "Conserve pheasants, quail and other wildlife through habitat improvements, public access, education and conservation advocacy."

That mission statement keeps us grounded in what we do.

Our mission is what drives the VISION we are working to build, which is to "Create a North American landscape of quality habitat supporting wild, sustainable populations of upland game birds and other wildlife that are accessible to generations of

hunters and conservationists."

Our vision fuels our passion. It is why we push ourselves harder every year to do more.

The STRATEGIC PLAN is meant to inform how we approach our tireless work to fulfill that mission and drive toward that vision.

The strategic plan is woven into the work plan of every PF & QF employee, so that we are tethered to the same priorities. For the first time, we will roll out a summary of the strategic plan to our chapters, members, donors, agency and corporate partners so that everyone can own a part of the successes we are sure to deliver in the future.

We have been dreaming and planning big, and we look forward to sharing the highlights with you in the coming months. More importantly, we are eager to live this strategic plan with you. You are critical to what Pheasants Forever is, and everything it does.

When you plan for the future, you can't help but ponder what brought you to this moment.

Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever are recognized as leaders in upland habitat conservation, with strong records in policy, public access creation and conservation education.

Boil it all down to this: We are invested in habitat, heritage and a landscape in harmony.

Upland habitat — its creation,

restoration and enhancement — is our mission. Without habitat, our beloved namesake birds don't have places to nest, rest and winter. With habitat, our namesake gamebirds and other wildlife exist in abundance.

And when we have habitat on the ground that is accessible to the public, we can embrace the hunting heritage we hold dear on a landscape in balance for pheasants, quail and all wildlife.

An ecosystem in harmony includes productive soil, clean water and air, and allows farmers, ranchers, hunters and conservationists to co-exist and thrive. Call me altruistic if you like, but I believe that balance can be struck. Maybe not on every acre, but in enough places to make a large-scale impact.

The wildlife habitat challenges our nation faces are substantial. Big solutions require big answers. We need each of you to play a role. Whether it is renewing and upgrading your membership, being a chapter leader, doing habitat work on your personal land or volunteering at a local habitat workday, your engagement is how we effect change. You can double your impact by bringing someone new into the organization.

Together we will go further, faster.

President and CEO, Pheasants Forever



20

23

ANNUAL REPORT

RENEWING HABITAT — AND STRATEGY — TO CREATE MORE BIRDS AND ACCESS

Pheasants Forever completed its fourth consecutive year of record habitat accomplishments in 2023.

Much of that success is thanks to our Farm Bill technical assistance program, where PF biologists help landowners implement conservation programs. Public land accomplishments play a key role in the success as well.

Even with our continued wins in creating and restoring habitat to impact pheasant populations at local, state and range-wide levels, our big-picture strategy continues to evolve.

The ability to produce pheasants is not the same across the country. Within core states, we are focusing on landscapes where we can produce the most birds with finite dollars — drilling our efforts into those core areas where the dollars and work can have the biggest impact.

What does that mean? For pheasants, it means focusing resources on landscapes as large as counties or watersheds — places with the best potential for producing birds and creating public access, where the shared funding investment with partners can produce the best return per dollar invested.

We continued to grow the number of PF team members by about

12 percent again in 2023. These employees, working on both public and private lands, focus on creating and restoring quality habitat, and growing public access to it, for more hunter opportunity. These positions are largely going into the focal landscapes described.

One exciting aspect of this growth is our habitat specialist program. In partnership with state fish and wildlife agencies, the sole job of these habitat specialist roles is hands-on work on habitat creation, restoration and renewal on public lands in those states.

These habitat specialists: remove trees that house predators; clear brush; convert low-quality, monoculture grasslands to diverse havens for nesting and brood-rearing; create new prairies and grasslands; conduct prescribed burns; and plant food plots. In general, they deliver diversity and renewal on the land.

