

**Is a pasture just an empty field?**





**The bobolink is one such grassland bird**



**Male bobolink**

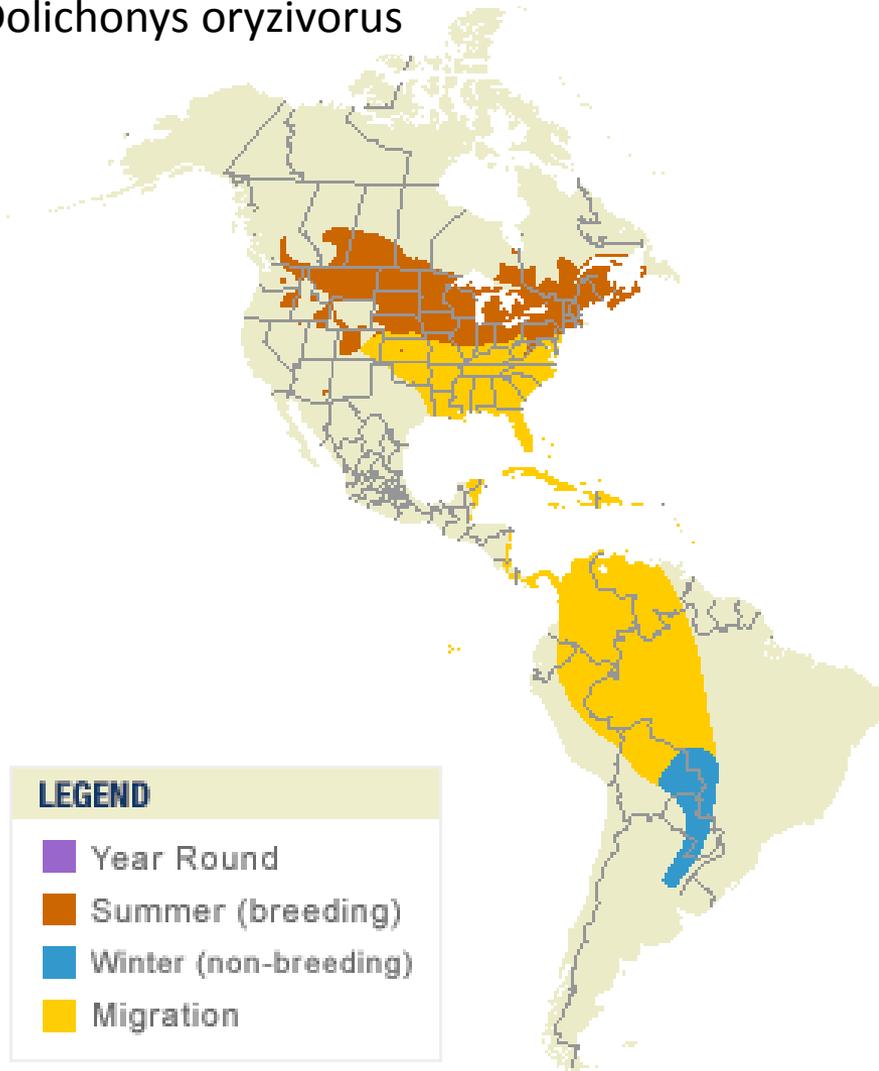


**Female bobolink**

# Range (geographic distribution)

Bobolink

*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*



Bobolink need to survive the winter in South America and then embark on an amazing journey to northern North America. They need stopover habitat along the way where they can find food, water and shelter. At the breeding grounds, they need to find grassland habitat that provides enough food, water, shelter and space to survive and to reproduce.

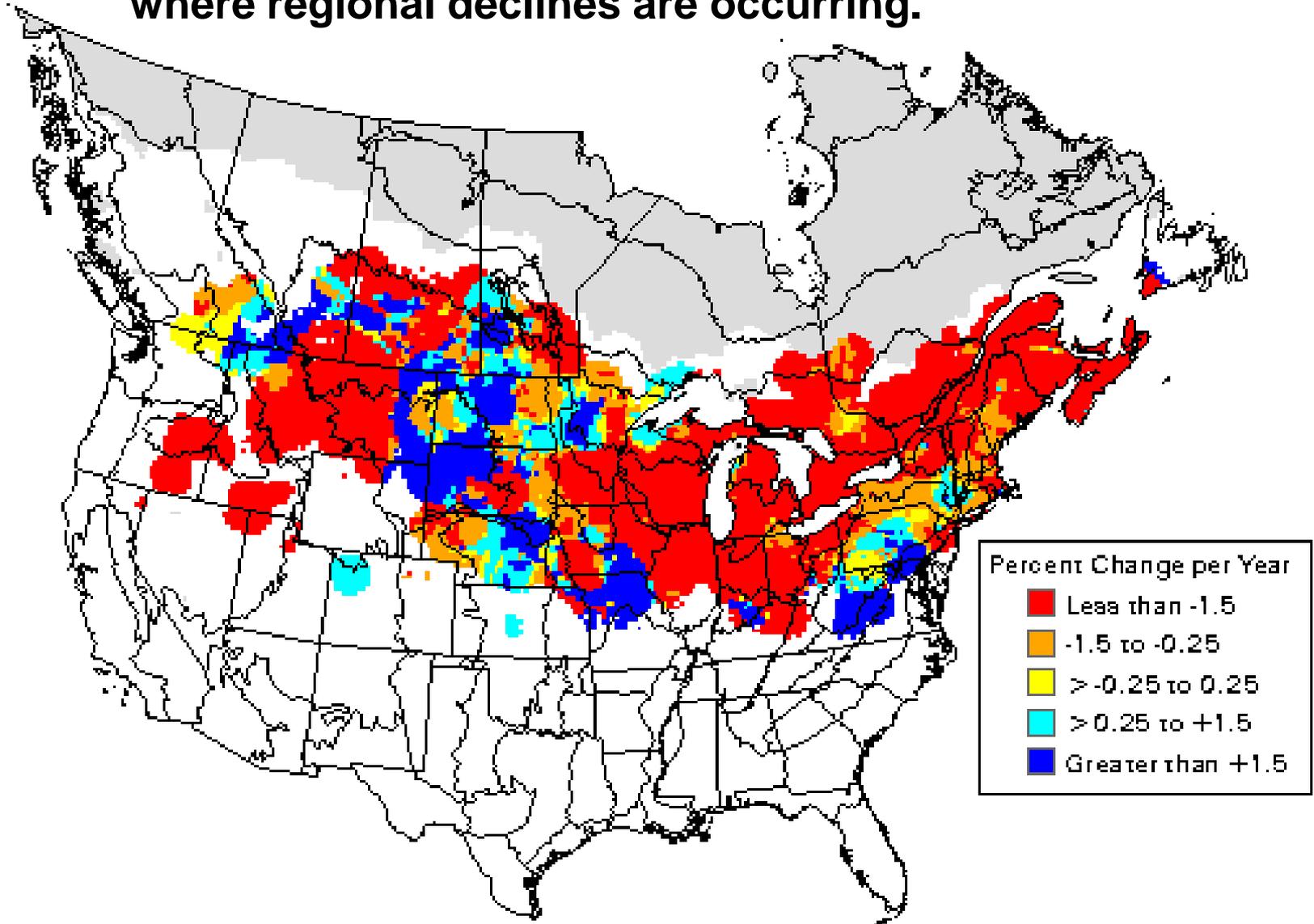
**Bobolink make their nests on the ground by mid to late May. Chicks hatch from early to mid June.**



