



# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

## Quarterly Partners' Report



Courtney Nicks - Randolph, Chariton, & Macon Counties

October–December 2021

### Activity Highlights

#### Conservation Planning

Landowner Contacts	<b>100</b>
Site Visits	<b>25</b>
Projects with Acres	<b>40</b>

#### Webinars

- Land Profitability
- Pond Management
- Quail Habitat
- NWSG & Forages
- Effects of Neonicotinoids

#### Partner Meetings/Trainings

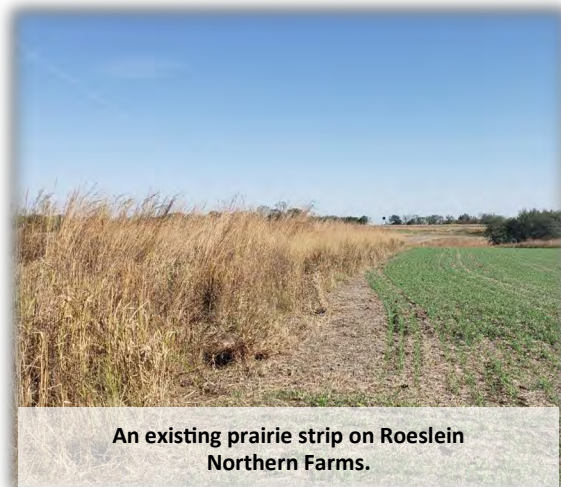
- QF Team Meeting
- Prairie Strip Technical Training
- Partners Round Table (MDC)
- Cultural Resource Training
- MoBCI Steering Committee Meeting
- Precision Ag Partner Meeting

#### Chapter Activities

Monthly Meetings	<b>6</b>
Events/Banquets	<b>2</b>

**Total Acres Impacted: 1,758.33 acres**

### New Programs Spark New Training Opportunities



An existing prairie strip on Roeslein Northern Farms.



Quail Forever Biologist, Josh Marshall, discusses the advantages of native warm season grasses.

Missouri NRCS collaborated with Roeslein Alternative Energy (RAE) to provide prairie strip technical training for conservation planners at the Roeslein Northern Farms in Putnam County. Here we met with Agricultural Specialists of Iowa State University, RAE, and NRCS to discuss cover layout, composition, establishment, and benefits of prairie strips.



### Excited Landowners Make a Difference

Chariton County landowner, Rob, is excited to keep transforming his acres into a wildlife haven. As an avid waterfowl hunter, his focus has been to enhance his WRP acres for ducks. In addition, Rob has witnessed countless observations of other species benefiting from his efforts. From the sandhill cranes that re-visit each year to the quail that frequent the shrubby areas surrounding the pools, there is no short of wildlife here. Rob contacted me to take a look at the property and we discussed improvements that could be made in addition to what he is already implementing. After an extensive tour of the property and witnessing several thousand ducks and a covey of quail myself, we discussed some possible next steps: prescribed burning, native warm season grass establishment, shrub planting, and more. Even though Rob has already spent a great deal of time improving his acres, he knows there is more he can do, and is ready to conquer it. Stay tuned, as we follow Rob on this adventure and hear what he has to say about the improvements he makes.



A covey of bobwhite captured on Rob's trail camera only days after our visit.

### Back in Action!

After postponing banquet festivities for over a year the Mark Twain Quail Forever Chapter hosted their 2021 banquet in early October. Our volunteers and supporters were excited to attend the festive night and enjoy a delicious prime rib dinner. The evening was a huge success and will contribute significantly to the chapters accomplishments and success of 2022. The funds will be used to host new hunter and youth hunting events, habitat projects, outreach, and so much more. Thank you to all who continually support our mission!





### Youth and New Hunter Opportunities

Hosting a Mentored Quail hunt on Dec 4th, **Mark Twain Quail Forever** of Paris MO, provided 100 quail to 30 hunters for a one day hunting event in Higbee, MO. Youth and New hunters experienced hunting behind working dogs and were mentored by several seasoned bird hunters. What a great day to share the hunting tradition. A big shout out to all of the volunteer dog handlers and mentors. It takes commitment and dedication to show up for these events. We couldn't do it without them!



The **Mid Mo Uplanders** of Columbia, MO also hosted a top notch event. Holding a mentored chukar hunt on Dec 18th, in Higbee MO. The chapter offered mentored hunts to 13 participants. Each hunter had the opportunity to hunt 3 chukar, accompanied by experienced mentors and seasoned hunting dogs. Again, having a tremendous amount of support

from dedicated members and volunteers, the participants raved about the event and asked for more! Hopefully, as we gain traction in this arena, more of these events will take place, offering even more opportunity for Missouri communities to experience the thrill of upland hunting.



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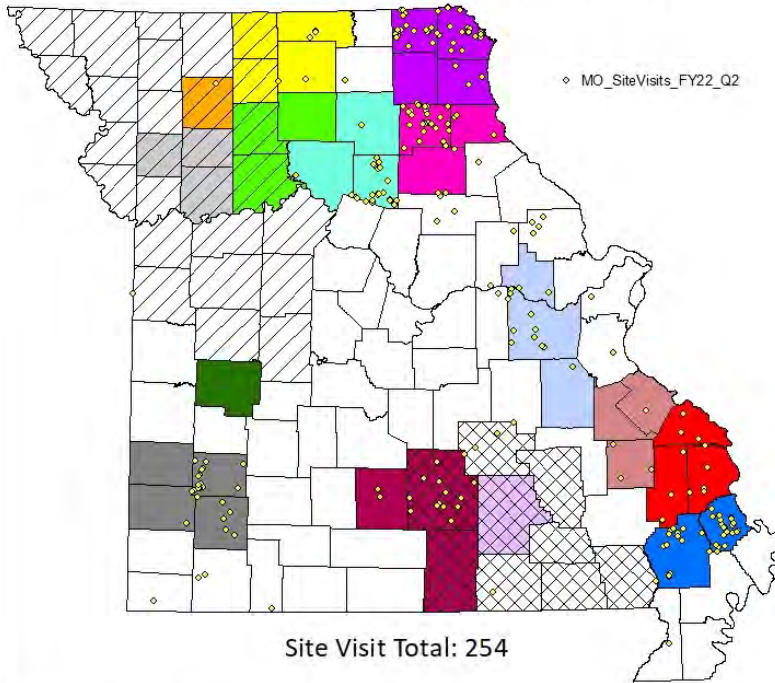


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October–December 2021

### FY22 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT October 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021



\*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.

Updated 1/5/2022



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.

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Quail Forever



MissouriPFQF.org

### Upcoming...

- Provide Landowners with technical assistance.
- Lead the Mark Twain Prescribed Burn Association membership meeting.
- Attend MDC PLC quarterly staff/partner meeting.
- Assist with MDC's prescribed fire skills sessions.
- Work with FSA and NRCS to review seed tags for CRP SU55 & 56 as acres are seeded.
- Coordinate outreach within the QRL to expand habitat improvements.
- Collaborate with peers to improve internal onboarding process.
- Continue chapter support as needed.

*\*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

Oct.—December 2021

### Keeping Sensitive Areas from Becoming Sore Spots

Every landowner has them in one form or another. Those “odd” areas that don’t readily comply with a farmer or rancher’s designs. They might be isolated landforms like sink holes, seeps, or rocky outcrops, or larger features like consistently wet riparian areas or dry, steep slopes. While some of these might be little more than a minor annoyance, others might keep a farmer up at night. Regardless of their form or extent, these areas often cannot accommodate the same management strategies employed on other, more stable or productive crop ground or grazing land. Thus, managers are forced to either redirect their course of action or suffer the consequences of poor production and environmental degradation, with the later almost never confined within the farm boundary.



Wooded draws are enticing for the shade they provide livestock, but like any watercourse, they can become point-sources of water quality degradation and nonnative plant invasion

This past quarter, I spent a lot of time ambling across farms to assess applicants’ eligibility for the Conservation Stewardship Program. As I describe it to landowners, it’s a warts-and-all assessment, where I poke, prod, and exhaustively evaluate each of their landuses to ensure they are satisfying NRCS’ standards of natural resources protection, while also searching for opportunities to help them further improve their operations. In doing so, I encountered many fantastic practices, like no-till farming, cover crops, sacrifice areas, and rotational grazing. Still, I also found a recurring blind-spot that ultimately rendered many applicants ineligible—their odd areas had become glaring sore spots.