Key partnerships with state fish and wildlife agencies help fund these positions, and Pheasants Forever manages the expertise and work. The goal is to make sure the permanently protected lands we all cherish so much have the people-power and resources, through partnerships, to really produce birds year after year.

How to summarize it all? Pheasants Forever works to target the right places on the landscape to build complexes of upland habitat, working across

boundaries to connect and create a mosaic of public land and private land habitats. Public access, for hunting as well as other recreation, is an essential part of the mix.

The impact of all these efforts grows exponentially as our partners, chapters and volunteers join in: pheasant habitat in place, harmony on the landscape, and improved soil and water quality in the process. Local communities benefit; so does other wildlife, from pollinators and grassland songbirds to prairie grouse and white-tailed deer.

Our employee team efforts continue to lead the charge for creating more pheasant habitat, and more public access to it. Your continued membership, support and volunteerism is critical to that mission.





RYAN KURTZ

**FARM BILL BIOLOGIST
PROJECTS 2023**
Acres Impacted = 1,771,243
Landowner Contacts = 37,728

**TOP 25 PF CHAPTERS
NESTING COVER
ACRES 2023**

Elkhorn Valley (NE).....	1,194
Turkey River (IA).....	803
Yankton Area (SD).....	715
Washington County (IA).....	708
Fayette County (IA).....	633
Bay/Midland (MI).....	619
High Plains (TX).....	438
Mitchell County Pioneer (IA).....	415
Washington County (NE).....	372
Eaton County (MI).....	358
Black Hawk County (IA).....	353
Ida County (IA).....	335
Great Plains (NE).....	321
Poweshiek County (IA).....	299
Sugar River Valley (WI).....	289
Delaware County (IA).....	281
Allamakee County (IA).....	266
Republican Valley (NE).....	259
Carroll County (IL).....	253
Southeast Nebraska (NE).....	214
Marshall-Tama County (IA).....	206
Butler County (OH).....	196
Shiawassee County (MI).....	191
Corn Country (NE).....	167
Lee County (IL).....	164

PF CHAPTER HABITAT STATISTICS (FISCAL YEAR 2023)

PROJECTS	2023	SINCE 1982
NESTING COVER		
Projects	1,180	162,343
Acres Covered	13,808	3,206,267
Dollars Spent	\$15,549,474	\$242,366,864
WOODY COVER		
Projects	36	52,303
Acres Covered	230	127,939
Dollars Spent	\$717,634	\$25,432,778
WETLAND RESTORATIONS		
Projects	29	4,209
Acres Covered	221	87,917
Dollars Spent	\$2,917,570	\$16,821,850
FOOD PLOTS		
Projects	3,032	304,020
Acres Covered	21,576	2,227,670
Dollars Spent	\$23,600,353	\$313,094,980
LAND ACQUISITIONS		
Number	13	1,619
Acres Covered	1,149	202,609
Dollars Spent	\$15,658,439	\$287,781,381
MAINTENANCE		
Projects	905	57,608
Acres Covered	29,399	3,721,396
EQUIPMENT		
Dollars Spent	\$966,490	\$21,436,642
PUBLIC AWARENESS AND EDUCATION		
Dollars Spent	\$7,971,407	\$127,215,675



CHAPTERS' UNWAVERING COMMITMENT IS CRITICAL TO THE HABITAT MISSION

In 2023, just as it has been for more than 40 years, Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever's core focus was on habitat. Establishing, improving and protecting habitat is the foundation of our mission and the reason thousands of members across the country volunteer their time serving on local chapter committees.

Habitat, and access to it, is the key to sustaining the hunting and outdoor heritage that we hold dear, and it provides the basis for nurturing future conservationists.

Our chapters complete upwards of 5,000 habitat projects annually: installing food plots, creating critical nesting cover, performing prescribed fire, planting woody winter cover, and so much more. Volunteers collaborate with landowners, communities, public agencies and wildlife professionals to improve critical habitats in their area while also advocating for increased public access to these essential lands.