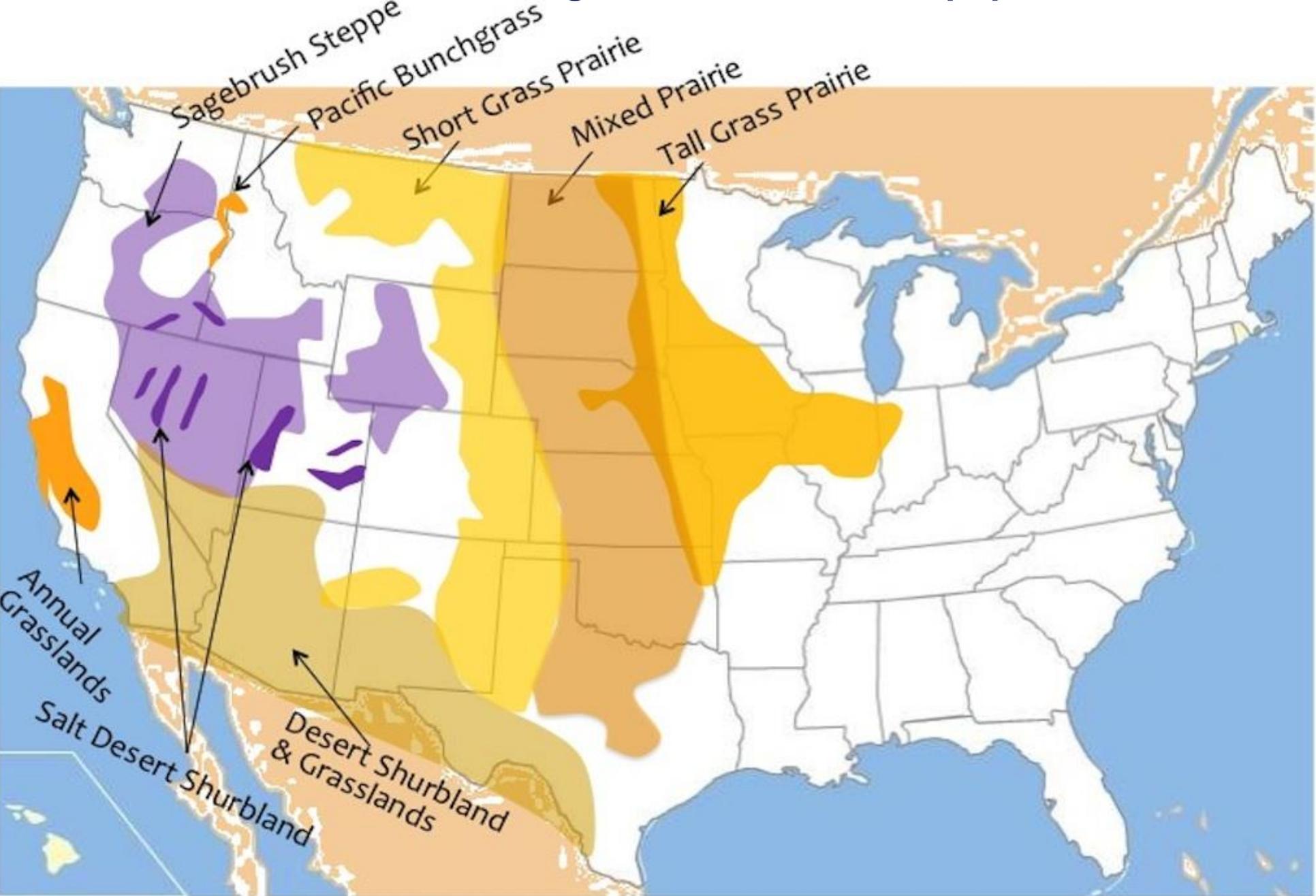
**First cutting of hay occurs from late May to early June.**



