



Position Update

This past quarter I hit the 5 month mark with The Habitat Organization and the Wetland Emphasis Team, and I am enjoying every second of it! The team and I spent the quarter getting out into the field conducting more wetland repair and restoration surveys, finishing up the year's on-site monitoring, and visiting with new and existing landowners to keep healthy working relationships (and to share our frustration with beavers!). Back in the office, a lot of planning went on behind the scenes to prepare for wetland construction over the upcoming summer months. As time allowed, I also slipped away for as many great training and conservation outreach events as I could, meeting awesome people learning a lot of new information!



The Wetland Emphasis Team assisting a dedicated landowner in breaching a beaver dam on his wetland easement



Setting beaver traps in an attempt to reduce the local population and discourage wetland damage



Moving Forward

- Begin wetland construction and repairs
- Build on my knowledge of wetland systems and construction
- Get involved with my local PFQF chapter, the Mid MO Uplanders, to promote public participation in wildlife and habitat conservation
- Complete 2022 & 2023's Compatible Use Authorization renewals
- Continue to stay in touch with our existing landowners and help with any questions

Conservation Technical Assistance Summary

Conservation Planning

- 27 Landowner Contacts
- 32 Site Visits
- 15 On-site monitorings
- 4 topographic surveys completed
- 1 wetland conceptual design
- 1 wetland determination

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
Missouri PF/QF 2022 State Convention	Helped put on a golf tournament and banquet in Columbia, MO for the state convention to celebrate all of our partner and local chapter support!
Fire Mgmt Level 3	Demonstrated my ability to write prescribed fire plans by receiving the MDC's Fire Mgmt Level 3 certification
MidMO Uplanders Trap Night	Assisted in teaching trap shooting techniques and safety with my local chapter
NRCS Engineering Training	Better developed my knowledge in the engineering process to assist in our wetland designs



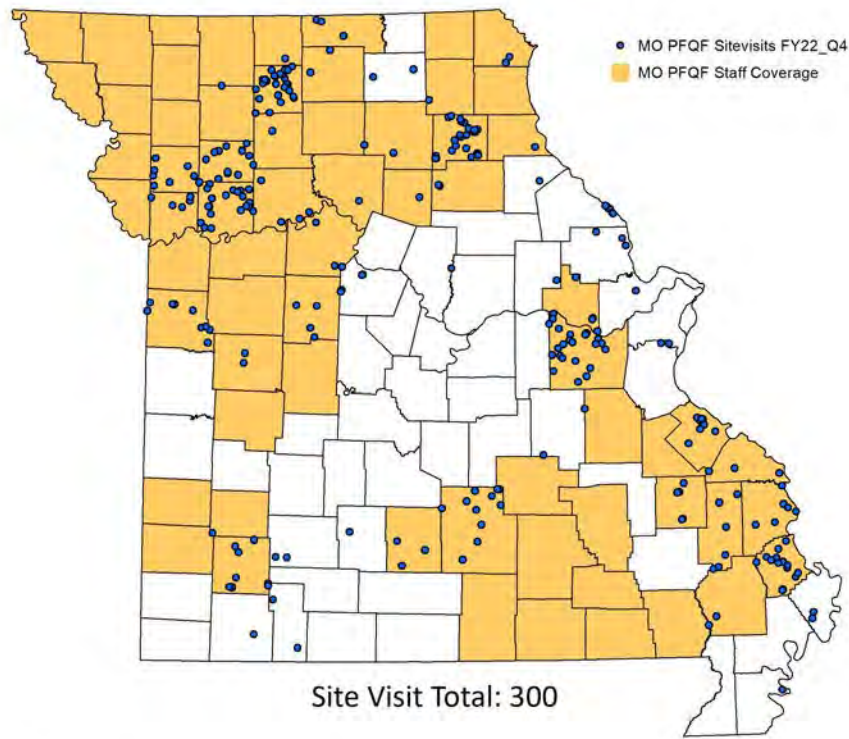




Fourth Quarter of FY22

From April 1, 2022 to June 31, 2022, our team recorded 661 landowner contacts and 300 site visits. The team impacted 12,792.8 acres. Outreach efforts reached 1936 participants through workshops, meetings, and trainings.

FY22 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT April 1, 2022 - June 30, 2022



*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.

Updated 7/11/2022



Missouri Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist positions are funded in partnership cooperation with the Missouri Department of Conservation and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



Courtney Nicks - Randolph, Chariton, & Macon Counties

April-June 2022

Activity Highlights

Conservation Planning

Landowner Contacts	73
Site Visits	4
Projects with Acres	68

Outreach

- Women's Landowner Workshop
- Partner Biologist Report
- Job shadowing
- State PF/QF Team Meeting

Partner Meetings/Trainings

- Culture & Team Building Course
- Customer Service Skills
- LCAP Training
- Grazing Systems Training
- Intern Orientation Instructor

Chapter / PBA Activities

QF Monthly Meetings	2
MTPBA Burns	3

Total Acres Impacted: 2,661.75 acres

Creating Sparks in NEMO

The Mark Twain Prescribed Burn Association in Northeast Missouri rallied the troops and created nearly 300 acres of early successional habitat through prescribed fire this spring. Five landowners utilized the local PBA's resources to safely and effectively use prescribed fire on their acres, and over 20 active members participated in at least one burn. This accomplishment is a tell-tale sign that the PBA offers an incredible resource to many landowners in the area, not only to conduct burns, but to teach landowners the incredible benefits of fire and how it can be safely implemented. The MTPBA continues to ignite local conservation efforts by encouraging landowners to step out of their comfort zone, light a match, and use this tool to improve their acres properly.





Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



Courtney Nicks - Randolph, Chariton, & Macon Counties

April-June 2022

PF/QF State Meeting Golf Tourney

The PF/QF team organized a state meeting that looked a little different this year. Chapter members and non-members were offered an opportunity to Golf for Conservation and then attend our Chapter Appreciation/Awards Reception. It was a fun day in the sun as golfers made their way around the AL Gustin Golf Course talking to our vendors and various biologists at stations around the course. The event allowed us the opportunity to highlight some of the phenomenal habitat work the course has implemented over many years working with the Mid Mo Uplanders Chapter.



Landowner Critter Pics

Landowners share their trail cam photos and stories of wildlife encounters. They love the land just as much as we do! Here are a few photos that were shared by our Randolph, Chariton, and Macon landowners this quarter.



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Randolph, Chariton, & Macon Counties

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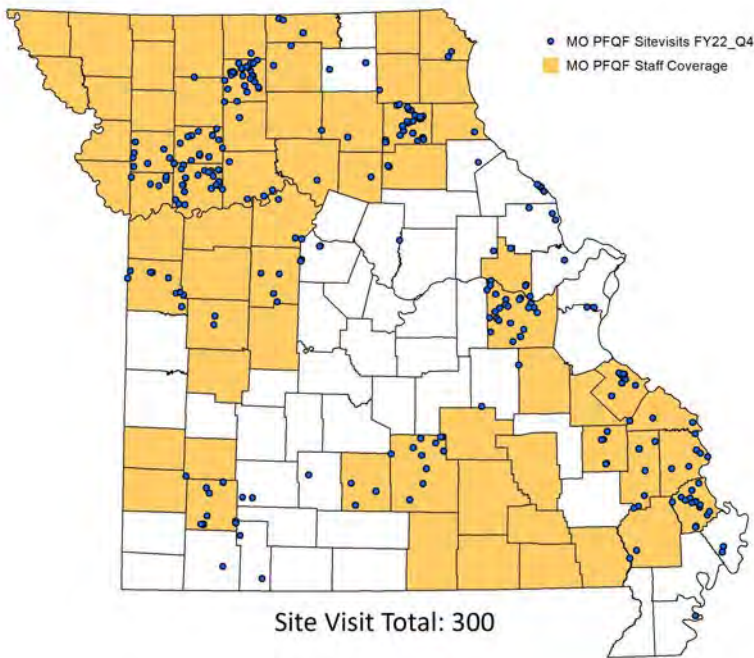


Quarterly Partners' Report

Courtney Nicks - Randolph, Chariton, & Macon Counties

April-June 2022

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Upcoming...

- Farm Bill PF/QF In-terns begin in July
- Moberly Customer Appreciation Day
- Native Grass Management Training
- Write CRP plans for SU57&58 offers
- Coordinate outreach within the QRL to expand habitat improvements.
- Collaborate with local staff to sign up RCPP applicants
- Columbia PBA interest meeting (July)
- Continue to support local chapters in upcoming events and projects
- No-till NRCS Training
- Quail 9 Conference
- Mid Mo Uplanders Banquet Aug 26

**If anyone wishes to discuss habitat projects or knows others who are interested; please contact me at the information below.*

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



Ethan Kleekamp - Lawrence, Jasper, Barton, & Dade Counties

April—June 2022

Where Quail Country Remains the Same

It is said that the only constant in life is change. The adage is undoubtedly true for land and our various uses of it. Indeed, rapid technological development over the last century have dramatically altered the way we build, farm, eat, and live. And the extent, and rate at which our up-scaled production and consumption has transformed the American landscape has profoundly impacted quail, pollinators, and other grassland wildlife. Still, many folks lamenting the loss of bobwhite quail will attest that “nothing has really changed” since the heyday, instead opting for the more convenient and oft-offered explanations like coyotes and eye worms. Disease and predation are certainly important drivers of population numbers, but a critical look at farmland today compared to that of 70 or 80 years ago shows truly staggering changes.

I was born in the late 1980’s at a time when farming and ranching had already made a dramatic, though relatively recent departure from the traditional agriculture of the better halves of the 19th and 20th centuries, and more changes were soon to come. Tall fescue began supplanting timothy and lespedeza as the forage of choice in the mid-1900’s, grain harvest efficiencies leapt in the mid 1970’s with innovations to combine header designs, and glyphosate-resistant crops were only a few years away. The land was being rapidly sterilized. In my place and time, there was nary a covey to find, and I was left only with stories of the increasingly distant “golden years”. Though I’ve since had the pleasure to traipse across the Southwest Missouri remnant prairies and woodlands that harken back to pre-European settlement days, until last month I had never witnessed the early agricultural landscape that formed the quail paradise so often spoken of.

Michael Hamilton had a conventional childhood hunting upland birds in Western Kansas with his family, but after attending graduate school, his life took on a much different trajectory than he initially envisioned. About thirty years ago, he married into an Old Order Mennonite community in Western Missouri and adopted the customs and traditions of his wife’s family. Now maintaining a horse-powered farm in southern Bates County, he grows numerous vegetables, corn, and alfalfa to feed his family, dairy cow, and work horses. *Continued —->*

Conservation at a Glance

- 65 Landowner Contacts
- 17 Site Visits
- 12 Conservation Plans Written
- 5 Outreach Events, 250 People

Program Involvement	Acres Impacted
EQIP	707
CSP	93.1
HCG/LCAP	1.9
Total	802

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



Ethan Kleekamp - Lawrence, Jasper, Barton, & Dade Counties

April—June 2022

Where Quail Country Remains the Same *continued*

He still, however, clings to some of his childhood passions, including hunting quail on his and surrounding farms behind his Springer Spaniel. He has held onto subscriptions to Game & Fish and Gun Dog Magazine, and recently enlisted as a Quail forever member and now receives quarterly publications of the QF Journal of Upland Conservation. When he learned of the opportunity to have a Farm Bill Wildlife biologist provide habitat consultation, he rode to town to request an email be sent to Missouri PFQF with an invitation to visit him on his land. The message found its way to me, and I didn't hesitate to make the hour and a half drive up to Rich Hill to meet Michael and see his farm.

Near the end of my approach, I ritualistically rolled down the windows as my pickup left the noisy pavement and began the jounce down the lane to Michael's farmhouse. Weaving through the neighboring weedy barn lots, gardens, ponds, and pastures, my ears hummed with the cacophony of chirping birds and insects, but still registered the sound of bobs whistling from every direction.