Chapter-led support of land acquisitions across the country continues to provide publicly accessible wildlife habitat for hunters and non-hunters alike. And volunteers have been champions of public access programs on private lands, not just

supporting them financially but also advocating for them at their capitals.

Our Hands-On Habitat initiative has come to life for chapters outside of their upland hunting seasons. Volunteers and members come together on public lands to tear down fence, remove invasive trees and complete any number of other critical habitat projects. In addition, planting native habitat for pollinators is moving the needle for our overall mission of upland habitat conservation.

All these events create better habitat for our namesake birds and other wildlife, while keeping our wild places wild.

Our hunting heritage is another prime motivator for many who volunteer with Pheasants Forever. Our chapters annually host hundreds of Learn to Hunt events for all demographics. Women on the Wing chapters and activities continue to flourish, and more women than ever before are taking to the field because of the opportunities being created and the intentional growth of a dynamic community of outdoorswomen.

Through habitat and the sharing of our heritage, our volunteers create harmony. It was the state where nature thrived, hunting traditions coexisted with conservation efforts, and people found solace in wild places.

We believe in the synergy between



humans and the natural world, where both can benefit from coexistence. Through the activities of our chapters, we are truly creating a new generation of dedicated conservationists by fostering an appreciation for the beauty of wild places.

PF & QF's core foundation is to protect, preserve and enhance habitats for the benefit of all living creatures and those who cherish the wild. Our commitment to habitat, heritage and harmony paves the way for a sustainable, balanced future so that our namesakes — ring-necked pheasants and all the quail species — can thrive alongside the natural world they call home.

Challenges lie ahead, to be sure. But, as always, our volunteers' dedication remains unwavering.



AARON BLACK-SCHMIDT



STAFF PHOTOS

**TOP 10 MEMBERSHIP CHAPTERS
(BANQUET MEMBERSHIPS 2023)**

Pheasant Country (SD).....	654
Northern South Dakota (SD)....	628
Northern Polk (IA).....	487
Ida County (IA).....	351
St Clair County (MI).....	344
Bay/Midland (MI).....	335
Lower Elkhorn Valley (NE).....	333
Ringneck Rustlers (KS).....	306
Shelby County (IA).....	292
Cherokee County (IA).....	286

**TOP 10 CHAPTERS
EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SPENDING (2023)**

Stearns County (MN)	\$110,850	Nicollet County (MN)	\$36,408
Clay County (IA)	\$107,593	Northern Colorado (CO)	\$35,054
Chickasaw County Pioneer (IA)	\$68,092	Poweshiek County (IA)	\$32,852
Lincoln Heritage (IL)	\$66,754	Dickinson County (KS)	\$31,723
Five Valleys (MT)	\$58,815	McPherson Area (KS)	\$31,230

CHAPTERS SPENDING \$50,000 OR MORE ON HABITAT (2023)

Bay/Midland (MI)	\$346,472	Morgan County (CO)	\$76,352
Phillips County (CO)	\$343,301	North Central Pennsylvania (PA)	\$71,346
Fayette County (IA)	\$270,797	Northern Polk (IA)	\$66,357
Twin Rivers (IA)	\$224,567	Ida County (IA)	\$66,080
Clayton County (IA)	\$176,429	Butler County (OH)	\$62,771
Northwest Suburban (MN)	\$170,000	Heartland (NE)	\$60,000
Yuma County (CO)	\$160,074	Hancock County (OH)	\$59,636
Dubuqueland (IA)	\$114,505	Clay County (IA)	\$58,531
Chickasaw County Pioneer (IA)	\$104,873	Marshall-Tama County (IA)	\$55,405
Pierre/Fort Pierre (SD)	\$103,984	Plymouth County (IA)	\$54,487
Washington County (IA)	\$98,562	Iowa Pioneer II/Cerro Gordo (IA)	\$53,673
Kandiyohi County (MN)	\$80,999	Three Rivers (IA)	\$52,359
Highland (IL)	\$76,458		



ALWAYS WORKING FOR MORE HABITAT AND ACCESS

It takes good habitat to produce abundant wildlife and opportunities to hunt. But it also takes robust public funding and sound conservation policy to shape that habitat.

Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever's dedicated Government Affairs team works to create policy and secure funding for programs that benefit all the uplands, from the rugged backcountry to the back 40.

In Washington D.C., political gridlock slowed progress on most big legislation in 2023. The federal government nearly shut down (twice) and what was supposed to be the 2023 Farm Bill — Pheasants Forever's top policy priority and the single largest source of funding for private lands conservation in the U.S. — may not pass until 2024 or later.

Yet we continued to make strides toward more wildlife habitat, and more hunting access, far into the future.

FARM BILL

Despite the delays, we successfully worked to introduce two important, bipartisan pieces of legislation that can be rolled into the next Farm Bill.

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Improvement Act of 2023

would incentivize landowners to enroll more acres of habitat in CRP, leading directly to more and better hunting opportunities, as well as improved soil and water quality.

The Voluntary Public Access Improvement Act of 2023 would triple funding for the Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program (VPA-HIP) — a popular component within the Farm Bill that helps create public access for hunting on private lands, often in coordination with CRP.

We helped secure a one-year extension of the current 5-year Farm Bill, which expired in September. The extension included ongoing support for CRP and \$10 million for VPA-HIP.

GRASSLANDS ACT

With our partners, PF and QF continued to advance our signature, bipartisan North American Grasslands Conservation Act (NAGCA), which was first introduced in the Senate in 2022.

NAGCA would help kickstart the voluntary protection and restoration of grasslands — and the livelihoods and wildlife that depend on them — by creating a landowner-driven, voluntary, incentive-based program to conserve and restore threatened grassland and sagebrush steppe ecosystems.

PF and QF member participated in a series of virtual meetings with members of Congress, helping secure a lead Republican bill sponsor in the House. We also expanded our NAGCA coalition, forging new relationships with Native American groups and incorporating traditional tribal knowledge and conservation strategies into the legislation.

SUPPORTING FUTURE HUNTERS

President Biden signed the Protecting Hunting Heritage and Education Act into law, clarifying that the Department of Education's ban on using federal funds for weapons training programs does not apply to hunter education, archery, school-sponsored shooting teams, and other outdoor programs in schools. PF and QF joined the coalition that pushed the Act through Congress at record speed.

We look forward to the potential that 2024 promises, including passage of a new Farm Bill that does more for upland hunters while supporting America's farmers, ranchers and foresters. We are investing more in state legislative work — diving deep into efforts to secure new, dedicated dollars for conservation, better connect federal dollars with state-level projects, and protect our hunting heritage.



Public access to wild places continues to live within the core of PF's advocacy work.

CHAPTERS CONTRIBUTING \$10,000 OR MORE TO LEGISLATIVE ACTION FUND (2023)

Northern Colorado (CO)	Clay County (IA)	Solomon Valley (KS)
\$30,395	\$10,000	\$10,000
Pheasant Country (SD)	Pipestone County (MN)	Dakota/Thurston (NE)
\$30,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Rice County (MN)	Northern South Dakota (SD)	Northfork Tailgunners (KS)
\$25,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Republican Valley (NE)	Clayton County (IA)	Golden Triangle (MT)
\$23,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Big Stone County (MN)	Iowa County (IA)	Gallatin Valley (MT)
\$20,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Mississippi Longtails (MN)	Grand Valley (MI)	Macomb County (MI)
\$20,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
High Plains (NE)	Delaware County (IA)	Washington County (MN)
\$15,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
James Valley (ND)	Wapello County (IA)	Pelican River (MN)
\$15,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Pikes Peak (CO)	McKenzie County (ND)	Rock Creek (NE)
\$11,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Stearns County (MN)	Bay/Midland (MI)	Washington County (NE)
\$10,250	\$10,000	\$10,000
Tri-County (MN)	Sibley County (MN)	Glacial Ridge (MN)
\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
McLeod County (MN)	Seward County (NE)	Blue Earth County (MN)
\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Otter Tail County (MN)	Phillips County (CO)	Southwest Indiana (IN)
\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Swift County (MN)	North Central Kansas (KS)	Southern Wyoming (WY)
\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000



CREATING NEW CONSERVATIONISTS FOR THE HABITAT MISSION

Creating more habitat for a landscape in harmony comes down to one core component: people. That is where Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever's heritage work comes into play.