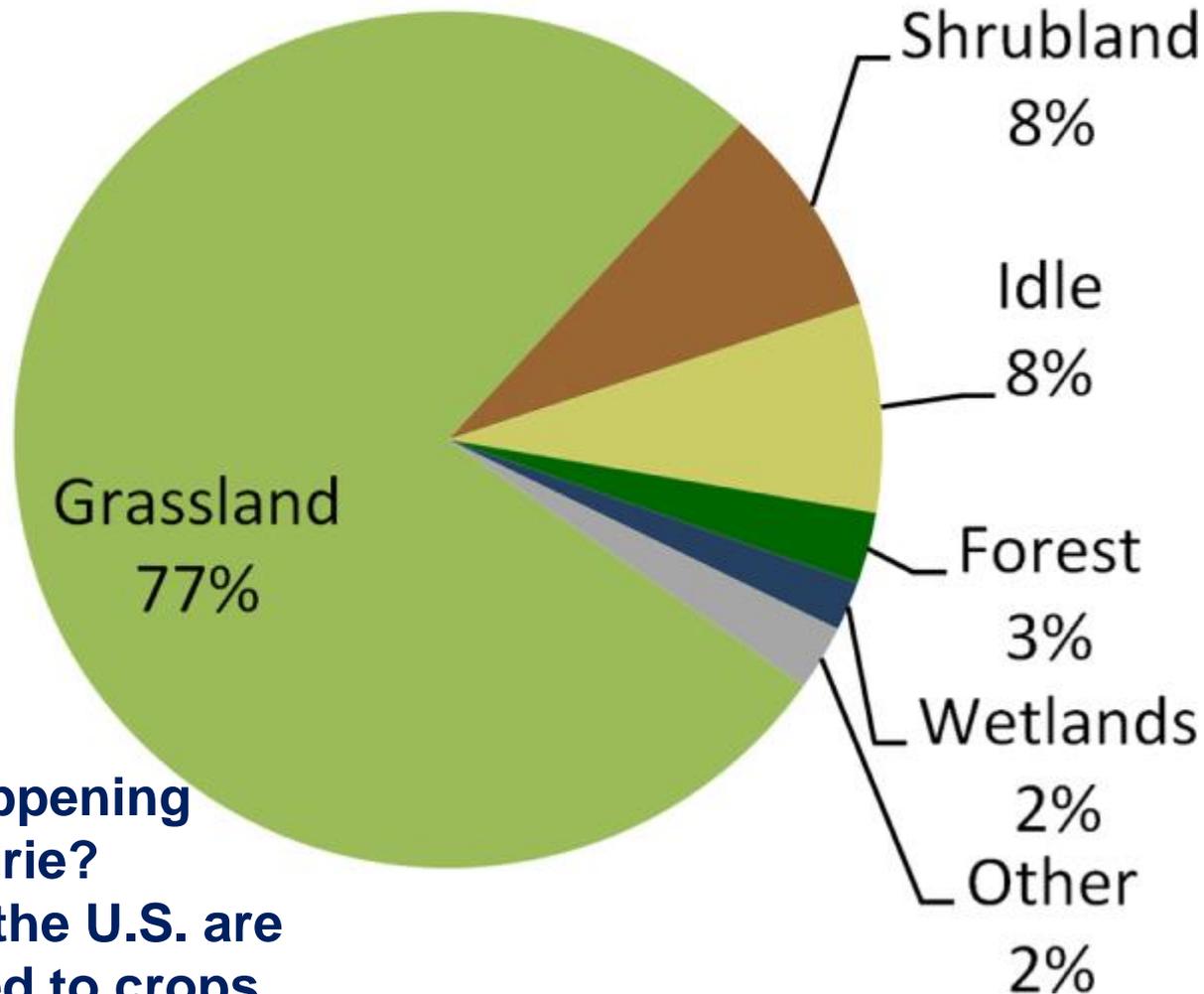
The global bobolink population is declining at a rate of 2.2 percent per year. Areas in red show where regional declines are occurring.



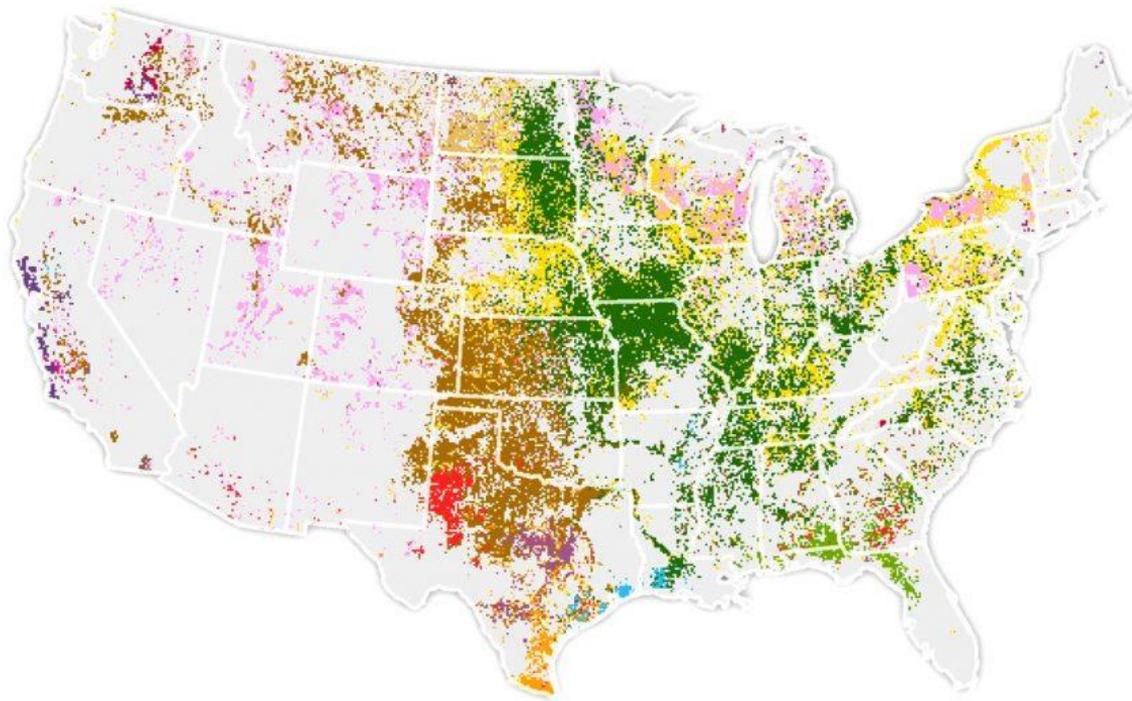
# Prairie habitat was a stronghold of the bobolink population