—> *Continued*

<u>Conservation at a Glance</u>	Program Involvement	Acres Impacted
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 52 Landowner Contacts</li> <li>• 26 Site Visits</li> <li>• 5 CSP Assessments</li> <li>• 2 RxP Plans Written</li> </ul>	CRP	104
	TNC Riparian Projects	3.6
	<b>Total</b>	107.6

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## Quarterly Partners' Report

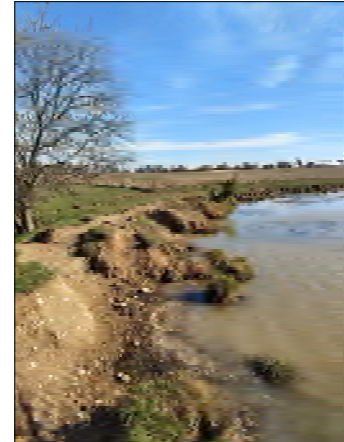
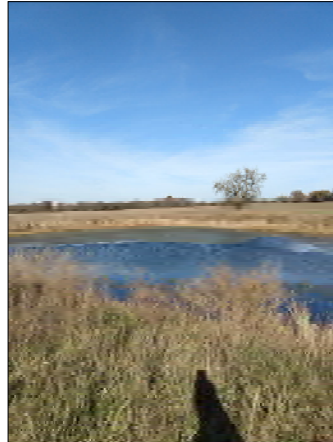


Ethan Kleekamp - Lawrence, Jasper, Barton, & Dade Counties

Oct.—December 2021

### Sensitive Areas *Continued*

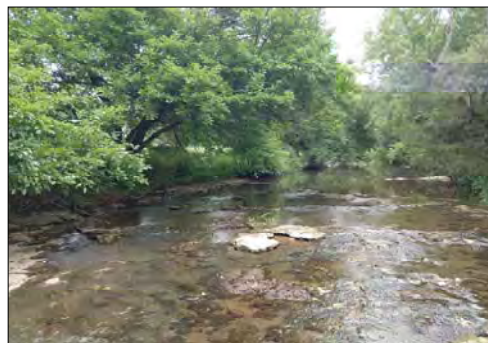
We certainly want to extol the land-owners that closely monitor their fields' residue coverage, soil organic matter, and pasture plant diversity. However, if those same farms' wooded draws and riparian areas, through extensive cattle loafing, are void of plant cover save for invasive species, exhibit collapsing stream-banks and pond dams, and have no suitable wildlife habitat, how can we consider them exemplary?



These ponds were a mere 75 yards apart on a Dade County CSP applicant's farm. The one on the left was protected via livestock access control, the one on the right was not

I believe the ultimate measure of land stewardship is the quality of water leaving a farm, and in that regard, sensitive areas can have an influence far greater than their relative acreage. If not given special precautions, sinkholes, seeps, draws, and riparian zones can convey tremendous amounts of sediment and nutrient-laden water into the greater watershed, negating many of the positive practices occurring on the majority of a farm.

Fortunately, we offer numerous practices and specific conservation programs for these specific areas. CRP buffer strips, WRP easements, EQIP-funded access control and replacement watering facilities, SWCD stream protection and riparian restoration, and more. And if the natural resource savings aren't enough to entice a producer to better manage these sensitive areas, the fact that it could make or break a CSP application is leverage that we should certainly employ.



I'm currently working with the landowner along the Lawrence County stream on the left to exclude livestock and replace the water source so it can begin resembling the stream on the right that has already received the same treatment.



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## Quarterly Partners' Report



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

Oct.—December 2021

## Outreach and Education

### A Case for Strategic Student Outreach

For the better part of the last two centuries, American agricultural lands could meet the diverse needs of a wide array of upland wildlife species. Quail, pheasant, prairie chickens, and a multitude of nongame species proliferated in the patchwork of weedy row crops, brushy fencerows, and native grass pastures. Unfortunately, fire suppression and woody encroachment, simplified crop rotations, and increased reliance on herbicides, pesticides, and nonnative forages have effectively sterilized many of these former strongholds—leading to the dramatic decline of grassland bird populations that we now see.

The PFQF model of grassroots, volunteer chapters relies on a collective passion to conserve the species and places people know and love. Unfortunately, the game-rich environments and upland hunting heritage that once captivated many of our current members have sadly dwindled in many parts of the country, leaving us with an aging demographic of supporters and a diminished assemblage of young, upland conservationists to take up the mantle.

Because of this, myself and several colleagues have begun formulating a new strategy to recruit young adults to our volunteer ranks. Through this “Collegiate Conservation Program”, our goal is to engender a renewed passion for Missouri’s upland wildlife and mobilize a cohort of future conservationists to bridge this generational divide. Our objective is to engage existing collegiate conservation societies through technical land management trainings and professional development, while promoting our culture of volunteerism and community engagement. Hosted jointly by our local biologists and chapter leaders, this service-based outreach and education aims to 1) better prepare students for entry-level wildlife management jobs that desire experienced applicants, 2) connect students with their local PFQF chapters, and 3) promote upland habitat knowledge and active participation in its conservation.

Ultimately, our hope is that this new path to the uplands can bolster our membership base, provide tangible support to our current chapters, and promote the PFQF mission at a level unseen in Missouri thus far. Though this promises to be a monumental effort, it is becoming increasingly urgent that we undertake it sooner rather than later. Stay tuned for more to come on this exciting front!



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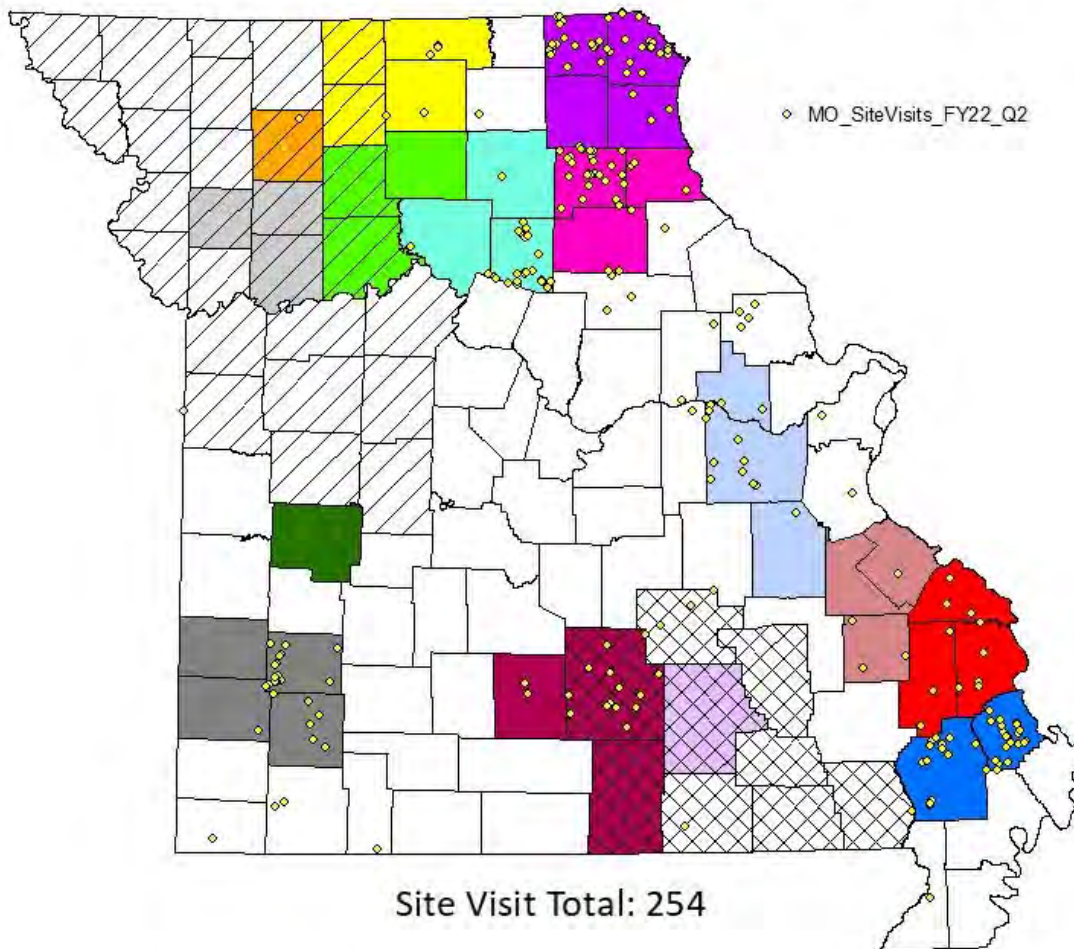
## Quarterly Partners' Report



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

Oct.—December 2021

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# Missouri Quail Forever Quarterly Partners' Report



Haley Lockard - Clark, Knox, Lewis, Scotland

Oct - Dec 2021

## Covey Rising

This fall brought exciting changes to the Missouri PF/QF team. Andrew White was promoted and now serves as the Missouri State Coordinator. In addition, Wes Buchheit and myself were promoted to Senior Farm Bill Wildlife Biologists in November. In this new role, I still provide technical assistance to landowners and partners but also serve a leadership role within our Missouri QF team. November also marked the birth of Missouri's first Habitat Specialist Crew. This crew located at Shaw Nature Reserve will put prescribed fire, invasive species control, and native restoration on the ground in the Grey Summit area. We are very excited for their addition to the team. We are also currently hiring 3 Wetland biologist positions to expand the reach of current partner wetland teams. We are very excited for these additions to the team and look forward to the habitat they get on the ground in new areas.



