

Heartland Co-op Update to the Lower Cedar Watershed Management Authority

What's Happening now:

- Cover Crops have been terminated, or will be soon, in preparation for spring planting.
- The last 10 days have been ideal for farmers to get field work completed.



Overwintering cover crops have been protecting the soil for the last seven months and are now being terminated to make way for corn and soybeans. Cover crops improve soil health by keeping living roots in the soil, protect the soil from erosion, help suppress weeds, and many other benefits.

Left– cereal rye cover crop on May 6th the same day as termination.

Batch and Build Progress

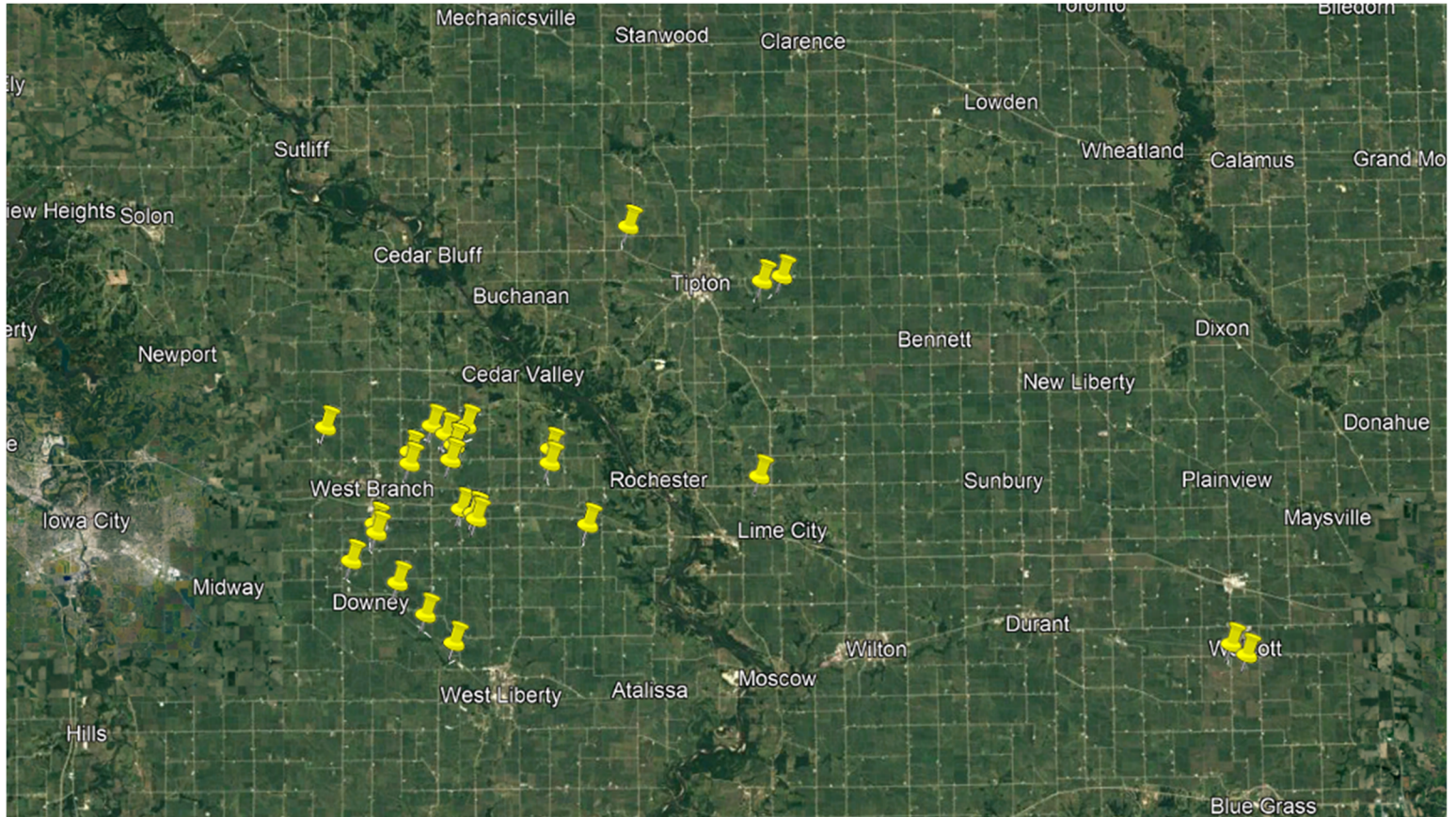
-62 outlets surveyed on 27 tracts of land from March-April

-11 landowners have projects that are in the preliminary design phase

-24 tracts of land have preliminary designs

-47 proposed feasible structures.

-Next Steps– get landowner approval of preliminary designs and move to final design.



In March and April, our team assessed sites online and if it looked promising we surveyed the site in person. We went to 27 fields to survey and found 24 suitable for edge of field practices. Most of the sites are in the West Branch area.



Using survey grade GPS equipment, the Heartland Co-op Conservation team gathered the field information needed for the private engineer to begin work on feasibility designs.

We generally work in teams of 2-3 to complete the field surveys. We worked some very long days but completed the surveys before fields were planted this spring.

Above— Emery Davis collects survey data for the private engineer.



Right- Ruth McCabe and Emery assess the stream for saturated buffer suitability.



Left: Conservation Agronomist, Will Hoffmann, uses a Tile Maverick to accurately locate drainage tile lines. The cable is energized and is located using a utility locator wand.



These meetings with farmers have opened the doors to conversations about erosion, cover crops, nutrient management, cover crop termination, wildlife habitat, and other conservation related topics.

Looking Forward

- June 6th– Fawcett Farms will host a field day at Cold Spring Farm
- Emery will review feasible edge of field projects with landowners
- Practical Farmers of Iowa cover crop cost share signup begins
- General conservation conversations with farmers

Thank you for your partnership making it possible for us to work with farmers to adopt conservation practices in the Lower Cedar Watershed. We are very excited to see the progress that will happen over the course of this partnership!