Michael offered a hearty welcome, complete with fresh-baked blackberry muffins, and we set out on a cart-ride to tour the farm behind Red, by far the most cooperative horse I have ever encountered. As we rode, I learned his family history, and received a lesson on some of the land-use rules of the community, which I'll loosely describe as: 1) no electric or combustion engines—any land clearing would be done by horse or hand, 2) no herbicide—weeds were either tolerated or controlled via tillage or grazing by cattle and small ruminants, 3) no tall fescue—animal health and performance was highly prized, so toxicosis wouldn't be tolerated, 4) insecticides were only to be used on vegetable crops plagued by Japanese beetles or other non-native insect pests, 5) fields need to lie fallow from time to time—rest is paramount for longevity.



Artistic rendering of the weedy, brushy quail habitat once found throughout the Midwest, but now only in isolated areas.

Among the many crops and products grown, these tenets allowed weeds, brush, and bugs—the obligate trifecta for producing good numbers of bobwhite quail.

Continued —>



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



Ethan Kleekamp - Lawrence, Jasper, Barton, & Dade Counties

April—June 2022

Where Quail Country Remains the Same *continued*

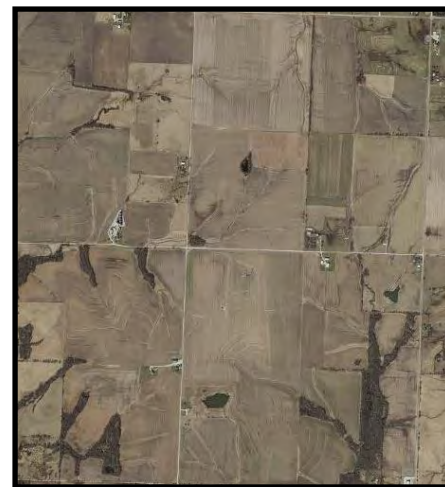


Satellite imagery of Mennonite community in Southern Bates County, MO.

The hayfields and dairy pasture were a mix of orchardgrass and alfalfa, periodically interseeded with lespedeza. Between the rows and along the margins of their corn and vegetable crops were abundant ragweeds, foxtail, desmodiums, and tickseed sunflower. The fencelines between fields were choked with plum, elderberry, and poison ivy, and were littered with hedge and locust tops from recent fencepost and firewood cuttings. No individual field was greater than 4 or 5 acres, and each member of the community farmed between 20 and 60 acres.

Altogether, Michael and his neighbors' farms are a living example of the early American agricultural landscape that grew Northern Bobwhites better than perhaps any other time in history. In fact, his 60-acre parcel consistently holds three coveys, with more in good years. But the way they operate is neither easy, nor care-free. As I was watching irrigation water being pumped from a pond by an ingenious tread-mill contraption powered by two horses, Michael's mention of his 4:30 AM—10:30 PM, Monday—Saturday work week roused me from my nostalgic reverie—it's not for the faint of heart. Nor is it practical for folks living and farming in our modern economic system. Today, farmers and ranchers are pressured to get bigger and more efficient, and given current land prices, to push out idle field and pasture margins in hopes of gaining at least *some* income off each acre.

However, I believe we can operate in *both* juxtaposed worlds. Precision agriculture is using modern technology to determine areas that are more profitable if left to weeds, brush, and bugs. Native warm season grasses are showing themselves to provide better, more profitable summer forage, while still providing nesting and brood-rearing cover for quail and other grassland birds.



Satellite imagery of modern farm/two miles to the West.

Continued —>



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



Ethan Kleekamp - Lawrence, Jasper, Barton, & Dade Counties

April—June 2022

Where Quail Country Remains the Same *continued*

We *can* share our farms and ranches with native plants and insects, it just takes a little education, and a lot of resistance to status quo thinking. Perhaps the most progressive agricultural system is the one that re-incorporates some of these elements from the past, and an appreciation for a holistic system where profit, wildlife, and clean water can coexist.

Outreach & Education

The Valley Rules the Stream

The outreach and education component of my position brings a tremendous amount of joy and satisfaction. Being an educator is a large part of my identity—I essentially give one-on-one ecology lessons every week as I tour landowners' properties. Thus, I jumped at the invitation to speak with several 4th grade classes in Springfield this quarter. Given the freedom to design the lesson however I chose; I ended up tailoring my hands-on activity to show the effects of quail management on overall watershed health, with a specific focus on aquatic macroinvertebrates. I brought in trays with live insects and crustaceans I had netted from local streams with differing landscape characteristics, and lead students through identification and classification into tolerance groups. The findings? Landscapes richer in native habitat diversity were indeed richer in aquatic macroinvertebrates, and had markedly better water quality. The takeaway? Quail habitat restoration is a far broader “umbrella”, enhancing not only diverse grassland wildlife, but most things near and far via watershed connections!



Students identifying aquatic macroinvertebrates to rate the health of a stream, and it's overall watershed.

Other Outreach

- Presented to University of Missouri's Wildlife Society on prairie ecology and involvement opportunities with Quail Forever in Missouri.
- Wah-kon-tah Prairie Day exhibitor
- Spring River Chapter of Quail Forever Youth Outdoor day in Baxter Springs, KS.



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

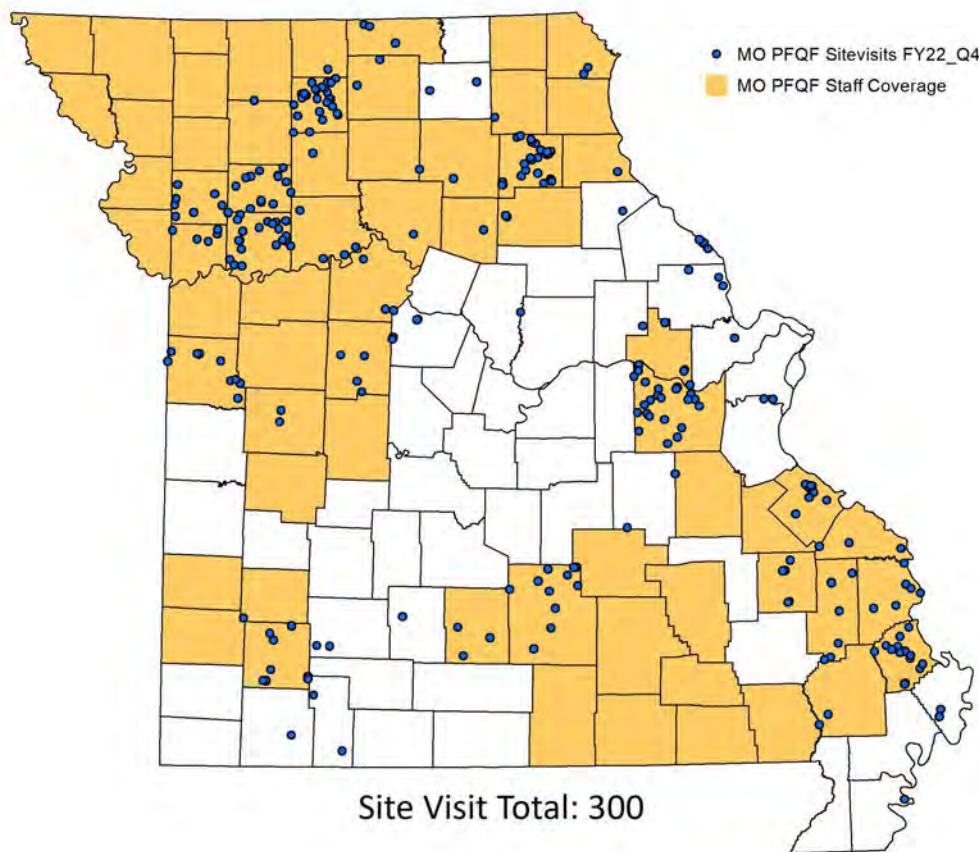
Quarterly Partners' Report



Ethan Kleekamp - Lawrence, Jasper, Barton, & Dade Counties

April—June 2022

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Missouri Quail Forever Quarterly Partners' Report



Haley Lockard - Cass, Johnson, Pettis

April - June 2022

Habitat and Conservation Programs

Several MO PFQF staff celebrated tax day by hosting a Women Caring for the Land workshop in Moberly, MO. We spent the morning reviewing quail habitat needs and diving into the numerous conservation programs available to help with implementation. In the afternoon, we visited a local property that has done A LOT of habitat work through different programs to showcase the practices and talk about the benefits and challenges of getting habitat on the ground. It was an honor to work with Kim Cole, Courtney Nicks, and Elizabeth Egan and help get the attendees on the right path toward better habitat.



Field Tour looking at a burn on thick NWSG
Photo credit: Kim Cole, MO QF

Quarter Highlights

Conservation Planning

- 61 Landowner Contacts
- 19 Site Visits
- 16 Projects With Acres
- 1 Seed mix review
- 15 Habitat Plans

Total Acres Impacted: 211.21

This quarter was also busy assisting NRCS and landowners with applications for three different RCPP (Regional Conservation Partnership Program). My work area is lucky to have several wildlife focused RCPPs. Each one is a little different in primary objectives (Grasslands, Monarch Butterfly, Precision Agriculture and Pollinators), but all put an emphasis on establishing native grasses and wildflowers. We had a lot of interest in these programs, and I look forward to working with the landowners with approved contracts to establish new prairie.



Helping a friend conduct a small timber-grassland burn.



Haley Lockard
Senior WLFW Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

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Missouri Quail Forever Quarterly Partners' Report



Haley Lockard

Jan– Mar 2022

Landowner Workshops/ Tours ...

- **April 15** Co-hosted a Women Caring for the Land workshop with *Kim Cole, Courtney Nicks, and Elizabeth Egan*. We discussed conservation programs and practices to improve wildlife habitat.
- **May 9** Participated in Pheasants Forever's On the Wing Podcast discussing Recovering Americas Wildlife Act with *Bob St. Pierre, Andy Edwards, and Al Eiden*. Watch the conversation on [YouTube](#) or listen wherever you get your podcasts.
- **June 10** Missouri PFQF State Habitat Convention

Trainings & Meetings...

- **May 9-11** Attended the PFQF All-Team Meeting in Red Wing, MN.
- **May 18** Attended the MDC KC Region CPLC staff meeting and provided an update on QF and my activities.
- **June 21-24** Attended and served as a mentor at Bobwhite Bootcamp in West Point, MS.



Large patch of remnant Pale Purple Coneflower while on a Landowner visit.

Conducting a Monarch Habitat Evaluation for an RCPP application.



Taking a Quail-eye view to evaluate grasslands



Learning about Pine-Savannah restoration



FBBII Will Robinson and group discussing management alternatives for a conservation planning scenario at Bobwhite Bootcamp.

Connect with Us!



