

# Phase-1 Offsite Herbaceous Habitat Evaluation



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Tract \_\_\_\_\_ Field No. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

For land that applicants plan to sodbust, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff completes this habitat evaluation after making an HEL determination. Projects that may adversely affect suitable endangered or threatened species habitat will require the completion of a *Phase-2 Onsite Herbaceous Habitat Evaluation* to determine whether NRCS can provide conservation planning assistance within these areas.

## Spring Color Infra Red Ortho Imagery

Suitable imagery for this evaluation can be found on the NRCS geodata server:  
*geodata\ortho\_imagery\layer\_files*

- SW Iowa-Spring 2009 Orthophotos.lyr
- NW Iowa-Spring 2007 Orthophotos.lyr
- E Iowa -Spring 2010 Orthophotos.lyr

### Spring CIR Ortho Imagery Interpretation Tutorial:



Spring CIR Ortho Imagery A) bright pink non-native cool season grass, B) dark pink native cool season wet meadow, and C) gray-pink dormant native vegetation.



1. Based on landowner knowledge of this property or according to historic aerial photography, has this area been cropped  $\geq 2$  consecutive years between 1960 and 1985?

No - Continue to number 2.

Yes - No suitable habitat, NRCS can proceed with conservation planning.

2. Access the *spring* color infrared (CIR) ortho imagery for the area of interest. Note the color of the area of interest and how it relates to areas of known non-native cool season vegetation. On the spring CIR imagery, is the area of interest significantly lighter or darker pink when compared to the bright pink of known non-native cool season vegetation?

No - No suitable habitat. NRCS can proceed with conservation planning.

Yes - Potential habitat present, continue to number 3.

3. Indicate whether any of the following soil types occur within the area of interest and continue to number 4.

### Soil Series, Map Units, or Complex Components

Hamburg

Sparta

Chelsea

Clyde

Salida

Storden

Monteith

Sandy Escarpment

Sogn

Palms Muck

Houghton Muck

Muck on hillside

4. To determine whether NRCS can offer conservation planning assistance within areas of potential habitat, NRCS is to provide the applicant with the *Phase-2 Onsite Herbaceous Habitat Evaluation* and a conservation plan map of the area using the spring CIR ortho photography. The applicant will return the completed *Phase-2 Evaluation* and map to the NRCS, at which time it will be determined whether NRCS can provide conservation planning assistance within sodbust areas. If the area has already been Sodbust, conducting a Phase-2 onsite herbaceous habitat evaluation is not possible. Discussions with the US Fish and Wildlife Service concerning these sites are ongoing and AD-1026 forms should be held pending further direction.