



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist III

Quarterly Partners' Report



Andrew White - Livingston, Linn, and Carroll Counties

April – June 2020

Teaming Up in the Face of Challenge



With all the recent uncertainty, being told different things from different angles, with several conservation programs happening at the same time, one thing is for certain: The amount of teamwork I have seen is astounding.

Fortunately, during all the quarantine craziness, I was able to still go out and perform CRP checks. These checks took up a bulk of the first part of the quarter and are an important pulse check for our offices to make sure that the appropriate cover is present and management is taking place. The left photo was taken during a CRP check in Livingston County later in the quarter.

With the 98% acceptance rate for the 54th General CRP sign up, paired with CSP and EQIP hitting at the same time, to say that USDA offices across the state are busy would be an understatement. However, despite limited office time, working from home, and practically zero face-to-face contact with producers, NRCS and its conservation partners are still getting quality habitat acres put on the ground. This level of teamwork and cooperation has always been there, but the current climate has really made everything that much more apparent. One of my favorite aspects of my job is that even with difficulties and random hurdles thrown at us, we all work together to get to job done and remain successful. Our partnership with NRCS and MDC is very strong and I cannot wait to see what the future holds for conservation in Missouri!

Making Miles for Monarchs!!!

Monarch Joint Venture hosted their annual Miles for Monarchs challenge during June. 16 staffers from your Missouri PF/QF team participated and logged just under 1,000 miles, which gained national attention as this made up nearly 1/3 of the total miles reported to MJV across the country. It was definitely fun getting out and getting active for one of my favorite butterflies and seeing some pretty impressive habitat! The photo of at CP42 field at right was taken during one of my 10 mile bike rides. Check out some of our social media content for more on our participation.





Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist III

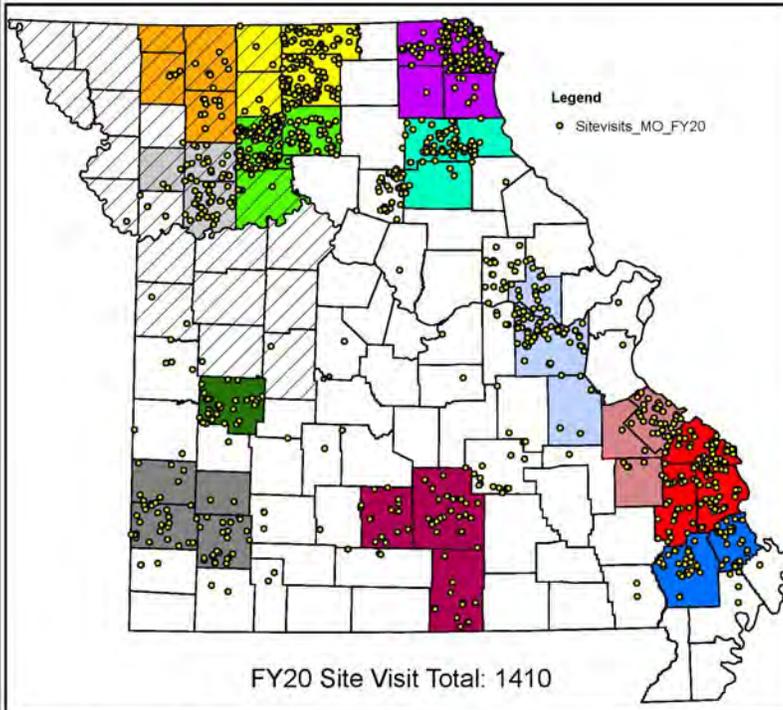


Quarterly Partners' Report

Andrew White - Livingston, Linn, and Carroll Counties

April – June 2020

FY20 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT MAP July 2019 - June 2020



*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured. Updated: 7/10/2020



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.

Outreach & Education

- Assisted the 2C QF Chapter with their Annual Food Plot Seed Day
- Have been and will continue to meet with local QF chapters to assist with habitat projects as well as youth and women's event planning and execution

Looking Forward

- Providing producers technical assistance at a distance
- Continued assistance with CRP, EQIP, and CSP conservation planning
- Attending NRCS Area 1 planner webinars to get the latest and greatest on program and planning information.
- State Team Meeting
- Coordination and planning of 2021 Missouri State Convention

Conservation Planning

- 217 Landowner Contacts
- 121 Site Visits
- 56 Conservation Plans Written/Modified
- 176 Status Review/Checkout
- 3 NBCI Surveys Completed



Missouri PF/QF has a new YouTube channel Please visit and subscribe for videos on who we are, and what we do, habitat how-tos, and much more!

Our page can be found by visiting:

[Missouri Quail Forever YouTube](#)

Programs	Acres Impacted
FSA	6,043.5
NRCS	1.0
OTHER	6.0
TOTAL	6,050.5

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Colby Sharp - Texas, Wright, and Howell Counties

April – June 2020

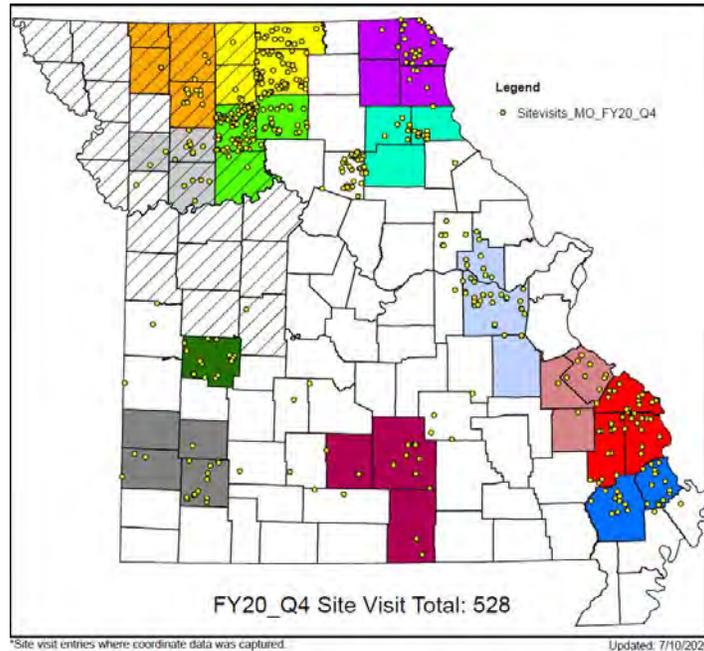
This Past Quarter...

These past few months have been a bit different than past quarters, with much of my work being from home. While working from home I was still able to assist landowners throughout the Ozarks from a distance, discussing practices such as glade restoration, prescribed burning, forest stand improvement, and rotational grazing that can be used to help them reach their land management goals.

When I was working from home I was also able to assist landowners with questions about the benefits of rotation grazing, native warm season grass growth, and pollinator plantings. During this time I also assisted partners with EQIP, CSP, LCAP, and Habitat Challenge Grant contract planning, contract eligibility reviews, mapping, and practice checkouts.

See the above map of where the Missouri Quail Forever team has been hard at work, using their expertise to provide technical assistance to landowners across Missouri.

Missouri PF/QF Biologist Footprint Map April – June 2020



*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.

Updated: 7/10/2020



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Conservation Planning

- 116 Landowner Contacts
- 23 Site Visits
- 16 Conservation Plans Completed
- 9 Status Reviews/Checkouts
- 3 Prescribed Burn Plans
- 32 Ranking and Eligibility
- 1 Article Written

Program	Acres Impacted
EQIP	1,150.26
CSP	9.46
HCG/LCAP	32.3



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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Colby Sharp - Texas, Wright, and Howell Counties

April – June 2020

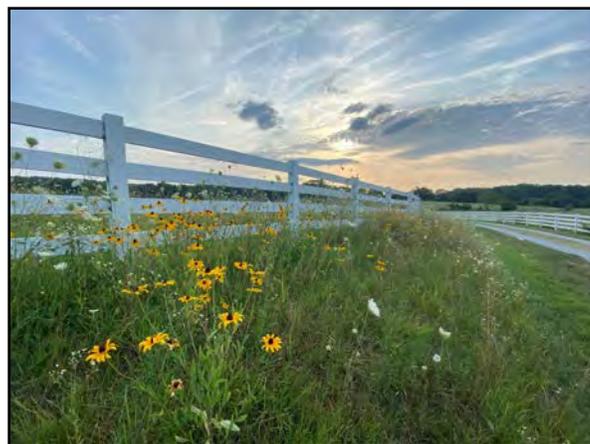
“Small Changes and Big Impacts”

When talking with new landowners with small acreage the first thing most of them say is “I don’t have much land but I’d like to see what I can do” or “Do you all work with small landowners.” This tells me that there is a misconception that you must have large acreage to do any kind of habitat management, and this simply is not true. When you have a large number of acres it will take more work, and in some cases more money, to make the same impact as work being done on a smaller scale. A five acre timber thinning may not sound like much to someone with 100 acres but if you have 10 acres, you just increased habitat and forest health on 50% of your property. The same goes for landowners that are on an even smaller scale, such as with their yard.

A yard is not typically thought of as habitat, but I ask “Why”? Why does landscaping have to be a perfectly mowed ecological disaster of nonnative and invasive grasses, flowers, and shrubs? The answer is, it doesn’t, a yard has the capability of being a diverse landscape of native grasses and wildflowers that can be used by songbirds, small mammals, and most importantly pollinators such as native bumblebees and butterflies. In some yards the first step is a simple as not mowing the area that you would like to convert to native. If you look at the picture at the top right and below you can see two areas that were not cut for one growing season, though these areas still have a high percentage of nonnative grass in the understory, the



This area of the property was difficult to mow due to terrain so it was left to grow. These Prairie Larkspur rapidly grew in and provide a beautiful view.



This area was left to grow since it requires a weed eater to be cut. Since then, it has grown into a great pollinator area and has had bobwhite quail using it for cover and foraging.

native wildflowers still flourished above the grasses. In other locations it may require a little more work with transplanting of native plants due to the years of herbicide and nonnative conversion. This conversion technique can reduce the amount of work needed and is great for those areas that may stay too wet to mow or that has terrain that requires the use of a weed eater.

By making these small changes to your yard you can make a big impact on the ecosystem and the wildlife that inhabit it. So next time you hop on the lawn mower or break out the weed eater, take a second to think about the areas in your yard that you have trouble with and make the decision to let them grow and provide great pollinator habitat.