Missouri Quail Forever



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Missouri Quail Forever Quarterly Partners' Report

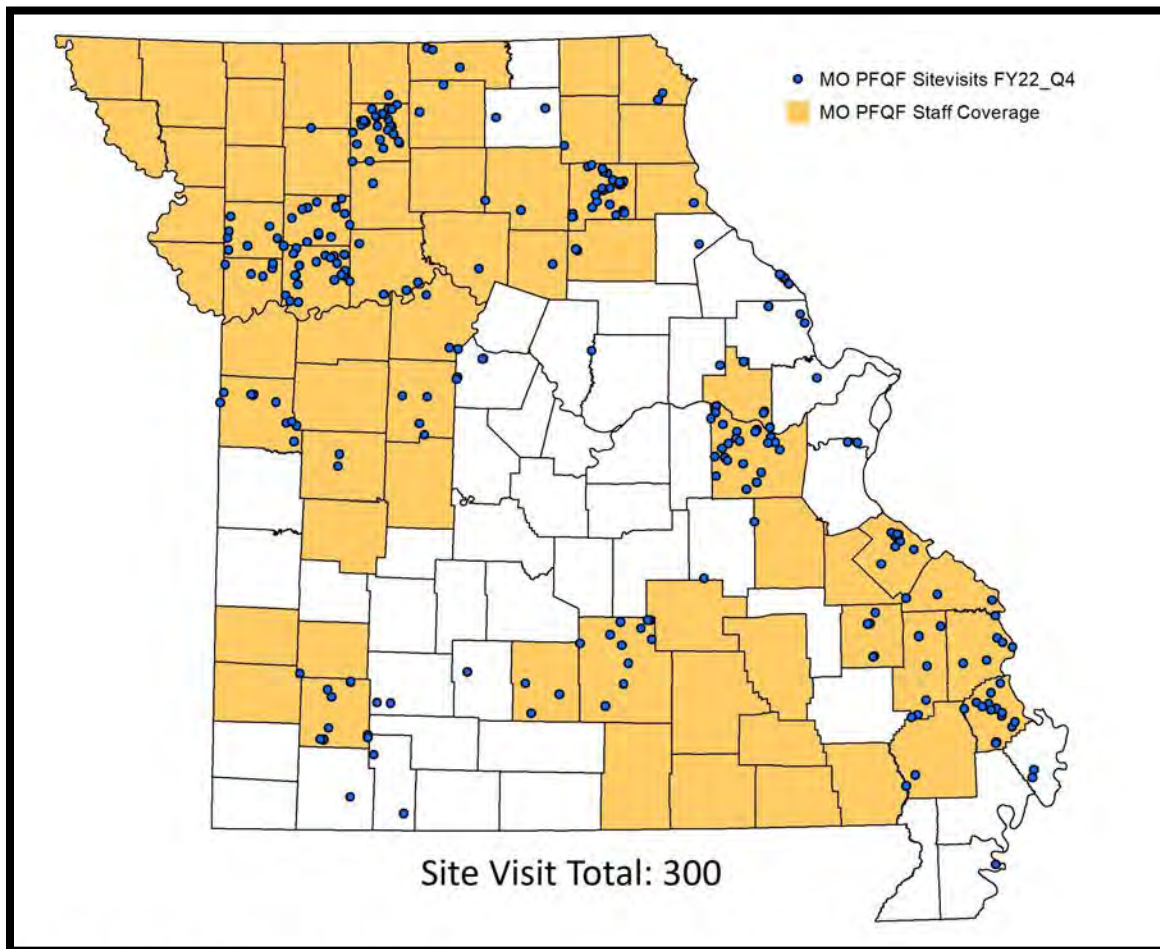


Haley Lockard

Jan– Mar 2022

Looking Forward...

- NABCI Private Lands Forum in Kansas City, MO
- State Women in Ag Conference in Branson, MO
- GO WYLD weekend in Osceola, MO
- Continue to provide technical assistance to landowners
- Assist NRCS with RCPP applications and conservation planning



Haley Lockard
Senior WLFW Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

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Sr. Coordinating Wildlife Biologist Quarterly Partners' Report



JAKE SWAFFORD - Missouri

April – June 2022

Position Update

It's been a busy 3 months, with lots of exciting news and changes! Since my last report I've moved to a new position, Senior Coordinating Wildlife Biologist, and will be working to promote conservation efforts across the state. The Regional Conservation Partnership Program – PRIME (Program Restoring and Enhancing Monarch Ecosystems) held its first signup and was met with a lot of interest. I'll continue to assist with conservation plan development as contracts are finalized. Missouri PF/QF has also hired three Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist Interns for the summer! I'll be working to get them up and running, knocking out field checks for us and partners. I'm looking forward to settling into the Sr. CWB role and exploring new opportunities with our conservation partners in the state.

QF & Partners Hire New Senior Coordinating Wildlife Biologist

Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever in Missouri is excited to announce that Jacob Swafford was hired to serve in the brand-new Senior Coordinating Wildlife Biologist (CWB) position. He started his new position April 11.

In partnership with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service and Missouri Department of Conservation, Swafford will lead efforts on special initiatives, coordinate the implementation of wildlife habitat-related conservation programs, and provide leadership to CWBs in the state. He will work in a joint capacity with several key partners to promote, accelerate enrollment, and coordinate the conservation provisions of the Federal Farm Bill. In his new role, Swafford will be working statewide to assist PFQF in Missouri with exploring new partnership opportunities, and providing leadership to the growing team of amazing staff within the state.



Swafford joined "The Habitat Organization" over 10 years ago. The Columbia, Mo., native grew up in an avid outdoors family, which shaped his passion for wildlife. He graduated from the University of Missouri with a B.S. in Fisheries & Wildlife and a B.S. in Forestry. Swafford served as a Farm Bill Biologist for 6 years, including 4 years in New Mexico, before taking the lead on

Conservation Planning

- 12 NRCS Cons. Planner Contacts
- 1 Quality Assurance Review
- 2 Site Visits
- 17 Landowner Contacts

Programs	Acres Impacted
EQIP	61.3
Total	61.3

Jake Swafford
Sr. Coord. Wildlife Biologist
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Sr. Coordinating Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



JAKE SWAFFORD - Missouri

April – June 2022

Missouri's Monarch Butterfly Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). He enjoys coordinating with passionate landowners and conservation partners to restore and enhance wildlife habitat.

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
Quail Forever Missouri State Meeting	Assisted with the Missouri State Meeting and golf tournament in Columbia. We provided habitat tours and hosted an award ceremony for chapters and partners.
PF/QF All Employee Meeting	Attended the biannual PF/QF All Employee Meeting in MN. This was a chance to collaborate with peers from across the country.
RCPP-PRIME Roll Out Training for Partners	Presented to NRCS planners and partner staff on the Monarch PRIME program prior to public signup. Discussed program goals and policies.
RCPP-PRIME update to Missourians for Monarchs	Presented to the M4M steering committee on the Monarch PRIME program and how the FY22 signup was going.
On The Wing Podcast-Guest	Served as a guest on Quail Forever's national podcast "On The Wing" during National Pollinator Week to discuss the status of pollinators in the U.S. as well as promote native plants and habitat.

Looking Forward

- I will continue to lead the delivery of the Monarch PRIME- RCPP.
- Supervise and manage FBB intern pilot program over the summer to ensure its success.
- Work with State Coordinator and partners to identify conservation priorities and assist with special initiatives to address them.
- Pursue certification as a drone pilot.
- I will continue providing technical assistance to landowners in Missouri who are interested in establishing habitat for Monarchs, quail, and other upland wildlife.
- Work with partners to clearly define my role and responsibilities as a Sr. Coordinating Biologist.



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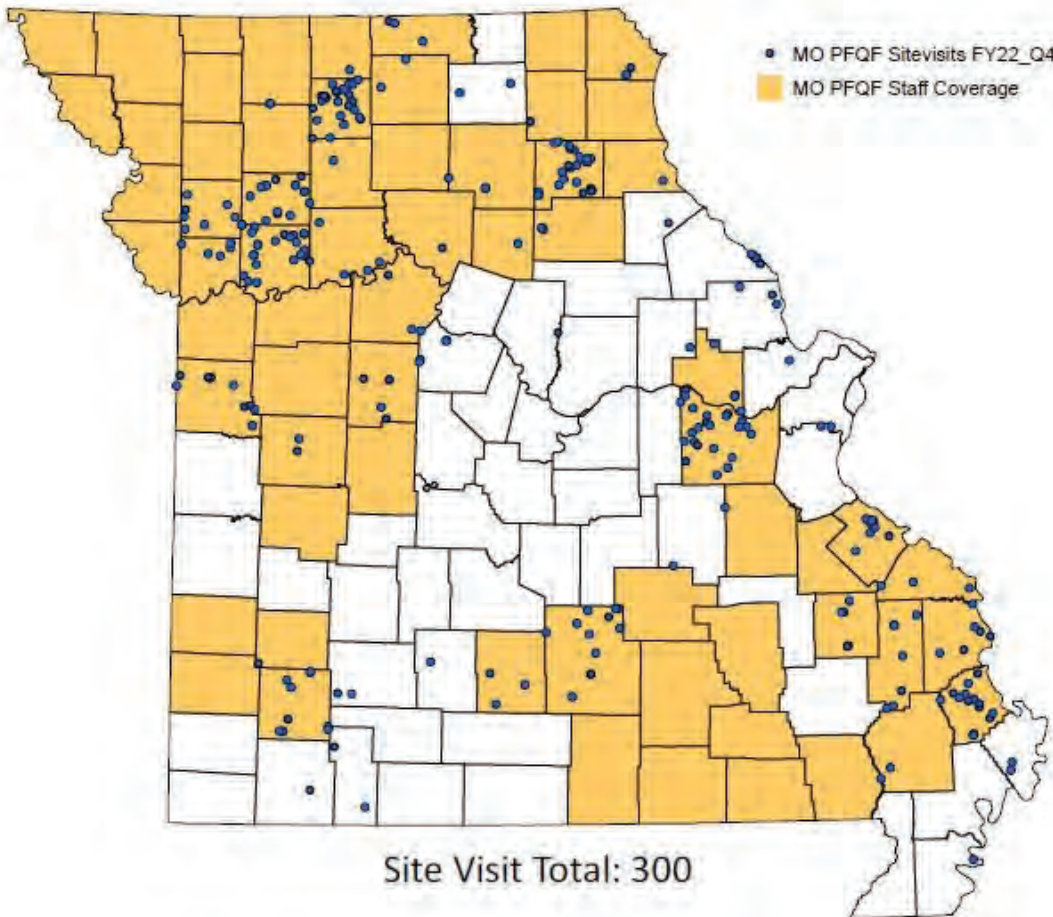
Sr. Coordinating Wildlife Biologist
Quarterly Partners' Report



JAKE SWAFFORD - Missouri

April – June 2022

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Joshua Marshall - Sullivan, Grundy, Putnam, and Mercer Counties

APR – JUN 2022

Quarterly Overview

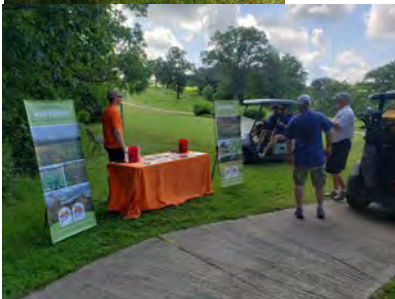
I kicked off this quarter with the Green Hills Chapter's first banquet in Unionville. I attended our national All Team Meeting in Minnesota and assisted in planning and executing our Missouri State Convention and golf tournament in Columbia, MO. Between traveling for those events, there was plenty of other work to do wrapping up EQIP contracts, creating management plans, and beginning CRP field checks. I had a couple outreach opportunities one being the Rotary in Trenton. I was provided the opportunity to present on a panel at a Pollinator & Cover Crops field day hosted by our partners MoSoy, MFA and the Missouri Department of Conservation. There always seems to be a project or workshop available and I enjoy using these events to help educate people about the benefits of native habitat.

State Convention

It has been a couple years since we have been able to host a Missouri State Convention. Our state conventions are opportunities to bring together our Missouri chapters and partners so we can connect with



them, celebrate chapter accomplishments, and award our chapters and outstanding partners for their hard work throughout the year. Usually we host an evening get together before the convention, then a full day conference and we wrap up with an evening award reception. This year, we put a different spin on the convention and hosted a golf tournament. We selected the A. L. Gustin golf course in Columbia, Missouri because of the work they have been doing with our local chapter, the Mid Mo Uplanders. Through the chapter's work with Gustin, they have established multiple native pollinator plots in the rough areas on the course. These plots provide much needed habitat to native song birds and pollinators. It also cuts down on how much the golf course has to mow and provides a nice aesthetic to the golfers. During the tournament, we had



Biologist presenting during the tournament.

biologists staged along the course near the plots to engage and educate the golfers about the benefits of pollinator plots and native habitat. We were able to display what a first year seeding looks like and talk about older plots that may need maintenance after they have been around for a few years. We also had sponsors through out the course to engage with the golfers about their service and how they partner with Missouri PF/QF. The tournament went well and we heard a lot of compliments from the golfers about the course and the event.



One of the golfers at the tournament.

The warm sunny day really showcased the pollinator plots as they were in the beginning stages of their summer blooms. It was such a success that we may look at doing an event like this some time in the future. That evening, we hosted our awards reception and social. We had a decent turn out of partners and chapters members. We were able to hand out several awards to hardworking and deserving supporters. We also hosted a silent auction and some raffles where several folks were able to walk away with amazing prizes and merchandise. It was refreshing being able to gather with our chapters and partners again. I look forward to next year's convention at the our National Pheasant Fest February 2023, in Minnesota.

