



Quarterly Partners' Report





Andrew White - Livingston, Linn, and Carroll Counties

January - March 2021

CRP is Still King

This past quarter, there has been no shortage of workload as it pertains to CRP. After planning wrapped up last fall, the dormant seeding period started which had me working with producers and seed vendors alike, checking individual seed mixes and making sure they met specifications. Once mixes met and approved, producers go right to work on ordering and have used mild weather conditions and nice days to their advantage getting their CRP seeded down.

As the seeding dates draw to a close, I now find myself working on initiating conservation planning for CRP signup 55 and 56. While signup 56 still has a deadline TBD, we have been encourage to go ahead and start working on plans in an effort to stay on top of our workloads. Looking at my workload, I see similarities between this year's round and this year's. Needless to say, I will continue to be rather busy with CRP for the coming quarter and beyond.

One of my favorite aspects of this career is helping people create the best habitat possible on their property. CRP is a fantastic program to do this. With the variety of practices to choose from, paired with each producers individual goals, having the landowner make an informed decision, and watching their dreams and goals for their properties be filled is quite satisfying and fun to watch!

Looking Forward

- Complete SU55/56 Conservation Planning
- · Assist Chapters with upcoming banquets
- · Continue providing quality technical service to landowners and partners



Conservation Planning

- 168 Landowner Contacts
- 22 Site Visits
- 10 Conservation Plans Written/Modified
- 17 Status Review/ Checkout
- 2 Rx Burn Plan

Programs	Acres Impacted
FSA	793.56
NRCS	56.2
OTHER	260.55
TOTAL	1,110.31



For more great content, please visit our social media pages or visit our Missouri state website at MissouriPFQF.org





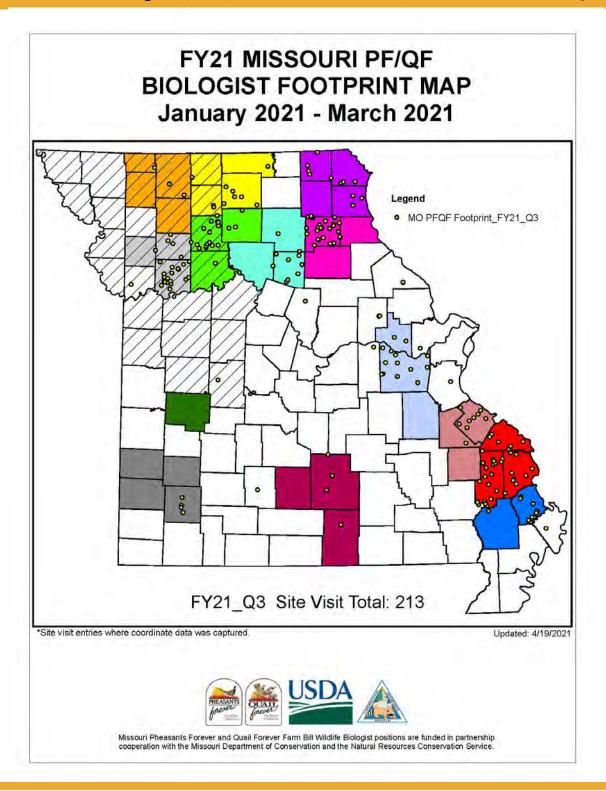
Quarterly Partners' Report





Andrew White - Livingston, Linn, and Carroll Counties

January - March 2021







Quarterly Partners' Report





Courtney Nicks - Randolph, Chariton, & Macon Counties

January-March 2021

Activity Highlights

Conservation Planning

- **42** Landowner Contacts
- 12 Site Visits
- **27** Projects with Acres
- **4** Attended Webinars

Outreach

- **1** Event
- 1 Interview

Total Acres Impacted: 311.5 acres

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM

Landowners seeding new CRP contracts took advantage of every fair weather day available to get their seed in the ground. As warm season and cool season stands were planted, the unique mixes were reviewed and approved by QF staff and others to determine that the required seed specifications were

met. As acres continue to be planted for CRP signup 54 contracts, new enrollment has begun for signup 56. Before long, contracts will be issued for this new signup and we will be planning conservation on even more acres within the counties.

Coffee Break with a Biologist



In early February we took our technical services out of the field and used a new platform to share information further than ever before. It may sound like a stretch, however, an hour long virtual session allowed us to reach nearly 15 landowners at once and cover a large range of topics tailored to the needs and interests of our participants. The experience was most comparable to a field tour. Not only were landowners receiving guidance tailored to particular requests, but other participants were able to listen in and absorb the information too. Quail Forever Biologist Haley Lockard and I enjoyed reaching landowners in a new way and welcomed the laid back nature of the conversation. After raving reviews from our participants, QF Outreach Coordinator, Kim Cole, will continue to organize these sessions in an attempt to connect even more property owners with our Biologists.

Courtney Nicks
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II
Randolph, Chariton, & Macon Counties

Moberly USDA Office 2995 County Rd. 1325 Moberly, MO 65270 m. 573-694-5316 P. 573-633-2211 x112 cnicks@quailforever.org





Quarterly Partners' Report





Courtney Nicks - Randolph, Chariton, & Macon Counties

January-March 2021

Making a Difference, One Acre at a Time...



Courtney Nicks
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II
Randolph, Chariton, & Macon Counties

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Quarterly Partners' Report





Courtney Nicks - Randolph, Chariton, & Macon Counties

January-March 2021

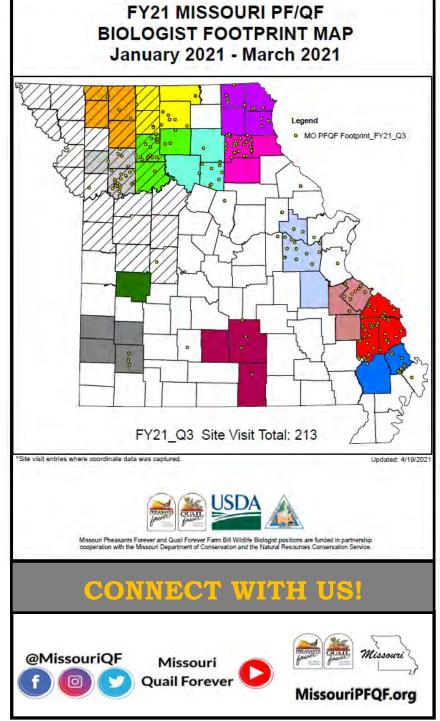
NEXT...