## Taste of My Own Medicine

On a personal note, this fall we broke ground on a cool-season hay field renovation at my grandparents' home. The field is being converted to a combination of pollinator/monarch habitat and native forages. We are trying to find a balance between acres dedicated solely to wildlife and maintaining production/profitability of the hay ground. The family gathered at Thanksgiving to conduct a prescribed burn as part of site prep. The field was sprayed early November to kill cool-season grasses and protect existing native forbs; then burned to clear the thatch. We got a really good kill on the cool season grass, but I expect to spray again at first green up in a few months before the native grasses germinate.



### Quarter Highlights

#### Conservation Planning

- 41 Landowner Contacts
- 48 Site Visits
- 72 Projects With Acres
- 24 Seed mix reviews
- 12 Habitat Plans

**Total Acres Impacted: 1,458**

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# Missouri Quail Forever Quarterly Partners' Report



Haley Lockard - Clark, Knox, Lewis, Scotland

Oct - Dec 2021

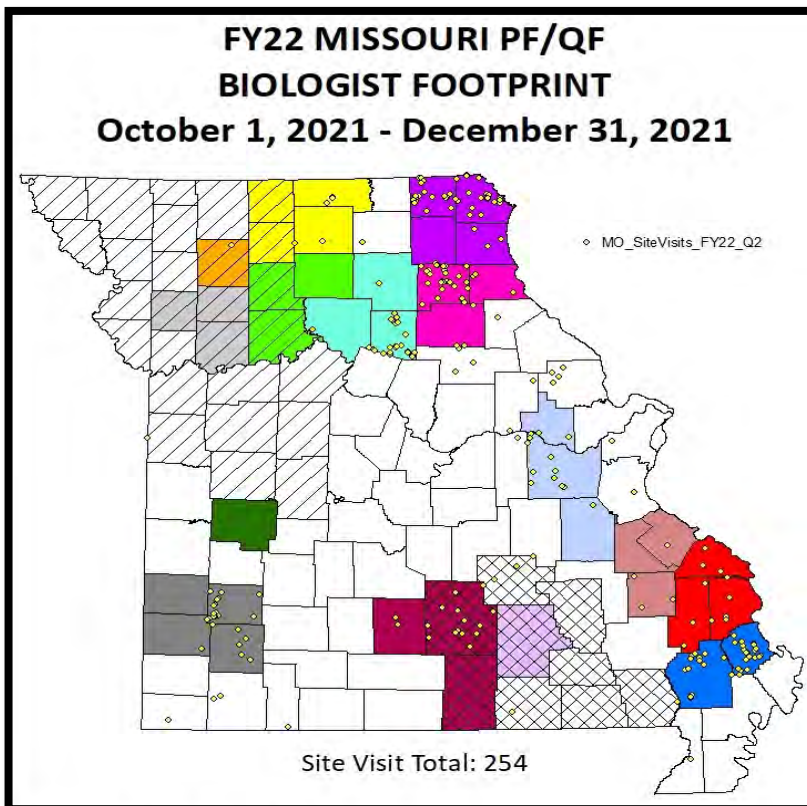
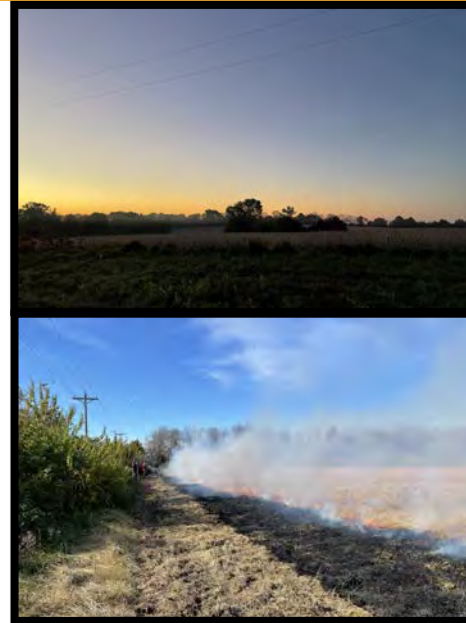
## Landowner Workshops/ Tours ...

- **October 19** Protecting You Investment Webinar. I was asked by FCS Financial and MFA Inc. to give a presentation on conservation programs.
- **October 27** Women Owning Woodlands Lunch and Learn Webinar. I gave a Quail Management 101 presentation with MU Extension.
- **December 9** With FSA and MDC, we hosted a landowner discussion of conservation/ wildlife habitat options for low-yielding pivot corners acres in irrigated farmland.

## Trainings & Meetings...

- **November 4 & 10** During the NRCS new employee training series , I gave a presentations on PF/QF in Missouri and professional organization opportunities with The Wildlife Society.

**Total Participants Reached: 82**



Connect with Us!

@MissouriQF



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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



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

**OCT- DEC 2021**

### Quarterly Overview

The second quarter of Fiscal year 2022 offered a break from the rapid fast paced schedule we had grown use to in the summer. We had an opportunity to get together as the entire Quail Forever Missouri Team, which we hasn't happened in two years. Farm Bill work kept moving forward and applications for the Environmental Quality Assistance Program and Conservation Stewardship Program provided us opportunities to start the process of adding more habitat to the ground. I also had a chance to conduct some trainings for local staff, start on a new personal project, and present at a couple local events. There is always an abundance of opportunities to help educate and enable folks in restoring native habitat. I look forward to the projects that I started this quarter and seeing how they will grow and develop.

### Team Meeting

In early October, all 19 members of Quail Forever in Missouri gathered together for a team meeting at Rockbridge Rainbow Trout and Game Ranch. Rockbridge is an incredible piece of Missouri Ozark history. The old town was founded in the mid 1800s with a mill, post office, and blacksmith shop. In the 1930's the town declined to a single post office until it was purchased by a family in the late 1940's. Now the resort uses restored original town buildings and an original mill to host outdoor enthusiasts and those trying to get away to a quiet spot in the southern woods of Missouri. During our time there, we covered our typical team tasks. We reviewed the previous year's accomplishments and successes and discussed areas where we needed improvement or saw opportunities for growth. We then set about discussing and making goals for the upcoming year. We had a staff member from Quail Forever Arkansas come talk to us about their Habitat Specialist Crew that is working hard to assist landowners and the state with prescribed fire and hands on habitat work. Staff from Pheasants Forever Headquarters in Minnesota came to talk to us about incentives and programs that are in the works or being conducted to help further our goals as an organization. Finally, we spent time together as a team. We had added several new team members who had never met the whole team and we were afforded the opportunity to bond as a team. Too often team bonding is overlooked or a structured check in the box. True team bonding needs to happen so team members realize they are part of an incredible organization that cares about their well being and wants what's best for the individual. These times of team get togethers allow us to see that there are others out



there who share the same struggles, passions, and work load as ourselves. It's good to know, if we ever are in need of help our teammates are just a phone call away. This is what I love about our team, we truly want what's best for each other which makes us a strong and passionate organization. I look forward to working towards our goals together and watching our team grow and expand.

In other team news, since our meeting, Andrew White was promoted as the new State Coordinator for Missouri. Haley and Wes were also promoted as Senior Farm Bill Biologist and we hired our own three person habitat crew. Missouri is growing and I know we will do great things as we move forward.

**Quail Forever in Missouri Team**

**Joshua Marshall**  
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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



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

OCT – DEC 2021

### Burning with Partners

A couple years ago, during a CRP sign-up, I was discussing the differences in native warm-season grasses with a landowner. As we were talking, I remembered seeing some grasses behind the office in an empty lot. I invited a landowner outside and showed him the differences in the various native grass species. This interaction gave me an idea. I should create a demonstration plot behind the office to show landowners what native plantings should look like. This fall I started on the project. I outlined 0.15 acres of open ground to be a demonstration plot. With native grasses already



Crispy Cedar Tree

growing here, this location would provide the perfect place to restore native habitat. The plot had some cedar, elm, and oak encroachment that was starting to take over. I cut down the larger trees and left the smaller cedars to be taken out by a fire. In October, with assistance from partner employees, we conducted a prescribed fire on the plot. Being such a small plot the fire only took a few minutes to burn but it succeeded in taking out the rest of the cedars and clearing the site for a seeding this winter. I plan on seeding the location to a native forb and short grass mix. With there already being several species of tall native warm



Rx Fire on the Plot

season grass, I am not worried about adding them into the plot. I am eager to watch this plot develop. With some good weather and a little luck, there will be an incredible demonstration plot close to the office that I can use to help educate landowners and partners.

### Outreach Events

In August, The Daughters of American Revolution, General John Sullivan Chapter, asked me to come speak at their monthly meeting. They asked me to present on who Quail Forever is and what I do within my job. This was a unique opportunity to present to a group of people that I don't often hear from us. In my presentation, I was able to present the history of Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever. I discussed what it is we do within the state and our different initiatives and partnerships we work on. I also dedicated some time to talk about how native habitat, such as pollinator gardens or landscaping with natives, can be used to benefit their local community. The presentation was received well and they asked several questions at the end that led to a good discussion. I was quite surprised by the level of detail that their questions contained. There have been many times at landowner workshops where I don't receive that kind of engagement and questions. I enjoy unique outreach opportunities like this because it allows me to reach individuals who I would not otherwise have the opportunity to talk with.