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



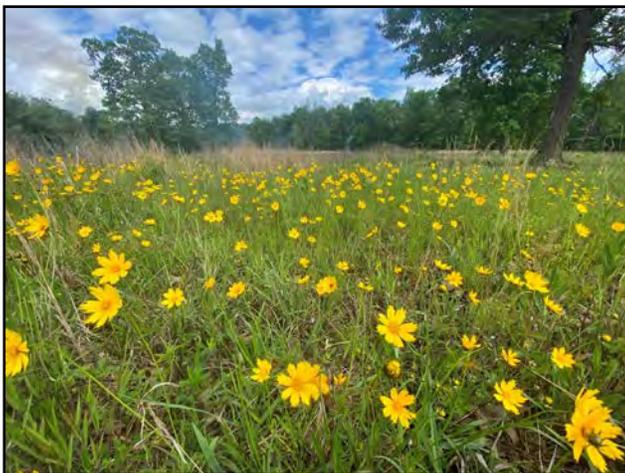
Colby Sharp - Texas, Wright, and Howell Counties

April – June 2020

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
Virtual CRP Conservation Desktop Training	Participated in CRP training where I learned how to use Conservation Desktop for planning.
Virtual NRCS Programs Weekly Meetings/Calls	Participated in NRCS programs meeting where I was updated on new Farm Bill program rules at this point.
Virtual Quail Forever, QF Chapter, and USFS Meeting	Participated in meeting that discussed future work on public land in Howell County through Heart of the Ozarks Quail Forever Chapter.

Looking Forward

- Assist NRCS with planning EQIP preapprovals for wildlife and forestry practices, while also getting new folks applied for 2021.
- Attend Quail Forever south Missouri team meeting to discuss goals for the next fiscal year.
- Potentially attend meeting with Quail Forever, QF Chapter, and USFS to discuss future projects on land adjacent to federal land.
- Potentially assist other QF FBBs with CRP planning in high CRP areas.
- Evaluate new methods for performing site visits, holding education workshops, and providing assistance during continuing pandemic.
- Continue to assist landowners and producers with Farm Bill programs, while continuing to further my understanding of EQIP, CSP, and MDC's LCAP planning.



During a growing season prescribed burn this patch of Lanceleaf Coreopsis was green enough for the fire to miss at this Howell County Property.



This recently restored glade is showing to have great diversity with both purple coneflower and Indian paintbrush emerging quickly at this Texas County Property.

**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



Courtney Nicks - Marion, Monroe & Shelby Counties

April-June 2020

Activity Highlights

Conservation Planning

- 84 Landowner Contacts
- 68 Site Visits
- 85 Projects with Acres
- 3 Trainings

Outreach

- 2 Articles
- 2 Interviews

Total Acres Impacted: 1,933.05 acres

TEAMWORK

makes the DREAM work!



CRP has the stage, front and center, for most USDA offices these last few months. In my assigned counties, 203 new or re-enrolled contracts were accepted and required field visits. The combined efforts of MDC private land conservationist, NRCS staff, and myself were able to complete these visits and submit feedback to the Farm Service Agency (FSA) in a timely manner; proving the invaluable nature of these partnerships. As a QF Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist I also offered assistance to counties outside of my own to help with the large workload in NEMO. In Randolph Co. a SWCD employee and I were able to tackle 73 contracts to help during a time with limited staff. These past few months have demonstrated the power of teamwork to make high workloads more manageable. At the end of the day there is satisfaction in knowing that I have likeminded professionals to lean on when I need it and I have the ability to support others when they need it. I am proud to be part of this partnership. Expanding our footprint and building strong working relationships is what it is all about! I look forward to the upcoming fiscal year and I am certain great new opportunities are to come.

Diversity on CRP acres...





Drill calibrations, set it right to grow it right!

As a technical service provider (TSP) I develop seed mixes to meet the standards of various practices. Each mix seemingly different from the next. Unfortunately, differing ratios of forbs and grasses often result in specific drill settings. This prevents us from suggesting a “catch all” setting, because quite frankly there isn’t one. Of course the seed mixture isn’t the only thing we have to take into account, soil moisture is huge too! Setting the appropriate depth is critical.

To explore different methods of drill calibration, Resource Conservationist Robert Conley and I headed to the field to help calibrate the SWCD’s Great Plains drill for a native warm season grass seeding. It was not only great to share drill calibration knowledge with our landowner but it was a good opportunity to become more familiar with our local drill and compare and contrast calibration methods.



EQIP in Action

Several Shelby County landowners have utilized EQIP funding to create some phenomenal habitat on private property. John, in his first growing season of a 7 acre pollinator plot, is already witnessing more quail utilizing his acres. Coupled with edge feathering and invasive species control he implements on his own dime, John anticipates increased quail numbers for years to come.



Another exciting project is about to pave the way for more quality habitat for pollinators and quail here in Shelby county. A 50 acre conversion from cool season grasses to diverse native forbs and warm season grasses will be paired with the planting of several covey headquarters to take another private property to the next level. These are just a few of the great opportunities that have been made possible by EQIP funding.



MOVING THE NEEDLE

Miles for Monarchs



Lacing up our running shoes, slipping on our padded shorts and dusting off our paddles, many of our Quail Forever staff donated their time outside of work to run, bike, and paddle 25 miles or more in support the Monarch Joint Venture's Miles for Monarchs initiative June 22-28th. Capturing fun footage and great photos while exploring the outdoors, we were able to engage with our social media audience in a new way. It was an exciting week and after acquiring nearly 1,000 miles from 16 of our employees, we are excited for the next challenge that comes our way.

The Power of Pollinators

The Mid-MO Uplander Quail Forever Chapter has done it again! Showcasing their work with A.L. Gustin golf course in Columbia. Not only did we tour first and second year plots, but up to ten year plots! The ability to observe the transition as pollinator establishments mature, is incredible. We observed early stage plots with a substantial amount of expected weedy encroachment (ragweed and foxtail with a subtle flare of lanceleaf coreopsis and black-eyed susan). We explored mid-staged plots with an abundance of coneflowers, milkweed, and wild bergamot. And finally we witnessed the beauty of late stage plots that had extreme diversity, including prairie blazing star, compass plant, rattlesnake master, Virginia bunch flower, and much more.





Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

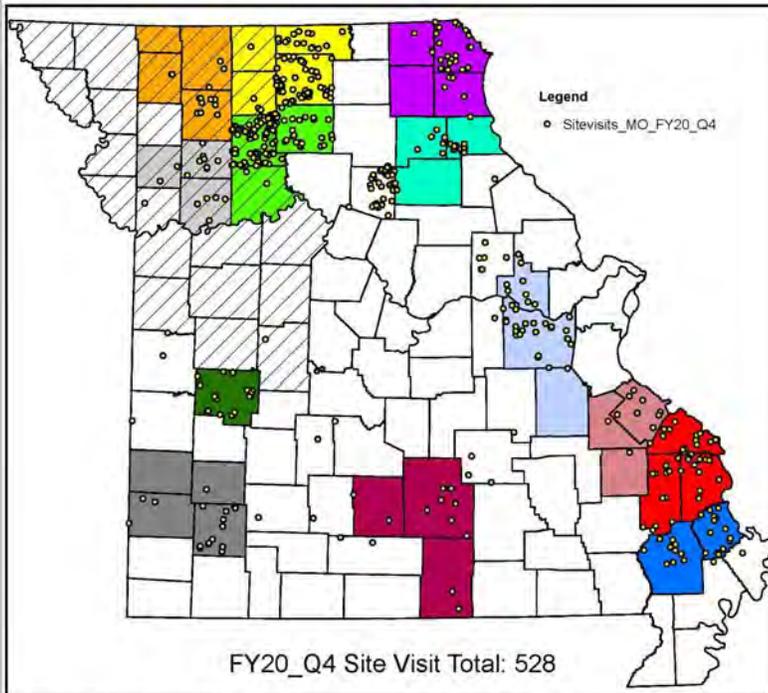


Quarterly Partners' Report

Courtney Nicks - Marion, Monroe & Shelby Counties

April-June 2020

FY20 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT MAP April 2020 - June 2020



*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.

Updated: 7/10/2020



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Looking Forward, I will...

- Continue to write and consult on CRP conservation plans
- Assist with EQIP conservation planning
- Consult with landowners to write wildlife management plans
- Reschedule workshops
- Drive Quail Forever MRAP committee tasks
- Start new FBB position in Randolph County
- Become acquainted with local staff within my new territory and develop a workplan that meets the needs of the area.
- Attend an annual meeting to set goals for the upcoming year



FOR UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

visit

<https://missouripfqqf.org/events-1>

**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



Erin Forsythe– Jasper, Lawrence, Barton, Dade Counties

April-June 2020

This Past Quarter...

Has been an interesting one. Covid-19 has caused us all to adjust to the new norm of working with our producers, coworkers and partners. Loosing the face to face contact has been a new challenge we continue to face. This Summer has been filled with CSP Renewals, EQIP, and CSP Classics. With the loss of NRCS staff in both Bates and Lawrence Counties, I was tasked with completing and assisting with the program application workload. It's always exciting working with different producers and hearing their stories.

Recently I have had the opportunity to work with a landowner from Lawrence County on his program application. We conducted a site visit to assess his current system to determine resource concerns we could address. Mr. Miller was very interested in improving his current grazing system with Stockpiling cool season forages, incorruption of clover and planting a monarch planting.

Mr. Miller was very open and proud to talk about the history of the property and how they got to the point they were at. Mr. Miller was born and raised in the area serviced our Country right out of high school. After his service he and his wife decided to settle down in the area where they proceeded to purchase land and raise a family. You could tell by the management the pride he took in the land and the memories the property provided. Seeing that kind of love for the land and great stewardship reaffirms each day my love for my career

Conservation Technical Assistance Summary

- (112) Landowner Contacts
- (19) Site Visits
- (6) Consplan Completed
- (1) Status Review/Check Out



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Missouri Quail Forever

Quarterly Partners' Report



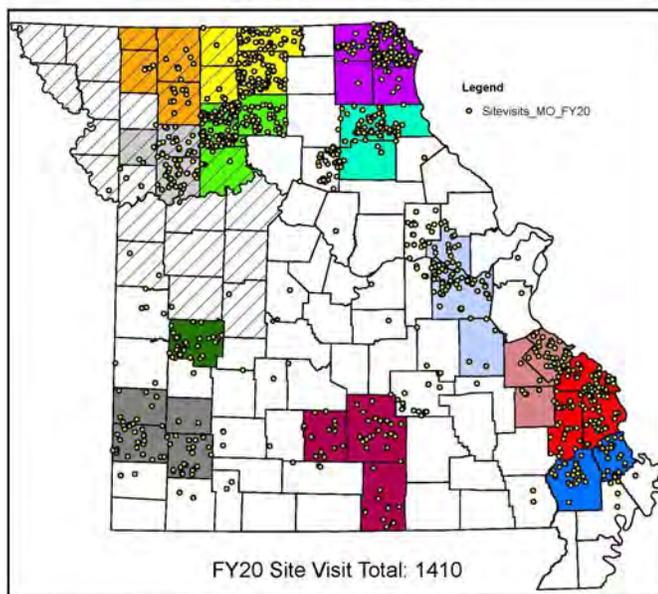
Erin Forsythe– Jasper, Lawrence, Barton, Dade Counties

April-June 2020

Looking Forward....

July 24th will sadly be my last day with Quail Forever. I will be working for NRCS as a Soil Conservation in Claremore, OK starting August 3rd. I have been very fortunate to work beside some magnificent coworkers and partners. I look forward to watching the Missouri Quail Forever team grow and thrive. I will continue to work closely with QF in the future. I plan to present at the 2020 Missouri Women in Agriculture Conference in Mid September with the MO QF team! Thank you all , and I look forward to working with you in the future. Quail Forever is planning to continue this position to assist partners and landowners!