While the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is in full swing, there isn't a dull moment. From seed mix reviews to contract development, and extending on into status reviews of expiring CRP acres, there is no shortage of work to be done. As I venture into this next quarter, I will continue to provide technical service to landowners while carrying out the many programmatic duties.

Keep an eye out for new opportunities offered to Missouri landowners through Quail Forever in Missouri. Whether it's a virtual chat with our biologist or one of our many workshops, take the time to see what is available to you.

Check us out!





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











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

January—March 2021

An Introduction

Stationed in the Mt. Vernon USDA Service Center since March, I am here to serve the people and wildlife of Lawrence, Jasper, Barton, and Dade Counties as your new Quail Forever Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist. I am thrilled to be here, and am eager to help farmers, ranchers, and other landowners meet their wildlife habitat goals, and soil and water conservation needs.

After receiving my Bachelor of Science in biology from Truman State University, I earned a master's degree in natural resources from the University of Missouri. There, my research focused on stream fish community ecology and developing landscape-level stream bioassessment models. Now, as a Quail Forever Biologist, I get to help landowners and community partners manage their land for quail, pollinators, and other wildlife, knowing that all the good we do on the landscape is having an equally profound and positive impact down-



Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist, Ethan Kleekamp

stream. After serving in this same role in Ray County, MO since 2018, I am glad to now be in the state's sprawling Southwest. Specifically, my work here will focus on improving the region's working lands for wildlife through federal programs like CRP, EQIP, and CSP, and state and local programs like MDC's Landowner and Community Assistance Program and Quail Forever's Habitat Challenge Grant agreement with MDC.

Conservation at a Glance

- 77 Landowner Contacts
- 29 Site Visits
- 2 Webinars (425 Total Attendees)

Program Involv	rement	Acres Impacted
CRP		255.7
CSP		3.5
LCAP/HCG		1
	Total	260.2











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

January—March 2021

Precision Agriculture: More Than Just a Row Crop Phrase

The term "precision agriculture", or more commonly "precision ag", has seen its use steadily increase in row-crop country over the last decade. Generally defined as "managing farming inputs based on site-specific information to increase profit, reduce waste, and maintain environmental quality", precision ag has proliferated with the advent of aerial drones, "smart" planting and harvest equipment, and improved GPS technologies. Farmers now have the ability to generate acre-by-acre predictions for needed seed, fertilizer, lime, herbicide, and other inputs. These same technologies also allow farmers to identify poor-performing acreage that might not even be worth farming—acreage that might be better suited for alternative landuses, such as designated wildlife habitat. Conservationists have used this philosophy of "farm the best, conserve the rest" with great success all across the country, but we would be missing a huge opportunity if we didn't market this same strategy to other types of agricultural producers.

In my very first month here in Lawrence County, I met with two separate landowners facing the same dilemma: they were each trying to produce forage on ground that wasn't particularly interested in growing any, or at least not the types they were interested in. One bemoaned the effort required to constantly clear his bottomland hay fields of woody debris along the unruly Spring River, as well as the numerous invasive species deposited after each flood. The



Forestland grazing not only has minimal return for most livestock species, it is often a great detriment to tree health, and soil and water quality. Sites like this might be better suited for timber production or strictly wildlife habitat.

other was debating whether or not to exclude her horses from some wooded acreage that was difficult to keep fenced and produced very little forage.

Every acre of land, based on its soil type, slope, disturbance regime, and myriad other factors, has a preferred state. Some grow grass; others trees. Some like to flood—some like to burn. It's important that we recognize such features and work with, rather than against, these strengths.

Continued ->









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

January—March 2021

Precision Ag...continued

It simply doesn't pay to keep trying to fit a square peg in a round hole. Fortunately, both Howard and Mary were open to the idea of doing something different, and NRCS just so happens to offer practices ideally suited for their land.

We are now in the early stages of planning for a riparian tree and shrub planting along the river that will help slow floodwater, trap debris, and provide wildlife habitat on Howard's farm. For Mary, we are developing a plan to exclude her horses from the forest, thin some of the overstory, and reintroduce prescribed fire as part of a woodland restoration; a rare and declining habitat that is extremely valuable to a wide array of flora and fauna. Moreover, just by letting these acres be what they want to be, Mary and Howard are trading headaches and lost time and money for fantastic wildlife habitat and increased recreational opportunities. Sounds like a good trade to me.

Outreach & Education

This past quarter presented two great opportunities for me to help amplify our message and reach new audiences alongside the Missouri Department of Conservation. In January, fellow Farm Bill Biologist, Josh Marshall, and I hosted a statewide CRP webinar with the help of Kim Cole, our QF Outreach and Education Coordinator, and Bill White from MDC. In March, Bill and I also co-hosted a webinar on pollinator habitat



restoration. Combined, the presentations drew 425 live attendees, and together, their online recordings have received nearly 600 views to date. One of the bright spots of this past socially distanced year is the expansion of our virtual communication platforms— with little more than two hours of input, we were able to reach over 1,000 landowners eager for habitat and program advice! The webinar recordings can be accessed on our Missouri Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever YouTube Channel:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHI27U pQ6eLl1ITChIbM0A



Quarterly Partners' Report

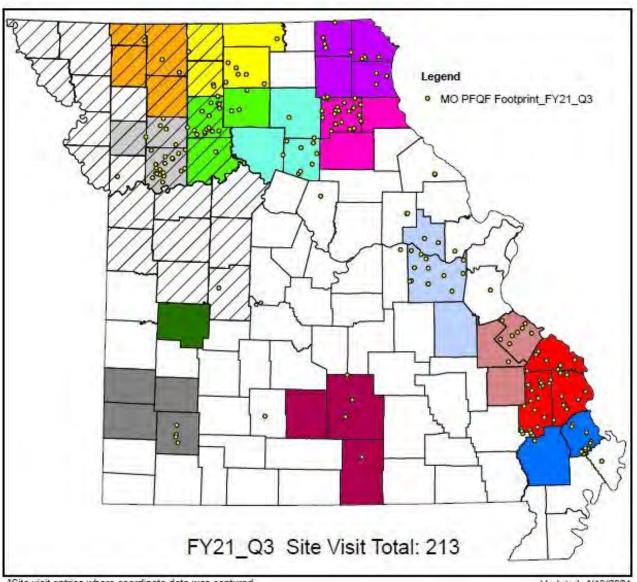




Ethan Kleekamp - Lawrence, Jasper, Barton, & Dade Counties

January—March 2021

FY21 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT MAP January 2021 - March 2021



'Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.

