

# Scott County IRVM Plan

# Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management



Vision Statement:

**We are committed to preserving our rich ecological past. Striving to conserve our natural resources, restore ecosystem services and protect our environment.**

Mission Statement:

**The mission of the Scott County Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management Program is to create public awareness and provide safe, ecologically diverse, environmentally integrated and aesthetically pleasing roadsides. Per Iowa Code 314.22**

# IRVM Legislation 1988

## Iowa Code

### **314.22 Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management**

1. *Objectives.* It is declared to be in the general public welfare of Iowa and a highway purpose for the vegetation of Iowa's roadsides to be preserved, planted, and maintained to be safe, visually interesting, ecologically integrated, and useful for many purposes.



# State and county roads



# Reduce use of herbicides





# Spot-mowing and prescribed fire



# Seeding of native species



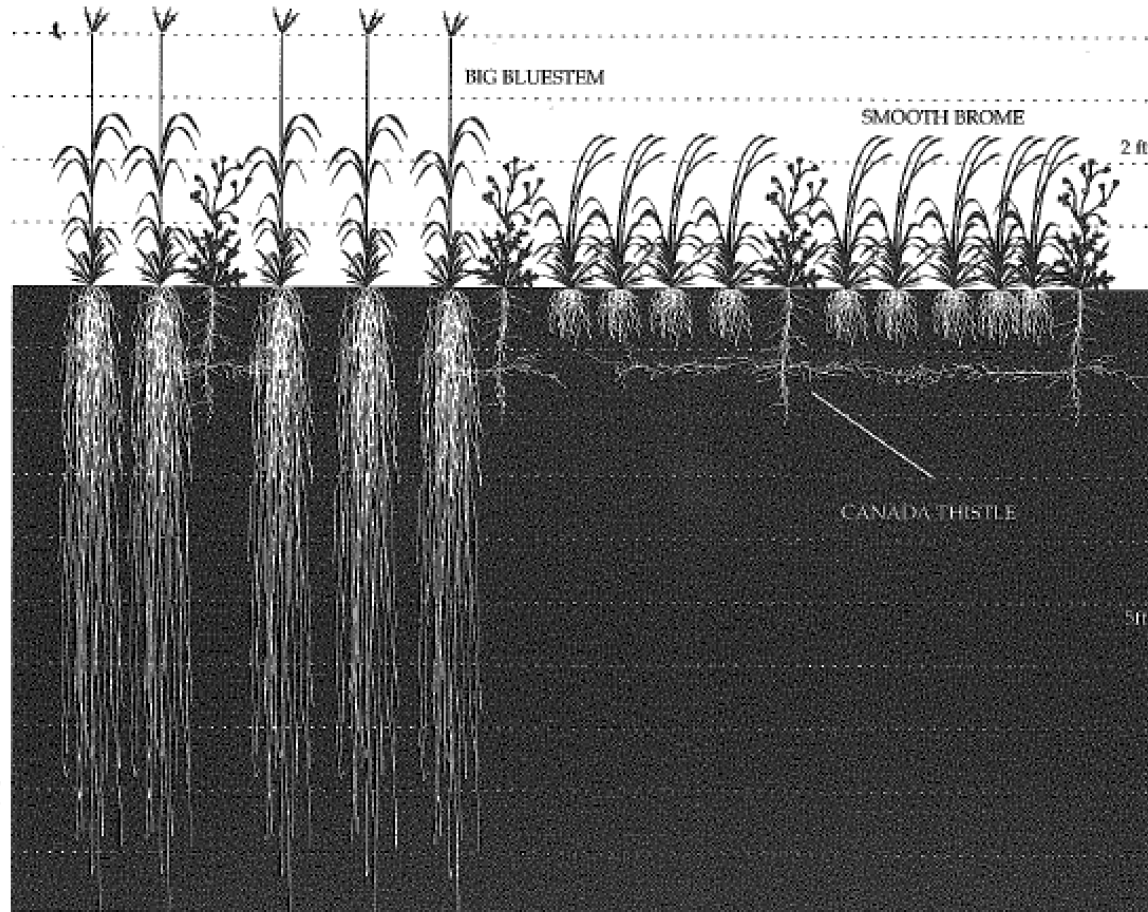


# Benefits of IRVM

- Take advantage of the Living Roadway Trust Fund
- More organized and proactive roadside management
- Vegetation tasks can be performed in house:
  - Seeding, conducting stormwater inspections required under NPDES, wetland delineations, erosion control, brush control, noxious weed control, roadside management (burning/mowing)
- Manage roadsides for multiple purposes

