

## Iowa recreational property ownership: Identification, contact and social dynamics of multiple-use perennial landcover

**Abstract:** This research explored the opportunities for expanding the productive use of perennial landscapes in Iowa through expanded beef and dairy grazing on non-resident owned recreational lands.

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*The majority of participants, particularly those with CRP contracts, were interested in considering and learning more about some form of grazing or grassland management on their property.*

### What was done and why?

Expansion of productive use of Iowa's perennial landscapes faces two major challenges. First, agencies and non-profit organizations in Iowa lack a standardized inventory and analysis method for obtaining contact information for non-resident recreational landowners. Second, there is little understanding of the willingness of non-resident landowners to integrate contract grazing into their vision of how their land is used.

The research project had these objectives:

- Identify of non-resident ownership patterns using a GIS-based inventory and analysis method based on parcel data and land cover attributes.
- Conduct social assessment of non-resident property owners to determine five characteristics:
  1. Ownership information, parcel size, reason for ownership
  2. Landscape characteristics, land cover
  3. Current land use and plans for future change
  4. Land management practices
  5. Level of understanding and experience with grazing systems and grass-fed livestock production, interest in receiving educational materials on perennial land cover use, and preferred methods of contact
- Analyze findings and prepare two templates relating to participants' interests in future contact methods.

### What did we learn?

Study results concerning non-resident agricultural landownership differed from other studies and from the initial hypothesis of the project.

Non-resident landowners selected for interviews represented those with the largest grassland holdings in each county. While one participant described non-residents owning agricultural land primarily for recreational purposes, the study sample did not uncover a strong representation of this ownership type. Nearly all grassland owned by those interviewed was reported as currently being maximally used. Income from agricultural use was relatively important to the study participants and despite their status as non-residents, participants were directly involved in grazing operations on a majority of grazed grassland in southern counties.



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