Updated: 4/19/2021



Missouri Quail Forever Quarterly Partners' Report





Haley Lockard - Clark, Knox, Lewis, Scotland

Jan-Mar 2021

Planting the Seed

After months of planning CRP contracts, it's time to actually put seed in the ground. Most of the past quarter has been reviewing seed mixes and helping landowners understand the requirements for seeding their CRP contracts. Quite a few acres are going into native grasses and forbs. I'm excited for the new habitat landowners are creating for wildlife.

In January, I had the honor of assisting a landowner and colleague with 2 prescribed burns in Lewis County. It ended up being a perfect day to burn a small cool season hay field, a pollinator planting, and WRP. Prescribed fire is an invaluable tool for managing a variety of vegetation. The purpose of our burns was to control tree encroachment and increase plant diversity.

A major highlight of the quarter was hosting a **Coffee Break** with a **Biologist** virtual event in February. Kim Cole (Outreach



Coordinator), Courtney Nicks (FBBII), and I held a morning break where landowners joined to ask their management questions. We discussed everything from glade restoration and invasive species management to quail relocation. It was a great event and we even had someone join from the field in their tractor. It was a great opportunity to reach people we don't normally get to interact with from across Missouri and a few other states. Look for more of these events in the future!



Quarter Highlights

Conservation Planning

- 36 Landowner Contacts
- 13 Site Visits
- 59 Projects With Acres
- 41 seed mix reviews
- 17 Conservation Plans

Total Acres Impacted: 1,146

Connect with Us!



Missouri Quail Forever





MissouriPFQF.org



Missouri Quail Forever Quarterly Partners' Report





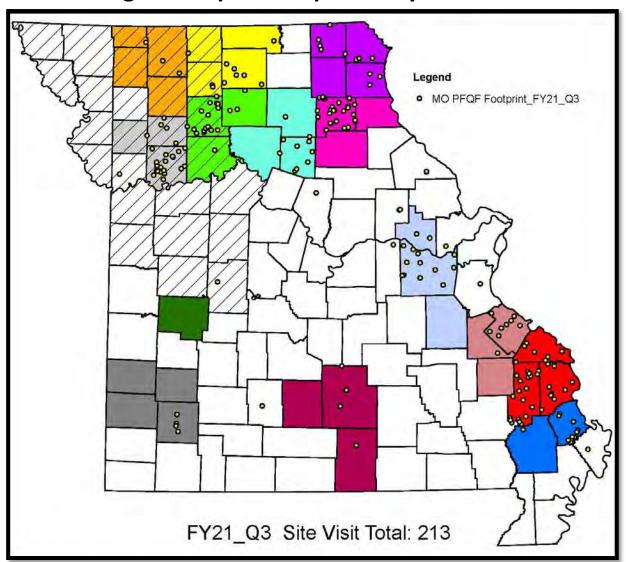
Haley Lockard - Clark, Knox, Lewis, Scotland

Jan-Mar 2021

Looking Forward...

- · Continue to provide technical assistance to landowners
- Conservation planning on CRP SU 55 and 56 offers
- Assist NRCS with EQIP contracts and conservation planning
- Start field checks of CRP expiring in 2022 and 2023

Biologist Footprint Map January-March 2021



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





Coordinating Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report





JAKE SWAFFORD - Northwest Missouri

January - March 2021

Position Update

There has been a lot to get excited about over the last 3 months! The Monarch PRIME-Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is closer to hitting the ground, conservation programs are moving right along, and our Missouri QF team has hosted and attended tons of great trainings, conferences, and webinars. I attended both the Missouri Natural Resources Conference (MNRC) and the Conservation Federation of Missouri's (CFM) annual convention which were terrific opportunities to interact with partners and receive updates on current conservation issues and initiatives. I'm looking forward to the next steps coming this spring and summer.

Pollinator Webinars a Big Success

The Missouri Quail Forever team and partners hosted two successful webinars, Pollinators 101 and 201, focused on pollinators and their habitat during the past quarter. Landowners seeking information on pollinator basics, monarch butterflies, native bees, and how to create habitat tuned in to listen to PF/QF biologists and partners from Missourians for Monarchs and the Missouri Department of Conservation. Both webinars were well attended with nearly 350 participants and over 600 registrations.

These webinars also held popular Q&A sessions following the presentations which allowed landowners to ask questions and talk with biologists from our team about specific issues. While I wasn't involved in the presentations for either webinar, I had a lot of fun assisting with the Q&A sessions for both. The quality of the questions and interest from participants has led our team to plan a Virtual Q&A Hour in the near future.

We're glad that we've been able to engage virtually and have noticed several benefits to the online format, including increased attendance and a statewide reach. Another positive is that we're



A small backyard pollinator plot is prepped using a prescribed burn in March. This will be the plots second full growing season.

able to share the recordings online as a resource for everyone. To view the recordings of the Pollinator 101 and 201 webinars visit our YouTube page here and look for upcoming events at Quail Forever and Pheasants Forever in Missouri.

As always, if you'd like more information on how to create habitat for pollinators, quail, or pheasants, please reach out to me or anyone of our team!

Conservation Planning

- 15 Landowner Contacts
- 12 NRCS Cons. Planner Contacts
- 3 Conservation Plans
- 4 Status Reviews

Programs	Acres Impacted
EQIP	3.8
CSP	26.9
CRP	108.3
Total	139





Coordinating Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report





JAKE SWAFFORD - Northwest Missouri

January - March 2021

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
NRCS Win-PST	Attendees were introduced to Win-PST program, essential
Training	components of the tool, and gained familiarity with running it.
NRCS Partnerships, Grants, & Agreements Training	Attendees learned about USDA-NRCS grants, agreements, and partnerships. Several projects were highlighted and discussed.
AFWA- MAT Adaptive Leadership Principles Course	Began this 4-week course that is designed to help staff gain an understanding of new, groundbreaking concepts in leadership and how to make meaningful progress on issues they care deeply about.
Missouri Natural Resources Conference (MNRC)	Participated in MNRC's virtual conference networking with partners and receiving updates on conservation efforts and research occurring within the state.
Conservation Federation of Missouri (CFM)	Participated in CFMs annual convention (virtually) and served as the Vice-Chair of the Grasslands and Prairie committee. Learned about important conservation issues facing the state.