# Sources of new croplands, 2008-2012

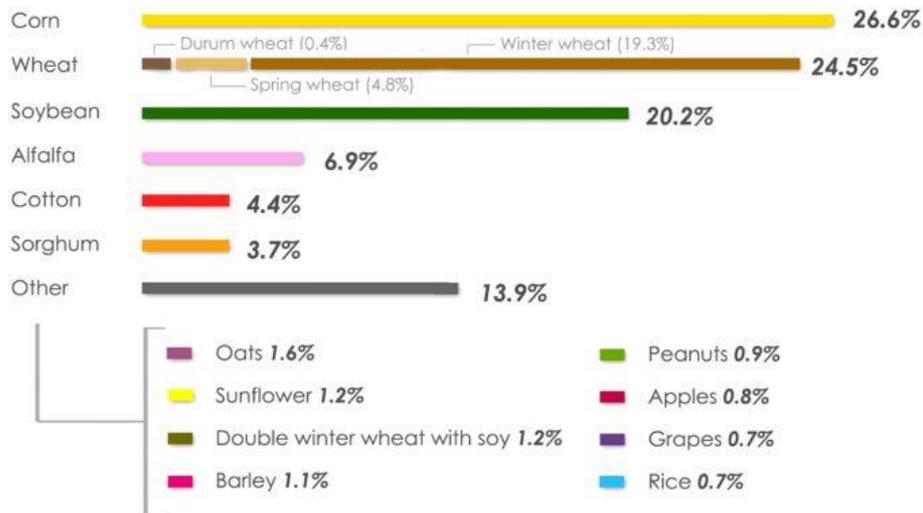


**But what is happening  
now to the prairie?  
Grasslands in the U.S. are  
being converted to crops.**

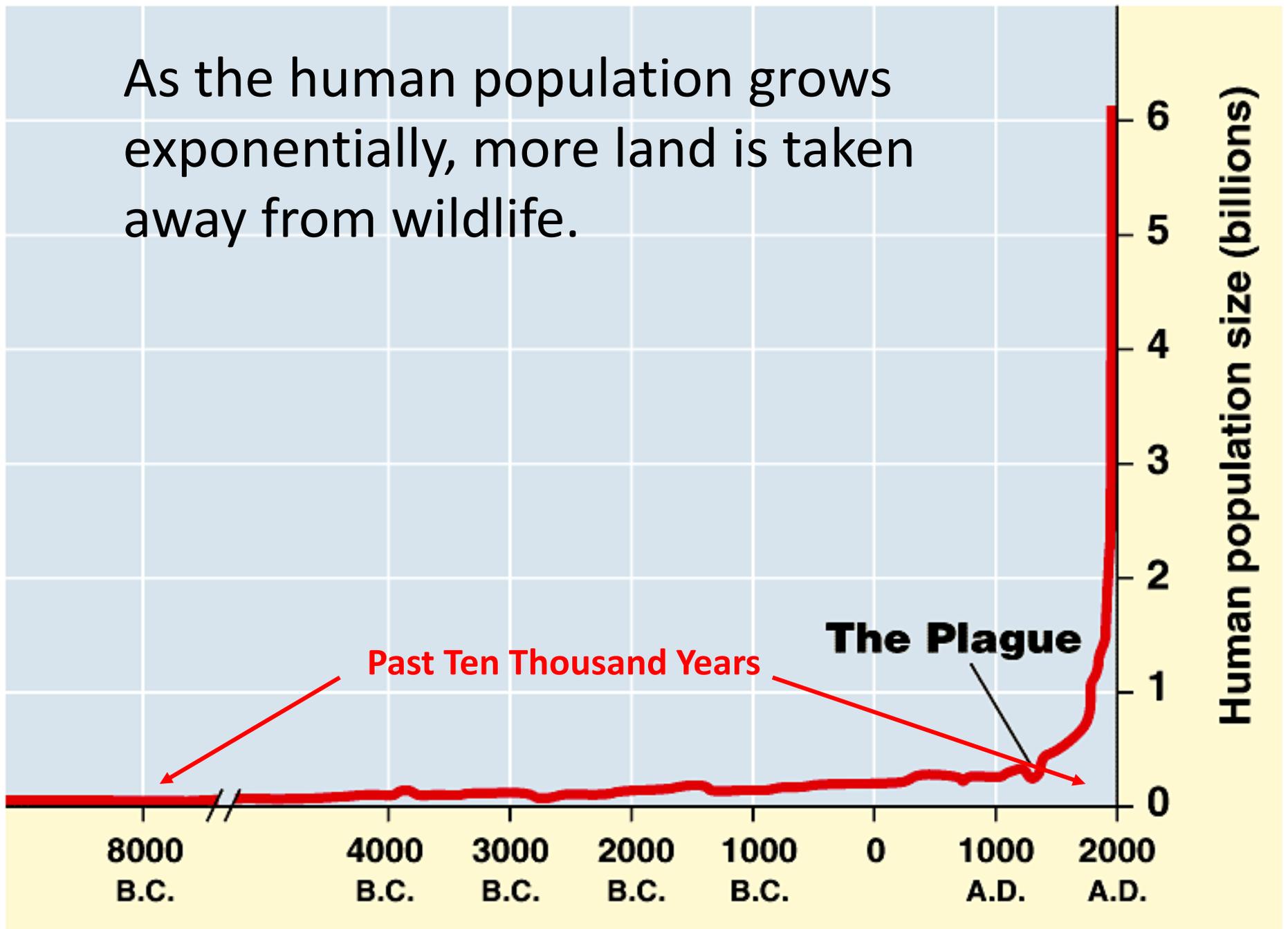


