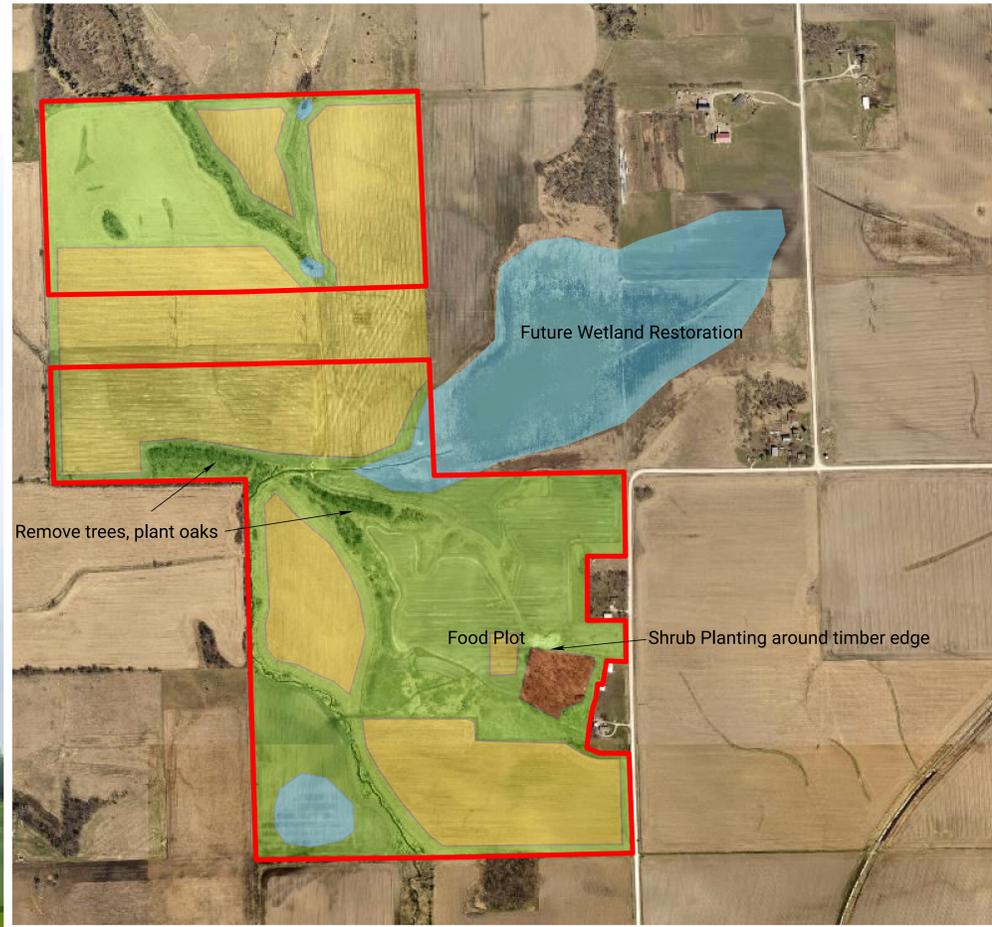


Linn County Learning Farm

- This unique water quality project located to the NW of Palo, Iowa involves restoration of one of the only known prairie pothole wetlands in Linn County, and managing the surrounding watershed and tillable acres with conservation farming practices in partnership with numerous agencies and organizations.
- Restoring and protecting this unique wetland will have significant water quality and wildlife habitat benefits due to the size and location of this property.
- The learning farm portion of this project will be designed with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conservation practices such as riparian buffers, cover crops and bioreactors. This local site would host educational programs that demonstrate the installation of more technical conservation practices in partnership with the NRCS.
- Through these goals, the Learning Farm will demonstrate economically viable ways to manage farmland while protecting the soil, water and wildlife resources critical to Iowa's future.



Acquisition of the 282 acre property by the Linn County Conservation Board was accomplished in early 2019. This project will involve additional property acquisition or conservation easements for large scale wetland restoration.

A historic 70 acre prairie pothole partially lies within this property and was drained in the 1930's for agriculture. The result was farmable wetland that remains a frequently flooded basin with remnant native wetland plant and animal species. Restoring and protecting this unique wetland will have significant water quality and wildlife benefits due to the size and location of this property. This diverse property includes many habitat types that would be enhanced through wetland restoration, streambank restoration, and conservation farm practices.

The learning farm portion of this project will be designed with agreements that will guide the farming protocols to include Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) designed conservation practices such as riparian buffers, cover crops, bioreactors, etc. The Conservation Board hopes to use this property to benefit new farmer programs and also provide a local site to host educational programs that demonstrate the installation of more technical conservation practices in partnership with the NRCS. Through these goals, the Learning Farm will demonstrate economically viable ways to manage farmland while protecting the soil, water and wildlife resources critical to Iowa's future.

In 2016, Linn County residents overwhelmingly passed a \$40 million dollar Water and Land Legacy Bond with 74% support to fund Water Quality, Park and Trail projects. This signature water quality project will leverage partnerships, public engagement and support of this Bond.