Regional Rep Trevor Day at Blessing of the Hunt

A second outreach opportunity I was able to participate in was the Cornerstone Church of Kirksville's Blessing of the Hunt. This is an annual event before the opening weekend of Missouri's Firearm Deer Season. The church hosts the event and brings in outdoor vendors. They always have a couple speakers and serve deer chili for supper. This event provided me a chance to talk with several folks about how I can help them with their wildlife goals and that I don't only work on quail and pheasant habitat. We had many folks come by our booth and were able to hand out a lot of information about native habitat and developing their land for wildlife.

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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



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

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Trainings and Outreach	Summary
<b>Blessing of the Hunt</b>	Outreach event to hunters and local outdoor enthusiast
<b>Daughter of the American Revolution</b>	Spoke to the chapter about Quail Forever and how they can be involved in putting habitat on the ground in their community.
<b>Pack Test</b>	Annual Refresher for S130/S190 Red Card.
<b>Team Meeting</b>	The Missouri PF/QF team met to close out one year and set goals for the new FY.

### Looking Forward

- February 1-3 MNRC
- March 11-13 Pheasant Fest & Quail Classic
- TBD CRP Sign-up

**Quarterly Numbers**

- 45 Landowners Contacted
- 10 Site Visits
- 2 Conservation Outreach Events
- 1 Partner Training Event

Program	Impacted Ac.
CRP Programs	294.6
NRCS Programs	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>301.6</b>



The newest addition of the Marshall family joined us December 11th 2021

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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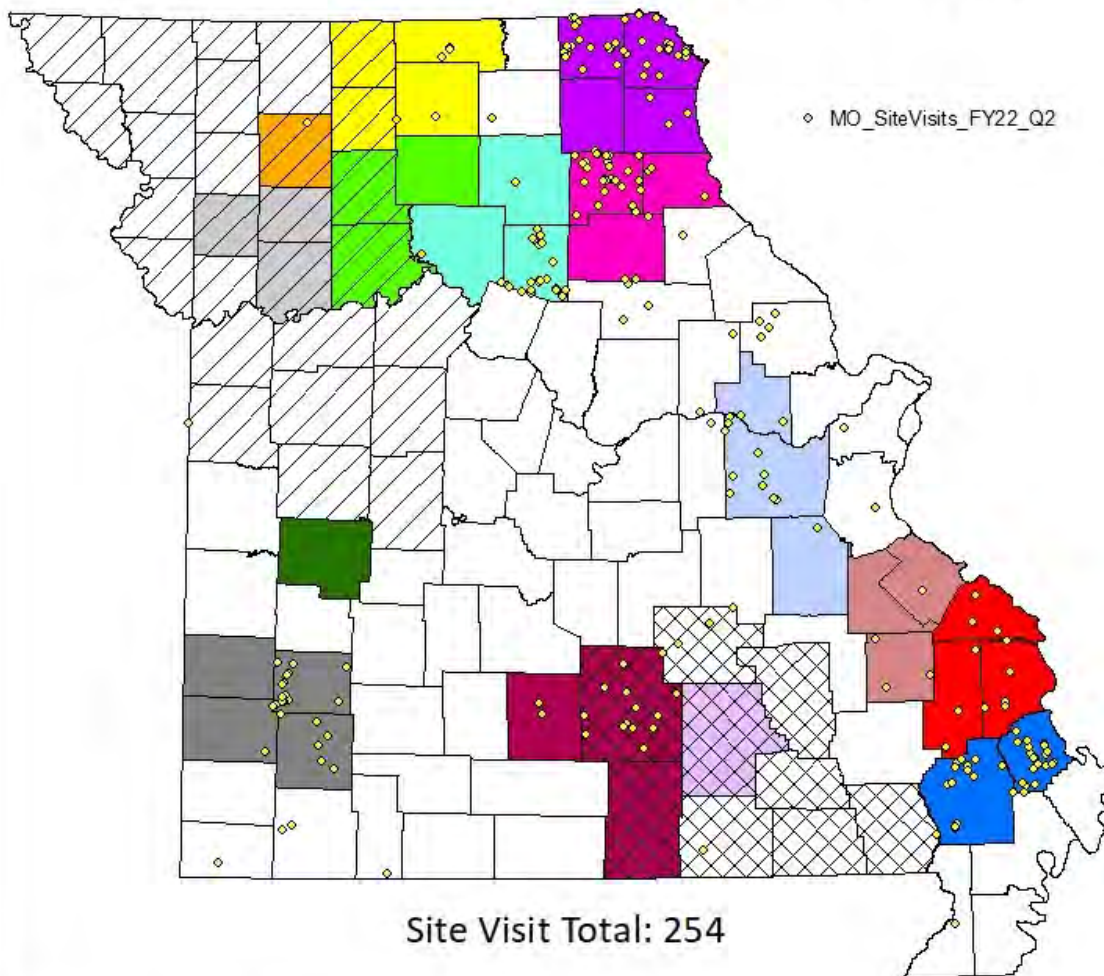
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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



Kelsey DeZalia—Scott and Stoddard Counties

October-December 2021

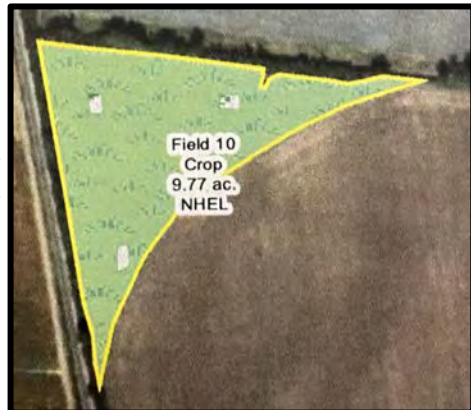
### Burning for the Better

Missouri Quail Forever Farm Bill biologists have been first hand witness to me droning on about my affinity with Sikeston pollinator plot. *CAN'T STOP, WON'T STOP*. The pollinator plot has finished it's first growing season and is planned to be burned in the near future to further encourage the growth of wildflowers that were planted Feb. 2021. **Don't fret**, we will have it all under control, with a prescribed burn plan in hand and a knowledgeable crew on board.

### Are shrubs making you shrug?

In regards to various wildlife-oriented practices associated with the Conservation Reserve Program, establishing shrubs is a key element. But are they making you ask yourself, "why do we NEED to?" Native, soil-specific shrubs provide crucial roosting habitat, food sources, escape cover from predators, and thermal cover from extreme weather conditions for a variety of wildlife.

**BONUS POINTS** if you can easily answer, "why is it ideal to scatter shrubs across the property?" Even though this can cause a little more of an inconvenience for operators during planting and required management with large equipment, scattering your shrubs across your property allows small game to utilize more of the habitat you've established. Small game will only stray so far from protection, if the shrubs are all clumped into one area, you are limiting the usage to that one area. If the goal for your property is to benefit wildlife, trust your biologist and ask for recommendations as to where to put them.



Above: An example of a pivot corner enrolled in CRP with three interior shrub plantings planned

If you own property and are looking for opportunity to make a little extra money AND provide temporary habitat during those winter months, I've got a "win-win" for you! One of the practices through the Conservation Stewardship Program is winter flooding. No pumping necessary; simply put your boards in and let the rain fall do the rest. Stop in your local NRCS office to see if your land is eligible. The waterfowl will appreciate your efforts!