**Much of the prairie  
has been  
converted to corn  
and soybeans**

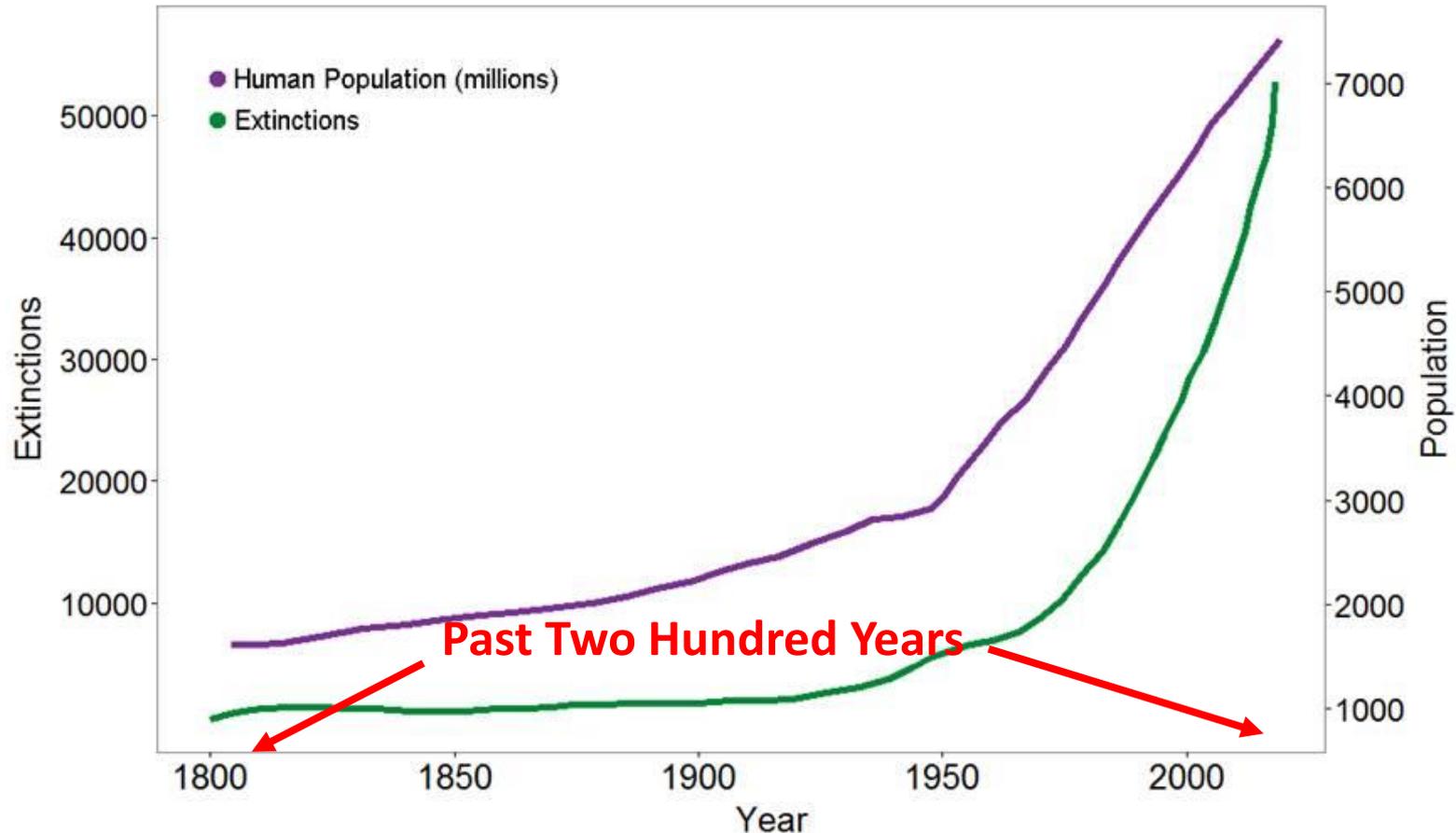
### MOST COMMON "BREAK-OUT" CROP BY REGION



As the human population grows exponentially, more land is taken away from wildlife.