Joshua Marshall
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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Joshua Marshall - Sullivan, Grundy, Putnam, and Mercer Counties

APR – JUN 2022

Green Hills Chapter Banquet

In early April, the new the Green Hills Chapter of PF/QF, hosted their first banquet. The Chapter was founded in May of 2021 and immediately began work within their community seeking ways to engage youth and those interested in learning more about the outdoors. It took a lot of time and effort by the core members of the chapter but together they put on a great banquet with several games, raffles, a silent auction and live auction. About 120 people from the community attended the banquet and everyone seemed to enjoy the evening. We were able to award a very deserving landowner the Polaris Habitat award and it was the highlight of the night for me because it is a landowner I have been able to work very closely with. The banquet was a great introduction of Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever to the community. I look forward to assisting with more events that the chapter puts on. There are currently talks about a community pollinator plot, possibly hosting a new hunter or new shooter workshop and putting together a booth at the local fair. The members of the Green Hills Chapter are passionate about upland game and also Monarch butterflies and pollinators. They want to make an impact and help curb the decline of these instrumental species. There is a lot of heart in this chapter and I enjoy our meetings and working with several of the members on their personal projects.



Full house for the banquet.



The Mothersheads, habitat award winner.



Youth prize winners.

Pollinator & Cover Crop Field Day

MFA, MDC, & MoSoy hosted a cover crop and pollinator field day in Columbia, MO this past quarter. The field day was directed at resource professionals. The workshop and field tour showcased some cover crop fields and pollinator plots, then discussed the various ways these practices can be used on a farm. Cover crops and pollinator plots can be used in a myriad of ways to benefit a landowner's production. They help with soil health, wildlife benefit and can increase the money brought in on a farming operation. While I was unable to attend the field tour, I did make it for the second portion of the workshop where presentations were given explaining how to connect with landowners and discuss with them the benefits of these various programs. At the end of the day, I was asked to sit on a panel and answer questions about these programs and how the panelist have seen them used on private landowner's farms. This was the first time I participated on a panel and I enjoyed the opportunity to answer questions and guide this discussion. There were several great questions that myself and the other two panelist answered which gave us an opportunity to talk about strategies or information that resonates best with private landowners. I hope in the future to continue assisting with events like this and I look forward to using the information I learned at the field day.



Cover crops discussion panel.

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- Sullivan, Grundy, Putnam, and Mercer Counties -



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Quarterly Partners' Report

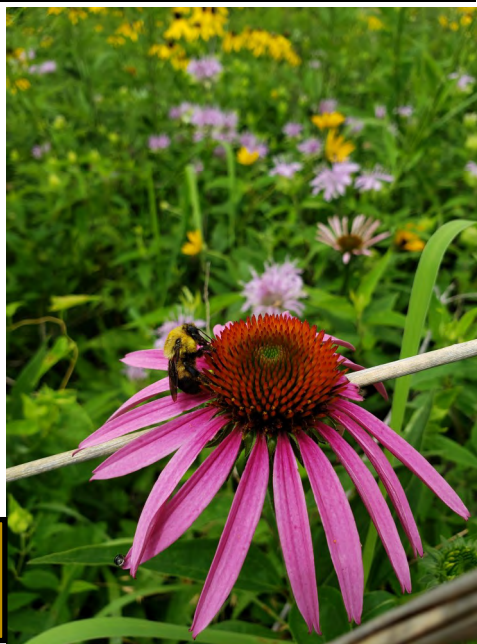


Joshua Marshall - Sullivan, Grundy, Putnam, and Mercer Counties

APR – JUN 2022

Trainings and Outreach	Summary
Green Hills Chapter Banquet	First annual banquet for the chapter.
Trenton Rotary	Discussed the benefits of pollinator plots to all wildlife with the Trenton Rotary.
PF/QF National All-Team Meeting	All employees from PF/QF met for three days to discuss the future and reflect on past accomplishments
Missouri State Convention & Golf Tournament	Our annual event to connect, and award our chapter members and partners.
Cover Crop & Pollinator Workshop	A one day workshop to showcase cover crops and pollinator plots and how they can be used by landowners.

Program	Impacted Ac.
CRP Programs	1587.35
NRCS Programs	19.8
Total	1,607.15



Quarterly Numbers

- 75 Landowners Contacted
- 35 Site Visits
- 2 Conservation Outreach Events
- 1 Training Event

Purple Cone Flower & Bumblebee in a pollinator plot.

We have a lot of great content on our YouTube and social media pages and we are updating them daily. Subscribe to our pages for the latest information on conservation programs and happenings in Missouri.



If anyone wishes to discuss habitat projects or knows others who are interested; please contact me at the information below.

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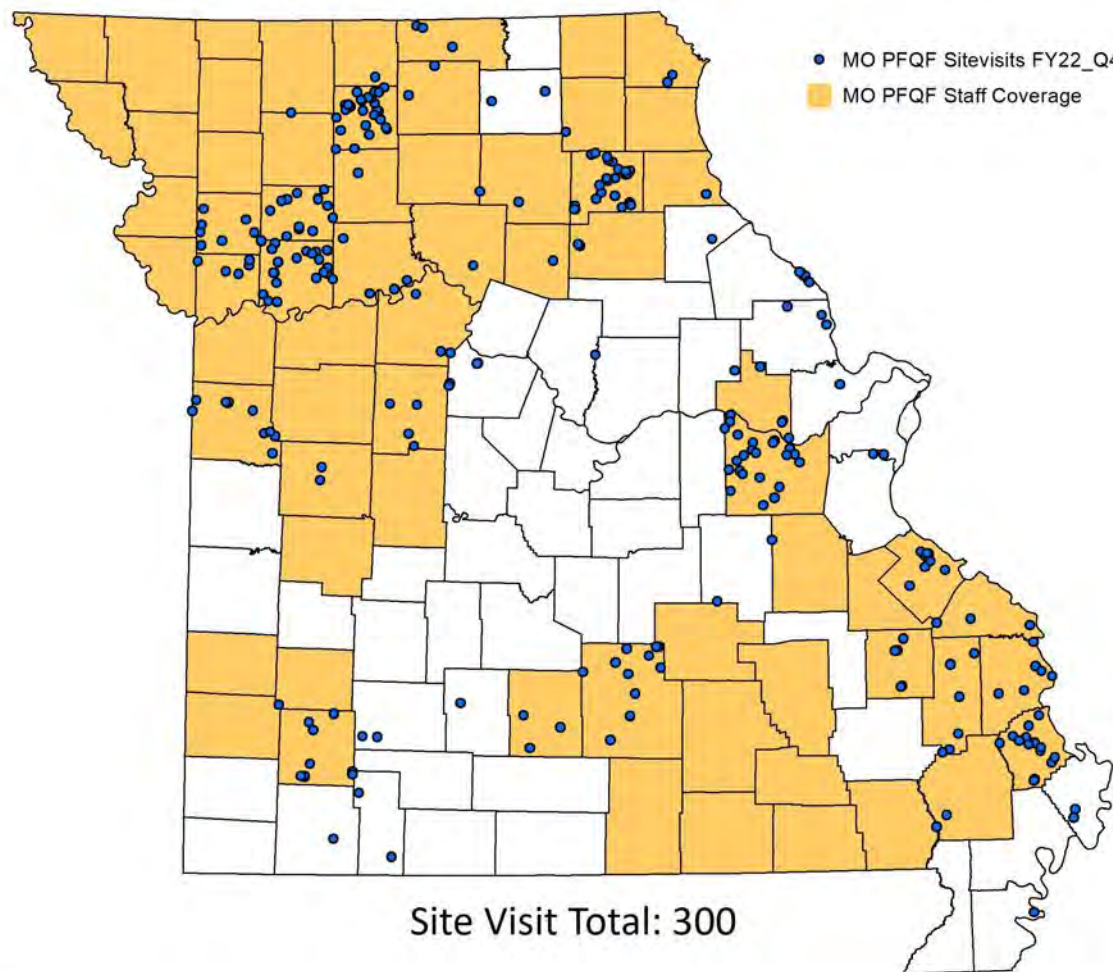
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist Quarterly Partners' Report



Joshua Marshall - Sullivan, Grundy, Putnam, and Mercer Counties

APR – JUN 2022

FY22 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT April 1, 2022 - June 30, 2022



*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.

Updated 7/11/2022



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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist Quarterly Partners' Report



Kelsey DeZalia— Southeast Missouri

April 2022-June 2022

The Wetland Side

Duck Creek Conservation Area

On June 24th, the Ducks Unlimited biologist and I were awarded a unique opportunity to shadow and learn from the Duck Creek Conservation Area manager, Nicole Walker, and her supervisor, Ryan Dirnberger, on some of the in's-and-outs of public wetland management. We drove to different sections of the area and asked questions regarding draw-down timing, food plot location, the battle and dance with trees and woody material, herbicide application, management rotation, various plant species, and managing the public. This experience is one of numerous planned. The ideal training plan is to return a month or so down the road, and follow the biologists and technicians while they address the various stages of public wetland management.

WRE/WRP Annual Monitoring

Each year, NRCS requires the WETs teams to complete on-site monitoring events on the wetland easements in their area of responsibility. This year, the Jackson WETs office had a total of 177 on-site assessments to complete and 84 off-sites (an aerial imagery evaluation of the property). This is the best time of year! Although it's extremely hot, humid, and buggy, there's nothing that beats being able to walk around a place that is only dry once a year...if that. While in the field, we're taking notes on current vegetation, checking various program compliance boxes, and enjoying not being stuck behind a computer screen. Although the numbers of easements are growing, the WETs staff has too; allowing us biologists to do what we do best, take a little more time to try our hand at understanding these systems.



The photos to the left are a common occurrence for biologists exploring wetland-type habitat. Several of Missouri's crayfish species burrow; some of conservation concern.

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist Quarterly Partners' Report



Kelsey DeZalia— Southeast Missouri

April 2022-June 2022

SEMO Wetland Meetings

It's of dire importance for professionals to be able to meet in-person and discuss the future of Missouri habitat management.

These meetings not only assist in building comraderies, but position a range of passionate individuals in one place discussing the future for public and private wetland design, implementation, biological considerations, and management.

The discussion had will set the tone for years, but are flexible to change, reflecting the complexity and dynamicity of a wetland system.

Short term goals: Green biologist growth

I listened intently as habitat professionals with many years of experience and knowledge gained through the tried-and-trues that are science. I can only be thankful for the opportunity to be in the presence of some great conservation-minded people. In the immersion of information over these kinds of days, I have grown to be greater asset to landowners and the habitats.



Above: Black Island- MDC hosts wetland biologists from across the state as a "meeting of the minds" to review SEMO wetland management and design; public and private.



Above/Below: SEMO- MDC hosts the four Missouri Wetland Emphasis Teams to review SEMO's wetlands. Discussion regarding past, present, and future conditions, management strategies, and enhancement



Above: The NRCS WETS 3 team (NRCS, MDC, DU, QF, ACES) eager to assist a landowner with his habitat goals



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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Kelsey DeZalia— Southeast Missouri

April 2022-June 2022

Habitat Management

Fire Level 3

From June 14-16th I attended Fire Level 3 training, hosted by the Missouri Dept. of Conservation in Sedalia, MO. Three full days of constant review and learning about fire behavior and the responsibility that comes along with being the person to write a burn plan. Fire is an extremely important management tool. It should never be taken lightly, as many of us have seen the recent effects of fire negligence. It is our responsibility, as biologists, to develop a responsible burn plan that will benefit both wildlife, the landowner, and the reputation of utilizing prescribed fires for habitat management.

Price of Passion

Since my shift into wetlands, I haven't been able to simply walk away from upland management. As I progress in my career, I look to build my arsenal of experiences, trainings, and knowledge to continually develop into a well-rounded biologist. With the support of my supervisors, I'll continue attending cross-trainings and dabbling in opportunities to practice or learn further about upland management techniques as well. Many of the NRCS wetland easements have timber and/or sand prairies. I aspire to become somewhat of a liaison for landowners who have both wetland and upland management goals.



