

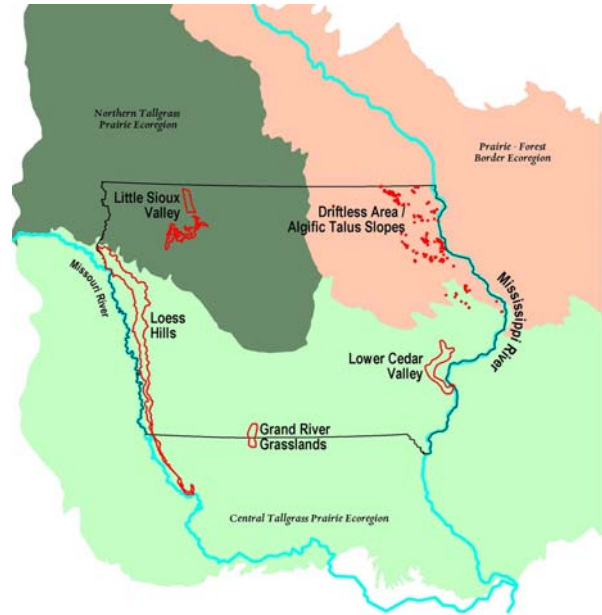
The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the land and waters they need to survive.

Our Origins

The Conservancy emerged from a professional association of ecologists seeking to turn their knowledge of nature into positive action for conservation. Incorporated as a nonprofit in 1951, the Conservancy completed its first land acquisition with a modest 60-acre purchase in New York. The Iowa program was founded in 1963 and began its protection efforts in 1961, when the Berry Woods preserve was deeded to the Conservancy by the late newspaper publisher and conservationist Don L. Berry. The 42-acre preserve in south central Iowa is a white oak, red oak, basswood and shagbark hickory woodland.

Where We Work

Starting with the establishment of the first program in Eastern New York in 1954, the Conservancy has expanded to encompass 50 states and 28 countries around the world, including Canada, Mexico, Australia and countries throughout the Asia-Pacific region, the Caribbean and Latin America. With more than 1 million members throughout the world and 7,500 members in Iowa, the Conservancy has influenced the protection of 14 million acres of critical landscapes in the United States, including 9,300 acres in Iowa, and more than 100 million acres worldwide.



Iowa once was covered with tallgrass prairie. Less than 1 percent remains. The Conservancy has protected significant remnants around the state and owns the largest native prairie in Iowa, at Broken Kettle Grasslands in the Loess Hills. The Conservancy manages more lands than any other private organization and works with interested
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For more information

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Waterman Creek Prairie (©Dave DeGeus/TNC)

private landowners on grazing and controlled burning to conserve and restore prairies and savannas in priority areas.

Setting Priorities

The Conservancy protects places where plant and animal species can survive for generations to come. It employs scientific, systematic analysis to identify places large enough in scale and rich enough in plant and animal species to ensure meaningful conservation results. By using this scientific planning approach – called Conservation by Design – a blueprint for action throughout the Americas, Asia and the Pacific Islands is being developed to preserve the areas most crucial to the Earth's biodiversity.

In Iowa, the Conservancy is focusing on six priority conservation areas – the Loess Hills, Little Sioux Valley, Lower Cedar Valley, Driftless Area, Grand River Grasslands and Upper Mississippi River. These are working landscapes with significant biodiversity where people and nature can work together to maintain healthy, functioning ecosystems.

How We Work

At each site, the Conservancy is using a range of methods based on conservation targets that are tailored to meet local needs. The Conservancy buys land, helps interested neighbors manage

their properties and facilitates public-private partnerships. It also collaborates with like-minded organizations and seeks pragmatic solutions.

The Conservancy is committed to working with businesses, communities and individuals to meet conservation challenges, using non-confrontational, market-based strategies. We pay property taxes where we own large tracts of land. For example, in 2004 the Conservancy paid \$17,000 in property taxes on our Broken Kettle Grasslands preserve in Plymouth County. In the United States, working with only willing sellers and donors, the Conservancy protects habitat through gifts, exchanges, purchases, conservation easements and management agreements. Internationally, the Conservancy works with government agencies and partner organizations to provide scientific expertise, infrastructure, community development, professional training and long-term funding for legally protected but currently underfunded areas.



Lower Cedar Valley (©Jim Riggs)