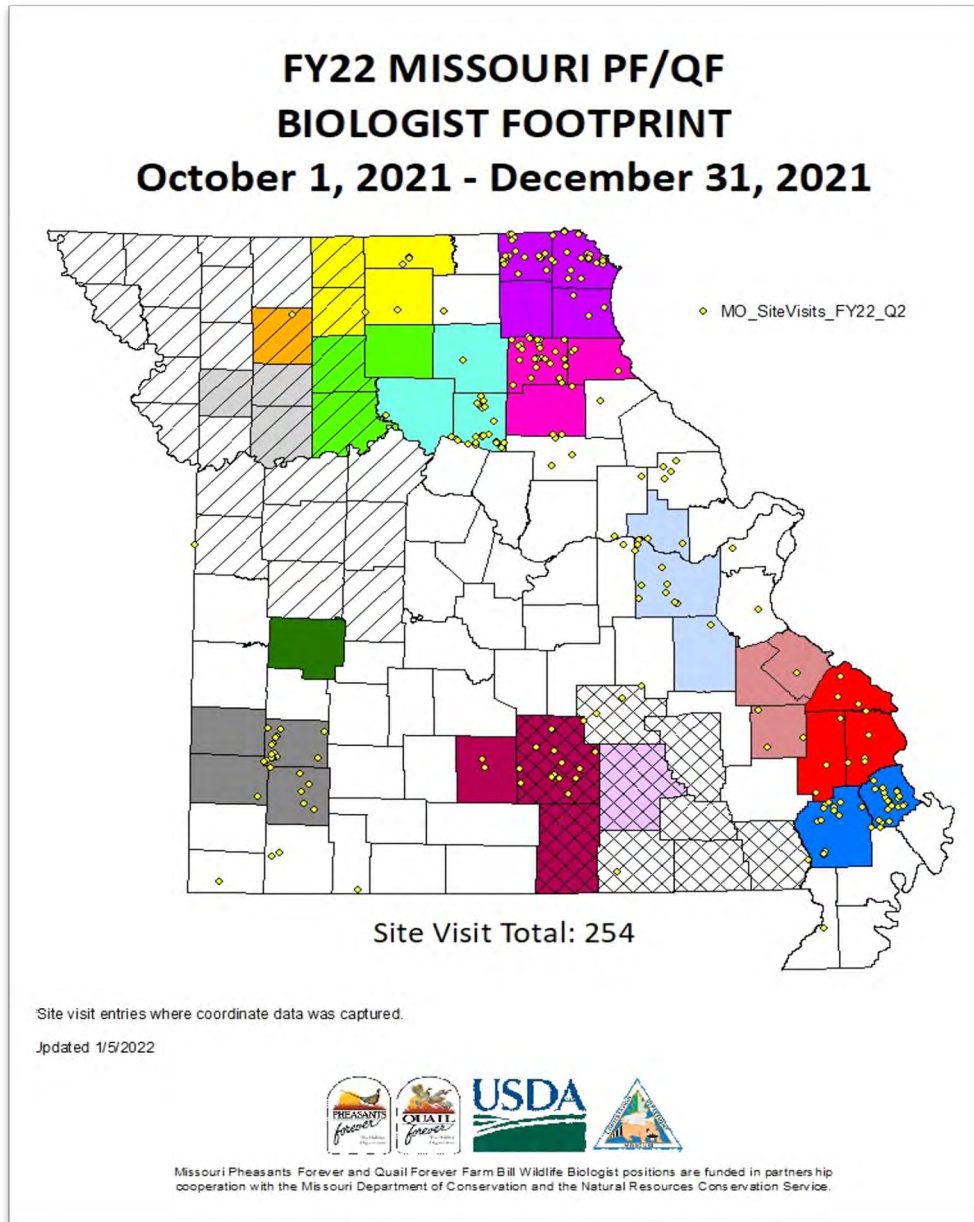
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Kelsey DeZalia—Scott and Stoddard Counties

October-December 2021

## MOFBB's Reach



### Conservation Technical Assistance Summary

• 60 landowner contacts	• 73 total site visits
• Completed CRP management site visits for Scott and Stoddard counties	• Completed various online-based trainings for certified planner requirements
• Conducted quail covey surveys	• Assisted landowners in 3 counties

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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

## Quarterly Partners' Report



Lizzy Johnson - Howell, Texas, & Wright Counties

October – December 2021

### “I Think There’s a Bunch of Butterflies at the Farm”

“I think there’s a bunch of butterflies at the farm you better come and see them.” This is the phrase that I hear each time I get a call from a particular landowner who wants me to come out and check on his monarch plot. With the help of his wife, he planted two areas to a monarch friendly seed mix and two areas to native warm season grasses. He planted them at a great time because a week later we received a light dusting of snow and freezing temperatures, followed by some warmer days. This is a great time to plant because freezing and thawing is a natural cycle that helps break a seeds dormancy and allows it to be pulled into the soil for good germination. I am excited to go back in the coming years and see how it looks and actually see some butterflies when the flowers are blooming.

The landowner also tells me about the quail that he sees on his property. These plantings will be beneficial to his quail too. They will provide the quail with bugs and seeds to eat as well as places to nest. It is great to see landowners planting native species and I will be continuing to check on other landowners monarch, pollinator and native plantings in the next few months.



This 327 Conservation Cover Monarch Habitat Planting was planted just before we received a light dusting of snow.

#### Conservation Planning

- 21 Landowner Contacts
- 21 Site Visits
- 6 EQIP Applications Assessed/Ranked
- 3 Practice Checkouts
- 1 Consplan Completed
- Achieved Conservation Planner Level I Certification

#### Looking Forward

- I will be attending the Missouri Natural Resource Conference in February.
- I will also be attending the Southwest Missouri Spring Forage Conference in February.
- Continuing to complete LCAP and EQIP practice checkouts.
- Continuing to rank and asses 2022 EQIP applications.

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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

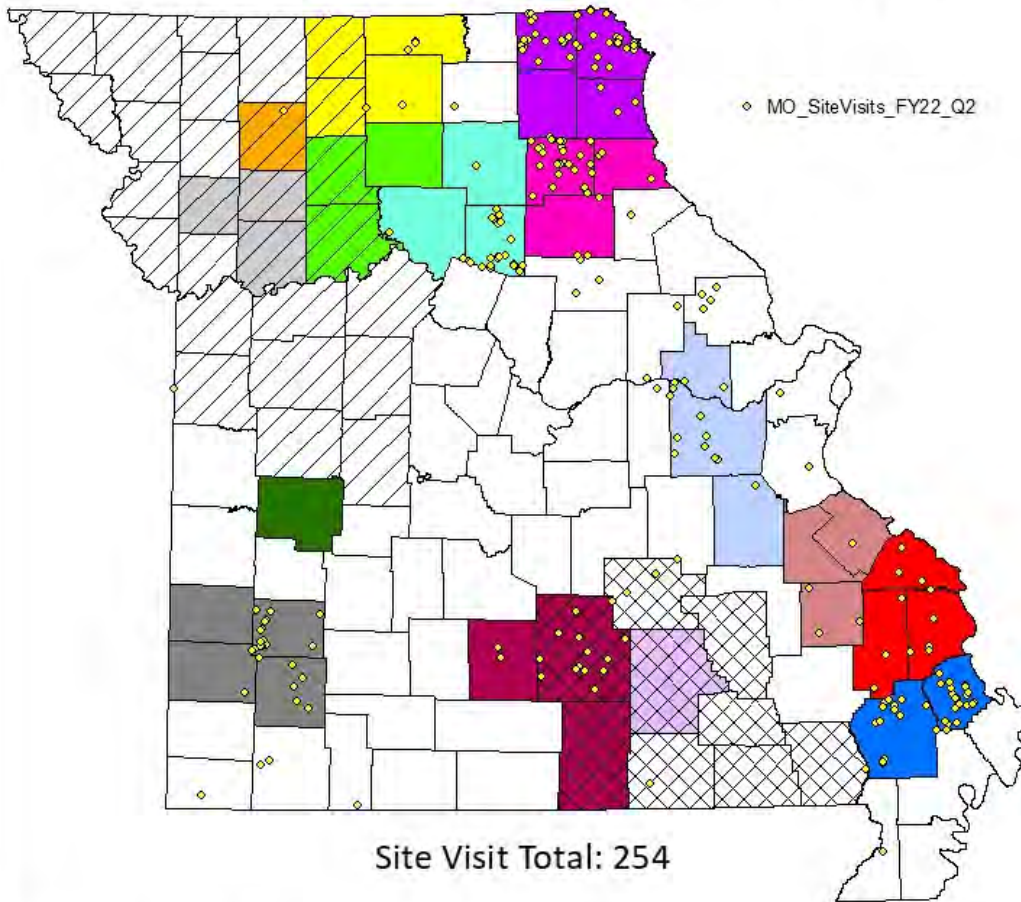


## Quarterly Partners' Report

Lizzy Johnson - Howell, Texas, & Wright Counties

October – December 2021

### FY22 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT October 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021



\*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.

Updated 1/5/2022



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.

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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II



## Quarterly Partners' Report

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

October—December 2021

### FY 2022—Second Quarter

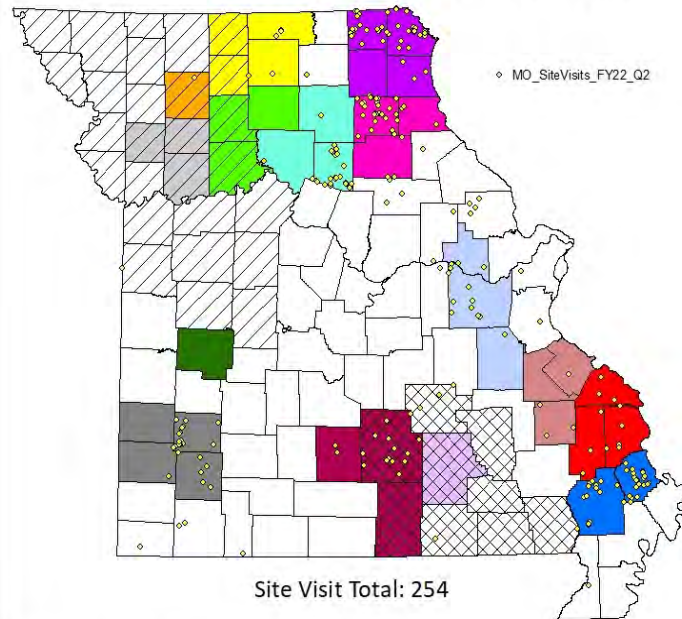
From October through December, our Missouri team conducted 254 site visits and logged over 550 landowner contacts while working in 62 counties. We impacted an over 5,300 acres of habitat statewide and reached out to 413 individuals at landowner workshops and outreach events.

During the second quarter, I had 26 landowner contacts and conducted 3 site visits. Through habitat planning and technical assistance, I impacted over 68 acres. These acres were from conservation planning within the Conservation Stewardship Program.