# Benefits of IRVM

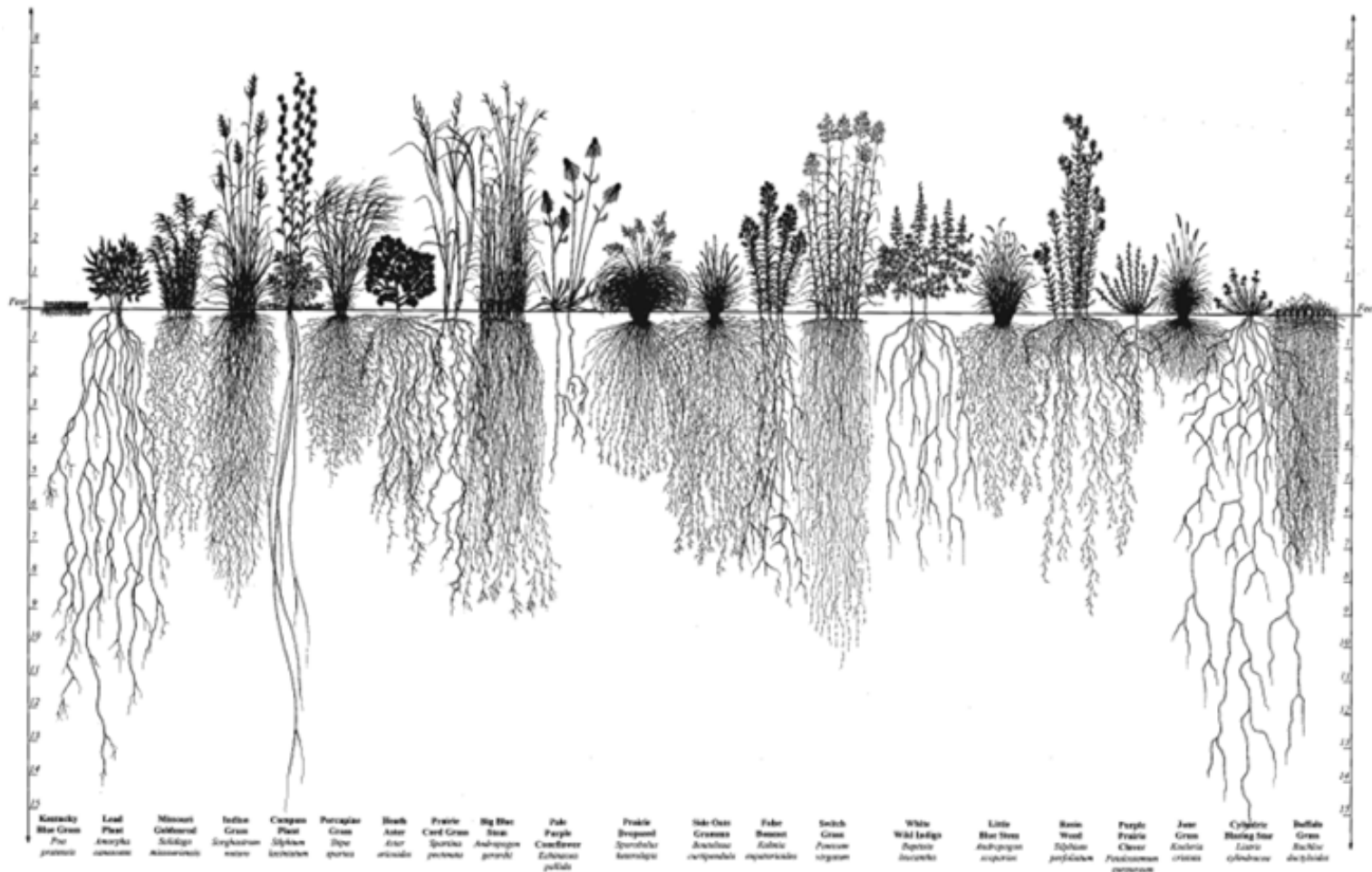
## Competition with weed species



Source: Minnesota DOT and Minnesota DNR 1992

# Benefits of IRVM

Increased water infiltration and slower runoff

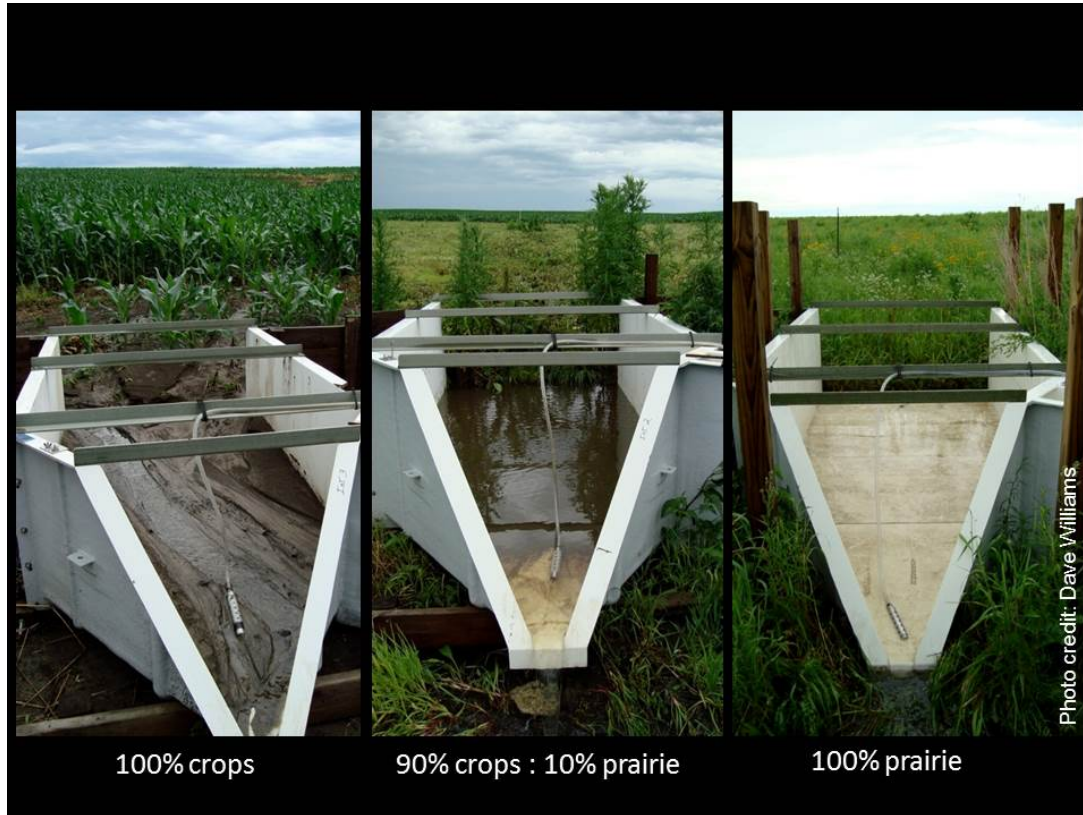


Source: Minnesota DOT and Minnesota DNR 1992



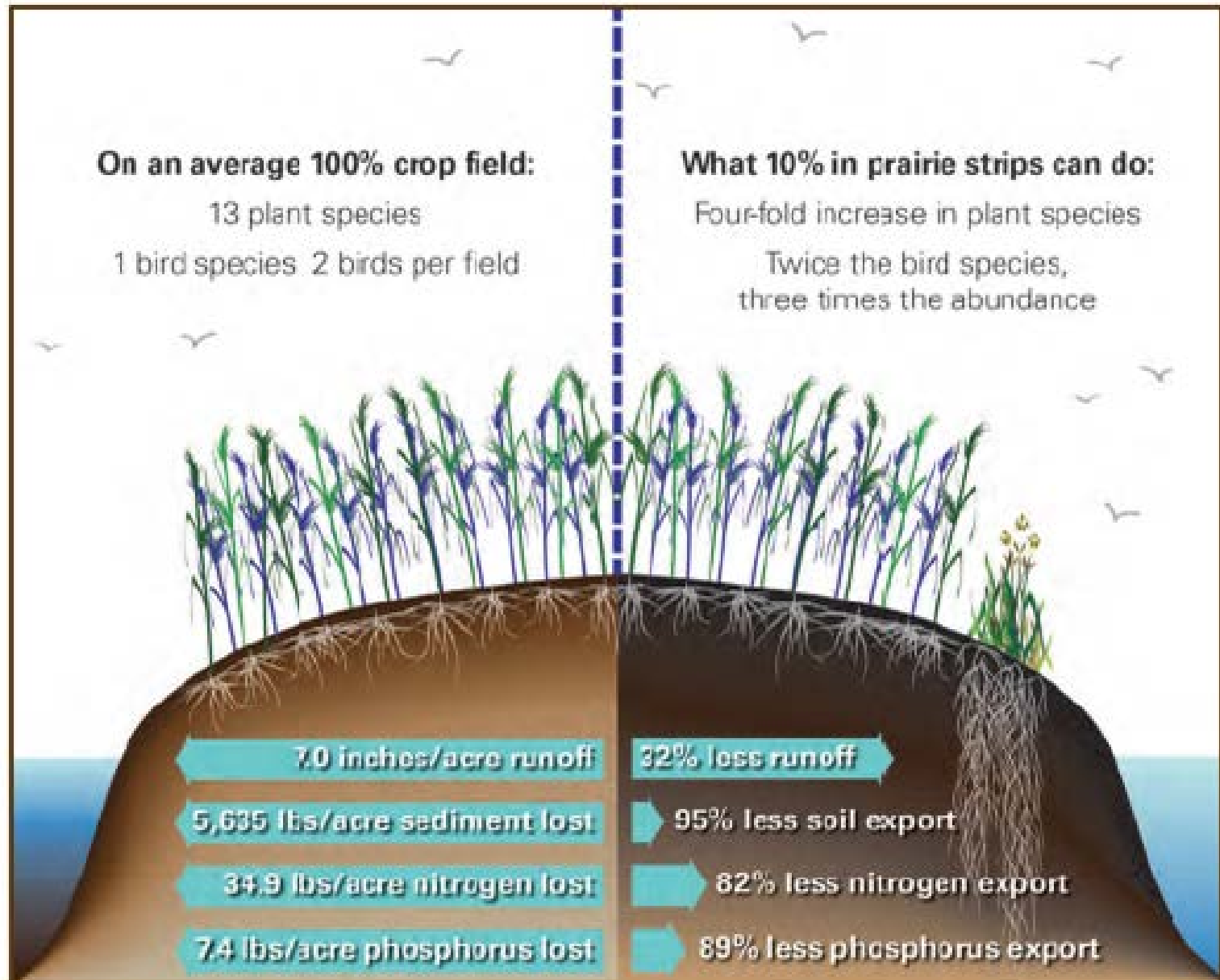
# Benefits of IRVM

Increased water infiltration and slower runoff



Source: Iowa State University