Outreach & Education

- Assisted with Q&A during QF Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) webinar for landowners with 322 attendees.
- Assisted with Q&A during QF Pollinators 101 webinar which had 240 attendees.
- Assisted with Q&A during QF Pollinators 201 webinar which had 103 attendees.

Additional Work

- Mentored students in the Conservation Leadership Program as they participated in CFM.
- Developed monarch butterfly guidance documents for Quail Forever team and partners.
- Familiarized myself with Working Lands For Wildlife Bobwhite Quail reporting guidelines.
- Reviewed draft wildlife CSP enhancements and provided feedback to Area 1 NRCS.

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 complete Quality Assurance Reviews.
- Assist with the Missouri Bumble Bee Atlas project and monitoring efforts in 2021.
- Create a NW Missouri County Equipment list to identify seeding equipment and availability.
- Assist NRCS at state and area level with the Central Regional Monarch Project.
- Pursue certification as a drone pilot.
- I will continue providing technical assistance to landowners in NW Missouri who are interested in establishing habitat for Monarchs, quail, and other upland wildlife.
- Work with partners to clearly define my new role and responsibilities as they relate to Monarch PRIME

 – RCPP.





Coordinating Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report

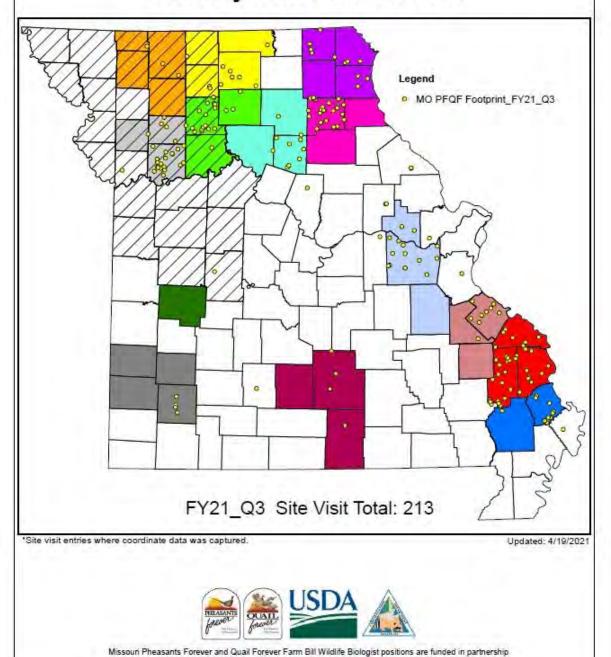




JAKE SWAFFORD - Northwest Missouri

January - March 2021

FY21 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT MAP January 2021 - March 2021



nent of Conservation and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.



Quarterly Partners' Report





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

JAN - MAR 2021

Quarterly Overview

It's hard to believe that the third quarter of the state's Fiscal Year has already come to a close. We are starting the fourth month of 2021, and spring is finally here. Hearing the birds in the morning and feeling the warmer temperatures has most folks in my line of work excited for turkey season. This quarter has been quite productive. I had the privilege of giving two online webinars and assisting with Q&A on an additional webinar. I was also able to give an in-person talk to a local 4H club. In February, I launched into an NRCS conservation planners course and I was able to participate in an MDC Basic Chainsaw Safety Course. It has been a full and rewarding quarter. As we transition into spring, I look to the horizon for upcoming field visits

Webinar's and Online Education

Something good that has come from our current situation of spending more time at home, is that people have gained more access to organizational programs and outreach efforts. Where attendance to these outreach programs used to be limited by where you lived and how willing you were to travel, now a program can be opened to the entire state and country by the click of a computer mouse. In January, I presented with fellow Biologist Ethan Kleekamp on a CRP Webinar. We discussed the ongoing CRP sign-up, how to apply, program policies, and benefits of CRP. It was a great presentation and provided me a chance to learn how to present via webcam. With MDC's help advertising the program, 322 People tuned in to watch the webinar, and our team behind the curtain was able to answer dozens of questions. We also recorded the webinar, sent it to our partners and put it on our Youtube page where an additional 448 interested people have watched it.

I was also fortunate enough to give a second presentation at the Missouri Natural Resources Conference virtual meeting. For three days, myself and teammates attended this multi-day webinar. We listened to conservation partners discuss projects they had been working on and future research or initiatives that continue to make Missouri a great place for conservation. When I presented, I highlighted projects that Quail Forever Chapters and Partners had successfully completed in the past. I continued the presentation by discussing why we need to capitalize and increase this work if we want to make an impact on a greater scale. I discussed the future of partnering with agriculture to help grow a better product and increase their bottom line while making a positive impact for wildlife. I discussed how citizen science is the way of the future and partnering with Missouri's citizens can push the needle forward for conservation research. Finally, I presented on the idea of the Civilian Conservation Corps and how it can be restructured and implemented in many different ways to have an outstanding impact on Missouri's native habitat. I hope the audience of my presentation walked away inspired and with the thought that there are new and exciting ways to engage more people and impact more acres for native habitat.

RX Fire

It is once again fire season and I have had multiple opportunities to help partners and

landowners with prescribed burns. I have been able to assist our partner Roeslein Alternative Energy with burning over 200 acres. The tracts were a prairie restoration and a savanna restoration that recently underwent woody invasive species removal. Both of these fields will benefit exponentially from the use of prescribed fire. I also have been writing burn plans for landowners so that they too may use the tool of prescribed fire on their property. I had the opportunity to conduct a prescribed burn on our family farm. Since we had fire breaks established from burning off our CRP last fall, we were set up to burn 13 acres of a small woodland unit.

Burning woodlands on the family farm

removing multi-flora rose. I am excited to see the impact the prescribed fire has on it.