# Humans & The Extinction Crisis



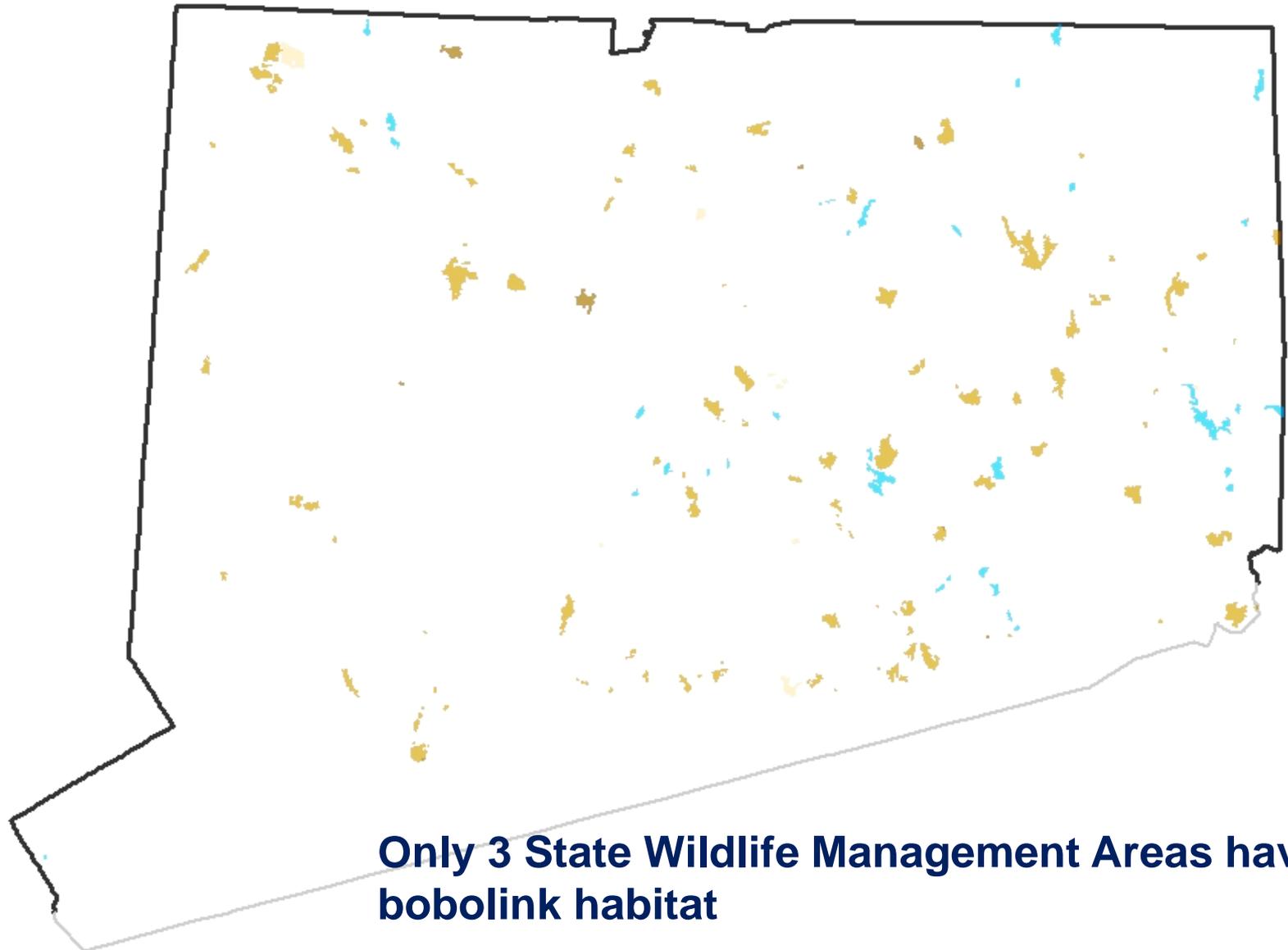
Data source: Scott, J.M. 2008. *Threats to Biological Diversity: Global, Continental, Local*. U.S. Geological Survey, Idaho Cooperative Fish and Wildlife, Research Unit, University Of Idaho.

**How do we feed all these people without driving more species to extinction?**

**The University of Connecticut's Horsebarn Hill in Storrs has pasture and hayfields that attract bobolink and other grassland birds.**



