

## Project 08-152 Schramm Bluffs Preservation Project

### Project Legend:

The Nebraska Land Trust requests a grant of \$1,100,000, to establish conservation easements on private land surrounding Schramm Park, to protect this highly imperiled and unique landscape. Given existing development pressure and the proposed construction of a new interstate exit near the bluffs, the time for conservation is limited. The resulting land protection will preserve wildlife habitat, mature oak-hickory woodlands, prairies, scenic views, soil and water resources for generations to come, in the midst of nearly one million Nebraskans.

**Proposal Context:** Regional

**Duration:** April 2008 to July 2012

**Cost:** \$1,100,000 Awarded from NET. Matched by \$958,010 in funds from the Natural Resources Conservation Service

**NET Funding Objective:** Soil Management, Surface & Groundwater, Habitat

### Process:

- Conservation easements were purchased, bringing the total acres preserved by this grant to 520, through five separate agreements. The area preserved by this grant amounts to 57% more land than the Schramm State park itself.
- Landowner interest in conservation easements exceeded the available funds for purchase. Because of this, projects had to be prioritized based on a variety of factors including threatened or endangered wildlife, presence of Oak-Hickory woodlands, tallgrass prairie, or other unique plant communities, historic/cultural Sites, water quality protection, and several other factors.
- Property scoring sheet was developed to rank the properties and determine which properties were most suitable for purchase and preservation.
- Four major easements were purchased including:
  - Patterson Farm – 56.62 acres
  - Patterson Farm II – 178.99 acres
  - Fedde Farm – 157.8 acres
  - Swanson Easement – 36.44

**Domains:** The purchase of land and the preservation of native wildlife accomplished throughout this project has helped to improve the quality of 520 acres of private land surrounding Schramm Park. This will bring in more people and generate more revenue for the area. For these reasons this project falls under the Environmental and Economic domains.

**Transferability:** Nearly any community with habitable land that is in danger of being developed could use the strategies found within this grant to purchase easements and limit development while increasing preservation.