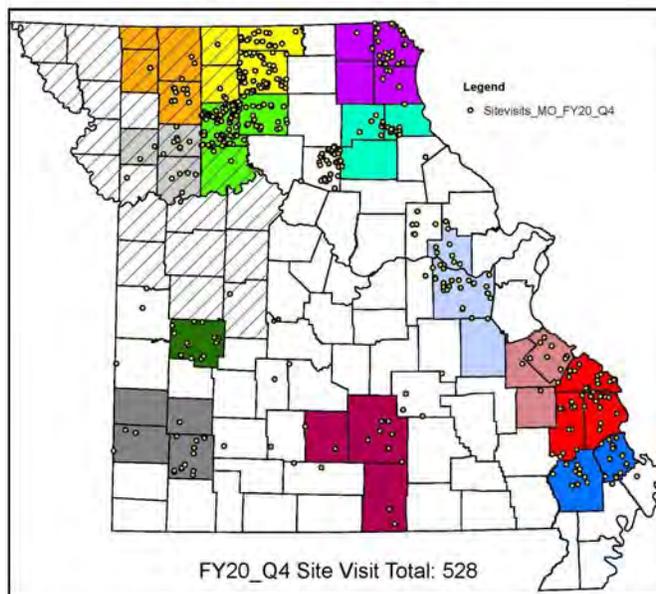
FY20 MISSOURI PF/QF
BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT MAP
July 2019 - June 2020



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Updated: 7/10/2020

FY20 MISSOURI PF/QF
BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT MAP
April 2020 - June 2020



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Updated: 7/10/2020

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



Ethan Kleekamp - Ray, Caldwell & Clinton Counties

April—June 2020

Good Things Come...To Those Who Wait

We all know, both intuitively and thanks to the popular phrase, that Rome wasn't built in a day. Some of its grandest structures, in fact, took over 100 years to construct, and the cityscape in its entirety evolved through many centuries of rise and ruin, putting the collective build days in the hundreds of thousands, if not millions. The lesson, of course, being that patience is a virtue – good things come to those who wait.

I repeat this message almost daily during the Missouri growing season as I work with landowners trying to resurrect prairie on their land. The scope, grandeur and diversity of virgin tall-grass prairie evolved over *millennia*, and were destroyed over the course of the last two centuries, yet we quickly lose patience when the seeds we sow in February haven't manifested in a fully restored prairie ecosystem by June. In fact, just this spring I've had landowners request permission to over-seed first-year pollinator plots that were right on schedule, and another unfortunate farmer that prematurely killed a burgeoning stand of native warm-season grass with an eye on replanting before a program deadline arrived.

This impatience is by no means their character flaw alone, rather, it is something all of us in the 21st century are plagued with. Many of the material goods we long for are only a click and a day away, and rural and suburban Americans see each year how our highly engineered seeds and chemical elixirs can grow 12-foot tall corn fields and lush, sod-bound lawns in mere months. We have forgotten that precious artwork, with all its subtleties and ornate detail, takes time to create, and often goes through its share of awkward years and growing pains.

A great example of landowners patiently waiting out these slow maturation times is Aaron and Lindsay Hawkins, two Ray County farmers that approached me in November of 2018 with an inquiry.

Continued ———>

Conservation at a Glance

- 91 Landowner Contacts
- 19 Site Visits
- 1 Workshop (50 Attendees)
- 1 Conservation Plan Completed

Program Involvement	Acres Impacted
HCG/LCAP	9.9
CSP	53.6
Total	65.5

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



Ethan Kleekamp - Ray, Caldwell & Clinton Counties

April—June 2020

Good Things Continued

“We are interested in converting one of our fields to monarch habitat; what do we need to know and do to make that happen?”

We sat and talked a while about their operation and the wants and needs they had for the property. Because of the highly erodible nature of the field, they had noticed their top-soil loss leading to increasingly underwhelming yields. On top of that, as wildlife enthusiasts, they were dismayed by the number of neighboring farms in the Northeast corner of the county that were coming out of CRP and returning to row-crop production. With no General CRP available at that moment, we decided instead to pursue Environmental Quality Incentive Program funds for their project. A few maps, plans, ranking reports, and an early start waiver later, they were approved to plant just before the dormant seeding period closed that following March.



The Hawkins' field prior to planting



Volunteer weeds during first growing season of monarch plot

After several discussions on site prep, seed acquisition and drill calibration, they made quick work of the planting. Moreover, they were willing to play citizen scientists and accommodated my request to utilize two separate seeding rates to allow a follow-up stem density comparison that will help inform my future management recommendations. After the flurry of signatures and this quick turnaround planting, all they had left to do was wait.

Green-up came and brought with it a terrific stand of volunteer ragweed, foxtail and pennycress. Next came the raised eyebrows and teases from their neighbors. By late June they likely began wondering where they went wrong, or if the seed mix they had paid handsomely for was a dud.

Continued ----->

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Ethan Kleekamp - Ray, Caldwell & Clinton Counties

April—June 2020

Good Things Continued



Illinois Bundleflower, Lance-leaf Coreopsis, Black-Eyed Susan, and Partridge Pea in the first-year understory

A visit to the site and quick glance below the weed canopy revealed that their restoration was right on schedule; their annuals and biennials had shown up in spades. All they needed was a boost in sunlight to continue their climb, and so after a July clipping, Aaron and Lindsay were back to waiting.

The season came and went quietly, with no vibrant, showy display of colorful blooms, and as winter settled in, they were once more left waiting...and waiting...and waiting.

When we finally made it to this spring, my CRP, EQIP, and CSP planning for 2020 kept me out of contact with the Hawkins', but my hopes remained high that this year was going to be different for their monarch planting. It wasn't until late June while on my annual quail surveys

that I happened by their place again, and as I approached on a county road from the North, I could see the fireworks from a quarter-mile away! Lance-leaf Coreopsis, False Sunflower, Wild Bergamot, Purple Coneflower, Black-Eyed Susans, and others adorned their hillside, practically leaping from the soil. What's more, I flushed three pairs of quail on my walkabout. Talk about rewarding one's patience!



Second-year monarch plot in all its glory!

Continued — — —>



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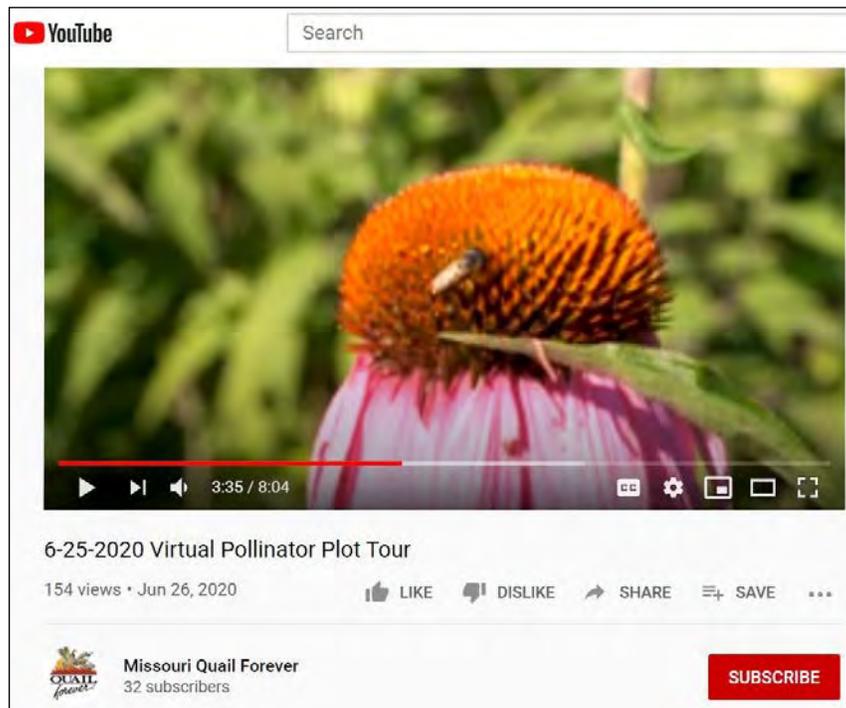
Ethan Kleekamp - Ray, Caldwell & Clinton Counties

April—June 2020

I called Aaron shortly after to commend he and Lindsay on a job well done, and we spoke a while about the rigors and uncertainties of having to wait around so long. I assured him it was normal, and that many landowners don't see fruits like these until the third or even fourth growing season.

Indeed, this is the norm when establishing pollinator and other wildlife habitat from seed, and I think it crucial that we biologists spend ample time teaching landowners what to look for in the early going and to help manage their expectations during the first year or two of their habitat restorations.

In an effort to do just that, myself and Trevor Day, our Quail Forever regional representative in Northern Missouri, spent a day capturing video and commentary in pollinator habitat plantings at various stages for a virtual tour to share with landowners, chapter members, and partner staff. Posted two weeks ago, the 8-minute video has already eclipsed 150 views, and we intend to share it more widely in the coming weeks.



National Pollinator Week Webinar Virtual Tour from A.L. Gusting Golf Course

The full video can be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/g4j4P3S5kmE>

It was great fun putting the presentation together, and I think it's safe to say that you will be seeing more digital outreach efforts like this from the Missouri PFQF team in the near future!

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Ethan Kleekamp - Ray, Caldwell & Clinton Counties

April—June 2020

	Additional Activities
2C Quail Restoration Landscape Monitoring	I returned to Carroll County for my third year of breeding bird surveys. It's always fascinating to see habitat changes and hear the differences in bird call rates from year to year. Anecdotally, things are looking good in the QRL!
National Pollinator Week Webinar	I had the pleasure of teaming up with fellow PFQF staffers Trevor Day, Kim Cole, and Jake Swafford to host my first ever webinar; in this case a pollinator habitat presentation and virtual tour in celebration of National Pollinator Week.
CRP Watershed Prioritization	I had the opportunity to exercising my landscape-level conservation planning skills as I helped Ray, Clay, Caldwell, Clinton, and Carroll Counties select watersheds for inclusion in CRP priority areas.