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

PRESCRIBED BURN PLAN

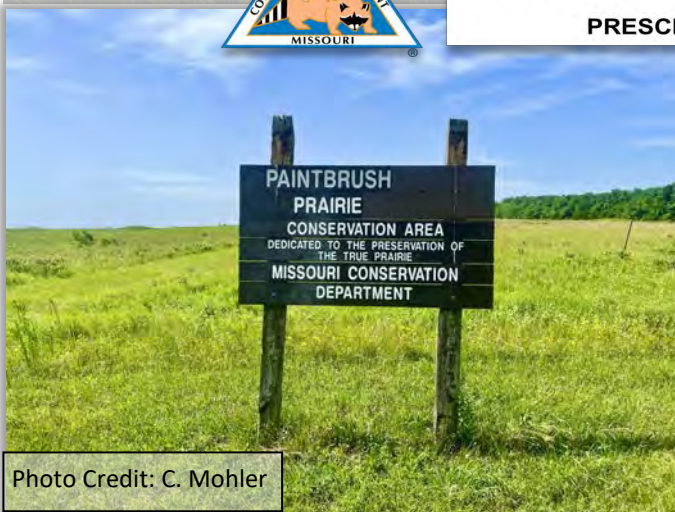


Photo Credit: C. Mohler



Photo Credit: C. Mohler

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Kelsey DeZalia— Southeast Missouri

April 2022-June 2022

Conservation Technical Assistance & Trainings/Meetings Attended

Conservation Technical Assistance

- 30 landowner contacts
- 30 site visits, assisting in ~10 counties
- Attended four, multi-day meetings
- Attended two training/career enhancement opportunities



Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
MDC Fire Level 3 Certification Sedalia, MO	<i>June 14-16th</i> —Aspiring to assist landowners in all their habitat goals, I completed the MDC Fire Level 3 course which allows me to write burn plans
Duck Creek Conservation Area Puxico, MO	<i>June 24th</i> —Spent the day with the manager of Duck Creek CA, Nicole Walker, and Ryan Dirnberger to learn and inquire about “the different animal” that is public wetland management
New Employee Orientation/All Teams St. Paul, MN	<i>May 9-12th</i> —The first NEO/ATM since COVID, here we were welcomed and motivated by a group of PF/QF veterans.
WETS Teams Meeting SEMO	<i>May 24-26th</i> – Spent two days in the field listening to presentations by MDC biologists regarding SEMO wetland management and design
Wetland Review SEMO	<i>June 21st-23rd</i> – Spent a series of 3 days with numerous habitat/wetland partners from across the state to review SEMO wetlands
MO QF State Meeting Columbia, MO	<i>June 10-11th</i> – A time to bring chapter members together and celebrate the chapter habitat victories of the previous year

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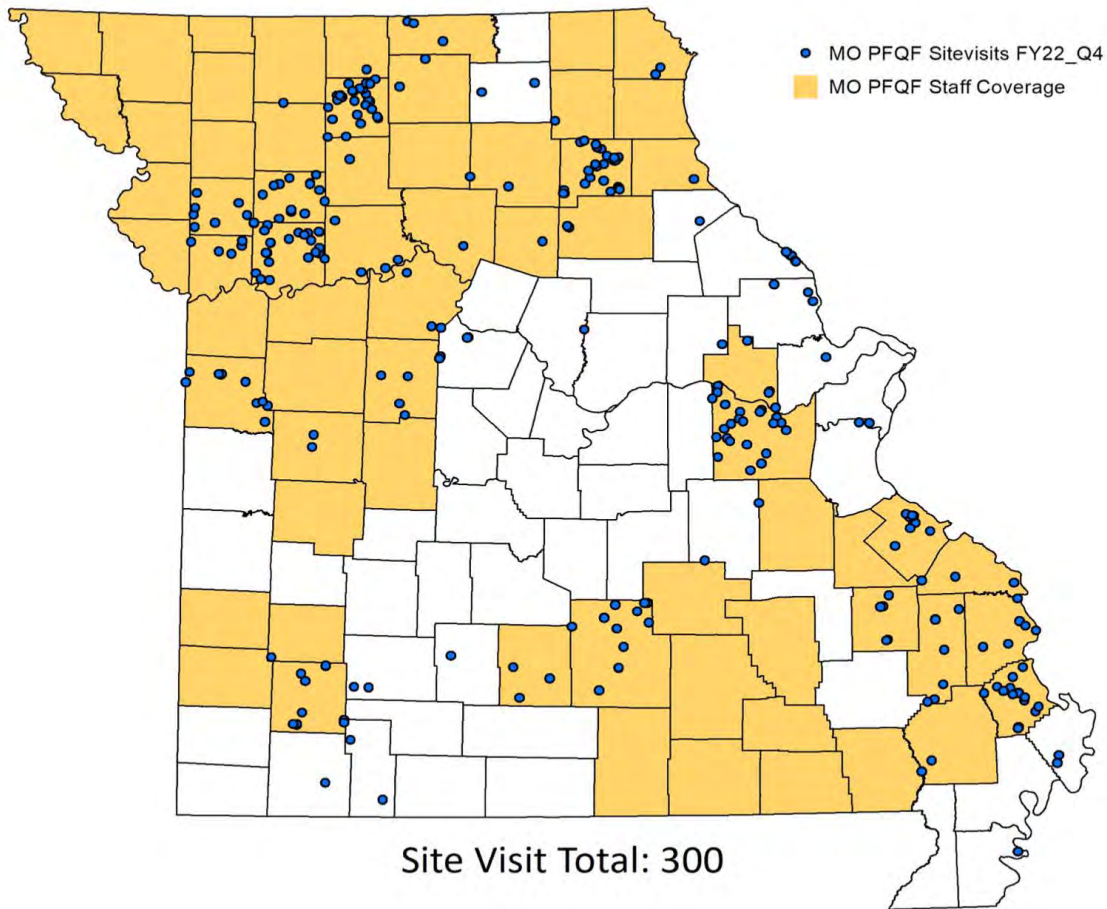
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist Quarterly Partners' Report



Kelsey DeZalia— Southeast Missouri

April 2022-June 2022

FY22 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT April 1, 2022 - June 30, 2022



*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.

Updated 7/11/2022



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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II



Quarterly Partners' Report

Lizzy Johnson - Howell, Texas, & Wright Counties

April – June 2022

The Benefits of Native Warm Season Grass

One of my favorite things to see is when a landowner decides to convert any existing areas to native grasses and/or forbs. This is because there are so many benefits to planting native species instead of introduced species. Also, whether a landowner's goals are centered towards wildlife or forage for livestock, converting to natives can benefit both of these sets of goals.

For the wildlife enthusiast native warm season grasses provide nesting for quail as well as seeds and bugs to eat. These grasses also grow in clumps which allow bare ground and space between plants for quail to travel. For deer, these grasses make great bedding and fawning cover. They are also tall and sturdy plants so they hold up well during the colder months providing winter bedding as well. Native warm season grasses and wildflowers attract many bugs which make great food for turkeys and they also provide protection from predators.

Not only are native grasses great for wildlife, they are great for livestock too. First of all they require a lot less fertility and are more tolerant to drought than non-native species. One reason for this is that they have much longer root systems that are able to reach deeper in the soil to get nutrients and water. Native warm season grasses make wonderful forage as well. They are a lot larger than non-native forage grasses which makes up more tonnage for hay and grazing during the growing season.

This year I have had landowners convert fescue fields to native warm season grasses for wildlife as well as for hay production. I look forward to seeing these fields once the native grasses have grown into full stands in the future.



Big Bluestem, Little Bluestem, Indiangrass, and Sideoats Gramma were drilled into a once Fescue field this May. The landowner's goal for this field is to provide habitat for wildlife such as deer, quail, and turkey

Conservation Planning	Other Programs	Acres Impacted
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16 Landowner Contacts 15 Site Visits 3 Practice Checkouts 	CSP Edge Feathering	.66
	EQIP Wildlife Habitat Planting, Tree and Shrub Site Prep	13.1
	LCAP Forest Management Plan, Grassland Burn, Firebreak	92.7

◇ This past quarter I attended New Employee Orientation and the National All Team Meeting in Welch Minnesota, where I met employees from around the country and learned about our company. I also attended our yearly state convention in Columbia Missouri.



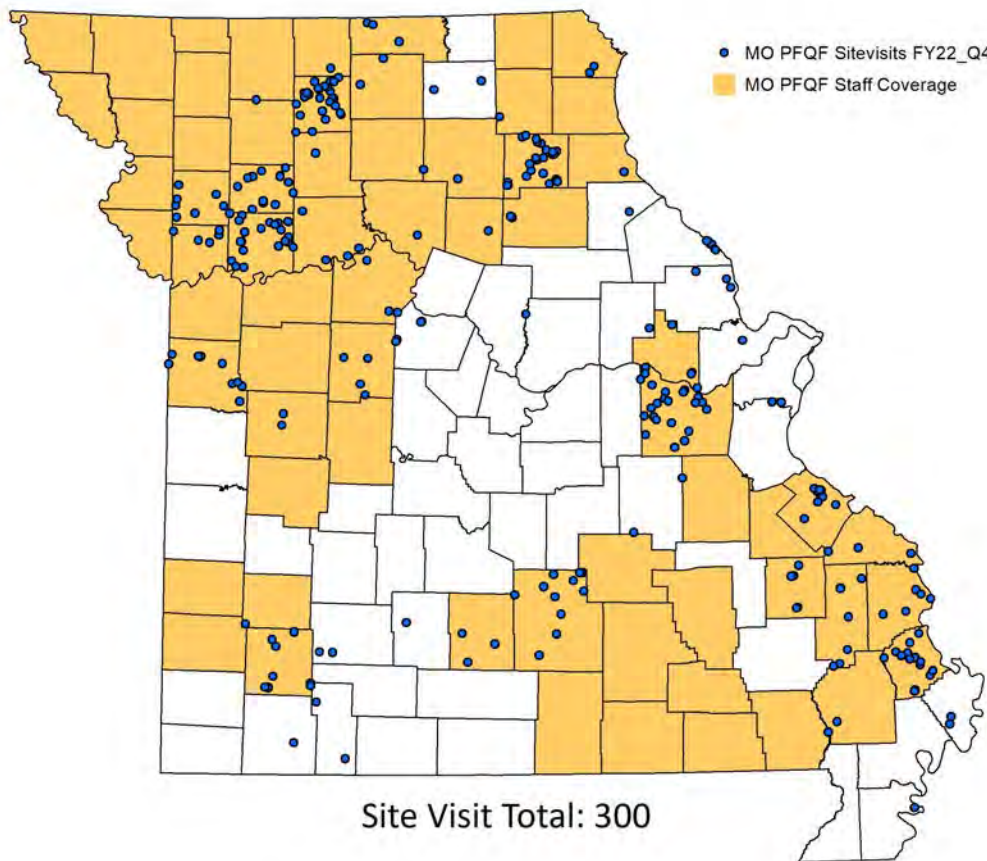
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II Quarterly Partners' Report



Lizzy Johnson - Howell, Texas, & Wright Counties

April – June 2022

FY22 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT April 1, 2022 - June 30, 2022



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Updated 7/11/2022



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**If anyone wishes to discuss habitat projects or knows others who are interested; please contact me at the information below.*