As for conservation outreach, I was interviewed by the Democrat News for their article, "What, why, and how of pollinators." The article can be seen on their website [here](#).

I completed the NRCS Missouri Leadership Investing in Planner Success (MoLIPS) training course. This was a 6-week in-depth training that covered the 9 steps of NRCS conservation planning. Aside from attending virtual presentations and participating in online discussions, I spent time in the field using planning tools and completing field assessments. This training will allow me to obtain the NRCS Conservation Planner Level 3 certification.

### FY22 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT October 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021



\*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.

Updated 1/5/2022



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	Program		CRP Practice	
	Program	Acres Impacted	CRP Practice	Acres Impacted
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 26 Landowner Contacts</li> <li>• 3 Site Visits</li> <li>• 2 Conservation Plans Completed</li> <li>• 1 Conservation Outreach Interview/ Article</li> <li>• Completed NRCS MoLIPS training</li> </ul>	EQIP	-	CP1	-
	CSP	68.1	CP2	-
	MDC LCAP	-	CP12	-
	QF Chapter	-	CP21	-
	Non-Program	-	CP29	-
		-	CP42	-
	<b>Total</b>	<b>68.1</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>

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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

## Quarterly Partners' Report



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

October—December 2021

### Winter Habitat Projects

Don't let the winter blues keep you inside this season, there's habitat work to do! While many species go dormant in the winter, the habitat work can be thriving. Native plantings, timber stand improvements, prescribed burning, edge feathering, and invasive species treatments are perfect for winter habitat projects.

#### Native Plantings

If the ground is adequately prepped, the best time to broadcast seeds for monarch and pollinator plantings is in the dormant season. If you are enrolled in NRCS or FSA programs, you may be required to plant these seeds at this time.

#### Edge Feathering

Create instant escape cover for quail, rabbits, and other wildlife by cutting trees over 12 feet tall in 30 foot by 50 foot areas at the edges of croplands and grasslands. You should treat the existing grass with herbicide to create bare ground before felling trees. Trees should be placed in a loose pile. Tree stumps should be treated using an approved herbicide.

#### Invasive Species Control

Some invasive species such as bush honeysuckle, Japanese honeysuckle, and wintercreeper can still be green while beneficial natives are dormant making this a great time to apply non-selective herbicides.

#### Timber Stand Improvement

TSI treatments in the warmer months can be exhausting and potentially unsafe. Cost-share programs may limit cutting during the summer to avoid harm to bat habitat as well. Try your TSI in the winter months to avoid these issues. Upcycle those felled trees for your edge feathering project!

#### Prescribed Burning

The dormant season is a perfect time for burning. Always use an approved prescribed burn plan and consult with your local Farm Bill Biologist or MDC PLC to ensure your burn will meet your objectives. Learn more about prescribed fire in Missouri from the [Missouri Prescribed Fire Council](#).



This prescribed burn was conducted during the dormant season as part of a glade restoration project.



This native forb seed was broadcasted in January following a 2" snowfall.

### Helpful Tips

- ⇒ Broadcasting native seeds with a few inches of snow on the ground can help ensure that your planter is calibrated correctly and you aren't planting too much or too little over the area.
- ⇒ Take advantage of the leaf-off and walk your wooded areas in the winter. Carry flagging tape or paint and a handheld GPS or a mobile app, such as OnX. You may find additional invasive species or areas for habitat improvement that would be harder to spot in the growing season. Flag these areas for follow up.
- ⇒ When edge feathering, don't treat the stumps of native shrubs; you'll want them to resprout to create beneficial cover.
- ⇒ Purple Paint Law: In Missouri, purple paint can be used on trees and posts to signal, "No Trespassing." Winter is a good time to walk your property line and post your boundaries. More information on the purple paint statute can be found on the Revisor of Missouri Statutes website [here](#).
- ⇒ Use winter as a time to attend prescribed burn workshops and learn how to safely conduct burns on your property. Find upcoming prescribed burn workshops near you on MDC's events page: <https://mdc-event-web.s3licensing.com/Event/AllEvents?EventTypeId=16>

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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II



## Quarterly Partners' Report

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

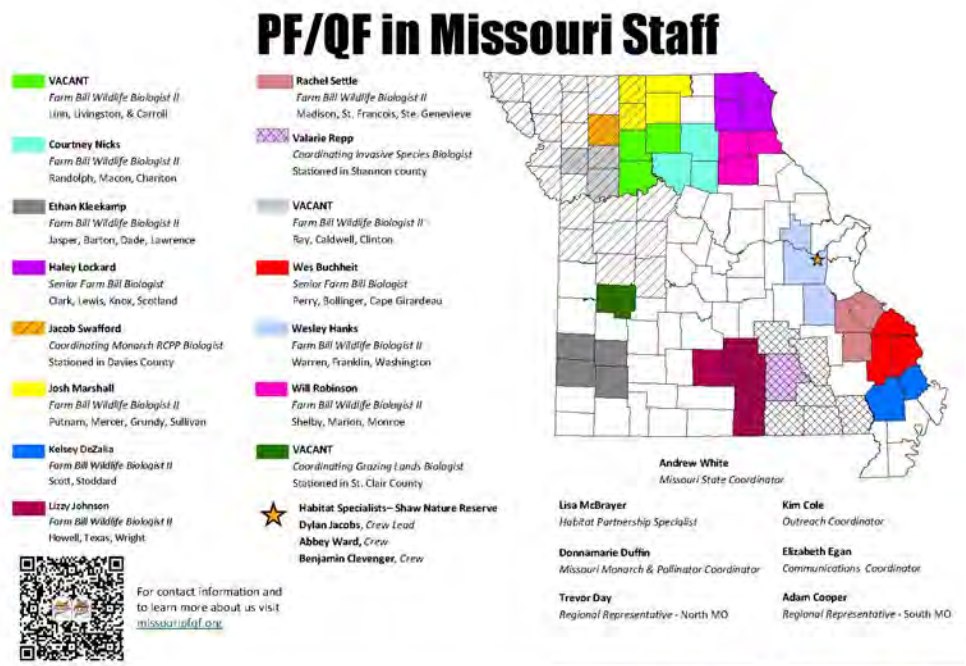
October—December 2021

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
NRCS Missouri Leadership Investing in Planner Success	Completed the Fall MoLIPS course to gain an in-depth understanding of the 9-step planning process and work towards obtaining Level 3 planner certification.
NRCS Forestry Training	Completed a forestry assessment training using various forestry tools in the field. This was part of the MoLIPS course.
NRCS Crop/Pasture Training	Completed crop and pasture assessment trainings using various crop and pasture tools in the field. This was part of the MoLIPS course.
NRCS Conservation Economics	Completed the conservation economics webinar series and learned how to integrate economics into the NRCS Conservation Planning Process.

### Looking Forward

- Obtain NRCS Conservation Planner Level 3 certification
- Assist with EQIP ranking and planning

Our team continues to grow! See the updated staff map below.



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



1/3/22

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# Coordinating Invasive Species Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



**Valarie Repp- Butler, Carter, Dent, Shannon, Reynolds, Ripely, Oregon, and Howell Counties  
October - December 2021**

### Getting In the Swing of Things

This quarter was my first complete quarter after being hired in August as the Coordinating Invasive Species Biologist. In October, I was able to meet our whole Missouri Quail Forever State Team, which was a great opportunity to learn a little bit about everyone and what they do for Quail Forever.

After spending some time getting to know what the Scenic Rivers Invasive Species Partnership (SRISP) was all about and meeting with several partners, I was able to start to plan different projects for SRISP to be involved. This included joining the Missouri Invasive Plant Council (MoIP) and becoming a member of the Cease the Sale subcommittee, which works to end the commercial sale of invasive species in Missouri. I was also able to sit in on the River-to-River Cooperative Weed Management Area's (CWMA) steering committee meeting to learn about what projects and initiatives they have. Their CWMA started in 2008, and I look forward to working with their coordinator to develop ideas for the SRISP and possibly collaborate with them.

In late December, Julie Norris (MDC) and Andrew Turner (MoDOT) met with me to discuss what options could be used in terms of spraying rights-of-way, including spraying county roads that lead to popular river access points. Andrew and his crew have been working diligently to spray invasives along major corridors, e.g., highways 60 and 63 within the SRISP. Next year he wants to coordinate with partners to determine what key highways to treat for invasives.



*The Current River Hills COA meeting. It was great to meet so many land managers doing work within the SRISP.*

The Current River Hills Conservation Opportunity Area (COA) invited me to give a presentation on the SRISP. Several partners from different agencies were at the meeting, including MDC, DNR, National Park Service, and Mark Twain National Forest. I was able to share the SRISP's mission as well as some projects that will be starting in the spring.



# Coordinating Invasive Species Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



**Valarie Repp- Butler, Carter, Dent, Shannon, Reynolds, Ripely, Oregon, and Howell Counties  
October - December 2021**

### All Partner Meeting Held After a Year Hiatus

In December, a SRISP partner meeting was held after more than a year long hiatus. Twenty-two people were present to listen to several guest speakers give talks about the formation of the SRISP and its future plans. Speakers also touched on different strategies the SRISP could implement to accomplish further invasive plant work.