LOOKING FORWARD

As we struggle through this time of global uncertainty, there are still many exciting opportunities and work to keep me busy. Among those I am most looking forward to are:

- Plan development for preapproved EQIP and CSP applicants
- CRP field reviews and planning
- Continued virtual outreach and education efforts



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

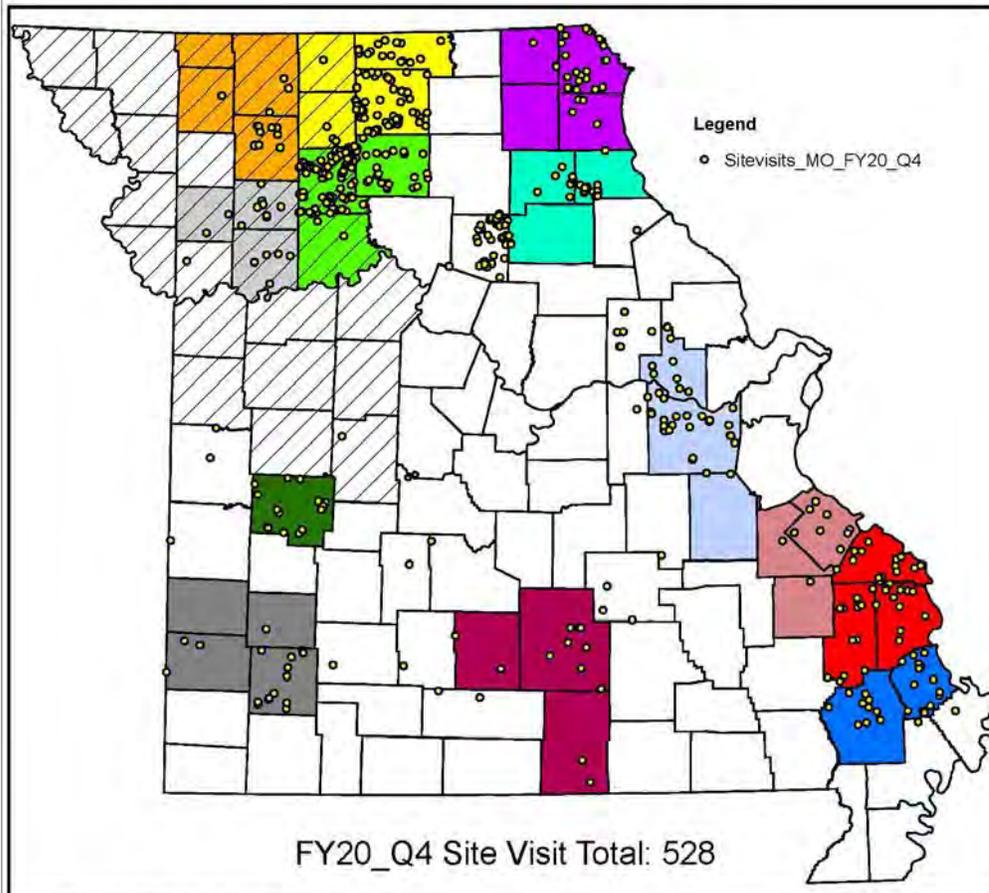
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FY20 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT MAP April 2020 - June 2020



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Missouri Quail Forever Quarterly Partners' Report



Haley Lockard - Clark, Knox, Lewis, Scotland

April—June 2020

In a world gone crazy, the Bobwhite still whistles...

It's comforting to know that while the world is drastically different than it was 5 months ago, conservation work continues and landowners continued to reach out for assistance. We handle site visits very differently now, but still provide superior customer service and technical guidance.



Field Check of a CP-33 Upland buffer.

February wrapped the first General CRP sign-up in many years. As we waited for the list of accepted offers, no one expected a 98% acceptance rate. In the best possible way, my plate became very full this spring and summer with CRP planning. The past few months have been spent conducting field checks, learning our new planning software, and churning out CRP plans. I am thoroughly excited about the great wildlife habitat some landowners will be establishing through CRP.

Quarter Highlights

Conservation Planning

- 31 Landowner Contacts
- 29 Site Visits
- 91 Projects With Acres
- 67 Conservation Plans

Total Acres Impacted: 3,464.5

In my last report, I talked about the importance of prescribed fire as a management tool for grasslands. I have kept tabs on one of those burns and wanted to share the difference fire can make in a cool season grassland. When actively managed with fire and/or grazing, you can create usable habitat for wildlife even in fescue fields. Don't get me wrong, native grasses and wildflowers provide superior quail habitat, but can work with fescue. The bare ground and flush of forbs will likely only last one year in this thick fescue field, but that is habitat that was severely lacking prior to striking the match. As you can see in the pictures below, the unburned field is too thick for small game to maneuver, but there is plenty of bare ground and forbs in the burned site.



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Missouri Quail Forever Quarterly Partners' Report



Haley Lockard - Clark, Knox, Lewis, Scotland

April—June 2020

Best foot forward

Before diving into CRP planning, I started April on a high note by assisting with my first woodland burn. After raking in fire lines around the burn unit, we finally lit the torch and watched as the fire slowly worked it's way through the leaf litter and rejuvenated the timber. The primary objective was to clean up invasive multiflora rose previously treated with herbicide and kill any remaining sprouts.

In addition to controlling invasive species, the burn was part of routine management the landowner uses to maintain quality deer and turkey habitat. The icing on top, is that during turkey season, a young girl shot her first turkey next to the units we burned. Prescribed fire works!!!



Flames slowly moving through leaf litter during a Woodland Burn



Tree trunks unharmed after a woodland burn

Have Milkweed, Will Travel

During this year's Pollinator Week (June 22-28), 16 members of your Missouri Quail Forever & Pheasants staff volunteered to participate in the Monarch Joint Venture's Miles for Monarch Challenge in our free time. We walked, biked, and paddled our way to almost 1,000 miles in 7 days to increase awareness for pollinator habitat. It was a pleasure to be part of this outreach effort , I hope some of you were able to participate, or at least get out and see some pollinator habitat. Wildflowers are in full bloom and the pollinators are buzzing. Rumor has it there may be another opportunity to rack up your own miles in the fall. Until then, you can see all the roadside pollinator habitat we came across on our social media channels.

Additionally, during pollinator week, MO QF/PF hosted a wonderful webinar about pollinator habitat. If you weren't able to watch , it is posted on the Missouri Quail Forever [YouTube channel](#). The virtual [pollinator plot tour](#) is well worth 8 minutes of your time. Please share this resource far and wide and remember pollinator establishment requires patience while the new plants sleep, creep, and then leap!



Missouri Quail Forever Quarterly Partners' Report



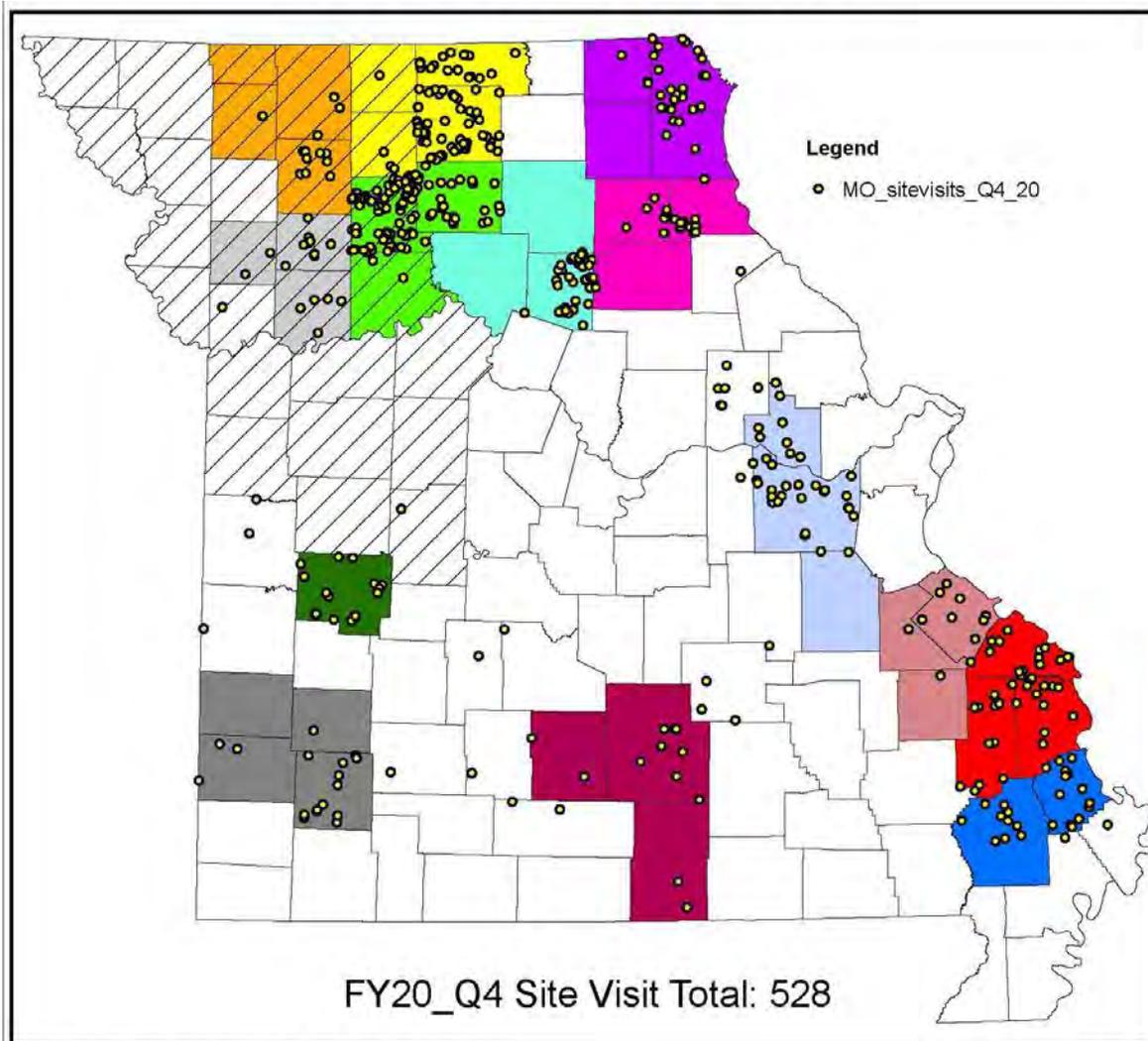
Haley Lockard - Clark, Knox, Lewis, Scotland

April—June 2020

Looking Forward...

- Continue to provide technical assistance to landowners
- Assist NRCS with conservation planning on CRP, EQIP, and CSP
- Collect baseline habitat quality information for the Precision Agriculture demonstration project
- Conduct monarch habitat monitoring for the Missourian's 4 Monarchs Collaborative
- Present on wildlife and working lands at the State Women in Agriculture Conference in September

Missouri PF/QF Biologist Footprint April - June 2020



*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.

Updated: 7/10/2020

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

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Coordinating Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



JAKE SWAFFORD - Harrison, Gentry, Worth, Daviess Counties

April – June 2020

Position Update

It's been an interesting 3 months dealing with a heavy workload and all the challenges associated with COVID-19. I've stayed busy coordinating with partners to deliver the monarch RCPP program as it headed into its final 6 months. I've also been working to assist with CRP field visits, promoting national pollinator week, and providing technical guidance to planners involved in EQIP and CSP. I'm excited to wrap up the monarch RCPP program this September and am looking forward to new and exciting opportunities to improve habitat for monarchs, pollinators, quail, and other wildlife.

New RCPP Means More Habitat for Monarchs and Upland Wildlife

Quail Forever in Missouri and dedicated partners were recently awarded a Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) by the USDA- Natural Resources Conservation Service totaling \$910 thousand for monarch butterfly habitat. These dollars are matched 1:1 through partner contributions from Missouri Department of Conservation and the Saint Louis Zoo in an effort to increase monarch and pollinator habitat in the state with a combination of land management and short-term land rental practices.