# Benefits of Prairie Vegetation Strips

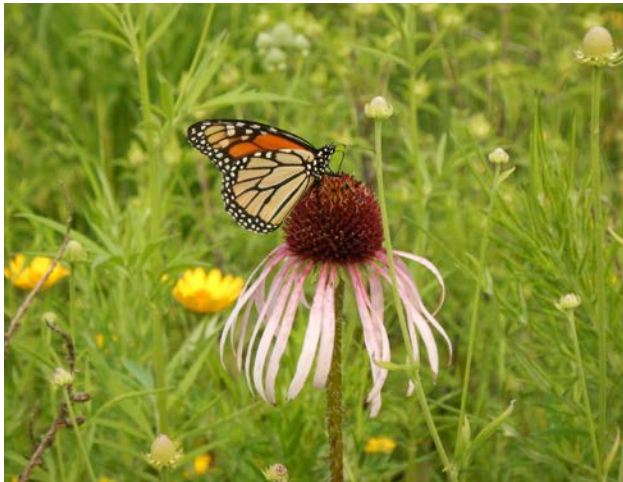


# Benefits of IRVM

Increased plant and animal diversity



Source: Iowa DNR



Source: Cory Engle, Hardin County IRVM



# Benefits of IRVM

Reduced snow glare, snow drifting



Source: Hardin County

# Benefits of IRVM

Aesthetically pleasing



Source: Dustin Ausdemore, Pottawattamie County IRVM

# Components of IRVM

- Statewide coordinator housed at Tallgrass Prairie Center
- Small grants program through State DOT – Living Roadway Trust Fund
- IRVM plan needed to apply for LRTF grants



# State IRVM Coordinator

University of Northern Iowa Tallgrass Prairie Center



- Roadside management listserv
- Winter meeting, fall annual roadside conference
- How-to publications, networking
- Policies and regulations affecting roadsides
- Public outreach