This is a unit that we have been working on thinning and



Controlled Burn with Roesllein



Quarterly Partners' Report





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

JAN - MAR 2021

Educating Future Generations

In early March, I was able to present to a 4H club in Harrison County, MO. Each month an outdoors or wildlife specialist talks to the club to educate them about the how they can be involved in outdoors or conservation projects. I was asked

Presentation to the 4H Club

to come and speak about pollinator plots and how wildlife benefit and utilize these plots. I enjoyed giving the presentation and the interaction that the kids provided. They were excited to try the root board and they were very attentive to the talk. It amazes me how much they pick up and the questions they ask. I had questions about the size of an adult quail, the size of quail broods, what happens if a nest is accidentally destroyed, how tall native plants can grow and how they can plant their own native pollinator gardens. The parents also had good questions about

how they could put in pollinator plots and the size that is most beneficial to pollinators. I enjoy presenting programs to youth. Through their interest, they can help educate their families and learn at a young age about conserving our natural resources and that building native habitat is important.



4H Students using the native root board

Adding More Tools to the Tool Box

Starting in February, I enrolled in an NRCS planners course called Missouri's Leadership Investing In Planner's Success. Throughout this course, we are learning how to apply NRCS' 9-step planning process to assists Landowner in reaching their goals and solving resource concerns on their property. Each week we conduct an

online seminar and for three weeks we were divided into teams to work with a mentor in the field. It has been a great opportunity to meet new members of NRCS and the SWCD Districts. I have also learned several new concepts about planning and natural resource conservation. I look forward to continuing the course and discovering new tools to help landowners reach their conservation goals.



Field Day

Chainsaw Operations

In mid March, I had the opportunity to join the

Northeast Missouri Department of Conservation Region for a basic chainsaw safety & operations training. While I have worked and had a lot of experience around a chainsaw growing up cutting firewood, I never received an official chainsaw safety training. I looked forward to learning new and better techniques and procedures that would make me a better chainsaw operator. I hoped to learn something new that I could pass onto landowners who were planning on using a chainsaw to build or enhance habitat. It was an exceptional 2 day course filled with detailed information about chainsaw operations and tree felling. We spent the entire second day putting into practice everything we learned on the first day. I learned a lot about how to operate a chainsaw and new techniques that will make me a more efficient sawyer. I am appreciative that MDC allowed me to attend so that I can expand my knowledge



Training Post at Chainsaw **Safety Training**

and skills in the field. I hope to take what I learned and pass it on to others to keep everyone safe while working to build habitat.



Quarterly Partners' Report





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

JAN - MAR 2021

Trainings and Outreach	Summary	
Statewide CRP Webinar	Co-Presented a webinar about CRP Sign-up 53 & 54	
MNRC Wildlife Presentation	Presented at the 2021 MNRC Virtual Conference	
Presentation to the Bethany 4H Club	Provided an educational presentation and activities to the a Harrison County 4H club	
Basic Chainsaw Safety	Participated in MDC's chainsaw safety course	
Conservation Planners Course	Participating in NRCS' 2021 virtual conservation planners course	
Pollinator 2.0	Assisted with the Q&A portion of an online webinar about pollinators hosted by MDC & QF Missouri	

Looking Forward

- May 4th Unionville Chapter Start Meeting
- May 6th QF/PF Missouri Honor Awards
- May 7th MRBO Birds and Bees Festival
- May 17th Rissler Elementary School Reward Day, Crowder State Park

Quarterly Numbers

- 74 Landowners Contacted
- 13 Site Visits
- 2 Conservation Outreach Events
- 3 Partner Training Event

Program	Impacted Ac.
CRP Programs	1,436.56
NRCS Programs	171.5
Total	1,608.06

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.

Missouri **Quail Forever**









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





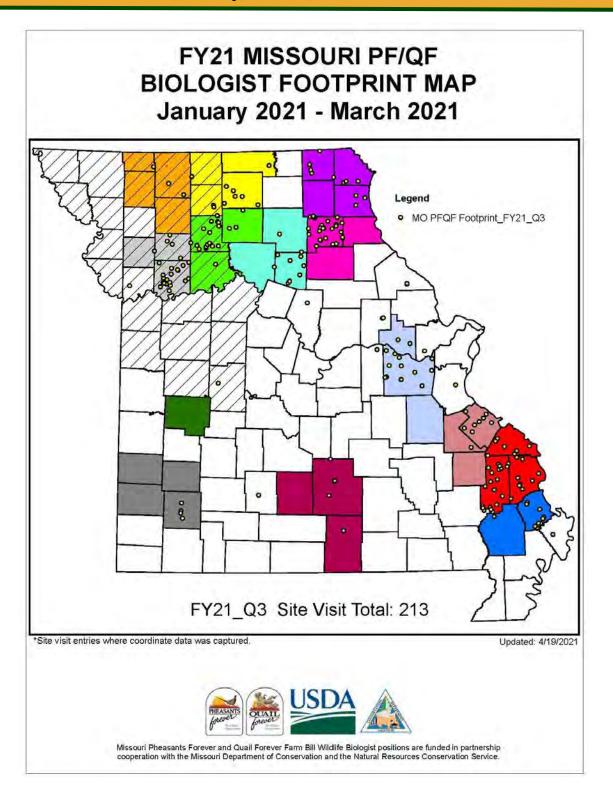
Quarterly Partners' Report





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

JAN - MAR 2021





Quarterly Partners' Report





Kelsey DeZalia - Scott and Stoddard Counties

January 2021-March 2021

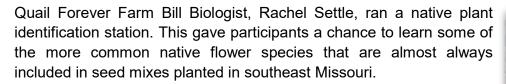
"Plant the seed..."

On February 27th,

About 40 residents of Sikeston, MO and the surrounding area participated in a pollinator educational event located at the Sikeston Park Bootheel club house. The participants rotated through three different educational stations.

Cory Stevens (Steven's Bee Company) brought in an interactive beehive display (bees included), a typical bee-keeper suit, and shared his tremendous knowledge and passion for these ecologically vital pollinators.

Private Land Conservationist (MDC), Kara McSpadden, headed another station with a "Pollinator-Free Sundae" activity where participants were given print outs of sundae ingredients and asked to create their idea of an ideal treat. However, without pollinators, we learned that so many (if not all) of these ingredients would cease to exist.