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II



Quarterly Partners' Report

Logan Baum - Ray, Clinton, and Caldwell Counties

April - June 2022

Fourth Quarter of FY22

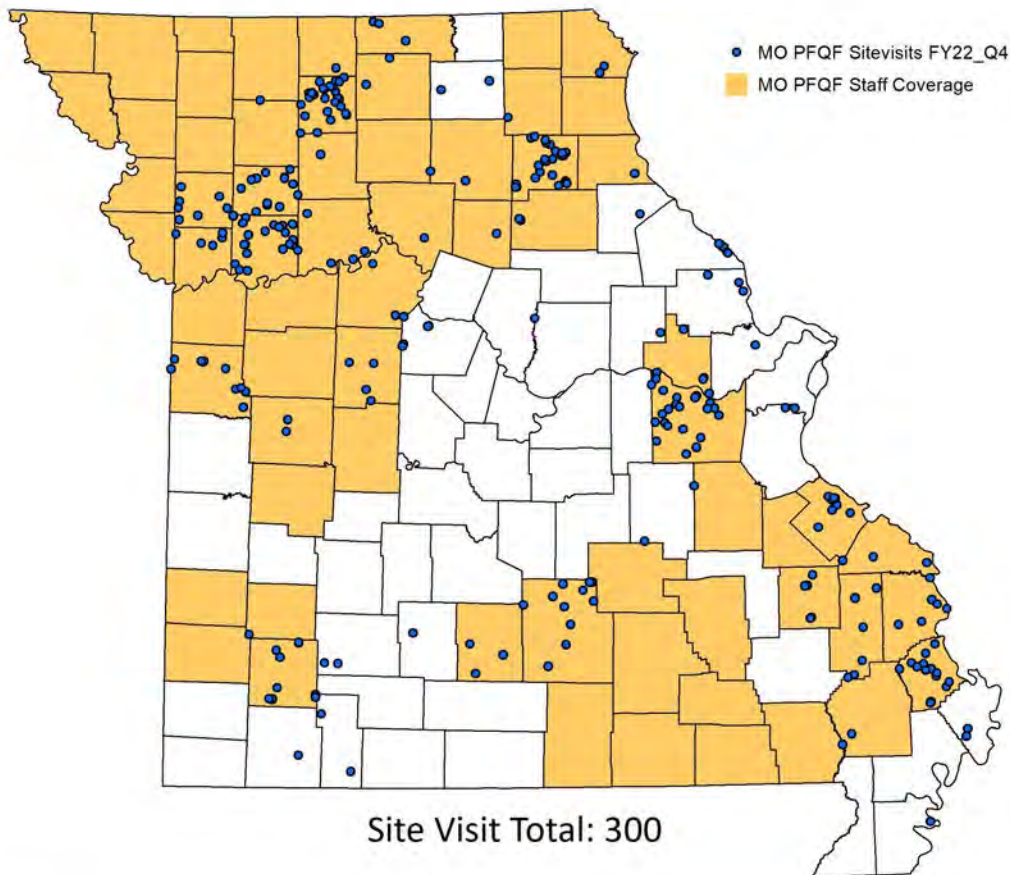
From April 1, 2022 to June 30, 2022, our team recorded 661 landowner contacts and 300 site visits reaching a total of 12792.8 acres. Outreach continues to grow with 1936 people reached through workshops, events, and training.

Conservation Technical Assistance Summary

- 17 Landowner Contacts
- 51 Site Visits
- 3463.25 acres impacted

Program	Acres affected
CRP	3463.25

BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT April 1, 2022 - June 30, 2022





Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II



Quarterly Partners' Report

Logan Baum - Caldwell, Clinton, and Ray Counties

April - June 2022

It's Not Just Weeds and Empty Space, Flowers Will Come

Pollinators are a very important part of our ecosystem. Monarch butterflies and bees are a large backbone for the pollinator interest across the nation. From urban areas to rural farms, pollinator plots and native wildflower gardens are vital to our ecosystem to support pollinating insects, bats, birds. With this popularity, comes a need for education and understanding the ecology of these pollinator plots and native wildflower gardens.

A majority of USDA programs, such as the CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) CP42 pollinator plot or EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentive Program) pollinator and monarch plantings, require a minimum of 20 flowering native forb species. Of these 20 species a minimum of 3 must flower in spring, 3 in summer, and 3 in the fall. By having plants bloom all year, habitat is available all year for a diversity of species. The biggest difference between pollinator plots and monarch plots, are that the Monarch plantings require milkweed and monarch preferred nectaring plants. Our local monarch plots typically include common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) and butterfly milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*). In some cases, swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*) is used for wet sites. More information on this can be obtained from your local NRCS field office.



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Quarterly Partners' Report

Logan Baum - Caldwell, Clinton, and Ray Counties

April - June 2022

Another thing to know with pollinator plots and native wildflower gardens is that for the first year you may not see many flowers. The plot may appear to be a bunch of green weeds that appear to be undesirable. Have patience, the flowers will come. Often times I am advising those who plant pollinator plots to give the plot about 3 years before they start to see a lot of wildflowers blooming. What looks to be a weedy mess at the beginning can turn into a beautiful plot with the proper care, management, and patience.

One last thing I would like to touch on when seeing a plot is that you may see some bare ground and think that you did not have good coverage. As the native plants grow, they become much larger and expand. The picture below is of a small native wildflower garden that an employee here at the Richmond NRCS field office in Ray county planted. This is a one-year old plot that was planted with plugs. This picture, being the first year, shows a lot of bare ground. The employee planted the plugs with enough distance between them to allow for growth and expansion. By the second year, the employee stated that no bare ground can be seen. She stated that it even looks like the plants are crowded amongst each other.



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Quarterly Partners' Report

Rachel Settle — Madison, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve Counties

April—June 2022

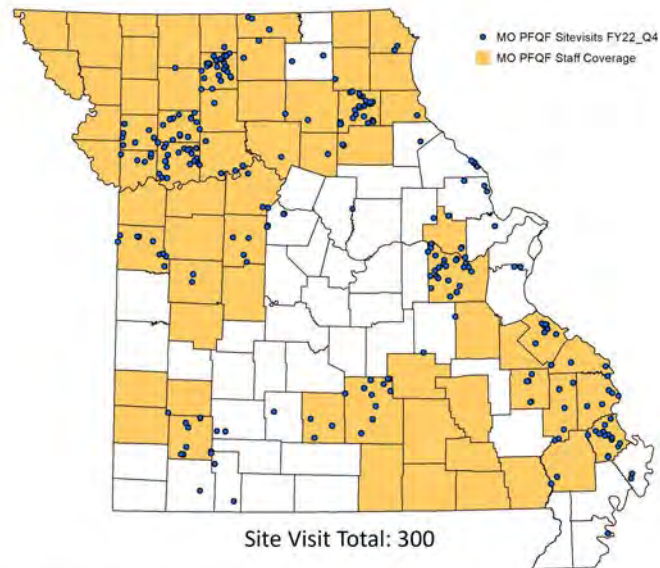
FY 2022—Fourth Quarter

From January through March, our Missouri team conducted 300 site visits and logged over 660 landowner contacts. We impacted over 12,700 acres of habitat statewide and reached out to 1,936 individuals at over 40 landowner workshops and outreach events.

During the fourth quarter, I recorded 57 landowner contacts and conducted 15 site visits. Through habitat planning and technical assistance, I impacted over 437 acres. Acres impacted were primarily from CRP status reviews and conservation planning.

This past quarter, I was busy with outreach events and landowner workshops. In May, I assisted with a Prairie Habitat Hike in Williamsburg. I also presented on the benefits of grazing natives at the Southeast Regional Grazing School. In June, I presented on pollinator habitat maintenance at the A. L. Gustin Golf Course during our State Habitat Convention in Columbia. During National Pollinator Week in June, I hosted two pollinator outreach events with Central Middle School in Park Hills. Also in June, I assisted with another Women Caring For the Land/Women Owning Woodlands workshop at Shaw Nature Reserve.

FY22 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT April 1, 2022 - June 30, 2022



*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.
Updated 7/11/2022



Missouri Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist positions are funded in partnership cooperation with the Missouri Department of Conservation and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Conservation Technical Assistance Summary

Conservation Planning

- 57 Landowner Contacts
- 15 Site Visits
- 10 Status Reviews/Checkouts
- 5 Conservation Plans Completed
- 2 Conservation Plan Modifications
- 4 Landowner Workshops/Presentations
- 2 Conservation Outreach Events

Program	Acres Impacted	CRP Practice	Acres Impacted
MDC LCAP	30.0	CP1	139.40
Total	30.0	CP2	37.74
		CP12	0.90
		CP21	17.50
		CP33	11.00
		CP38	167.10
		CP42	34.06
		Total	407.70

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National Pollinator Week June 20—26 2022

National Pollinator Week is an annual event that raises awareness on the importance of pollinators and their contributions in our everyday lives. To celebrate pollinator week, I spent two days with Central R-3 Middle School's Outdoor Adventures classes and their teacher, Ms. Juli Kline.

Missouri Bumble Bee Atlas

The purpose of the Missouri Bumble Bee Atlas is to monitor Missouri's native bumble bees. This statewide citizen science project allows anyone to get involved to contribute to the conservation of our native bumble bees. On June 22, Jamie Koehler and Julie Norris with the Missouri Department of Conservation and I worked together with Ms. Kline's Outdoor Adventures class to conduct bumble bee atlas surveys near their school. Students learned the survey protocol, divided into teams, and recorded bee captures and habitat data. The students learned about the importance of native plants, pollinators, and community science projects.

Earlier in the year, Ms. Kline and her science classes began renovating an area outside the school by planting several native plants to serve as their outdoor classroom (see next page). The data collected during our bumble bee surveys will be used for baseline data to gauge the response of bees to the native plants over time.



Left: A student uses a net to capture a bumble bee for observation.
Middle: Jamie Koehler (MDC) takes a picture of a bumble bee that was captured during a survey.
Right: Students record habitat data for the survey areas.

Pollinator Facts

- 🦋 In the last 20 years, monarch butterflies have declined by 90%**
- 🦋 Pollinator habitat increases carbon sequestration and improves soil health**
- 🦋 >100 crops grown in the U.S. rely on pollinators**



Pollinator Habitat Day

What was previously a manicured lawn is now a diverse area full of native plants and a walking path thanks to students at Central R-3 Middle School. Earlier this year, students in Ms. Kline's science classes learned about native pollinators, host plants, and plant requirements (sun/shade, moisture, spacing). After researching various native plant species and their requirements, students then designed a landscaping plan to include sections to benefit butterflies, birds, and bees. They also included different types of milkweed and nectaring plants to support monarch butterflies.

Months ago, students smothered the existing grass with cardboard to prepare the site for planting. Julie Norris with MDC assisted Ms. Kline and her classes by providing materials and native plants for their project. On Earth day, they hauled in mulch and began planting milkweed and other natives. On June 23, I worked with their classes to plant more natives to support pollinators. Signage was added to the area to show other students and faculty the purpose of the project. After planting and watering, we discussed the importance of plant diversity and soil health. We also discussed how to manage the plants over time and hypothesized what next year's bumble bee atlas surveys might look like with the newly-planted habitat. Not only does this project provide learning opportunities for years to come, it also cuts labor and maintenance costs and adds aesthetic value to their school's campus.



Clockwise from top left (1): Students from the morning Outdoor Adventures class after they planted natives; **(2):** A student learns how deep to plant whorled milkweed; **(3) & (4):** Signage for the planting area near the walkway entrances; **(5):** Students from the afternoon Outdoor Adventures class after their plants were planted and watered



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



Rachel Settle — Madison, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve Counties

April—June 2022

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
PF/QF All Team Meeting	Attended QF/PF All Team Meeting in Minnesota in May. Networked with Farm Bill Biologists from other states and received organization updates.
MDC LCAP Docket Rollout	Attended virtual meeting with MDC partners to receive FY23 LCAP docket updates.
Missouri PF/QF State Convention	Attended our annual State Convention to recognize partners and chapters for their contributions to our habitat mission.

Looking Forward

- Host monarch butterfly outreach events with the Ozark Regional Library at the Fredericktown and Ironton branches in July
- Host Native Pasture Tour in Jackson on September 8
- Continue CRP planning and status review field visits

Native Pasture Tour

Want to know how you can boost your forage production during the summer slump?

Join us for a pasture tour and producer panel!

Learn from cattle producers utilizing native forages in their grazing systems

State and federal cost-share programs will be discussed

Thursday September 8, 2022
6 – 8 pm
Aufdenberg Farm
1725 State Highway F
Jackson, MO 63755

Refreshments will be provided
Please RSVP to Cape County NRCS:
573-243-1467 ext. 3

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Valarie Repp- Butler, Carter, Dent, Shannon, Reynolds, Ripely, Oregon, Texas, and Howell Counties
April—June 2022

State Partner Meeting

Missouri Quail Forever held their State Meeting for chapters and partners this June in Columbia, Missouri. It was a great opportunity for all of the Missouri Quail forever staff to visit with our partners and chapter members, as well as acknowledge all of the hard work they have done this past year. I had the great pleasure of nominating and presenting one of our partner awards to Carol Davit, the Missouri Invasive Plant Council's (MoIP) Chair. Her work through MoIP and as the Executive Director of the Missouri Prairie Foundation, she has spoken to many groups on the importance of prairie conservation and the many benefits of native plants. The Missouri Invasive Plant Council (MoIP) advocates for making early detection and control of known and potential invasive plants a statewide priority. Their work with multiple agencies and partners has expanded messaging about invasive plants throughout the state. Their initiatives, such as the Cease the Sale idea, work to end the sale of invasive plants found in the horticulture industry and promote the planting of native plants in their place. In partnership with Forest ReLeaf of Missouri and Forrest Keeling Nursery, the Callery Pear Buyback program has ensured that invasive Callery Pear trees have been removed from residential yards and replaced with native trees. MoIP also helps increase awareness of other organizations that promote native plants and habitats, such as Grow Native!, Missourians for Monarchs, and the Scenic Rivers Invasive Species Partnership. Thank you, Carol, for all of your amazing work!