# \$300,000 federal seed grant for counties (Transportation Alternatives Program)



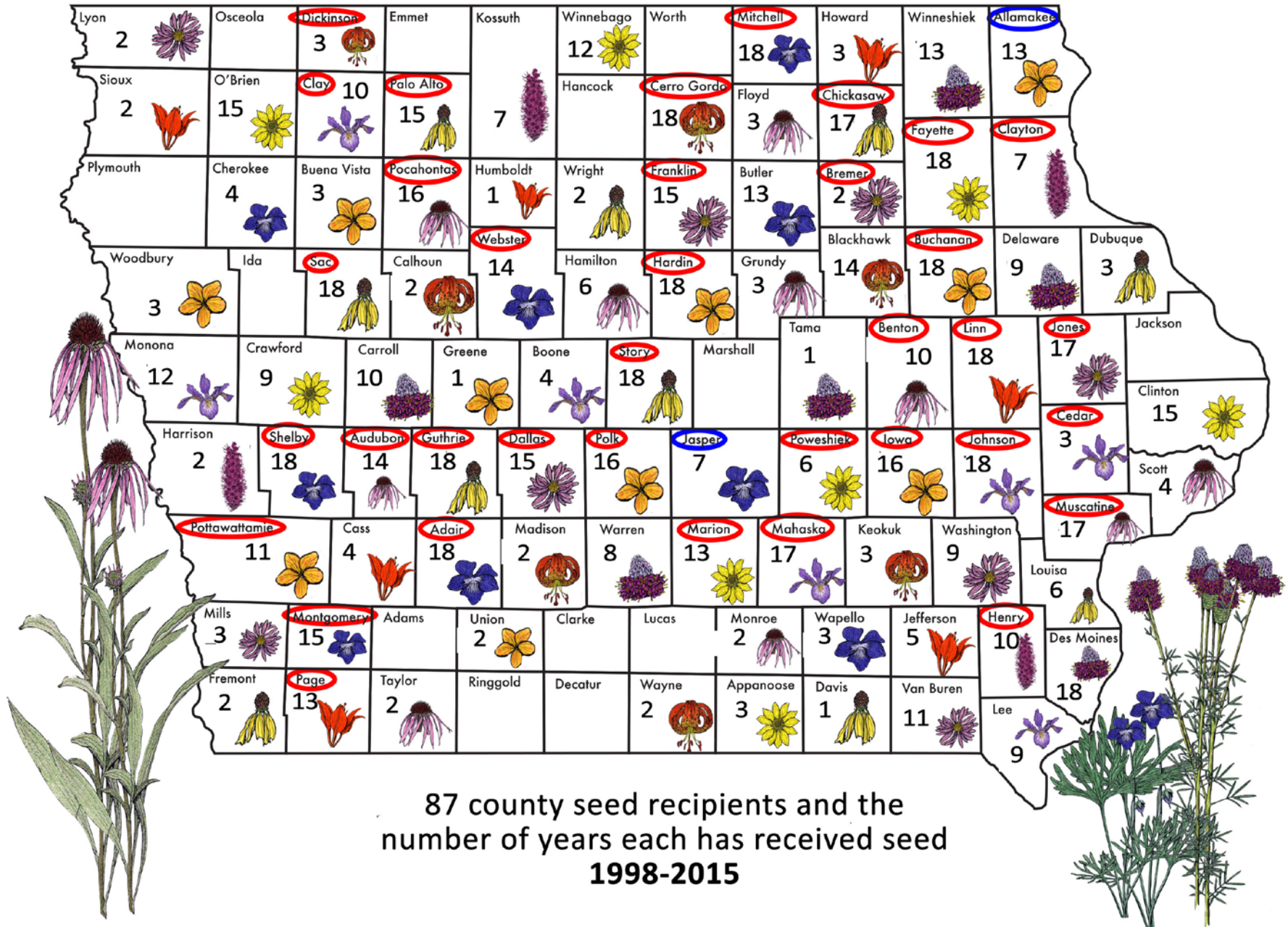
## Cleanout Mix

(2015: 8 grass and sedge species, 11 forb species)

## Diversity Mix

(2015: 11 grass and sedge species, 27 forb species)

# Transportation Alternatives Seed For County Roadside



87 county seed recipients and the number of years each has received seed 1998-2015



## County Board of Supervisors

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graph TD; A[County Board of Supervisors] --> B[Engineer's Office  
(Secondary Roads)]; A --> C[Independent]; A --> D[County Conservation Board]; B --> E["(Most frequent choice.)  
• Allows better communication with engineer.  
• More resources available – dollars, equipment, support personnel.  
• Already mowing shoulders and cutting brush."]; C --> F["(Reports directly to the board of supervisors and is physically located in the engineer's office or conservation board headquarters.)  
• Most freedom."]; D --> G["• More experience with native vegetation.  
• Usually a more conservation-driven program.  
• Facilitates closer relationship between Engineer and Conservation."];
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### Engineer's Office (*Secondary Roads*)

*(Most frequent choice.)*

- Allows better communication with engineer.
- More resources available – dollars, equipment, support personnel.
- Already mowing shoulders and cutting brush.