Wes Buchheit, the Quail Forever Farm Bill Biologist, stationed himself in front of a Truax Drill. Currently, the drill ownership is a partnership between MDC and QF and is available for rent to establish wildlifefriendly cover. He provided information about the drill to interested attendees.

The last step to this process was the broadcasting seed portion. Attendees were given a bucket full of a native seed mix and went out to plant a 1-ac designated area of the 15-ac that would be planted soon after.



















Quarterly Partners' Report





Kelsey DeZalia— Stoddard and Scott Counties

January 2021-March 2021

(cont. from pg. 1)

On March 4th, the Truax drill was used to plant 15 acres of the local Sikeston Park to native wildflowers. As biologists we've adopted the phrase "Sleep, Creep, Leap" in relation to an ideal 3-year period to see the full effect of a wildflower planting. The majority of these species are perennials, which devote energy in root development followed by flowering. Of course, depending on weather and circumstances beyond our control, this might vary. However, in the years to come, this area will prove to be beneficial for wildlife and aid in the enjoyment for patrons of the park as well as the surrounding community.





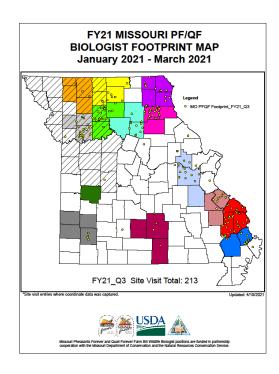
A Special Shout-out To:

- ⇒ The local Quail Forever Chapter the Bootheel Bobwhites for the use of the Truax Drill and financial aid in site preparation
- ⇒ Corteva AgriScience for the awarded grant funds to purchase seed mix
- ⇒ Sikeston Board of Municipal Utilities, Home Oil Inc., and MDC
- ⇒ The volunteers who ran the educational stations
 Wes Buchheit, Rachel Settle, Kara McSpadden, Cory Stevens
- ⇒ All partners, local and national
- ⇒ All other volunteers who helped set up/coordinate

Farm Bill Biologist Assistance

Our Reach

Alongside the regular technical assistance, the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) sign up has kept everyone busy across the state. Stop by your local NRCS/FSA office to inquire about putting quality habitat on your property!





Quarterly Partners' Report





Kelsey DeZalia— Stoddard and Scott Counties

January 2021-March 2021

Virtual Learning

Quail Forever biologists have been dedicated to education and outreach throughout this pandemic. Workshops have gone virtual! With amazing coordination and participation from various partners, we have been able to reach people across the state!

Here are just a few virtual-type workshops and outreach opportunities our biologists have hosted and/or participated in:

- Pollinators 101
- Pollinators 201
- Coffee Break with a Biologist

Did you miss the opportunity to participate? No worries! The pollinator webinars were recorded and posted to the Missouri Quail Forever YouTube Channel.

Training To Plan

Missouri Leaders Investing in Planner Success

Over the course of 8-10 weeks, veterans of the Missouri conservation system have pulled together a training course for "green-horns" of the conservation planning world. Being NRCS led, the training covered a wide array of topics. The instructors broke it down to the basics of conservation planning and the trainees attended hours of webinar sessions as well as attended in-the-field trainings. This training is aimed to break down the fundamentals and instill good planning within planners across the state. This has been a huge commitment on everyone's part to ensure the best quality of service for our producers!



Conservation Technical Assistance

- Coordinated Pollinator Event at the local park 40 landowner contacts
- Planted 15 acres of native wildflower seed 37 site visits to provide CTA and management using Truax drill at the park
 - recommendations
- Attended virtual MNRC (Missouri Natural Enrolled in MOLIPS conservation Resource Conference)
- planner 8-week training course
- planting acres
- Assisted in four projects that resulted in Completed conservation planner virtual learning requirements



Quarterly Partners' Report





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

January—March 2021

FY 2021—Third Quarter

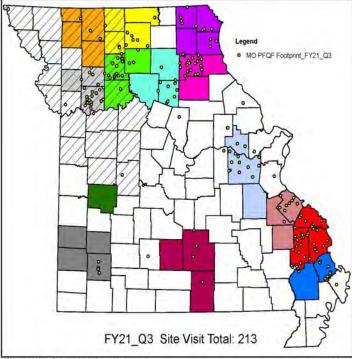
From January through March, our Missouri team conducted 213 site visits and logged 880 landowner contacts while working in 64 counties. We were able to impact over 6,451 acres of habitat statewide and reach 1224 workshop and meeting participants at 15 events.

During the last quarter, I conducted 10 site visits and reported 60 landowner contacts. Site visits were for GCRP re-enrollments, new CRP offers, and initial field visits for landowners interested in EQIP. The majority of these landowners specifically stated their main interest in EQIP was to apply for a monarch habitat planting. Through habitat planning and technical assistance, I impacted over 122 acres. I wrote a 10-acre burn plan and completed a 4-acre monarch habitat planting checkout for separate LCAP projects.

As for conservation outreach, I assisted FBB Kelsey DeZalia with her pollinator event in Sikeston. I also participated in a Seed Swap event that was hosted by the Ozark Regional Library in Fredericktown.

Looking ahead, I plan to write Conservation State visit entries where coordinate data was captu. Plans for CRP, host virtual and in-person workshops focused on habitat management, landowners and continue working with interested creating habitat through in conservation programs.

FY21 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT MAP January 2021 - March 2021





Conservation Technical Assistance Summary

Conservation Planning Acres **Acres Program CRP Practice Impacted Impacted** • 60 Landowner Contacts CP1 **EQIP** CP2 10 Site Visits 40 **CSP** CP12 2.0 • 5 Status Reviews/Checkouts MDC LCAP 4 CP21 2 Conservation Outreach Events QF Chapter CP30 1 Prescribed Burn Plan Written Non-Program CP42 66.2 1 Eligibility/Ranking Assessment 4 108.2 Total **Total**

Rachel Settle Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist 711 Pointe Basse Drive Ste. Genevieve. MO 63670 573-883-2703 ext. 8078 rsettle@quailforever.org



Quarterly Partners' Report





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

January—March 2021

Ozark Regional Library Seed Swap

In late March, the Ozark Regional Library System and the University of Missouri Extension collaborated to host seed swap events at the Fredericktown and Ironton libraries. For this socially-distant program, gardeners and plant enthusiasts were encouraged to bring seeds and seed starters from their favorite vegetables, flowers, and trees. The main purpose of the event was to provide an inviting environment for swapping seeds and for sharing techniques and tips related to propagating and growing.

