



# PHEASANTS FOREVER & QUAIL FOREVER

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## NEWS RELEASE

### **Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever in Missouri committed to increasing voluntary public hunting access**

Staff working to bring awareness to MDC program

**JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – September 16, 2020**– Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever in Missouri has partnered with the Missouri Department of Conservation and others to improve, promote and increase the use of the Missouri Outdoor Recreational Access Program (MRAP) lands.

This MDC program, funded through a federal Farm Bill grant, provides payments to private landowners in exchange for making the enrolled land available to the public for specific recreational uses, including wildlife viewing, hunting and fishing. There are even youth-only properties that provide more opportunities for young hunters and anglers to gain experience.



The program launched with pilot counties in late 2015. In the spring of 2020, MDC received a \$2.2M grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service through their Voluntary Public Access – Habitat Incentive Program to renew the MRAP program for three more years. With this program, funding is also available to support habitat improvement projects on these properties, in addition to landowner payments.

“Neighboring states like Kansas and Nebraska have long had successful walk-in access programs that benefit private landowners and increase hunting opportunity and access,” said Casey Bergthold, Missouri State Coordinator for Quail Forever. “Partnering on this effort will create wildlife habitat and encourage seasoned hunters to mentor those new to the pursuit. This is just one more way that our nearly 3,000 Quail Forever members and volunteers can help increase wildlife habitat and outdoor recreational opportunities while helping private landowners.”

As its contribution, Quail Forever partnered with MDC on MRAP efforts and committed \$10,000 of in-kind support in the form of habitat improvements, volunteer hours, program promotion and mentored hunt opportunities. This work will occur over a three-year period starting in 2020.

MRAP already features 56 properties across the state totaling just under 15,000 acres. MDC is hoping to double those acres by 2023, and Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever in Missouri is



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excited to help with that goal. Partnering with MDC to raise awareness of and work to improve MRAP properties supports Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever's mission – to conserve quail, pheasants and other wildlife through habitat improvements, public awareness, education and land management policies and programs.

“We are thrilled to continue to partner with Quail Forever and Pheasants Forever to create additional outdoor recreation opportunities in the state and improve the habitat on private land for upland game and other wildlife,” said MDC Farm Bill Coordinator Lisa Potter. “All MRAP properties require a minimum amount of quality wildlife habitat to be present on the landscape, which helps ensure that our outdoor recreationists will always have a good experience visiting the properties whether they are looking for fishing, wildlife viewing or quail hunting opportunities.”

### About Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever

[Pheasants Forever](#), including its quail conservation division — [Quail Forever](#) — is the nation's largest nonprofit organization dedicated to upland habitat conservation. Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever have more than 132,000 members and 760 local chapters across the United States and Canada. Since creation in 1982, Pheasants Forever has spent over \$900 million on 550,000 habitat projects benefiting 19 million acres nationwide. Visit the [Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever in Missouri website](#) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

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