Today more than ever, the solution to balanced wildlife conservation must focus on the human element. Our outreach efforts involve multiple stakeholders and center around expanding, educating and engaging the upland conservation community.

Our Path to the Uplands initiative provides unique opportunities to strengthen relationships between people and nature. We are broadening our audience to align more closely with our country's demographics and interests. The vision is for an integrated and relevant conservation community working together at landscape levels.

The strength of our organization is, and will always be, the people. Our members, volunteers, staff and partners are passionate and purposeful, and all have an emotional connection to Pheasants Forever. Our education and outreach programs offer fellowship through common interests, providing a place for people to let their guard down and develop relationships. Those



relationships encourage people to return and grow within the organization.

We also invest time, talent and resources to educate stakeholders on the significant role that grassland landscapes provide to the wildlife we love and the environment we live in. With people as the focus, we prioritize the value of quality experiences to create multiple pathways — such as hunting, habitat and public access — for engagement.

We have adapted programs to keep volunteers engaged in our mission and delivering local activities year-round.

We work to create conservationists; and most conservationists feel a responsibility to be active and do something positive. Examples like Hands-On Habitat projects and weekend-long Learn to Hunt experiences allow people to get involved and make meaningful differences in their local communities.

Through online opportunities,

our team has created unique ways to meet people where they are, and bring conservation education to a larger audience. Our new How to Hunt Upland Birds course, and our revamped Journey to Conservation Careers curriculum, are great examples of how we provide inspiration, support and training that can greatly impact people.

Our programs provide multiple pathways for people to engage with Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever, and to share an appreciation for wild places and upland wildlife far beyond our namesake birds.

Those new conservation advocates will be key for the future of habitat, access, hunting heritage and our quality of life. Be a part of it. Get involved with your local chapter. Mentor someone new in the hunting lifestyle.

Give your time, offer your knowledge, share your passion. Onward we go.



LOGAN HINNERS



HABITAT · HERITAGE · HARMONY

Habitat is the foundation and core of what Pheasants Forever is and does. Creating it, improving it, developing public access to it.

Only with habitat on the ground can we foster the hunting and outdoor heritage that makes more conservationists to keep that mission thriving.

Harmony is the goal: a landscape in balance for the ring-necked pheasant that is our namesake bird ... but also for all the other upland wildlife that benefits, for soil and water quality, and for the people who love wild places.

Thanks for reading Pheasants Forever's story for achieving habitat, heritage and harmony in 2023 ... and for being part of that noble effort in the years ahead.

CHAPTERS CONTRIBUTING \$10,000 OR MORE TO PATH TO THE UPLANDS™ (2023)

Mississippi Longtails (MN) \$20,000	East Medicine (MN) \$10,000
Chisago County (MN) \$15,000	McKenzie County (ND) \$10,000
High Plains (NE) \$15,000	Northern Colorado (CO) \$10,000
Phillips County (CO) \$15,000	Dakota/Thurston (NE) \$10,000
Southern Wyoming (WY) \$15,000	Washington County (NE) \$10,000
Oregon Trail (NE) \$12,000	Northwest Suburban (MN) \$10,000
Pikes Peak (CO) \$11,000	Southwest Georgia (GA) \$10,000
Black Hawk County (IA) \$10,000	

THANK YOU, PHEASANTS FOREVER CORPORATE SPONSORS