# Wildlife Management Areas

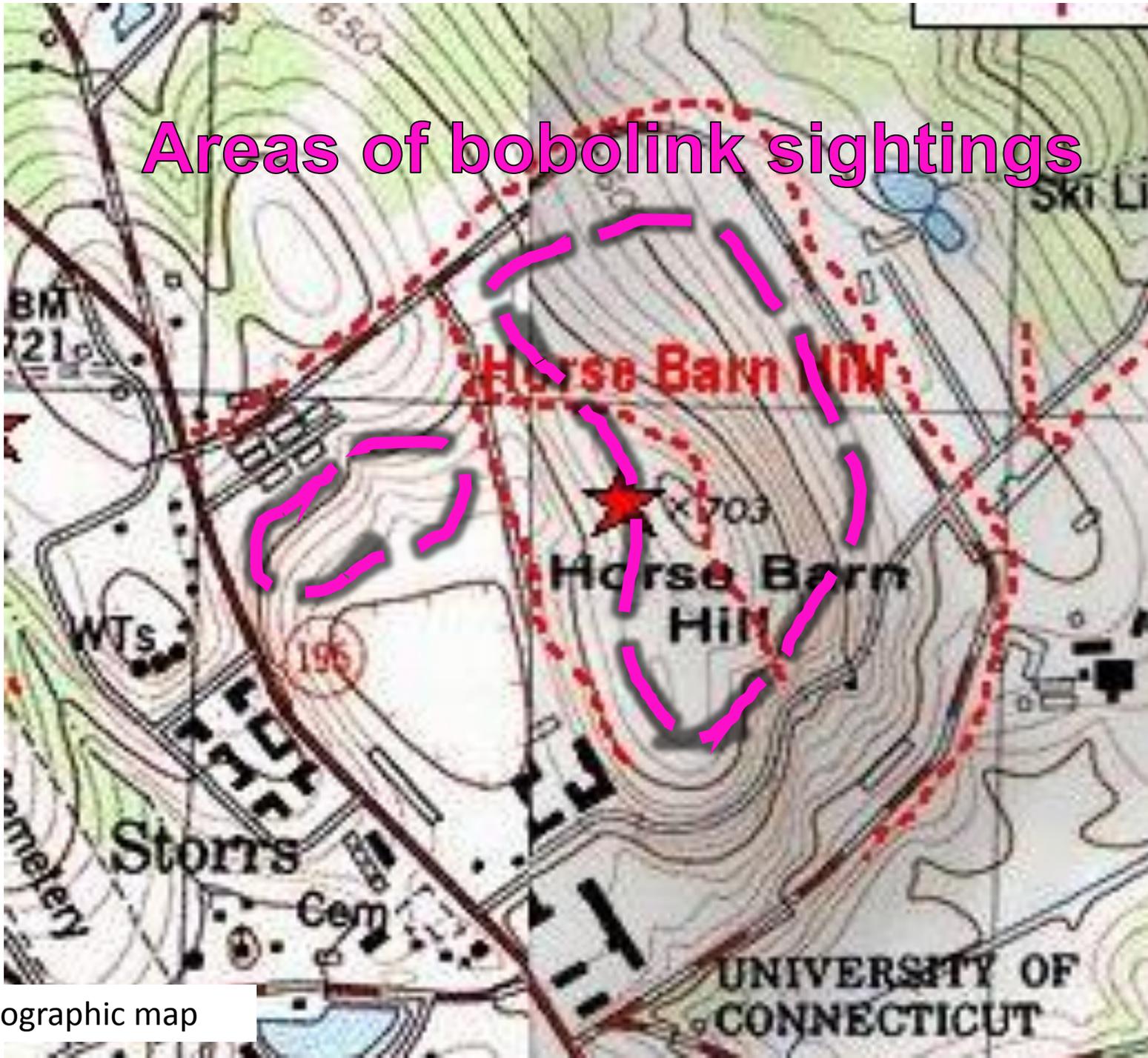


**Only 3 State Wildlife Management Areas have bobolink habitat**

**Can UConn satisfy its obligations as an agricultural university and also allow bobolink to raise their young?**

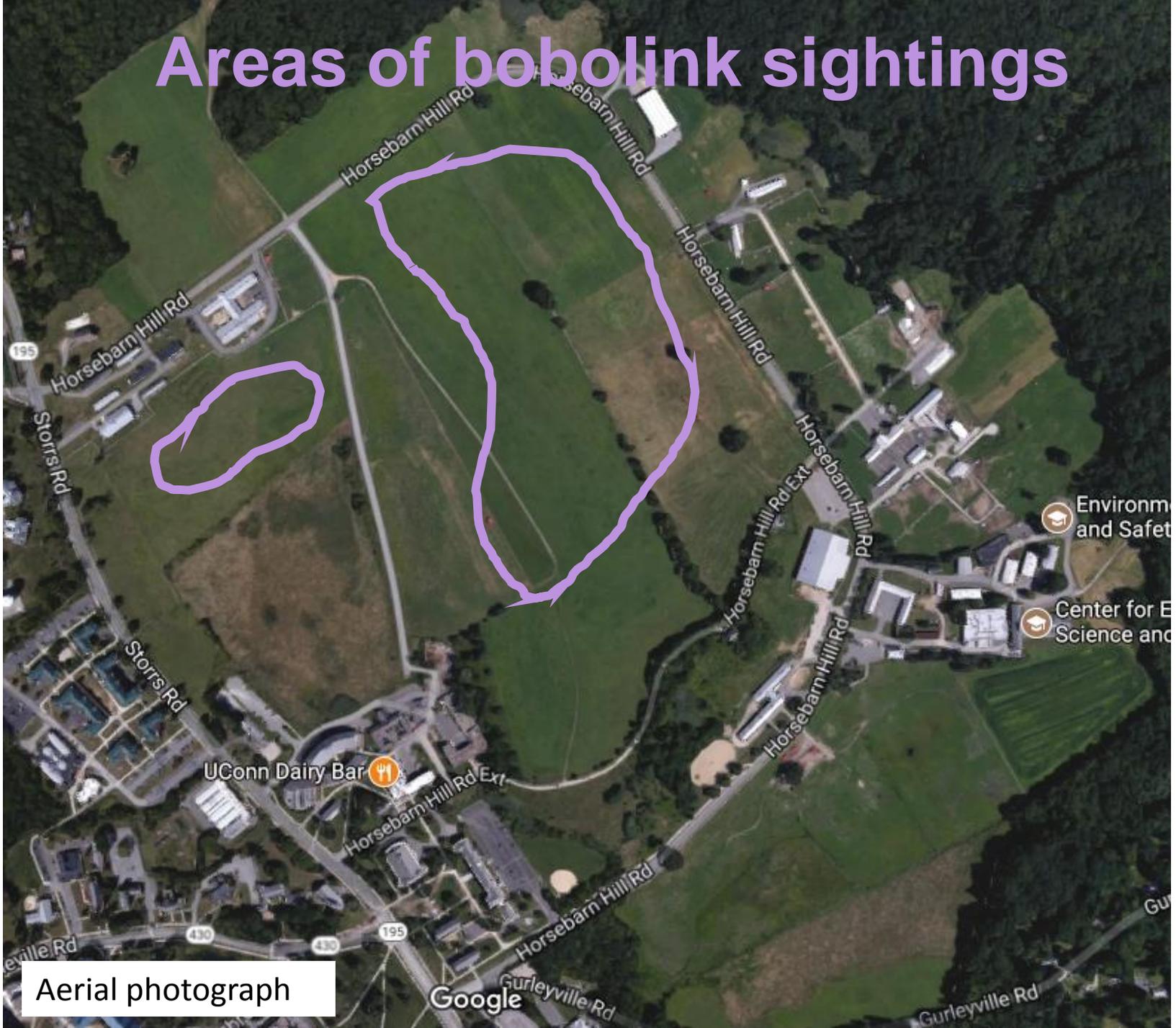


# Areas of bobolink sightings



Topographic map

# Areas of bobolink sightings



Aerial photograph

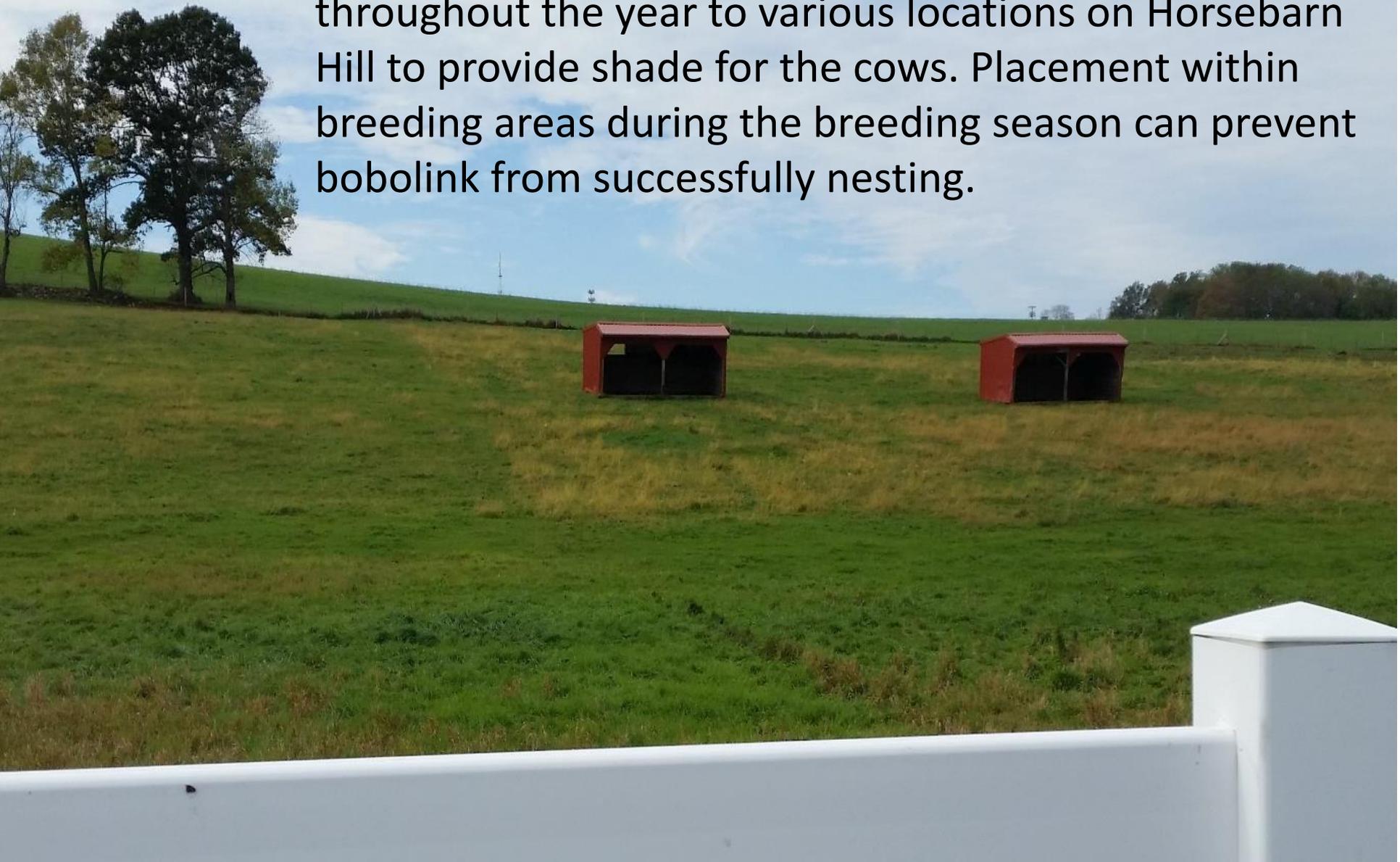
# Can Horsebarn Hill support agriculture, bobolink and recreation?



**It only takes one dog, one time, to eliminate bobolink from an area.**



Bobolink avoid areas that have buildings and other structures. Portable livestock shelters are moved throughout the year to various locations on Horsebarn Hill to provide shade for the cows. Placement within breeding areas during the breeding season can prevent bobolink from successfully nesting.



**How do we educate the public about protecting bobolink and other vulnerable wildlife?**





Other sites to find bobolink in Connecticut include Topsmead State forest in Litchfield and Pomfret Audubon in Pomfret.