### Independent

*(Reports directly to the board of supervisors and is physically located in the engineer's office or conservation board headquarters.)*

- Most freedom.

### County Conservation Board

- More experience with native vegetation.
- Usually a more conservation-driven program.
- Facilitates closer relationship between Engineer and Conservation.

# **Advertised Roadside Manager Starting Salaries**

Benton County, 2014: \$35,000-\$40,000

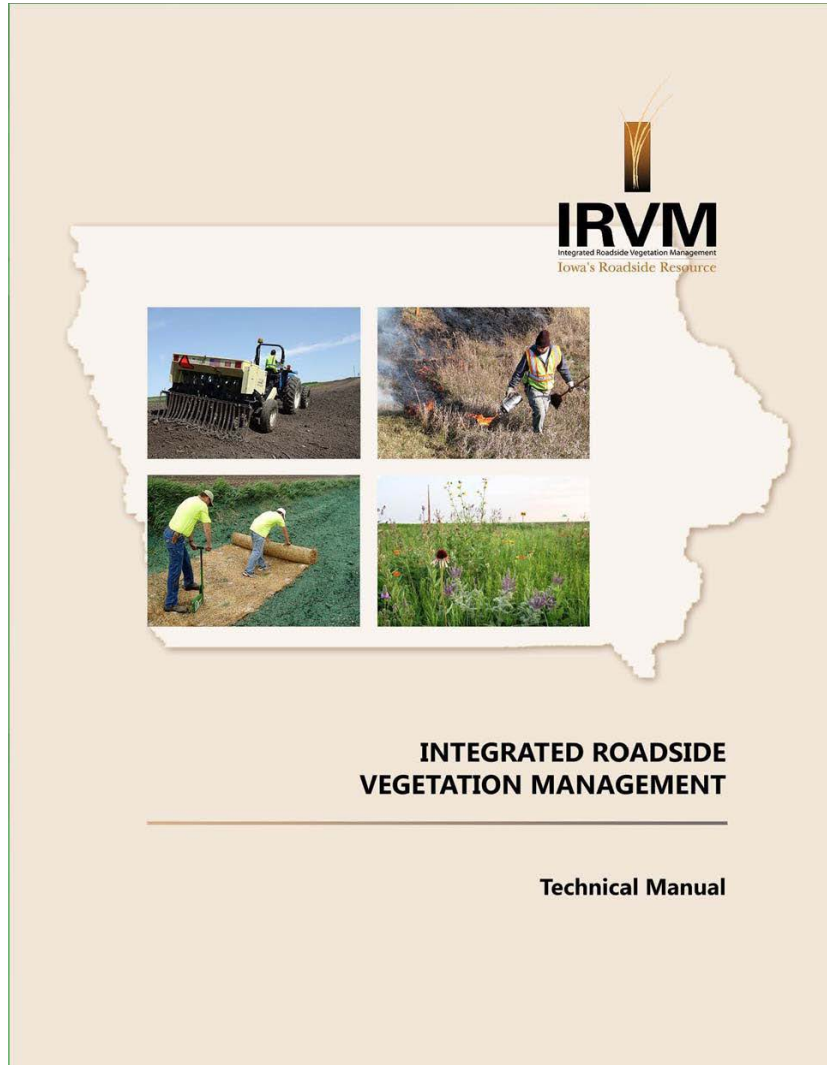
Fayette County, 2014: \$40,000-\$45,000

Cerro Gordo County, 2014: \$45,000-\$47,000

Dickinson County, 2015: \$38,000-\$42,000

Bremer County, 2015: \$37,000-\$40,000

<http://www.tallgrassprairiecenter.org/irvm>



The cover of the 'Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management Technical Manual' features a central white outline of the state of Iowa. At the top center is the IRVM logo, which consists of a stylized plant icon above the text 'IRVM' and the subtitle 'Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management Iowa's Roadside Resource'. Inside the Iowa outline, there are four small photographs: a tractor with a mulch machine, a worker using a hand tool on a roadside, two workers unrolling a roll of sod, and a field of green vegetation with purple flowers. Below the Iowa outline, the title 'INTEGRATED ROADSIDE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT' is printed in bold, uppercase letters, followed by a horizontal line and the subtitle 'Technical Manual'.