Aside from swapping seeds, the event provided an opportunity to discuss the importance of native plants to soil health. I attended the Fredericktown library event and hosted a Quail Forever booth featuring an interactive native plant root board. The board provided a visual comparison of the height and root depth of select native grasses and wildflowers. Attendees were surprised to see how deep native plant roots compared to the shallow roots of Kentucky blue grass. By using this interactive board I was able to teach landowners how plants with extensive root systems can reduce runoff by providing better infiltration and decrease erosion by holding the soil in place.

I provided attendees with a broad selection of publications and resources related to native plants. Several attendees were interested in how they could replace non-native plants with more beneficial native plants. In particular, the Bradford or Callery Pear tree was a common concern among those attending. Another popular topic during the event was selecting plants that are beneficial to pollinators. I provided guidance for planting native species including milkweed—the host plant for Monarch butterflies. I met several local contacts that have an interest in increasing their knowledge of native plants to combat pollinator declines. Despite the cool rainy weather, the event had a good turnout and attendees left with a native seed packet to plant at home.







Right: University of Missouri Extension and the Ozark Regional Library provided information on gardening and free library programs. All photos courtesy of Tim Smith.









Quarterly Partners' Report

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

January—March 2021

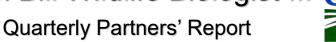
Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
Missouri Natural Resources Conference	Attended virtual conference with other natural resource professionals to discuss the latest research and happenings in Missouri
Ste. Genevieve SWCD Board Meeting	Provided an update of local projects to partners

Looking Forward

- Attend MDC SE PLC meeting in May
- Partner with the University of Missouri Extension to host a Women Owning Woodlands/Women Caring for the Land workshop in Mount Vernon in June
- Obtain NRCS Apprentice Conservation Planner and continue working towards Conservation Planner certification











Wes Buchheit - Bollinger, Cape, and Perry Counties

January - March 2021

Seed hitting the ground

The third quarter falls in the time of year when native grass and forb seed should be planted for wildlife plantings. This time period is known as the dormant planting season. When the seed is broadcasted on at least 60% exposed bare soil or drilled 1/8 inch into the soil, the precipitation and freezing/ thawing of the winter weather helps break the dormancy of the seed to improve germination.

This was such the case for numerous local CRP and EQIP Seed mix of 50 native forb species. seedings. These practices consisted of field borders to reduce the adjacent tree competition for crops and to improve wildlife habitat, plantings that included milkweed and forb seed to target monarch habitat, and whole field CRP practices

with a mixes of native forbs and grasses to benefit a whole host of wildlife.

I met with landowners to recommend site preparation practices, verify proper site prep, and to certify the plantings met planned standards and specifications per the applicable program policy. Site prep is key in a successful planting that leads to excellent wildlife habitat!

Our Missouri Quail Forever Team was busy assisting landowners with similar projects across the state with 880 landowner contacts and conducted 213 site visits while working in 64 Missouri counties. We took advantage of



Native forb/grass seed mix broadcasted on snow with more snow in the forecast

limited capacity to host in-person workshops by hosting several virtual webinars. In total we presented to 1,224 workshop/meeting participants. Through our technical assistance and habitat planning work, we impacted 6,451 acres.

Conservation Planning	Conservation Program	Acres Impacted
188 Landowner Contacts	EQIP	246.1
• 40 Site Visits	CRP	274.47
10 Conservation Plans Written23 Status Reviews/Checkouts	MDC LCAP	31.4
Completed	QF Habitat Challenge Grant	15.75
3 Prescribed Burn Plans Written	Conservation Technical Assistance	41.8
4 Prescribed Burn Plans Reviewed	Total	609.52



Quarterly Partners' Report





Wes Buchheit - Bollinger, Cape, and Perry Counties

January - March 2021

New PBA gaining momentum

The Foothills Prescribed Burn Association (FPBA) was officially formed in January with a mission to help landowners overcome hurdles that limit the use of prescribed burning—lack of experience, equipment, and most of all, people to help conduct the burn. The FPBA facilitates a neighbor-helping-neighbor approach to prescribed burning, currently working in parts of Perry, Bollinger, and surrounding counties as interest dictates. There is no set geography but, simply, how far members are willing to travel to assist others on burns. To become an active member to receive assistance with burning on their land, one must pay annual \$25 dues, and participate on 2 FPBA burns or 1 FPBA burn and a prescribed fire

training.



FPBA members gather after a successful woodland burn

The FPBA is led by a board of directors and those leaders have been successful in the PBA coming out of the gates hot, pun intended. First item of business was to secure a collaborative grant with MDC and Quail Forever to acquire all the proper equipment for safe burning and an enclosed trailer to house the tools. Equipment includes drip torches, hand tools, 3 water units, radios, and more. In less than three months, they have safely completed 12 prescribed burns improving over 90ac of habitat. A variety of habitat

types have been impacted, including woodlands, grasslands, and even a pasture of native grass for cattle forage. Current membership is 16 landowners/community members and growing as the word of the FPBA model continues

learn more and get involved.

As the spring green-up advances, the burning window diminishes, but that won't slow efforts for planning more fire. The FPBA is looking to expand membership, plan a summer meeting, and begin lining up growing season burns potentially starting in late July. This group of passionate conservationists and prescribed fire enthusiasts have accomplished much in little time, and the momentum continues to build for better habitat on the landscape.

to spread. Contact foothillspba@gmail.com to



Pine/oak woodland prescribed burn to stimulate an herbaceous understory great for wildlife







Quarterly Partners' Report

Wes Buchheit - Bollinger, Cape, and Perry Counties

January - March 2021

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
Missouri Natural Resources Conference	Attended the virtual presentations and poster sessions with resource professionals across the state.
Northeast Region Prescribed Fire Council Networking Forum	Networked with neighboring states' prescribed fire councils and learned about their hurdles and successes in promoting the use of prescribed fire.
Coalition of Prescribed Fire Councils National Meeting	Learned how the Coalition of Prescribed Fire Councils has become a national voice for prescribed fire and the goal of connecting fire councils across the country.
Nebraska Pheasants Forever Prescribed Fire Planning Workshop	Attended the workshop to learn tips on prescribed burn planning and took notes for the opportunity to deliver a similar training in Missouri.
Southern Fire Exchange webinar— Potential Applications of PBAs for Family Forest Landowners	Listened to presenters from southeastern states regarding the models used to establish and keep PBAs moving forward.

