



STATE OF KANSAS: BALDWIN WOODS

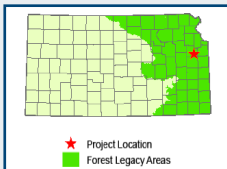
In 2016, Baldwin Woods became the first and only USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy project in the State of Kansas. It exemplifies the power of public and private partnerships in conservation, especially in a state with limited conservation resources.

“The Baldwin Woods Preserve ... is a biological treasure of local, regional, and national significance. Expansion of the preserve, facilitated by the Forest Legacy Program and partnerships with multiple agencies and landowners, has enhanced the conservation value of the preserve, and expanded opportunities for public outreach, education, and research in the environmental sciences.”

— Bryan L. Foster, Director University of Kansas Field Station



Baldwin Woods was named a National Historic Landmark in 1980 by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior and is widely recognized as a site of biological significance.



It lies within an ecotone, or border region, where the North American eastern deciduous forest meets the tallgrass prairie.

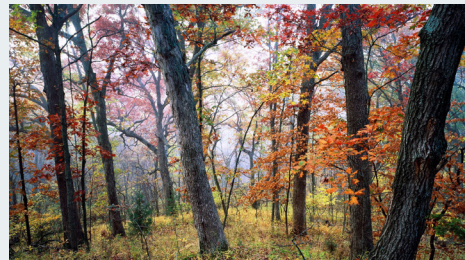
Many species found within Baldwin Woods are living at the western extreme of their geographic range, and thus subtle shifts in environmental conditions may impact their populations in Baldwin Woods before the rest of their range sees any changes. This makes the project lands extremely valuable to researchers who study ecosystem dynamics.

Baldwin Woods provides important habitat for the southern flying squirrel, red-bellied snake, and smooth earth snake (both snakes threatened).



Only a small portion of native forest remains in Baldwin Woods. Historically, the loss of forests in Kansas was the result of conversion of forested land to agricultural land. Today, the biggest threat is conversion to residential development. If the Baldwin Woods Preserve were not protected by the Forest Legacy Program and other entities, the nation would risk losing both a nationally recognized research area and one of the last pockets of long-term managed native forests in Kansas.

“The Baldwin Woods Forest Preserve” is managed as part of the University of Kansas Field Station for research and education by the Kansas Biological Survey & Center for Ecological Research (a KU ecological research unit).



The selection of Baldwin Woods for a Forest Legacy project was endorsed by the State Stewardship Coordinating Committee. The State of Kansas then partnered with multiple organizations and four altruistic landowners in order to complete the project.

“The Baldwin Woods project provided an extraordinary opportunity to serve as a partner in a project that protects a truly unique landscape ... Because of this effort, Baldwin Woods (Forest Preserve) will be protected for future generations and will work to inspire the preservation of additional woodlands and prairies that are unique to Kansas and to our nation as a whole.”

— Jan Shupert-Arick, Douglas County Heritage Conservation Council Program Coordinator



Baldwin Woods preserves one of the oldest native forests in the state, provides habitat for numerous species, creates new recreation opportunities, and acts as an important research station for environmental change.



At this property, and across much of Kansas, walnut, oak, and hickory are losing ground to other more shade tolerant species.

Kansas does not have state policies or programs to protect land from conversion to non-forest uses. The USDA Forest Legacy Program provided that important opportunity for the protection of Baldwin Woods.

AT-A-GLANCE



166 acres protected.



At least 25 species of reptiles and amphibians occur on the property.



Baldwin Woods includes nearly 80 species of woody plants, half of which are trees.



156 recorded species of birds on the property.



Property includes more than 500 species of flowering plants and ferns.



Site is home to 100 kinds of bryophytes (mosses), 200 different kinds of macrofungi, and 200 kinds of lichens.

Top L: Rice tract in the foreground, Baldwin Woods tract in the background. Facing WNW. (Photo: Kansas Forest Service); Middle L: (Photo: Kansas Biological Survey & Center for Ecological Research); Bottom L: (Photo: Edward C. Robison III Photography); Top R: (Photo: Claire Harper, USFS); Bottom R: (Photo: Edward C. Robison III Photography)

For more information, visit <https://www.kansasforests.org> and www.biosurvey.ku.edu.