The Farm Bill's Regional Conservation Partnership Program uses a partner driven approach to fund innovative solutions to natural resource challenges. Through RCPP projects, NRCS and partners work together with private landowners to implement a variety of conservation activities, including land management practices, short-term land rentals, and conservation easements. The mix of conservation activities under each project depends on its goals, objectives, and conservation benefits. During the first round of funding under the 2018 Farm Bill, NRCS is investing \$206 million in 48 projects across 29 states. Missouri received awards for 2 projects, including Quail Forever's.



A female monarch butterfly lays eggs on the leaves of common milkweed planted in a native flowerbed used for outdoor education .

-Continued on next page-

Conservation Planning

- 14 Landowner Contacts
- 20 NRCS Cons. Planner Contacts
- 13 Site Visit
- 8 Status Review

Programs	Acres Impacted
CSP	18.2
CRP	456
Total	474.2

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Coordinating Wildlife Biologist Quarterly Partners' Report



JAKE SWAFFORD - Harrison, Gentry, Worth, Daviess Counties

April – June 2020

The RCPP titled Program for Restoring and Improving Monarch Ecosystems (PRIME) will target expiring Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres in northwest Missouri by enhancing low-quality stands through increased management and by planting high diversity seed mixes. The program will also offer short-term land rental payments, similar to CRP. I'm thrilled at the opportunity to continue creating great monarch and pollinator habitat in northwest Missouri. I look forward to working with our partners over the coming months to get this program up and running. Check back with me this fall for more details on the Monarch PRIME RCPP.

Outreach & Education

- Assisted with Quail Forever National Pollinator Week webinar.
- Worked with outreach staff to highlight RCPP efforts and develop informational video clips.
- Participated in a training for staff using MDC's LCAP program.
- Attended CRP planning training hosted by NRCS and Quail Forever planners.

Additional Work

- Coordinated with new RCPP partners and NRCS staff to begin program development.
- Developed reports for the Monarch RCPP and continued to assist with delivery across its range.
- Assisted in the development of program policy and ranking questions for the Monarch-RCPP in Missouri, Minnesota, and Iowa.

Looking Forward

- I will lead the development and delivery of the new Monarch PRIME RCPP later this year.
- I will work with local and Area Office staff to renew my NRCS conservation planner certification.
- Working with the Monarch Coordinator in Oklahoma, we will continue to deliver RCPP efforts across its range.
- Continue participation in PF/QF's Leadership Development Program thru Fall 2020.
- Assist with Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) planning as my time allows.
- Maintain my role in the Pollinator Habitat Working Group and sub-committees.
- Assist with the development and delivery of FY20 EQIP and CSP plans in Missouri and other RCPP states.
- I will continue providing technical assistance to landowners in Harrison, Gentry, Worth, and Daviess counties who are interested in establishing habitat for Monarchs, quail, and other upland wildlife.

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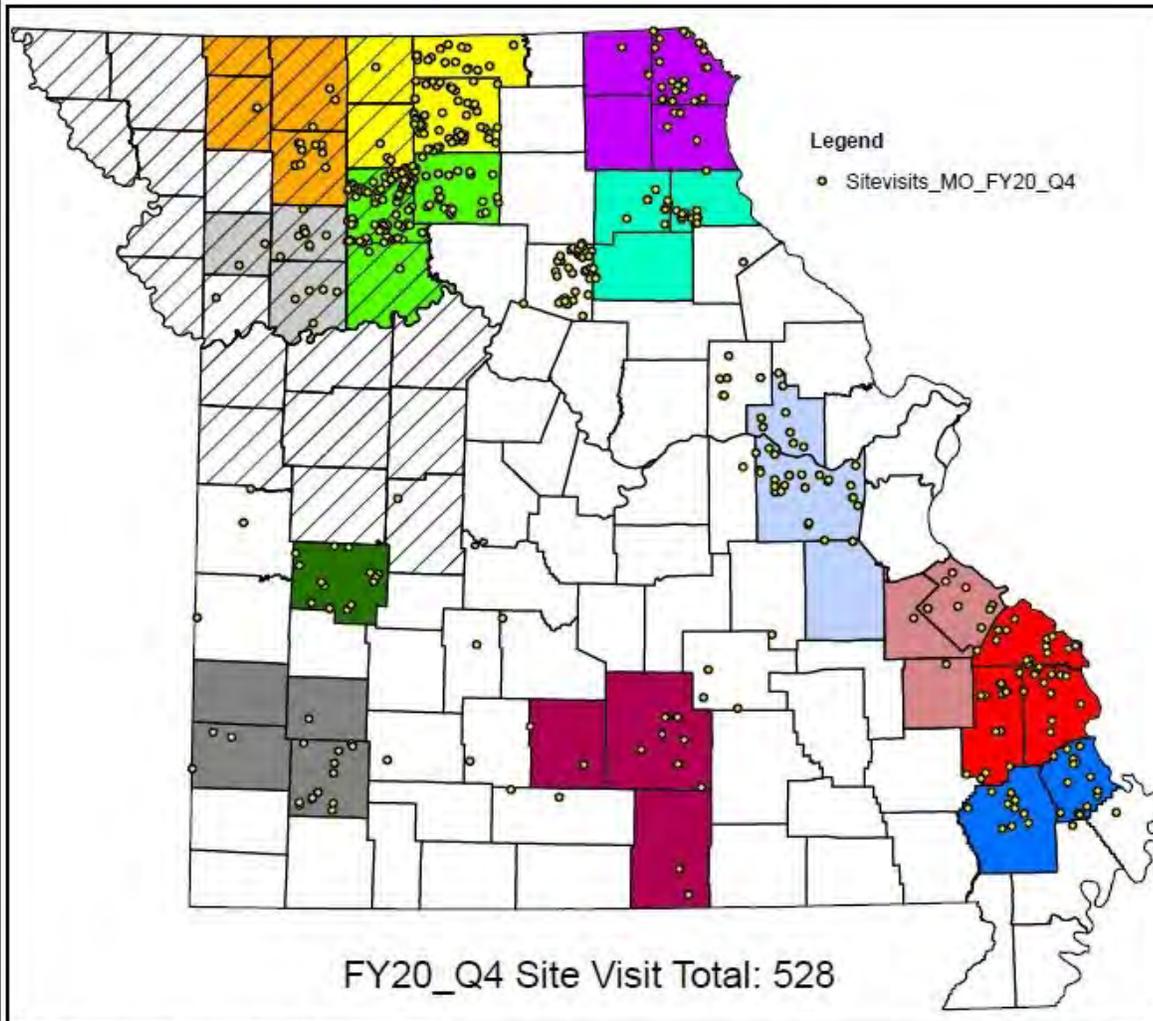
Coordinating Wildlife Biologist Quarterly Partners' Report



JAKE SWAFFORD - Harrison, Gentry, Worth, Daviess Counties

April – June 2020

FY20 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT MAP April 2020 - June 2020



*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.

Updated: 7/10/2020



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.

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



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

APR – JUN 2020

Quarterly Overview

Another fiscal year comes to a close and I look back at the past year amazed at all that has been accomplished. The year started off with a great partnership event with Pure Air Wildlife Management Cooperative and came to a close with a very successful CRP sign up. April marked my second year with Quail Forever and I am pleased with how much I have learned and grown while working as a Farm Bill Biologist. I look forward to many more years of helping landowners accomplish their conservation goals and making Missouri a better place for wildlife and native habitat.

CRP Works

In my last report, I mentioned that I was beginning CRP checks. I have continued those through this quarter. During the visits, I have had the opportunity to meet new landowners, share and record successes with old acquaintances, and continued to see how CRP works for wildlife. As I have conducted visits throughout the growing season, I have seen numerous native plants covering the landscape and noted various native birds and wildlife species utilizing the excellent habitat that CRP can provide. This bobwhite quail pictured here is one of the many native birds I have encountered during my CRP checks.



A host of native forbs & legumes can be found in well managed CRP fields. These plants provide food and shelter to wildlife ranging from large game such as deer to small song birds & quail. The foliage provides green browse for mammals, their flowers provide nectar and pollen for pollinators, and their seeds provide vital food to birds. In addition, native legumes also fix nitrogen for other native plants to use during growth. The pictures above show several native forbs and legumes that were spotted growing in CRP fields.



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



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

APR – JUN 2020

Restoring Missouri's Oak Savannahs

John Murphy, Wildlife and Ecological Services Manager for Roeslein Alternative Energy, reached out to myself and Missouri Quail Forever to see if we could assist them with a project of removing woody invasives and cedars from a grassland savannah. We discussed it among the team and Wildlife Biologist Wesley Hanks carried the message to the Missouri River Valley Chapter from Franklin county who generously volunteered to contribute funds towards the project. These Habitat Challenge Grant funds were matched by the Missouri Department of Conservation and John Murphy was able to complete some incredible work. By removing invasive woody trees and opening up the landscape, the native seedbank could fully express itself. George Shurvington, MDC Private Lands Regional Supervisor, and I visited the sight and we were pleased with the response from the native plant



Yellow star grass

community. Showy goldenrod, rough blazing star, black-eyed susan, iron weed, and common milkweed were just a few of the many native species that were beginning to grow. One of the best parts about this project is that no seeds were planted in the project areas. All the natives that were growing were remnant species that had been suppressed by the woody overstory. A few post oaks and white oaks were left in the project area to complete the restoration of the Oak Savannah ecosystem. These trees will increase the wildlife habitat by providing food and shelter for several species of animals.