L to R: Valarie Repp, Carol Davit, Andrew White (MO QF State Coordinator). Valarie presents Carol with her Partner Award during the 2022 State Banquet.



Valarie Repp- Butler, Carter, Dent, Shannon, Reynolds, Ripely, Oregon, Texas, and Howell Counties
April—June 2022



I had a great time at the Bird Festival at Echo Bluff State Park teaching kids about how invasive shrubs can take over a forest. This ring toss game helped show the benefits of native trees and shrubs over invasive ones and the kids had fun playing!

Invasive Outreach

This quarter, I was able to get out a do a few outreach events as well as participate in Play, Clean, Go Awareness Week. The Bird Festival, hosted at Echo Bluff State Park, focused on everything birds. I was able to talk about how invasive plants can negatively effect Missouri's birds as well as demonstrate how they can take over a forest by playing a ring toss game. I also got to speak to over 200 middle schoolers on invasive plants and give out native seed packets during Missouri Extension's Ag Day in Poplar Bluff. Students got to play different variations of tag to see how invasives can spread quickly among native plants! During the week of June 5th through the 11th, the SRISP also helped

promote Play, Clean, Go Awareness Week. Play, Clean, Go is an initiative to get people out to enjoy natural spaces, clean their gear that they used for the

(Continued on page 3)



Valarie Repp- Butler, Carter, Dent, Shannon, Reynolds, Ripely, Oregon, Texas, and Howell Counties
April—June 2022

(Continued from page 2)

day before the go home to help prevent the spread of invasive species to new places. This can include brushing off shoes and pants after a day of hiking, spraying down UTVs and ATVs after trail riding, and cleaning fishing gear and disposing of any unused bait in the trash on site before leaving. By promoting Play, Clean, Go, the SRISP hopes to establish preventative measure habits in all who enjoy the outdoors!

Targeting Invasive Species Along Key Rights-of-Way in Mahan's Creek

This quarter I began work in the Mahan's Creek Area, located in Shannon County. This area is a Tier 1 priority area for the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC). Using funds from the Heart of the Ozarks Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) Grant, the SRISP is working to spray invasive plant species along county rights-of-way in this high priority area. Right-of-ways of roads can act as corridors for invasive species to be introduced and spread into natural areas as well as private lands. Rock that is brought in can contain invasive plant seeds. Road grating can also cause disturbance, opening the door for invasive plants to establish and expand. Some species that I have been specifically focusing on include spotted knapweed (*Centaurea stoebe*), sericea lespedeza (*Lespedeza cuneata*), multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*), Japanese



A small glade habitat on the side of the road in Shannon County. Protecting small pockets of intact habitat like this one along roadsides allows native plants to expand and provide valuable food and shelter for pollinators, birds, and reptiles.



Coordinating Invasive Species Biologist
Quarterly Partners' Report



Valarie Repp- Butler, Carter, Dent, Shannon, Reynolds, Ripely, Oregon, Texas, and Howell
April—June 2022 Counties



(Continued from page 3)

honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), and beefsteak plant (*Perilla frutescens*). These invasives are all commonly found in this area and pose to be the most problematic for private land owners and managed areas. Along with MoDOT, more than 40 miles of right-of-way will be treated within the Mahan's Creek area. Helping stop the spread of invasive species at one of the biggest sources is a great first step in preventing the spread of invasive plants found in the Scenic Rivers Region.

A small glade habitat along a county road in Shannon County. The glade was full of blazing star that was just about to bloom!

@MissouriQF



MissouriPFQF.org



Prescribed Fire Coordinating Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Wes Buchheit - Missouri

April - June 2022

Expanding connections for the prescribed fire community

While the title includes “biologist”, “coordinating” is the key word for increasing the capacity of prescribed fire in Missouri. For the first quarter in this role, I have focused on providing consistent communication with and building relations between conservation agencies, organizations, contractors, prescribed burn associations (PBAs), and Missourians. The Missouri Prescribed Fire Council (MPFC) website, moprescribedfire.org,

Conservation Planning

- 58 Landowner Contacts
- 5 Site Visits
- 0 Acres Impacted
- 0 Burn Plans Developed/Reviewed
- 1 Workshops/Webinars/Meetings Hosted

and email account continue to be useful tools in sharing information and making connections. The MPFC newsletter reaches over 1,300 subscribers, and counting, with regular plugs for upcoming events, the log your burn tool, and PBA outreach. As prescribed fire training and educational opportunities are announced within Missouri, adjacent states, or virtually, those events are posted on the website calendar and shared via email with MPFC partners for further dissemination through their channels. Just as it takes a crew to conduct a prescribed fire safely and efficiently, it takes the collective prescribed fire community to increase the capacity for this critical land management tool.

Upcoming Events

Below: Native wildflowers thrive following August 2021 prescribed burn.

**Missouri Prescribed Fire Council
Annual Meeting and Field Tour**
Promoting and protecting the responsible use of prescribed fire

August 13, 2022
10:00am-5:00pm
 El Dorado Springs Community Center
 135 W Spring Street
 El Dorado Springs, MO 64744

Scan and Register Now!

Meet with fellow prescribed fire practitioners, landowners, and Prescribed Burn Association (PBA) members from across the state as we discuss the latest on prescribed fire in Missouri.

Topics include

- Missouri Prescribed Fire Council Meeting – MO Fire Needs Assessment, insurance, training opportunities, fire effects monitoring, and more.
- PBA Happenings – PBA updates from across the state.
- Problem Plants and Adaptive Management Practices – Successes shared and lessons learned in managing prairie systems.

Field Tour

Join us as we explore Wah'Kon-Tah Prairie to view the results of adaptive management practices, including prescribed fire.

Social

Stick around for the evening social for food, refreshments, and conversations with fellow fire practitioners.

FREE admission, lunch and refreshments will be provided.
 Register [here](#) or at moprescribedfire.org/calendar.
 Questions: (573) 517-8860 or moprescribedfire@gmail.com

INTERESTED IN PRESCRIBED FIRE?
ATTEND OUR UPCOMING

PRESCRIBED BURN ASSOCIATION INTEREST MEETING

Want to use prescribed fire to manage your property? Want to gain prescribed fire experience? A Prescribed Burn Association (PBA) may be the answer! Through a neighbor-helping-neighbor function, PBAs can help provide equipment, experience, training, and people-power.

THURSDAY, JULY 21ST • 6:30-8:00PM
 MO SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION BAY FARM
 5601 S. RANGELINE RD, COLUMBIA, MO 65201

Join us for snacks, drinks and to learn more! Questions? Contact **Ryan Lueckenhoff** at ryan.lueckenhoff@mdc.mo.gov or **Wes Buchheit** at wbuchheit@quailforever.org

- Why burn?
- PBA function & benefits
- Sign-up to be a member!

Missouri Prescribed Fire Council

Register for meeting: bit.ly/PBAstart

For more info about prescribed fire, visit <https://moprescribedfire.org/faqs>





Prescribed Fire Coordinating Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Wes Buchheit - Missouri

April - June 2022

Outreach Effort	Outcome
Authored press release for the Log Your Burn tool on the MPFC website and shared by MDC	Reached 59,707 MDC email subscribers and resulted in a 100% increase in submissions within 2 months of the press release
Shared 2 sources of liability coverage	Forwarded to 99 MPFC affiliates, including 36 contractors
Shared the NWCG S-130/S-190/L-180 field exercise hosted by MDC in Jefferson City	Forwarded to 75 MPFC affiliates, including 36 contractors and 26 PBA leaders
July MPFC Newsletter	Emailed to 1,314 subscribers with information on the Annual Meeting & Field Tour, PBA Interest Meeting in Columbia, and the Log Your Burn Tool
Developed draft version of field exercise location survey	The survey will capture interest and location preference of the field exercise component of the Prescribed Burning for Missouri Land Managers training to be disseminated with MDC staff for consideration of training coordination. Survey will be sent via MPFC newsletter and link posted on MDC prescribed fire webpage and MPFC website

Empowering PBAs for further safety

Prescribed Burn Associations (PBAs) are an effective way to reduce risk associated with prescribed fire through the availability of training, equipment, and experienced help. In fact, perceived risk is higher than actual risk. Data from the MPFC Log Your Burn tool show that of the 518 prescribed burns submitted, 458 (88.5%) were completed with no issues. Ten percent reported that fire occurred outside the burn unit but was extinguished with equipment and personnel on site. And only 1.5% of prescribed burns completed, resulted in fire occurring outside the burn unit and fire department(s) assistance was required to extinguish it. These data support that prescribed fire is a relatively safe land management tool.

As Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever, the MPFC, and other conservation partners work to increase the amount of responsible prescribed fire to improve our natural resources, the number of instances fire occurs outside the burn unit could inherently increase. Prescribed fire training typically involves a demonstration burn, but as the data show, the frequency of fire outside the burn unit and needing extinguishing is not common. Because of this limited occurrence, Paul Breitenstein, Vice-President of the Foothills PBA and NWCG FFT1 with 38 years of structural and wildland fire experience, and I collaborated to host a full-day of training on April 14th focused on these uncommon but stressful situations. The morning consisted of presentations and discussions on the preparation of burn units and the execution of prescribed fire that reduces the chance of fire occurring outside the unit and then how to respond when fire occurs outside the burn unit.

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Prescribed Fire Coordinating Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Wes Buchheit - Missouri

April - June 2022

Empowering PBAs for further safety, continued

We took to the field in the afternoon demonstrating the tactics and tools to extinguish fire. A demo burn unit with wide firebreaks was selected and the PBA had burned the downwind adjacent grassland weeks prior so that we had a safe environment for the training. After first demonstrating the response process, we paired the Foothills PBA members into groups of 4 to gain hand-on experience in a mock scenario.

Fire was set within the grass fuels and given time to grow before the crew member mock radioed to the burn boss that there was a slopover, to cease ignition, gave a size up of the location, size, fuels, and resources needed. At that time, the crew received assignments and began anchoring their suppression into an existing firebreak, proceeded to flank the fire on both sides to pinch it off and extinguished the fire. Each run was followed with an after action review to highlight the strong points, note the difficulties experienced including which tools were effective and which were not, and discuss aspects that could have been improved. Then the next crew was up to go through the same process. We closed out the day with two woodland prescribed burns since we had the crew and the opportunity to improve habitat—with no fire occurring outside the burn units.

As we gathered around for water while the smoke was settling, participants shared comments of improved awareness, preparedness, and skillset affirming we met the goal to provide the knowledge and experience for the PBA members to be able to safely and confidently handle those stressful situations.

Planning has begun to refine and replicate this training this fall near the St. Louis area over a two-day period. The first day will be for PFQF staff and partners and the second day for Missouri PBA members and landowners to continue empowering them with the resources they need to safely apply prescribed fire for the benefit of the landscape.



Above: Foothills PBA members work to extinguish fire in a training scenario of fire outside the prescribed burn unit.

