

WISCONSIN COVERTS PROJECT



Promoting Woodland Wildlife Stewardship

Sponsors/Partners

- University of Wisconsin – Madison
Division of Extension
- Dept. of Forest & Wildlife Ecology at
UW-Madison
- The Ruffed Grouse Society /
American Woodcock Society
- Wisconsin Sustainable Forestry
Initiative (SFI®) Implementation
Committee
- The Renewable Resources Extension
Act (RREA)
- Braun Woodlands



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



Forest and Wildlife Ecology

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



What is a Covert?

- **“Covert”** pronounced “kuh-vert” is a 14th century English word describing a dense thicket that provides shelter for wildlife.
- The Wisconsin Coverts Program aims to educate private woodland owners about ways to protect, enhance, and create these valuable coverts.



The Wisconsin Coverts Project

- The WI Coverts Project started in 1994 and has consisted of 35 workshops and 4 reunions to-date.
- The program is organized and led by the Extension Wildlife team in the Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology at UW – Madison.
- State Coordinator: Jamie Nack



What is the WI Coverts Project?

- A 3-day, overnight workshop (Thurs. afternoon to Sun. noon) for landowners who want to enhance their woodlands for wildlife.
- Indoor classroom sessions and outdoor field trips led by wildlife and forestry professionals from the WDNR, Division of Extension, The Ruffed Grouse Society, USDA Forest Service, private landowners, etc.



The WI Coverts Project

- Emphasizes the premise that good forest management = good wildlife management.
- Participants learn how to enhance their land's wildlife abundance and diversity by actively managing their woodlands.
- Landowners are given a holistic perspective, one in which management for wildlife habitat is important, and is compatible with other goals such as recreation, aesthetics, and timber production.



The WI Coverts Project

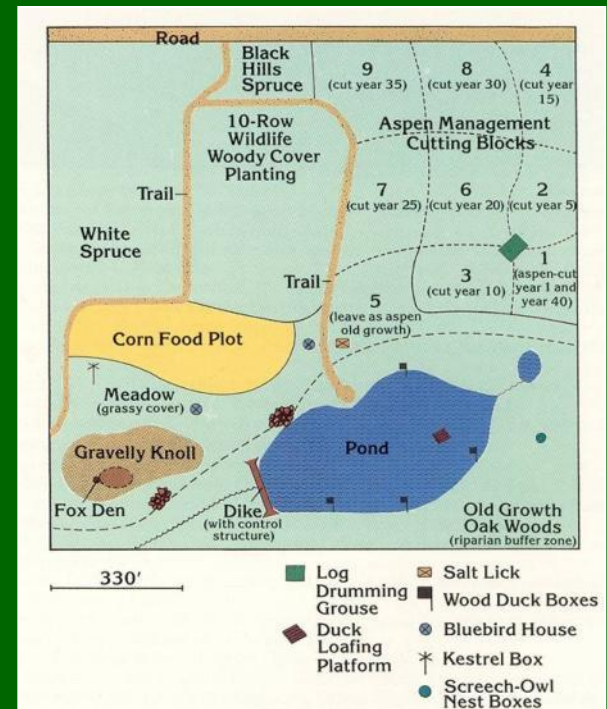
- Landowners are provided with resources (e.g. websites, publications) to help them manage their woodlands.
- They learn who to contact for their woodland wildlife needs: private, state, and university forestry and wildlife specialists.
- Finally, they get to share a weekend with like-minded people and the opportunity to learn from each other.
- At the end of the workshop attendees become “Coverts Cooperators”.



WI Coverts Cooperators

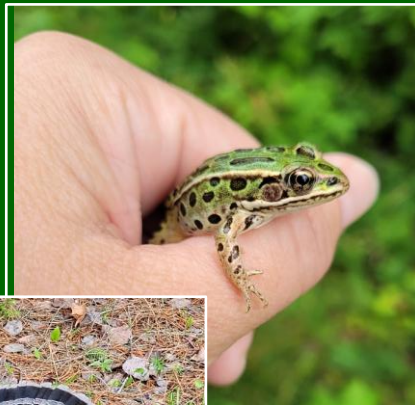
As Coverts Cooperators, attendees agree to:

- Develop or review a written wildlife and forest management plan for their land.
- Reach out and motivate other woodland owners in their communities, and be available to answer questions.
- Share resources provided by the Wisconsin Coverts Project.



Sample Workshop Topics

- Principles of wildlife management
- Management strategies for ruffed grouse and woodcock
- How to conduct a successful timber harvest
- Invasive plant species management
- Forest songbird management
- Large carnivore management
- Small mammal identification
- Herptile management
- Wildlife damage management
- Creating a written wildlife management plan
- Working with the media and outreach efforts



Sample Field Trips

- Tour of the Northern Highland-American Legion state forest
- Wildlife inventory and monitoring workshop
- Tour of a well-managed, private property in the area



Who Can Attend?

- Any woodland owner or person responsible for managing a parcel of wooded land in Wisconsin (or the Midwest) may apply.
- Space is limited to ~30 landowners.
- There is no minimum acreage requirement; we are most interested in persons with outreach potential/influence in their community. We're looking for people who....
 - can find time in their busy schedules for the workshop and some outreach activities in their communities.
 - would like their woodlands to be healthy and productive.
 - care about woodlands and the wildlife that live within them.



How Much Does it Cost?

- It's FREE!
- Expenses including lodging and meals are paid for by the workshop sponsors. All you need to do is provide your own transportation to and from the workshop location.



How Successful has the Coverts Project been in WI?

- Since 1994, 912 Coverts Cooperators (representing 759 properties) have been trained.
- These Cooperators own or are responsible for managing 256,979 acres of woodlands in Wisconsin and neighboring states.
- WI Coverts Cooperators have reached out to more than 17,500 landowners accounting for an additional estimated 730,000 acres in WI.
- The total land base impacted through 31 years of the WI Coverts Project is estimated to be over 1 million acres.

When and Where is the Workshop Held?

- The 2026 Wisconsin Coverts Project workshop will be held **August 6-9** at Kemp Natural Resources Station in Woodruff, WI



How to Apply

****Applications are due June 15th of the workshop year****

- Applications are available on the Wisconsin Coverts Project website <http://fwe.wisc.edu/coverts> or by contacting Jamie Nack.
- Return completed applications to:

Jamie Nack
Wisconsin Coverts Project Coordinator
University of Wisconsin - Madison
Dept. of Forest and Wildlife Ecology
211 Russell Labs
1630 Linden Drive
Madison, WI 53706
Phone: 608-265-8264
E-mail: jlnack@wisc.edu

Want More Information?

- Check out the WI Coverts Project website at:
<http://fwe.wisc.edu/coverts>
- The website contains a brochure, application, typical agenda, a directory of WI Coverts Cooperators and much more.
- Contact Jamie Nack at: (608) 265-8264 or
jlnack@wisc.edu.