Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs described herein is available to all individuals without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or handicap. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to Office of the Secretary, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, 900 Jackson St., Suite 502, Topeka, KS 66612.
Quail and pheasant populations in these counties remain lower than the long-term trends. Many factors may contribute to this, but quality habitat is the driving force for improving bird numbers.

Biologists from Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP), Pheasants Forever, and Quail Unlimited agree that Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) lands offer the best opportunity to improve habitat for upland game birds. These fields, although quite productive during the first few years of establishment, quickly become less and less inviting to birds for nesting and brood rearing as the tall, native grasses begin to dominate the stands. It has been shown that bird productivity drops off substantially after the field has been established for five years.

Landowner-cooperators in KDWP’s Walk-In-Hunting Areas (WIHA) program who have not previously signed up in the habitat enhancement program, qualify for a signup bonus of $200 plus $1/acre of habitat work. WIHA cooperators who have had habitat work done in past years and new, non-WIHA landowners qualify for a signup bonus of $50 plus $1/acre of habitat work. (maximum of 40 acres of habitat work per non-WIHA cooperator).

Following are a few easy management practices that can return CRP productivity for pheasants and quail.

**STRIP DISKING**

Strip disking is probably the simplest practice with the fastest results for increasing nesting and brood rearing. Strips are disked through the CRP, disturbing the surface and allowing annual plants a chance to establish. These might be wild sunflower, ragweed or similar plants used extensively by game birds. Grass in the strips is “set back” but not destroyed and in 2-3 years will be as thick as before.

**BURNING**

A prescribed burn removes old, grassy litter, improves travel lanes for young birds and increases annual and perennial forbs in the stand. It will also improve strip disking and inter-seeding success by allowing equipment to make better contact with the soil.

**BROOD STRIPS**

The benefits of strip disking can be magnified by drilling a legume mix over the disked strips. It has been shown that “brood strips” with alfalfa and other broad leaved plants are food factories for chicks.

**FOOD PLOTS**

Traditional food plots can also increase the value of CRP and can be planted with grain crops or legume mixes also. These may also serve as fire breaks to assist in burning CRP.

**LEGUME INTERSEEDING**

Finally, simple interseeding of a legume mix into burned, hayed or grazed CRP can help establish “brood strips” without disking.