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Prescribed Fire Coordinating Biologist



Quarterly Partners' Report

Wes Buchheit - Missouri

April - June 2022

Missouri Prescribed Fire Council

Promoting and protecting the responsible use of prescribed fire - moprescribedfire.org

- Prescribed Burn Associations
- Log Your Burn
- Log Your Burn Data Summaries
- Law & Liability
- Contractor List
- Weather Resources
- Calendar of Events
- Grant Applications
- Contact Us

Training/Meeting	Outcome
Northeast-Midwest Regional Prescribed Fire Council Coordinating Group (NEMW RPFCCG) Meetings	Represented the Missouri Prescribed Fire Council at monthly meetings to connect with other state prescribed fire practitioners and councils. Topics included liability coverage opportunities, assessment of each state's current capacity for prescribed fire, and discussion of a potential regional prescribed fire summit in 2024.
Upper Osage PBA	Attended the membership meeting to provide an overview of the MPFC, new law, and my new role. Shared a new-member form/flyer and a project prioritization excel spreadsheet for the PBA to adapt and use.
Foothills PBA Training	Hosted training for 13 attendees discussing how to reduce the risk of fire occurring outside a burn unit and demonstrating how to extinguish it with resources on site.
TREX Planning Meeting	Attended the Prescribed Fire Training Exchange (TREX) planning meeting with numerous partners hosted by Ryan Gauger, TNC. Tentative dates of Feb 27 - March 10, 2023 within southern MO. The objective is to use the 15-30 participants plus training cadre to complete prescribed burns on partner lands as training opportunities, especially to advance NWCG qualifications.
Prescribed Burning and CRP Meeting	Represented PFQF at the meeting with NRCS, FSA, and MDC to discuss the approaching workload of burn plan preparation for CRP management. Discussed increasing training opportunities for contract holders, increasing plan preparation capacity, and increasing awareness of prescribed fire resources available through MDC and MPFC.
MPFC Annual Meeting & Field Tour Planning Meetings	Lead calls for the planning committee consisting of MPFC exec committee and leaders of the Upper Osage PBA to organize the August 13th event in El Dorado Springs.



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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Wesley Hanks - Franklin, Warren, and Washington

April-June 2022

Native Forages: Different Motivations Same Benefits for Wildlife

Using native grasses and forbs for livestock forage is gaining in popularity because of its long list of benefits to both livestock production and to the environment. A producer's motivations for incorporating native forages can differ greatly from another's. One Montgomery County cattleman currently uses pastures of native warm-season grasses to support his need to have both fall-calving cows and spring-calving cows. Their local buyer purchases a half dozen animals every few weeks so they must have them ready for sale throughout the year. The native grasses help ensure that calves are gaining weight throughout the summer and conception rates are high. Another Montgomery County livestock producer has incorporated natives to market their product as grass fed beef which can increase his overall bottom line. Their grazing operation also includes small ruminants such as goats and sheep. With their diversity of forages, they can support a diversity of livestock and be in multiple different markets.



Sampling bumble bees for the MO Bumble Bee Atlas.

Photo Credit: Kim Cole

Trainings/Meetings/Outreach	Outcome
Warren County Prescribed Burn Manager Field Training	Assisted local MDC staff with Prescribed Burn Manager training.
Foothill PBA Spot Fire Training	Attended training hosted by FPBA members covering how to deal with spot fires and larger escaped fires.
Union Elementary 1st Grade Pollinator Talk	Presented information on the importance for pollinators and their habitat to a 1st grade class participating in Milkweed in the Classroom
Montgomery County Farm Tour	Assisted Montgomery county SWCD and PLC in presenting on the benefits of pollinators to 3rd graders from local elementary schools.
Franklin County Grazing School	Presented information on the benefits of using native grasses and forbs as part of a grazing system.
PF/QF All Team Meeting	Connected with PF/QF Staff from across the country and learned details about PF/QF's strategic plan.
Prairie Habitat Hike at Prairie Fork Conservation Area	Helped Kim Cole and Rachel Settle with a prairie habitat hike highlighting the importance of prairies, prairie management and prairie plant ID.
MO State Convention/Golf Tournament	Connected with partners and chapter members from across the state.
Native Forage Grazing Workshop—Hosted by MDC	Learned about how and why producers in Montgomery county are using native grasses and forbs as part of their livestock production system.
Native Forage Grazing Workshop—Hosted by MU Extension	Learned about incorporating natives into a grazing system and shared information on QF and why we care about native forages with participants.
Women Owning Woodlands Workshop	Shared info on PBAs and discussed commonly used prescribed burn equipment.

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



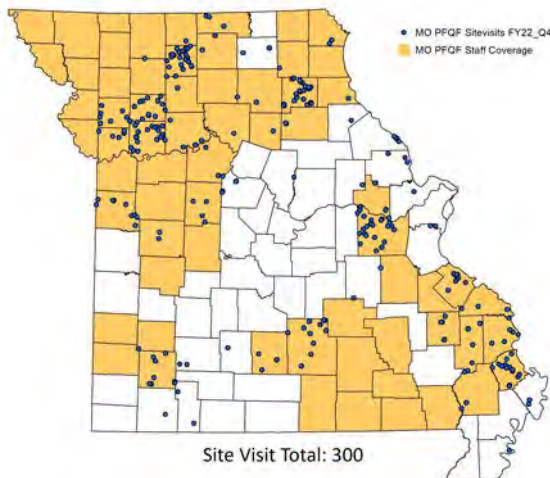
Wesley Hanks - Franklin, Warren, and Washington

April-June 2022

Native Forages: Different Motivations Same Benefits for Wildlife Cont.

Down in Washington County, natives are being used for their drought resistance and ability to grow in nutrient poor soils. This allows the producer to have high quality forages when summer droughts or poor soils stress cool-season forages such as tall fescue. While these are just a few reasons to incorporate native forages each of these situations has a common outcome, creating high quality wildlife habitat. While wildlife habitat was not a goal of any of these producers, when managing natives with livestock upland wildlife will find it and thrive. On the Montgomery County properties, grassland birds such as quail, dickcissels, and meadowlarks can regularly be heard during the summer months. While they haven't seen any quail on the Washington county farms, wild turkey and deer are both benefiting from the native grass pastures. Native forages can be a win for the livestock producers and a win for wildlife even if that's not a primary objective.

**FY22 MISSOURI PF/QF
BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT
April 1, 2022 - June 30, 2022**



*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.
Updated 7/11/2022



Missouri Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist positions are funded in partnership cooperation with the Missouri Department of Conservation and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Conservation Planning

- 50 landowner contacts in 11 different counties
- 30 Site Visits
- 24 CRP Plans covering 519 ac
- 5 CRP Status Reviews on 71 ac

Practice Checkouts for LCAP, HCG, and EQIP	Amount
Herbaceous Weed Spraying	41 ac
Pollinator/Monarch Habitat Planting	1 ac
Edge Feathering	1 ac
Prescribed Burning	22 ac
Timber Stand Improvement	11 ac
Old Field Restoration	5 ac
Native Grass Planting	44 ac
Woody Invasive Control	1 ac

Looking Forward

- Work with landowners to develop plans and reserve cost-share for projects through LCAP and HCG.
- Assist FSA and NRCS with CRP planning and field reviews.
- Assist PBA members in planning their Summer meeting and upcoming burns.
- Through landowner contacts I will continue to share the Quail Forever mission and help get anyone interested involved with their local QF chapter.

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II



Quarterly Partners' Report

William Robinson– Marion, Monroe & Shelby Counties

April-June 2022

Position Update

Whew! What a year. FY22 has come to a close and FY23 has officially started. FY22 ended in a flash that included writing CRP plans for Shelby County and some for Ralls county as well. CRP acres make a huge difference for wildlife! I have had the opportunity to meet with several landowners over the last few months to talk about the positive benefit CRP provides, and how proper management can extend the life and the productivity of those acres. I look forward to seeing what FY23 brings!

Q4 FY22 Activity Highlights

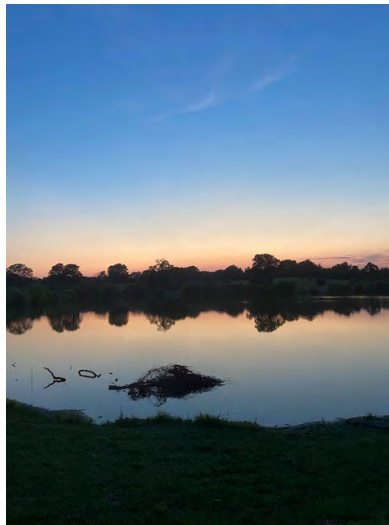
- ◆ 86 Landowner Contacts
 - ◆ 28 Site Visits
 - ◆ 84 Projects with Acres
- 2376.87 Acres Impacted

CRP Update

The finish-line is in sight for Sign-up 57 and 58. As we wrap up the planning aspect of CRP, I look forward to dusting off my plant identification as I begin to evaluate expiring CRP stands.

Total FY22 Activity Highlights

- ◆ 246 Landowner Contacts
 - ◆ 158 Site Visits
 - ◆ 224 Projects with Acres
- 5870.99 Acres Impacted



Sunset in Mississippi after an evening plant identification hike



Left: Butterfly on black-eyed susan in Shelby County



Right: Butterfly on purple coneflower in a butterfly garden in Clark County



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II **USDA**

Quarterly Partners' Report



William Robinson– Marion, Monroe & Shelby Counties

April-June 2022

Bobwhite Bootcamp

Towards the end of June, I had the pleasure of attending Bobwhite Bootcamp at Prairie Wildlife in West Point, Mississippi. The folks at Prairie Wildlife have spent the last several years improving wildlife habitat. It is also the location of several Bobwhite Quail studies conducted by Mississippi State University. I was able to hear several presentations covering Bobwhite ecology, predation, establishment of native habitat, and management strategies for several different scenarios. Despite the heat, we spent lots of time in the field looking at pollinator plantings, pine savannahs, and various CRP practices. It was an action packed, informational week.



Sun Rise over a field of native grasses and wildflowers in Mississippi while listening for whistling Bobwhites



Sensitive Briar in a CRP field in Shelby County

Interactive Nature

Summer is a great time to get outside with family and friends. Being outside is always nice. However, the experience can be made more meaningful by interacting with the nature around you. One of my favorite interactive plants is sensitive briar (pictured on the left). It features a pretty, fluffy, pink flower as well as leaves that will fold to the middle when touched. It is a fun plant to showcase on site visits, or while on a hike with friends.

I also enjoy looking for monarch caterpillars on milkweed plants. It is fun to monitor their growth and lifecycle. One thing I enjoy doing on site visits is pointing out all the flowers that pollinators like butterflies and bees are using. There's a lot to see when you start looking around!

ADD @MISSOURIQF on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter
You can find us on YouTube @Missouri Quail Forever

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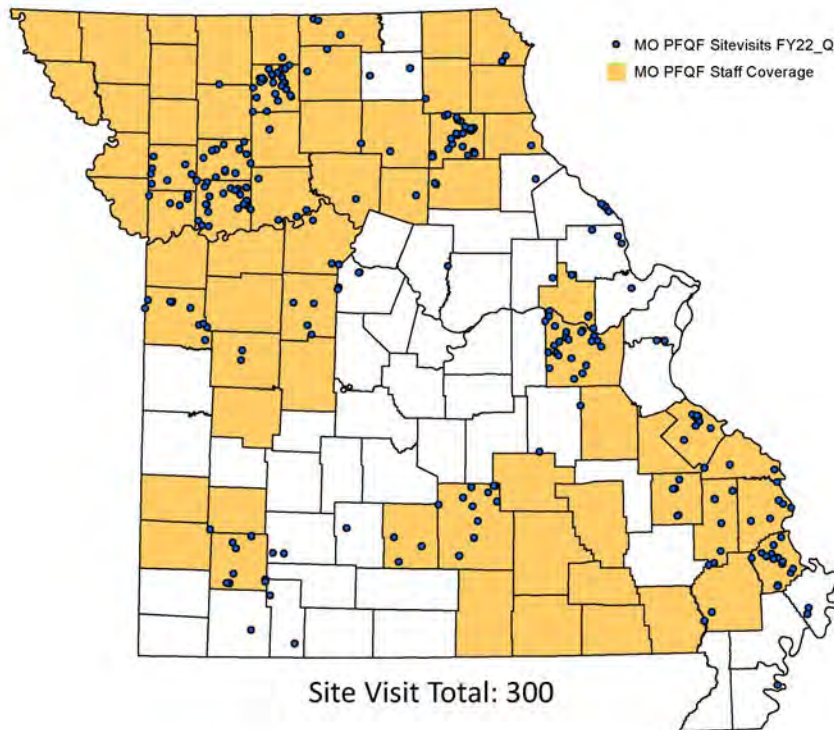


Quarterly Partners' Report

William Robinson– Marion, Monroe & Shelby Counties

April-June 2022

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Looking Forward

- Expiring CRP field reviews
- CRP establishment visits

**If anyone wishes to discuss habitat projects or knows others who are interested; please contact me at the information below.*

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