

Why Native Vegetation?

Non-native, introduced species are heavily relied upon for soil and water conservation, as well as forages. While these plants can be effective for those purposes, introduced plants and/or their management generally provide poor habitat for many declining species of grassland wildlife, and can become invasive in some situations, threatening remnant native habitats.

Native plants not only provide wildlife benefits, but are also as effective as introduced species, or in some cases better for soil conservation, soil health, water quality, air quality, and livestock forage. Native vegetation delivers multiple benefits, providing a better value.

Better for conservation
Better for agriculture
Better for wildlife



Water & Air Quality

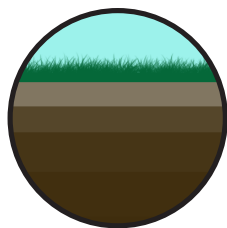
37-100%

LESS neonicotinoids are found in crop field surface runoff flowing through native prairie vegetation strips.

Buffers require **one-half** the width of introduced grasses and remain **functional LONGER.**

Soil Conservation & Soil Health

UP TO 70% of native plants' biomass is below ground, adding structural reinforcement and organic matter to the soil.



2X MORE deep root biomass as introduced species.

sequester **MORE CARBON**

13.5% **MORE** average total nitrogen and phosphorous is removed than by introduced grass buffers.

95% of total plant carbon is stored below ground in native vegetation.



Agriculture & Wildlife

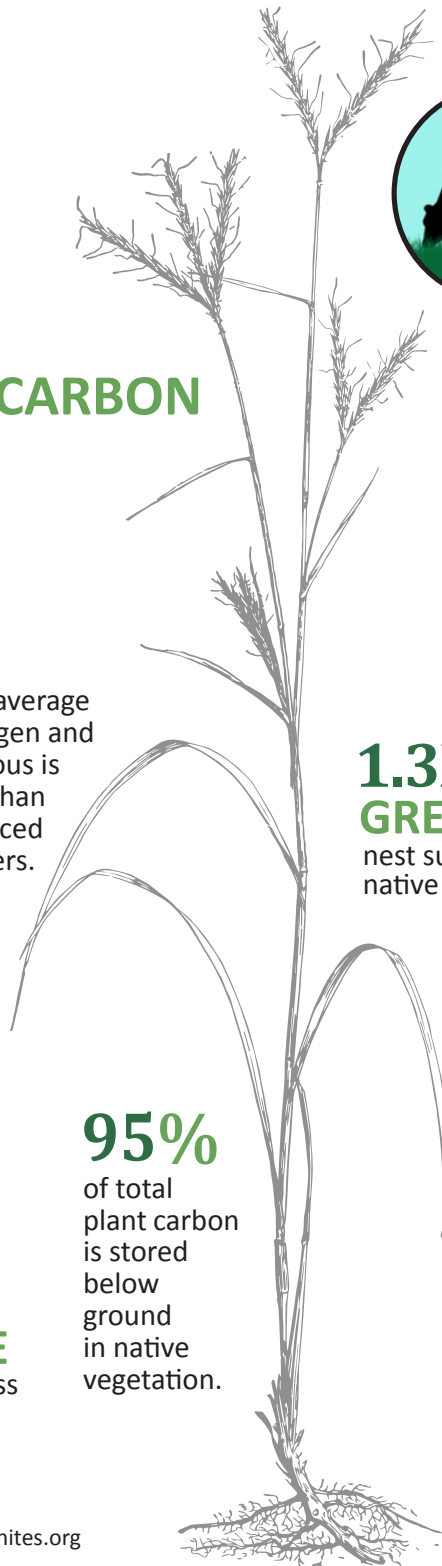
50-150 lbs. MORE gain per animal than tall fescue during summer grazing.

drought TOLERANT

1.3X GREATER nest success than in non-native pastures and hayfields.

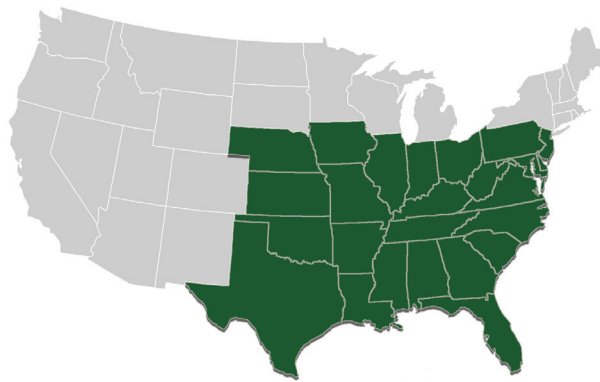
31¢ cost per pound of gain on cattle grazing a big bluestem/indiangrass mixture.

2.9X HIGHER bird abundance than adjacent cropland.





The National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative (NBCI) is a unified, multi-state effort to restore wild bobwhite quail to America's landscape. The NBCI was created by state wildlife management agencies comprising the core of bobwhite range and is funded by the Federal Aid in Wildlife & Sport Fish Restoration program, the University of Tennessee, Park Cities Quail, and the Quail and Upland Game Alliance. NBCI is tasked with developing and coordinating the implementation of a national, habitat-based approach for the landscape-scale restoration of huntable populations of wild bobwhites.



Natives First is an NBCI-led effort to create a native vegetation standard for the Conservation Title of the Farm Bill.

To help restore declining upland game birds and other wildlife we propose that the Farm Bill direct USDA to adopt a standard for native vegetation that would apply to private conservation and working lands, where feasible and appropriate. Such a standard should:



National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative

- Be voluntary and non-regulatory;
- Promote the adoption and use of native plants for most purposes;
- Allow flexibility for using select non-aggressive introduced plants that do provide habitat benefits; and
- Prioritize financial assistance for native plants in new USDA program enrollments.

The Natives First Coalition is a coalition of organizations, businesses and individuals who support the concept of utilizing native vegetation where feasible and appropriate. The mission of the Coalition is to increase awareness and adoption of native vegetation using scientifically sound information about the multiple benefits and economic and environmental advantages provided by native vegetation.