(Top) Cleared and burned project area.
(Bottom left) Showy golden rod
(Bottom right) Pale purple coneflower & wild quinine blooming on the project site



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Quarterly Partners' Report



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

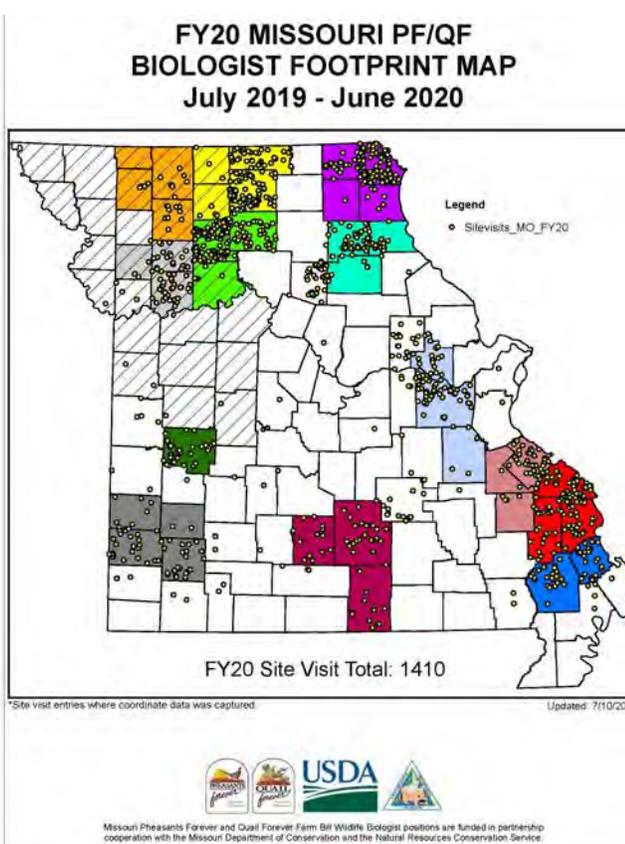
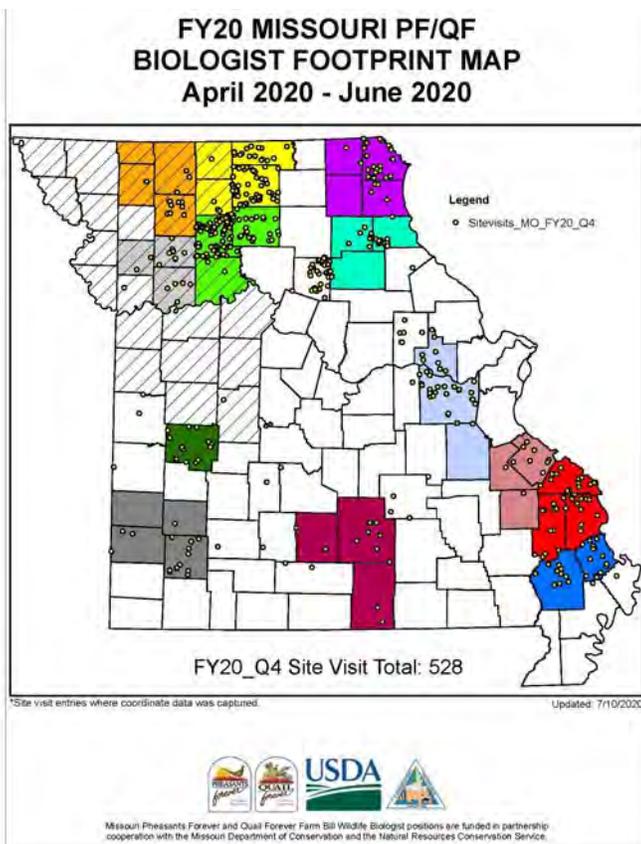
APR – JUN 2020

Trainings and Outreach	Summary
NRCS Planners Training	Completed the online planners courses for NRCS Apprentice and Conservation Planner.
LCAP/HCG Training	Assisted Wesley Hanks in leading a team training on cost share practices through the LCAP/HCG program.

Looking Forward

- TBD Field day with Roeslein Alt. Energy
- Aug 19-20 North Team Missouri Team Meeting
- TBD Missouri Team Meeting

Program	Impacted Ac.	Quarterly Numbers
CRP Programs	4,205.94	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 79 Landowners Contacted • 81 Site Visits • 1 Training Event
HCG/LCAP	79.4	
Total	4,285.34	



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



Kelsey DeZalia - Scott and Stoddard Counties

April 2020-June 2020

Conservation: Anytime, Anywhere

One of the coolest things about creating habitat, is it can be done anywhere! You don't even have to be accepted into any specific program (CRP, EQIP, etc) to be able to put habitat on the ground. Consult with your local Quail Forever chapter and/or biologist to request support through them! Our chapters are full throttle when it comes to putting their money to local projects.



It does not have to be 10+ acres of planting to make a difference.

Can you imagine if everyone designated a small area of their lawn to convert to native wildflowers and grasses? That would add up to a tremendous amount of habitat!

Maybe it's an area that is difficult to get to with equipment, or it is a low area and stays wet which makes it difficult to mow, or just an area out your back stoop that you'd like to view while having your morning coffee...that's the kind of stuff dreams are made of!



New Partnerships in SEMO

Back in late February, Quail Forever, Corteva Agriscience, and the Missouri Department of Conservation partnered together to host a youth pollinator event on a 5 acre plot. Not only was quality habitat established, but something new came up a couple months later.

(cont. to pg. 2)



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist Quarterly Partners' Report



Kelsey DeZalia— Stoddard and Scott Counties

April 2020-June 2020

(cont. from pg. 1)

One of Corteva's employees that was a key role in the success of the event, Nathan Bengston, reached out to me and relayed amazing news of a grant opportunity through Corteva Agriscience. As we're always excited for new partnerships, Quail Forever was awarded a portion of the grant funds to assist our Women Caring for the Land Workshops. We would have been more than grateful for that...***BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE!***



The Sikeston Board of Municipal Utilities (BMU) was awarded a generous grant through Corteva. But why would a utilities organization apply for and receive a grant concerning wildlife and native habitat? Coming very soon (crossing our fingers for Spring 2021) to the Sikeston Park, 15 acres will be converted into native wildflowers and grasses with the goal of benefitting both wildlife and the community! This project would not be possible without our partners working towards the same mission (QF, MDC, BMU, Corteva).

Sikeston Bootheel Pollinator Project



Legend
Pink boundary flags
Pollinator plot perimeter



Want to see it for yourself?
Go to the park and check out the new signs. These will show you where the pollinator plots will be established.



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Quarterly Partners' Report



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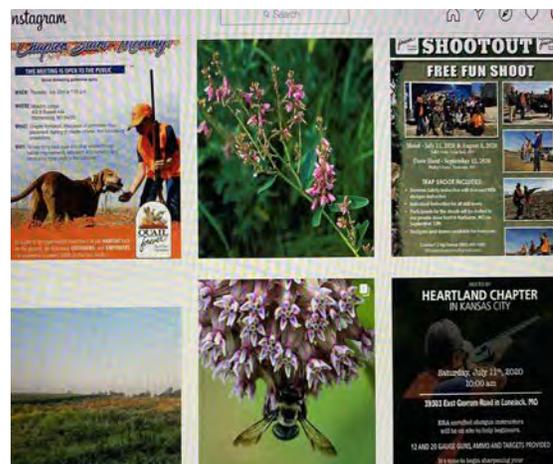
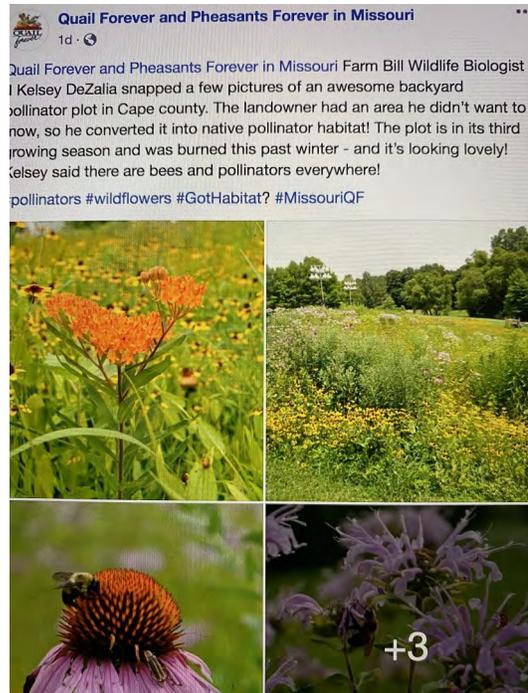
April 2020-June 2020

Webinars, Social Media ...all the tech fixin's

Believe us, we're right there with you. We're tired of this whole COVID ordeal and it doesn't seem to be going away any time soon. But we also don't take chances when it comes to the safety and well-being of landowners, employees and peers. Events? They're still happening! Just...a little different. A lot has been put on the shoulders of our education and outreach/media outreach coordinators and they are consistently impressing everyone with their hard work and dedication to the Quail Forever mission!

Typically, our events would consist of a classroom portion and the second half of the day would be a field visit or two relating to what topics were covered. We've had to adapt to our circumstances. Rachel Settle (Farm Bill Biologist serving St. Genevieve, Madison and St. Francois counties), Kim Cole (Missouri Outreach Coordinator), and myself hosted a Women Caring for the Land Pollinator and Wildlife Habitat webinar on June 3rd. This workshop was designed to focus on and engage women landowners. A variety of topics were covered and we had good participation from the women who joined us. Delivering webinars allow us to still hold events for interested landowners as well as keep everyone safe and healthy!

Since COVID began, the Missouri PF/QF Instagram and Facebook accounts have been flooded with all kinds of pollinator, quail, songbird, you-name-it information and pictures sent in by our biologists around the state. Go follow one or both, you won't be disappointed!



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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Kelsey DeZalia— Stoddard and Scott Counties

April 2020-June 2020

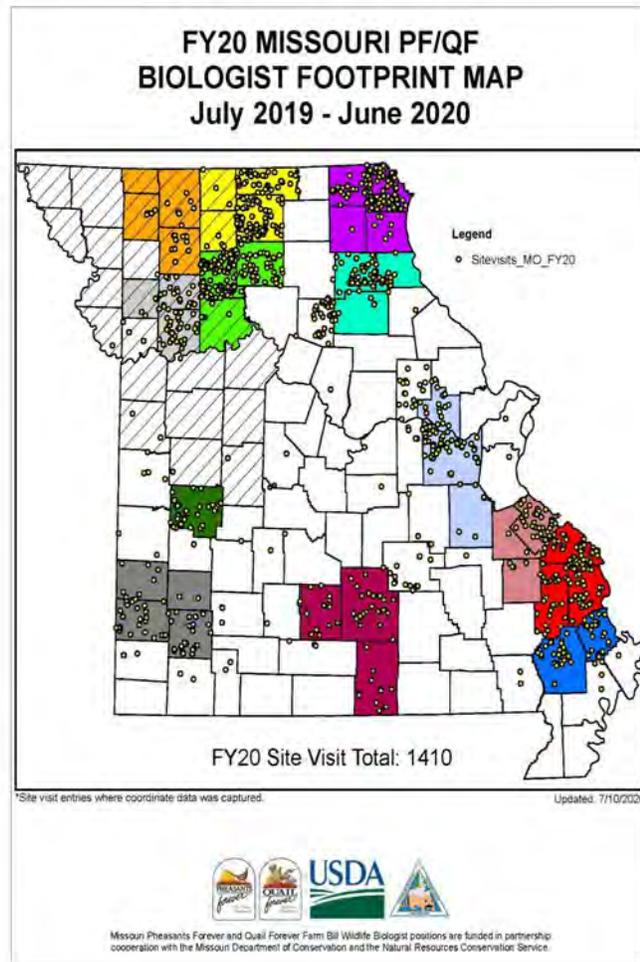
You Ask. We deliver... technical assistance

This past year the Quail Forever biologists have exceeded site visit numbers from previous years. Yeah, we love what we do. It's pretty easy to go to work every day when it doesn't feel like work.

Check out this awesome map showing our visits!

"Team work makes the dream work."

Below is a wrap up of what I've been up to the past couple of months. Thank you to all the partners and landowners who have worked with us during this abnormal year—we can still stick to the mission and put quality habitat on the ground...from 6 ft. apart.