Brian Davidson and Nate Muenks discussed why this specific area was chosen for the SRISP. They discussed the GIS analysis done for the area and the huge potential the area has for collaborative work. The Current River Hills area also contains high-valued, near pristine natural areas, giving it a priority for invasive species prevention. Nick Seaton, coordinator of the River-to-River Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA), discussed what their CWMA has done in the past several years to present our audience with opportunities the SRISP could implement.

Rebekah Wallace, EDDMaps Coordinator, gave a brief introduction to the EDDMaps platform and how its uses could be helpful to the SRISP. EDDMaps is a web-based platform that allows users to enter invasive plant population data into a universal system that is accessible to everyone. This system also allows users to enter treatment data for invasive species. The program would be ideal for partners in the SRISP to use so that land managers can see what invasive plant populations are present near the areas they are working, even if they are not with the same agency. After the presentation, many partners were interested in knowing more about how to use EDDMaps and the EDDMaps Pro app. A zoom training is scheduled for all the partners in the SRISP February 10th.

Caleb Sanders was the last guest speaker. He is the crew lead for the Watershed Conservation Corps, a group based in Springfield, MO that conducts habitat improvement work within a 150 mile radius of their home base. All of their crew members are chainsaw and herbicide certified, making them an ideal crew to hire for boots on the ground invasive work. Their team expressed great enthusiasm for wanting to do invasive work within the SRISP area.

Overall, the meeting was very successful and filled with lots of discussion about what partners are needing from the SRISP. Now, there are even more project ideas to move forward with in the future.

**@MissouriQF**



**MissouriPFQF.org**



# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist III



## Quarterly Partners' Report

Wes Buchheit - Bollinger, Cape, and Perry Counties

October - December 2021

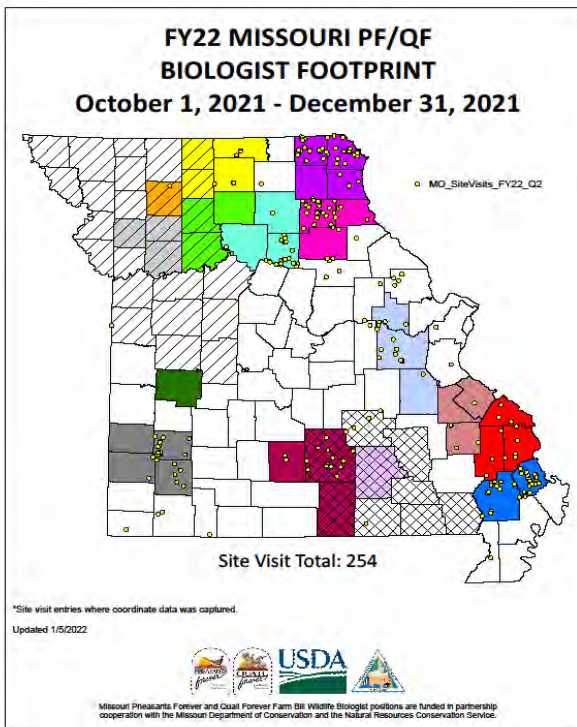
### Second Quarter of FY22

From Oct 1, 2021 to Dec 31, 2021, our team recorded 554 landowner contacts and 254 site visits working in 62 counties collectively impacting 5,329 acres. Outreach continues to grow with 413 people reached through workshops, meetings, and trainings.

### Conservation Technical Assistance Summary

#### Conservation Planning

- 93 Landowner Contacts
- 15 Site Visits
- 6 Conservation Plans Written
- 5 Status Reviews/Checkouts Completed
- 5 Prescribed Burn Plans Completed
- 3 Prescribed Burn Plans Reviewed



Conservation Program	Acres Impacted
EQIP	173.9
CRP	27.2
MDC LCAP	-
QF Habitat Challenge Grant	-
CSP	9.0
Conservation Technical Assistance	9.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>219.6</b>

Right: Indiangrass and big bluestem seed heads tower over James and Debbie Deneke as they admire their 1-year old native forage planting funded through EQIP







### Burning on the margins—the safe margins

Prescribed burning relies upon proper planning and preparing aided by a prescribed burn plan. The plan describes the who, what, where, when, why, and how to safely conduct a burn. It will describe the objective of the burn, the type of firebreaks needed around the burn unit from which to ignite, equipment and personnel needed to safely conduct the burn, what to do in the event of an escape, and many more features to guide the crew. One of those sections is the weather parameters in which to conduct the burn including wind speed and direction, relative humidity, temperature, cloud cover, dead fuel moistures, mixing height, transport wind speed and direction, and ventilation rate among the common parameters listed.

Most planners will state a range in which the burn can be conducted—within prescription. Some will even include “ideal conditions” to help the burn crew identify conducive fire weather in which they know the fuels will burn but not be too volatile. The problem? We don’t live in an ideal world. One must evaluate the weather forecast and make a decision of “go” or “no-go”. When that decision can affect the plans of 5 other people or more, it is difficult to do. But, always, safety is paramount.



*Above: A mostly cloudy day lessens the capability of fire to carry, but can this broomsedge-dominant grassland be safely burned and still meet the planned objectives?*

Everyone looks for the ideal fire weather, but I believe we can conduct burns when the weather forecast is on the margin of the prescription—that is, the margin closest to “I’m not sure if it will even burn”. I’m talking about the day when there is more cloud cover forecasted than “ideal”. If the burn unit is predominantly fine, flashy fuels such as grass, it’ll likely burn and be less likely to slop-over outside the burn unit. How about that day when the relative humidity is not going to drop as low to that “ideal” range? Can you still burn safely and achieve your objectives? To answer the latter question, will you be acceptable of a somewhat patchy burn? The burn may not consume all of the fuels within the burn unit, but that can result in a diverse plant community, and diversity is key.

*Continued —>*



# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist III

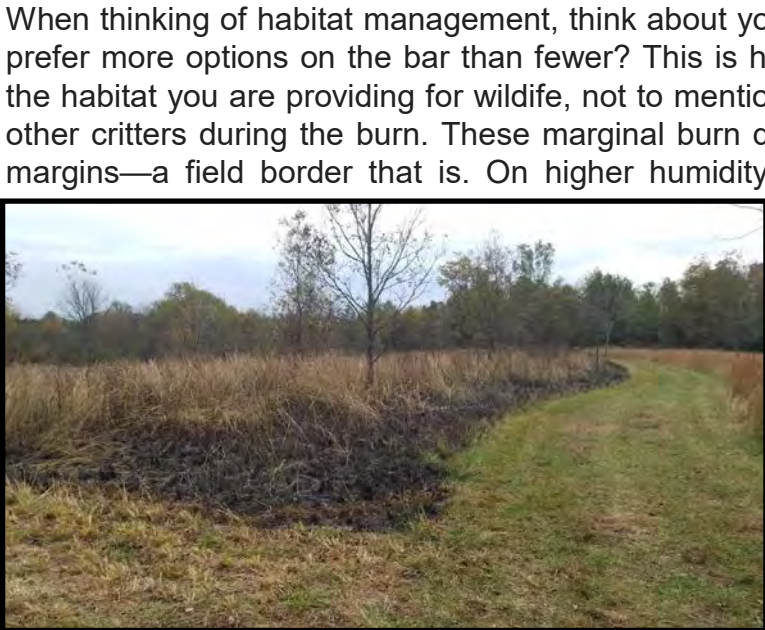


## Quarterly Partners' Report

Wes Buchheit - Bollinger, Cape, and Perry Counties

October - December 2021

### Burning on the margins—the safe margins: continued



Above: The fine fuels of the dense grasses carried the fire safely through the grassland in preparation for overseeding native wildflower seed.

When thinking of habitat management, think about your favorite buffet restaurant. Don't you prefer more options on the bar than fewer? This is how a patchy burn can add diversity to the habitat you are providing for wildlife, not to mention they serve as refuge for insects and other critters during the burn. These marginal burn days can be helpful in actually burning margins—a field border that is. On higher humidity days, or shorter time since the last precipitation, or cloudy days, these can result in the adjacent woodland having higher fuel moistures to reduce the chance of escape and an easier to control fire. Safety should not be overlooked when evaluating the burn weather and one must burn within prescription—must! Just be on the look out for those days that are near the edge of the prescription opposite of volatile. More burn days—more burns—more habitat.

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
<b>PF/QF in Missouri Team Meeting</b>	Attended our annual team meeting to meet new team members, hear updates from national staff on initiatives, and set FY22 goals as a team.
<b>9th International Fire Ecology and Management Congress</b>	Attended the virtual conference on fire ecology with presenters from around the world.
<b>US Forest Service Cohesive Strategy Grant Meeting</b>	Aided partners in developing a proposal requesting funds for a MO Fire Needs Assessment, fire training, and The Nature Conservancy habitat team in the eastern Ozarks.
<b>Foothills Prescribed Burn Association Order of Work Committee Meeting</b>	Assisted the FPBA in creating a tool to determine prioritization for PBA member projects.
<b>Wyoming Prescribed Fire Council Presentation: MO Prescribed Burning Act</b>	Representing the Missouri Prescribed Fire Council, I presented on the need for, the process of, and lessons learned from the effort to establish the new MO law that defines liability for prescribed burning as WY considers similar efforts.



