



**Kurt Bond and Robbins with landowner Carl Schwartz. Schwartz is proud of the fact his habitat projects have stopped sediment runoff from his land. It has also provided a home to many wild pheasants and other wildlife.**

ing with landowners in the watershed, signing them up to do habitat projects. Through this continuing partnership with the NRCS, PGC and PF chapters, PF is also adding three new FBBs in the state, two of which will be placed directly in the heart of the Somerset and

Central Susquehanna WPRAs. They will focus on CREP outreach and habitat planning for CREP re-enrollments and new CREP contracts.

In addition to pheasants, other grassland species are benefitting from CREP, including the melodious eastern

meadowlarks, striking red-winged black birds, field sparrows, barn owls and state threatened short-eared owls and northern harrier hawks, graceful flying birds I have marveled at many times.

But restoring wild, huntable pheasant populations remains the top priority. "If not for PF chapters and volunteers working with state and federal partners, wild pheasants would be done in Pennsylvania," Klinger said.

Shon Robbins, PF's regional wildlife biologist for the east coast, is working to take PF's achievements to the next level by promoting a plan and seeking funding to permanently protect CREP pheasant acres using conservation easements. His initial goal is 2,000 acres.

### John Hoy Cares

PF member and farmer John Hoy cares about pheasants and all other wildlife. He has worked with the local PF chapter and NRCS to enroll some of his land in CREP, established several wetlands with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program and helped the barn owl. Hoy let the PGC cut an entry hole in his barn and install a nesting box for this enigmatic, but dwindling species.

"I like wildlife and want it here for future generations," Hoy said showing us a nest full of barn owl chicks in his barn. "We also have to protect rural lands from urban sprawl."

During our visit, Robbins and Kurt Bond, a PF/PGC Farm Bill biologist working CREP re-enrollments and the PGC's hunter access and Deferred Use of Grasslands program, talked to Hoy about burning his CREP acres to improve it for wildlife.

He was interested. "I've seen birds out here I've never seen and it's because of the CREP....bats, snakes too. I'm glad to see them."

Hoy is also concerned about land practices. "I think we're asking for another dust bowl by taking out CREP and other conservation acres, plowing native grass

**“ I last reported on the Wild Pheasant Recovery Area in 2005 when it was just starting. Now, some believe a limited wild bird season could open in the state in three years. That is good news. ”**



**Landowner and farmer John Hoy is giving back to his land in many ways, including providing a home to declining barn owls (at left) through a state program. Hoy said that after a lifetime of taking from his land it was time to give back.**