Conservation Technical Assistance

- 48 landowner contacts
- 30 site visits
- Completed my first Habitat Challenge Grant opportunity
- Assisted MDC biologist in applying herbicide to invasive species
- Began partnership pollinator project with QF MDC, Corteva, BMU for Sikeston Park
- Currently assisting NRCS/FSA in writing conservation plans for landowners accepted into the new CRP sign up
- Assisted in hosting Women Caring for the Land Webinar
- Provided assistance to MISS. Co. correctional facility with their native wildflower project

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Coordinating Wildlife Biologist Quarterly Partners' Report



Len Gilmore—St. Clair Co.

Apr – Jun 2020

Position Update

As spring opened the priority of the job did not change but the challenge of doing the job did change. Producers had prepared to complete their projects in EQIP and CSP. They continued seeking technical assistance to be successful in carrying out their plan. One of those practices that landowners asked for help was the planting of native prairie plants. They had purchased the native seed back in the winter and wanted to get it planted in the ground. Those that did not get their native seed winter seeded resorted to using a no-till drill to get the seed planted this spring. One producer rented a no-till drill but needed technical assistance to calibrate the drill to the correct seeding rate as well as correctly adjust the drill settings to plant this specialized and expensive seed. With the use of proper hand and face protective equipment along with disinfectant wipes the drill got calibrated and landowner planted the seed. Later during discussion with co-workers it was mentioned that we have not worked under such conditions before. The challenges we face now are no different than what I have faced before, but boy it seems much tougher to adapt to the changes today. But the planted prairie seed? They have sprouted and are growing.

Checking Grassland Bird Status

Since June 2015 a grassland bird roadside survey has been conducted along three routes within the Upper Osage Grassland (UOG) geography and two routes outside the UOG for comparison. Twelve species of grassland birds were monitored for density of occurrence at each half mile point along the route which is modified from the National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative (NBCI) bird survey. Land cover along these routes have been surveyed. This data will be used to show changes in grassland bird densities when habitat is improved along these routes. Several landowners from local communities in the UOG have been contacted to offer services to implement best management practices for grasslands on their properties. In some instances the farmer may implement rotational grazing while others change the timing of haying or grazing to improve their prairie for grassland bird habitat.



Grassland bird roadside survey is conducted along roads within the Upper Osage Grassland priority area to monitor grassland bird population trends.



Conservation Planning

- 35 Landowner Contacts
- 27 Site Visits
- 38 WHAGs

Other Programs	Acres Impacted
CSP	160
EQIP	49
CRP	30
CTA	7
Total	246



Coordinating Wildlife Biologist Quarterly Partners' Report



Len Gilmore—St. Clair Co.

Apr – Jun 2020

Outreach & Education

- Helped lead discussion during evening pasture walk on the importance of native forb and legumes in a native warm season grass grazing system.
- Taught four NRCS Pathway students about the function of a patch burn grazing system on a native prairie and the benefits for wildlife and livestock.
- Gave a talk to the Osage Plains Native Plant Society group about status of woodland/savanna land in St. Clair County.

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
Photography Training	Attended online training on how to take better photographs by Chris Helzer, TNC Nebraska.

Looking Forward

- Inspect landowner's prescribed burn units for proper firebreak construction.
- Assist with Native Forage grazing workshops for Landowners as needed.
- Monitor grazing contract for Spring Creek property.
- Assist with evening pasture walk on Clubine farm.
- Conduct Monarch monitoring in Upper Osage Grassland.

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II



Quarterly Partners' Report

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

April—June 2020

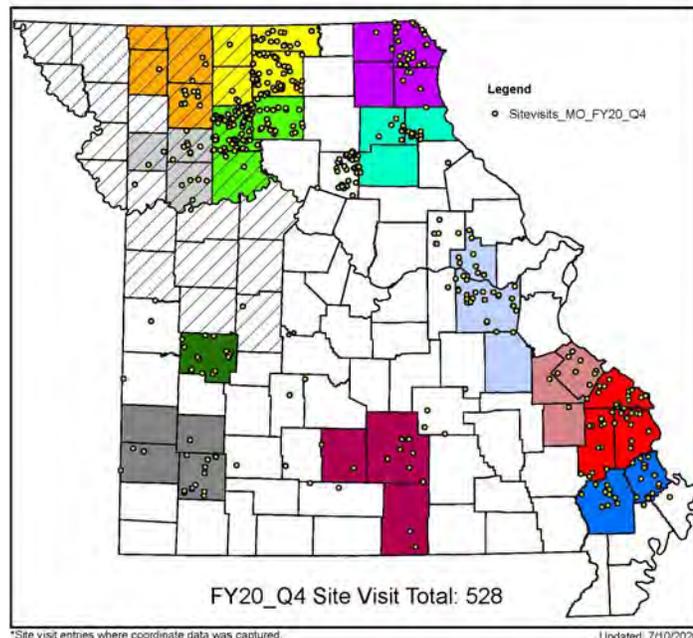
FY 2020—The Last Quarter

From April through June, our Missouri team conducted 528 site visits and logged over 1,000 landowner contacts. Over the last year, our team has collectively conducted 1,410 site visits across 98 counties. We were able to impact over 34,000 acres of habitat statewide.

Over the last quarter, I provided several landowners with conservation technical assistance. Much of the assistance from this quarter was focused on CRP, EQIP, and herbicide recommendations. As a result, I conducted 13 site visits and had 51 landowner contacts. I continue to work on CRP planning and habitat projects through EQIP and LCAP.

The last few months proved to be challenging for our Missouri team, but we quickly found ways to adapt and continue delivering our habitat mission across the state. One way we were able to overcome workshop cancellations was to create online webinars and virtual habitat tours. In June, QF Outreach Coordinator Kim Cole, Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist Kelsey DeZalia and I hosted an online webinar in lieu of our scheduled in-person workshop. This Women Caring for the Land Workshop targeted women landowners interested in creating wildlife-friendly habitat on their properties. We were able to interact with several landowners and provide technical assistance based on their habitat management goals.

FY20 MISSOURI PF/QF
BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT MAP
April 2020 - June 2020



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	Program	Acres Impacted	CRP Practice	Acres Impacted
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 51 Landowner Contacts • 13 Site Visits • 7 Status Reviews/Checkouts • 6 Eligibility/Ranking Assessments • 1 Landowner Workshop 	EQIP	184.1	CP1
CSP		5.3	CP22	9
MDC LCAP		-	CP30	1.8
QF Chapter		-	CP33	27.3
Non-Program		-	CP42	10
Total		189.4	Total	53.9

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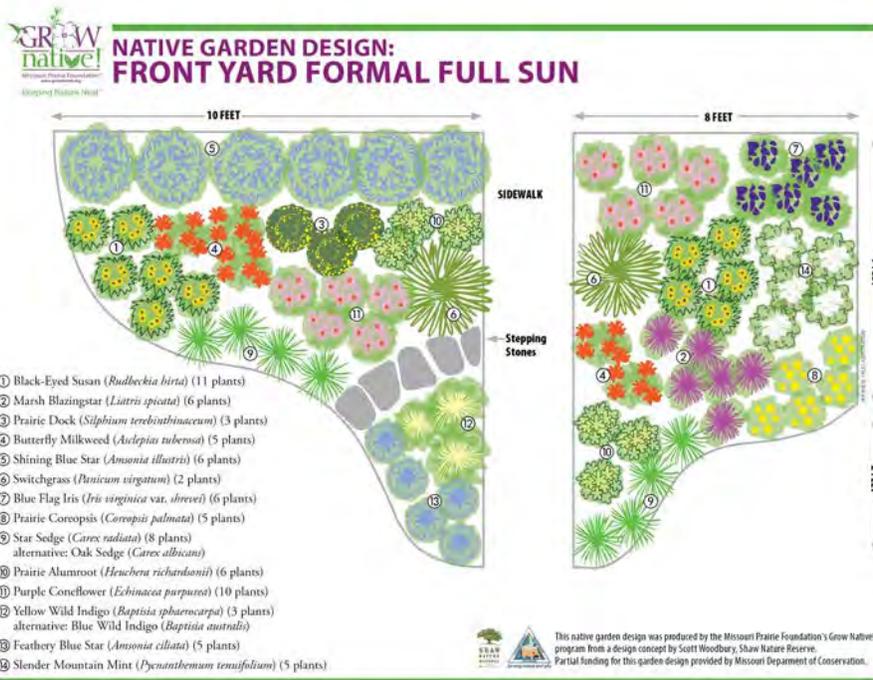
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Small Habitat for a Larger Impact

Amid a global pandemic, we may find ourselves spending more and more time at home. If you're like me, more time at home means more time to complete projects around the house. In the last few months, I've used my time at home to create more pollinator-friendly habitat in my suburban lawn. My overall goal is to provide pollinators with a diverse grouping of native plants while also giving my house some curb appeal. Ideally, I'd like to have species that bloom early in April, throughout the summer, and in October. Extending the time that plants are blooming maximizes the resources that are available for pollinators to use while they are active. To help monarch butterflies, I included milkweed in my planting. Because this is in front of my house, I wanted showy plants that were also lower growing. Species that I have planted so far include butterfly milkweed, New England aster, silky aster, wild bergamot, garden phlox, prairie blazing star, Missouri coneflower, and glade coneflower. I plan to add more species to this flower bed again next year.

The process of starting this project was very easy. I used GrowNative.org to search for native plant retailers and placed an online order for potted plants that were suited for the conditions (e.g. moisture, sunlight, soil type) in front of my house. The website I ordered from was helpful in providing bloom period, sun preference, planting space, moisture requirements, and even uses by various pollinators and wildlife. If you're unsure of which plants to choose, GrowNative.org provides convenient landscaping plans. Whether you want to create a formal front yard setting, a rain garden, or a bird-friendly plot—they have you covered! It's perfectly fine to start small and add plants in over time. You can make it fun by adding some signage, too. Some native plantings grow tall and may appear to others in the neighborhood as being "unkept." Adding signage can show your neighbors that the planting has a purpose and it is providing beneficial habitat. Keep in mind that although several big box stores sell a variety of flowers, many of these aren't native to Missouri and aren't as useful to our native pollinators. In fact, some of these non-native plants can be invasive. You can find native plant retailers by using the resource guide on GrowNative.org.



Retrieved from GrowNative.org

Aside from my flower bed, I also plan to add a small pollinator plot in my backyard this winter. Site prep will start this fall when I kill out the existing grass with herbicide. In December, I'll broadcast a native seed mix on the bare ground. These seeds will go through a cycle of freezing and thawing, eventually working themselves into the soil. One benefit from this planting is that it'll save me some mowing time in the summer heat!