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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



Wesley Hanks - Franklin, Warren, and Washington

October-December 2021

### Seed Mix Reviews

One way Quail Forever Biologists assist our partners, is by reviewing native seed mixes to ensure they meet various program specifications and are well suited for the site. While we create many of seeding sheets landowners use, we encourage landowners to get quotes from seed vendors and then send those quotes to us so that we can verify they meet the required specifications. We review the plant species, amounts of each species, germination rates and test dates, and seed origin. This avoids the situation of a landowner seeding a field and not getting the cost-share they were expecting or needing to seed any additional species to meet specifications.

Program and Purpose	Num. of mixes Reviewed
CSP Monarch	1
EQIP Monarch	3
CRP SAFE	3
LCAP Monarch	3
<b>Total Mixes Reviewed</b>	<b>10</b>



Recently installed firebreaks in Warren county. Firebreaks can be easily constructed in wooded areas by removing leaf litter and exposing bare ground. This can be done by something as simple as a leaf rake or a backpack leaf blower.

Trainings/Meetings	Outcome
<b>MDC Burn Manager Training Rollout Training</b>	Learned about MDC's new Burn Manager Training program.
<b>MO QF Team Meeting</b>	Reconnected with QF staff from across the state to set team goals and get updates on national initiatives.
<b>MDC Partners Round Table</b>	Learned more about MDC's ongoing initiatives and heard from other MDC partners on their initiatives.
<b>Natural Areas Association Annual Conference</b>	Attended webinars on the impact fire can have on invertebrates, specifically, pollinators.
<b>NRCS Gender Bias Training</b>	Learned how unconscious bias around gender can impact how we interact with co-workers and landowners alike.
<b>Spatial Impacts of Prescribed Fire Webinar</b>	Learned about what impacts the spatial scale of prescribed fire can have and how to consider those impacts when planning burns.
<b>NWSG Forage Grazing Webinar</b>	Learned about the benefits of NWSG Forage grazing to the producer and wildlife and common misconceptions about establishing natives for livestock forage.
<b>Cooperative Language Online Class</b>	Learned what cooperative language is and how to implement it in an effective and meaningful manner.



# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



**Wesley Hanks - Franklin, Warren, and Washington**

**October-December 2021**

### Virtual Conferences

The ongoing pandemic has impacted everyone's lives in some way or another. One of those changes has been how people work, interact, and meet with others. If there's one positive thing to come out of this change, it is the increased access to information and ways of sharing this information. Many natural resource related conferences that are typically held in person each year were held either entirely or partially online. This shift has eliminated high registration cost and travel expenses for these events, which can often be barriers that keep resource professionals from attending. One example of this was the 2021 Natural Areas Association Conference held in October. This year's theme was centered around the impact fire can have on pollinators and other invertebrates. Since I work a lot with advising landowners on creating and maintaining pollinator habitat and implementing prescribed fire, I was very interested in this event. During this day-long event, I learned about how timing and scale of both prescribed burns and wildfires can impact pollinators and other invertebrates. This is valuable information that I can use when making management recommendations to landowners. Without this online option, I likely would not have had access to this type of event and gained the knowledge that I did. This is just one example of the many online trainings and conferences that have been offered to benefit natural resources professionals.



- Conservation Planning**
- 60 Landowner Contacts in 11 different counties
  - 22 Site Visits
  - 4 EQIP Applications
  - 3 CRP Contracts Flagged

Practice Checkouts	Amount
Firebreak Construction—EQIP	5,123 ft
Monarch Habitat Planting—EQIP	1.5 ac
CP 1—Introduced Cool-Season Grass	11.3 ac
CP 12—Wildlife Food Plot	0.7 ac
CP 2—Native Warm-Season Grass	8.2 ac
Honeysuckle Removal—LCAP	10.5 ac

### Looking Forward

- Write burn plans for landowners who are planning to burn this Fall/Winter.
- Assist MDC staff with Prescribed Burn Manager Training Field Days
- Advise landowners completing winter habitat projects through LCAP, HCG, CRP, and EQIP.
- Assist NRCS staff in planning on EQIP applications that will benefit a wide range of wildlife.
- Through landowner contacts I will continue to share the Quail Forever mission and help get anyone interested involved with their local QF chapter.



# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

## Quarterly Partners' Report



William Robinson– Marion, Monroe & Shelby Counties

October-December 2021

### Position Update

The second quarter of FY22 was another great quarter. I was able to spend time with landowners, work on developing conservation plans, help producers with the implementation of conservation practices, and check several CRP seedings and edge feathering sites. I look forward to seeing what the third quarter brings my way! As always, thank you all for your continued support. None of this would be possible without you.

### Q2 FY22 Activity Highlights

- ◆ 55 Landowner Contacts
- ◆ 51 Site Visits
- ◆ 36 Projects with Acres

780.98 Acres Impacted

### Edge Feathering

Edge feathering is a common conservation practice used to create escape cover for quail and other small game. Edge feathering is a fairly simple practice to implement and makes a huge impact on the landscape. According to the NRCS specifications, each edge feathering site is 50 feet long and 30 feet wide. These are often found in conjunction with the quail buffer CRP practice. Every tree within that area is cut down, typically with a chainsaw, and arranged in a loosely structured pile that can be used by quail and other small game to evade predators. A few hours with a chainsaw can make a huge difference for small game!



Edge feathering sites on the edge of quail buffers in Shelby County



**Thank you so much for your support! Without this partnership, I wouldn't be able to provide assistance to private landowners and positively impact conservation in Missouri!**

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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

## Quarterly Partners' Report



William Robinson– Marion, Monroe & Shelby Counties

October-December 2021

### Conservation Reserve Program Seedings

Proper site preparation and seeding is, arguably, the most important part of establishing a quality stand of native flora. A dormant seeding is often recommended for seedings that contain forbs, as many of these forbs need to go through some freeze/thaw cycles to begin germination. I have had the opportunity to look at several seedings so far this winter. Some were drilled using a native grass drill, and some were broadcast onto bare soil. I enjoy this time of year as it allows me to meet with producers and talk about how to effectively implement the conservation practices. It also allows me to see some neat stuff out in the field, and take some time to appreciate the quality wildlife habitat that is being created in Missouri!

### MOLIPS

In November I completed the Missouri Leadership Investing in Planner Success (MOLIPS) course. I am looking forward to using the thigs I learned in the upcoming year. Thank you for your partnership, and providing these opportunities



CRP being Seeded in Shelby County



The sun sets on a freshly seeded CRP field in Shelby County

Connect with Us!



Missouri Quail Forever



MissouriPFQF.org

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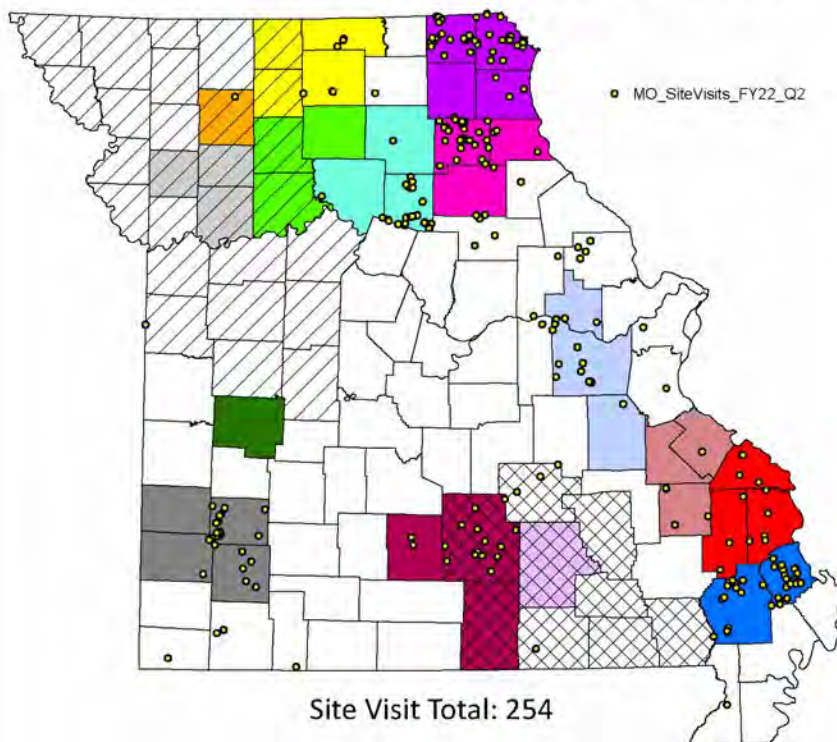
## Quarterly Partners' Report



William Robinson– Marion, Monroe & Shelby Counties

October-December 2021

### FY22 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT October 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021



\*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured

Updated 1/5/2022



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.

### Looking Forward

- Attend the Missouri Natural Resources Conference in February
- Provide Assistance in Planning EQIP Practices
- Continue certifying CRP practices in Shelby and Marion County

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

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