Imagine your Conservation Reserve Program land turned into wildlife habitat with very little effort and no out-of-pocket expenses while you receive annual rent payments.

Even if your land is not enrolled in CRP, DNR private lands wildlife biologists will help you turn suitable land into better wildlife habitat and costs will be covered by the Iowa Habitat & Access Program (IHAP).

If you decide to do some or all of the work to improve your wildlife habitat, IHAP will pay you to do that work.

**WHO IS ELIGIBLE?**

Eligible landowners (or those who have legal authority to sign a land contract for a landowner) must have at least 40 acres of land with adequate or the potential for adequate wildlife habitat that the landowner is willing to open to the public for walk-in hunting from Sept. 1 through May 31 for three to ten years.

**WHAT IS THE LANDOWNER’S COMMITMENT?**

Landowners enter into a cooperative agreement with Iowa DNR to allow the posting of public access areas, hunters to hunt the land and Iowa conservation officers to patrol it. In return, a private lands biologist will walk the land to determine the quality of the landowner’s wildlife habitat and provide a plan to improve it for the species to be hunted.

Landowners have the choice to do the work, contract the work, or allow the DNR to contract the work described in the contract. A sample IHAP agreement is available on the DNR website at [www.iowadnr.gov/ihaplandowner](http://www.iowadnr.gov/ihaplandowner) or

> “Every time I go down to the farm I flush up a few pheasants in the IHAP. Always see deer too. And the wildflowers? That is so rewarding to see. My wife loves them. Makes a person feel closer to nature’s wonderful world.”

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*This is a summary of Code of Iowa 461C Public Use of Private Lands and Waters as it pertains to the Iowa Habitat and Access Program contracts with landowners. Contact the DNR’s legal department for further explanation at 515-725-8200.*
What Assurances Do Landowners Get in IHAP Enrollment?

Liability for hunters is an important landowner concern. Under Iowa law, an IHAP property landowner has “limited liability.” This means the landowner bears no liability for injuries suffered by the public allowed access to hunt on the landowner’s IHAP property, except that the public should be given notice of all known and foreseeable dangers, such as a large unplugged well hidden by the landscape.

The liability protection law was drafted, and recently amended, specifically to encourage public access on private lands without worry of financial ruin from lawsuits, and is required by the terms of the law to be construed liberally and broadly in favor of IHAP enrollees.

Hunters are only allowed use of legal bows and firearms as permissible under Iowa hunting regulations. It is illegal to discharge a firearm within a 200-yard buffer around occupied dwellings — homes, livestock buildings and open animal feedlots.

No trapping or fishing is allowed.

Hunting is walk-in only — no vehicles are allowed on IHAP property. Vehicles must be parked in a designated area or along the road.

IHAP lands are patrolled and hunting seasons and regulations are enforced by DNR conservation officers.

If a hunter threatens the health, safety or property of the landowner or the landowner’s family members, that hunter may be denied access. The local DNR conservation officer will be available for assistance.

Contact information is available for private lands wildlife biologists at www.iowadnr.gov/ihaplandowner/ or call the main DNR office in Des Moines at 515-725-8200 to get the name and phone number for your local private lands wildlife biologist.

Wildlife dependent recreation spurs rural economic opportunities. With only one percent of Iowa’s area available for public hunting, your voluntary enrollment in IHAP will help open 30,000 additional acres in support of the Iowa tradition of hunting and associated economic opportunities in rural Iowa.