Whether you live in the suburbs or have a large piece of land, you can create quality habitat for native pollinators and wildlife. If you need assistance, please reach out to a Quail Forever Farm Bill Biologist near you.

www.missouripfqf.org/contact



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



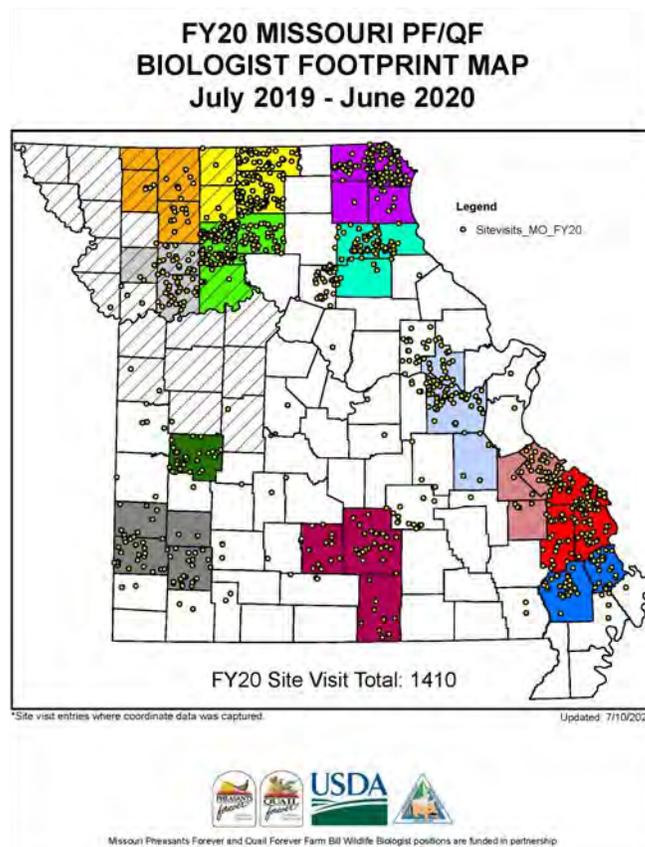
Rachel Settle — Madison, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve Counties

April—June 2020

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
CRP Planning Webinar	Learned about CRP planning in Conservation Desktop
LCAP/HCG Training Webinar	Learned about the application and checkout process of MDC's Landowner and Community Assistance Program/Habitat Challenge Grant

Looking Forward

- Partner with MU Extension to host a Women Caring for the Land/Women Owning Woodland workshop in Ste. Genevieve County on August 21
- Obtain NRCS Apprentice Conservation Planner and continue working towards Conservation Planner certification
- Continue getting to know landowners in my counties and building relationships with partners



Our Missouri Team made over 1,400 site visits across the state in Fiscal Year 2020!

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist III



Quarterly Partners' Report

Wes Buchheit - Bollinger, Cape, and Perry Counties

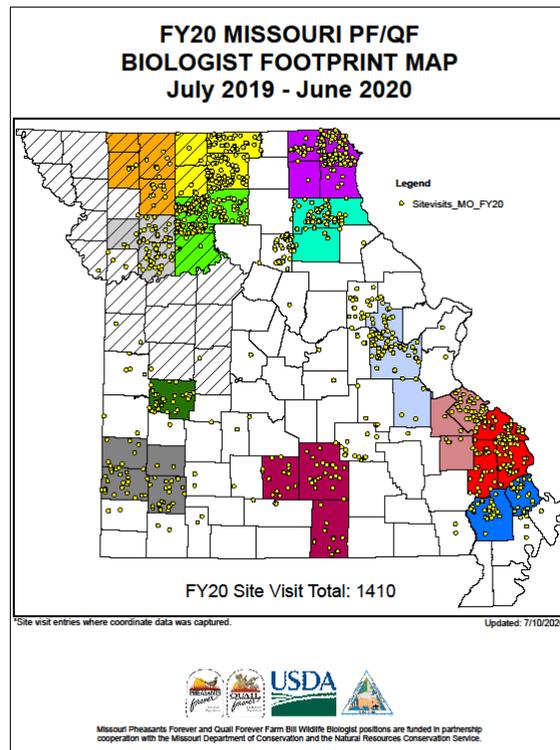
April-June 2020

Charging Forward

We all have faced challenges this quarter due to the pandemic, including the Missouri Quail Forever Team, however we are not letting that slow our delivery of partner programs and our mission. Farm Bill Wildlife Biologists were able to help reduce the number of people in offices by teleworking from home and remain productive writing conservation plans, conducting field visits, and assisting landowners remotely.

The health guidelines put a hamper on workshops, field tours, and the like, but the team worked tirelessly to provide some of those events via webinars to keep our audience engaged through a pollinator habitat virtual tour, Women Caring for the Land workshop, chapter resources presentations, and more!

This marks the close of FY20 and the team is putting the pedal down and not wavering in delivering mission. Over the past year, the Missouri Quail Forever Team recorded 3,788 Landowner Contacts (25% increase over FY19) and conducted 1,410 Site Visits (33% increase over FY19) while working in 98 Missouri Counties. Through their technical assistance and habitat planning work, they impacted 34,331 acres; an 88% increase when compared to FY19 and more than any year since the program began in 2011. They presented to 6,475 workshop/meeting participants (37% increase over FY19) at over 130 events. All the while, social media outreach has soared with nearly 3,000 individuals following our state Facebook page and over 8,500 people reached in the last month alone. Missouri is charging forward!



<u>Conservation Planning</u>	Conservation Program	Acres Impacted
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 155 Landowner Contacts • 46 Site Visits • 2 Conservation Plans Written • 26 Status Review/Practice Checkouts • 2 Prescribed Burn Plans Reviewed 	EQIP	88.2
	CRP	367.0
	CSP	-
	MDC LCAP	44.4
	QF Chapter	27.2
	Conservation Technical Assistance	3
	Total	529.8

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Partnering for Improved Pastures

Incorporating a small percentage of native warm season forage into a grazing system can have a large impact on the overall forage quality and quantity for cattle producers. This movement took a large step this spring as several producers committed to the conversion after seeing the process at last summer's native pasture tour. This was a partner effort as various program assistance matched the producers' timeline and comfort. I assisted



Cow/calf pairs grazing native forage in its second growing season.

NRCS staff with a planting through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), two projects were completed through the MDC Landowner and Community Assistance Program (LCAP), one through the QF Habitat Challenge Grant piggyback on a SWCD/DNR program, and I provided technical assistance for another SWCD project and one the producer completed at their own expense. In summary, 6 native pastures were established totaling 114 acres of improved forage and wildlife habitat!



Native seedlings visible in the drill rows of this spring's pasture conversion while cattle graze the adjacent second year native planting.

We are planning another native pasture tour for producers and partner staff at Charlie Beshers' farm in Bollinger County. This is the same location as last summer's event and the main attraction will be touring the GRAZED second-year planting. You heard that right, producing forage in its second growing season!

The event will be August 26, 6:00-8:00pm near Meadow Heights School, RR 5 Box 2402 Patton, MO 63662. Call 573-238-2671 ext. 3 by August 17 to RSVP or request accommodations to participate in this event.



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist III



Quarterly Partners' Report

Wes Buchheit - Bollinger, Cape, and Perry Counties

April-June 2020

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
MDC Landowner and Community Assistance Program and QF Habitat Challenge Grant training webinar	Hosted by Wesley Hanks and Josh Marshall of the Missouri PF/QF team that covered the intent, eligible practices, and planning process of the programs to assist landowners in meeting their conservation goals.
Conservation Desktop CRP training webinar	Hosted by Cody Campbell (NRCS) and Andrew White (QF) to walk through the CRP planning process in Conservation Desktop.



Green milkweed, *Asclepias viridis*



Butterfly milkweed, *Asclepias tuberosa*



Purple milkweed, *Asclepias purpurascens*

Looking Forward

- Complete CRP planning for accepted offers.
- EQIP planning of approved applications.
- Virtual Missouri Prescribed Fire Council Annual Meeting, August 13.
- Native Warm Season Grass Info Meeting and Pasture Tour, August 26.

@MissouriQF



MissouriPFQF.org

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Wesley Hanks - Franklin, Warren, and Washington

April-June 2020

Adapting to Change

Almost everyone has been impacted in some way by the current pandemic and Quail Forever is no different. Fortunately, your local Farm Bill Biologist and MO QF staff are considered essential workers and have been able to continue moving the needle for conservation. Today's technology allows the QF team to complete much of their conservation planning from home while NRCS offices remain closed to the public. Site visits can be conducted as long as social distancing protocols are followed and landowners are comfortable with the visit. The current situation has created a number of new challenges but has also created new opportunities to engage landowners virtually. While we face these "uncertain times" one thing that can be guaranteed, is that your local QF Biologist and MO QF Team will be out there doing good work for our Chapters, Partners, and PF/QF as a whole.



Native forb, rattlesnake master, re-sprouts shortly after a prescribed burn

Conservation Planning

- 59 Landowner Contacts
- 45 Site Visits
- 15 CRP Status Reviews Impacting 385 ac

Practice Check-Outs	Acres
Native Seedings	49.1
Brush Management	4.9
Cedar Removal	2.2
Edge Feathering	0.2
Prescribed Burn	568.2
Total	624.4

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
Weekly NRCS FOSA Conference Call	Stayed connected with NRCS staff and kept up to date on NRCS programs while offices are closed due to COVID-19.
MO QF Team HCG/LCAP Training	Led a virtual training for the MO QF staff on using HCG and LCAP cost-share programs.
CRP Planning Training	Learned how to use NRCS planning tools to create CRP conservation plans for FSA.
Completed Various AgLearn Trainings	Completed online NRCS trainings on soil conservation, water quality, and special environmental considerations.



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Wesley Hanks - Franklin, Warren, and Washington

April-June 2020

Burning in the Park

Several years ago the City of New Haven's Parks Department worked with the local MDC PLC, Lia Heppermann, to plant native grasses and wildflowers. The planting can be enjoyed by the public as they attend little league baseball games or by walking the trail along its' perimeter. While the planting had been burnt in years past, it had been 3 to 4 years since management was last conducted. With changes in park management staff, current staff did not feel comfortable with conducting a prescribed burn on their own. That is when they reached out to the East Central Prescribed Burn Association for help. A group of ECPBA members, QF Chapter Volunteers, New Haven Volunteer Fire Dept. firefighters, and the City of New Haven staff burnt the 4 acre planting. The objective of the burn was to eliminate excessive thatch from past years' growth and encourage new plant growth in the spring. The response of both native grass-



Compass plant, likely one of the tallest growing native forbs in MO, stands out in the planting burred this past Spring



An area dominated by gray-headed coneflower and wild bergamot is quite showy in mid-July following a spring burn.

es and forbs was fantastic. So far this summer park visitors could see native forbs such as penstemon, rattlesnake master, purple coneflower, compass plant, gray-headed coneflower, wild bergamot, prairie blazing star, partridge pea, black-eyed Susan, and false sunflower. Native grasses such as little bluestem, prairie dropseed, and big bluestem re-



burn everyone visiting the New Haven City park can enjoy the sites and sounds of a planting that mimics the native plant community that would have been scattered across the uplands of east central Missouri.

Looking Forward

- Planning for CRP, EQIP, and CSP will continue
- Engage with Chapters at upcoming district meetings.
- Assist landowners plan projects for the upcoming Fall/Winter using HCG and LCAP cost-share.
- Plan ECPBA annual meeting in conjunction with a possible growing season demo burn on Aug 22nd.
- 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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