FY21 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT MAP January 2021 - March 2021 FY21_Q3 Site Visit Total: 213



Little bluestem, big bluestem, and Indiangrass ready to produce tons of forage in a native pasture in response to a FPBA burn.

@MissouriQF





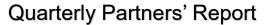






MissouriPFQF.org









Wesley Hanks - Franklin, Warren, and Washington

January-March 2021

Landowners' Path to Working with a QF FBWB

Every landowner is unique in their motivations and overall goals for their property. Management objectives vary from increasing the number mature animals to hunt, restoring natural communities, or having more wildlife to simply watch and enjoy. Just as diverse as landowners' objectives are, so is how a landowner comes to work with Missouri's team of Quail Forever Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist (FBWB). While working with the same landowners year to year is important to help them to make continual improvements, engaging new landowners is just as important. Working with new people allows you to share the QF story and mission with someone who may not be familiar with it. It is also an opportunity to educate them about the important partnerships that make conservation in MO happen. Lastly, it is an opportunity to educate new people why all ECPBA Members burning in Crawford county. wildlife, regardless if it's a non-game or game species, benefit from some level of management.

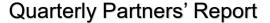


There are several drivers that steer new landowners to our FBWB team. Over the past few months, the MO Outreach and Education Coordinator, Kim Cole, and Communication Coordinator for Missourians for Monarchs, Elizabeth Egan, have worked with FBWBs across the state to host webinars and Q & A's. Outreach such as these can engage a wide audience and let them know that QF has a dedicated team across the state ready to help. Often FBWB are active members in their local QF Chapter or they have a local prescribed burn association (PBA) they regularly work with. When Chapter or PBA members are talking with their friends and family about wildlife habitat, they will likely recommend they reach out to their local QF FBWB. FBWB are located in their local USDA Service Center, which means landowners often call

in with a specific question in mind. Depending on the time of year that may be a specific interest in using fire or managing a specific invasive species. Often those phone calls end up as site visits with the landowners. Being out on the property looking at what is there already, often spurs the broader conversation on what could be done to improve the native plant communities and create better wildlife habitat. Having these different avenues for landowner engagement, helps ensure that MO's team of FBWB continues to reach new landowners and promote QF and its partners' intertwined missions.

Program Checkouts	Acres
EQIP	
Monarch Planting	14.5
Pollinator Planting	31.6
CSP	
Monarch Planting	1.3
Prescribed Burn	35.0
LCAP	
Timber Stand Improvement	32.0
Pollinator Planting	11.4
HCG	
Pollinator Planting	4.7
CRP—See table on page 2 for practice break down.	53.6
Total	184.1









Wesley Hanks - Franklin, Warren, and Washington

January-March 2021

MNRC 2021

Each February, natural resource professionals meet up at the Missouri Natural Resource Conference to share thoughts and ideas on the current and future management of MO's natural resources. This year's theme was Natural Resource Management in a 5G World. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic this theme couldn't have been more relevant. This year's MNRC was 100% online with talks given live from across the country on how technology is aiding in our understanding and management of our natural resources. Since MNRC is typically a gathering of many natural resource professionals, it is an opportunity for college students looking to get into the field to network, practice their interview skills and learn about job opportunities in the natural resource fields. This was also held virtually. Through an online platform, students were able to meet with QF FBWB and talk about what the organization is all about and what



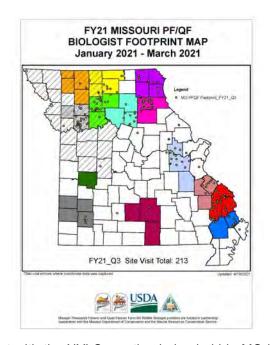
ECPBA Members burn a grassland unit just outside of Washington, MO.

types of careers are available with the organizations. Outreach opportunities like these are great ways to get the QF name out to those who we may not engage with otherwise.

Conservation Planning

- 78 Landowner Contacts
- 20 Site Visits
- 5 Burn Plans Written Covering 175 ac

CRP Seeding Checkouts	Acres
CP 1—Cool-Season Grass	14.6
CP 2—Warm Season Grass	8.2
CP 33—Buffers for Upland Birds	2.9
CP 38-4D—Bobwhite Quail SAFE	21.6
CP 42—Pollinator Habitat	6.3
Total	53.6



Looking Forward

- Continue to talk with landowners about CRP as an option to create wildlife habitat.
- Assist NRCS in planning conservation practices for accepted EQIP contracts.
- Completed NRCS Conservation Planners Training
- Assist with the NYLC meeting being held in MO in June.
- Through landowner contacts I will continue to share the Quail Forever mission and help get anyone interested involved with their local QF chapter.





Quarterly Partners' Report





William Robinson- Marion, Monroe & Shelby Counties

January-March 2021

Position Update

Wow! Three quarters have already gone by in FY21. That must be proof that the saying "Time flies when you're having fun" is true! The third quarter was a busy one. I attended the virtual Missouri Natural Resources Conference, worked on a Quail Study in Southern Illinois, attended the Level 2 Fire Management course put on by the Missouri Department of Conservation and began work on new CRP contracts. I anticipate a busy fourth quarter as we work more on new CRP and begin to look at CRP contracts that expire in 2022.

Q2 FY21 Activity Highlights

- 40 Landowner Contacts
- ♦ 31 Site Visits
- 33 Projects with Acres

472.11 Acres Impacted



Trapping site on Burning Star



CRP Update

It's that time of year again! While CRP sign-up 56 is still going on, we have begun to work on the planning of new contracts that will start in September. Getting a jump start on some of the planning has allowed me to work more in Conservation Desktop and immerse myself in the CRP planning process. I hope to finish these up in the fourth quarter. I also plan on getting a jump start on field reviews for expiring contracts. These field reviews are a wonderful opportunity to see new areas and often lead to good conversations about improving habitat on these acres.



Quail Roost Site

Using radio telemetry to track collared birds

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!





Quarterly Partners' Report





William Robinson- Marion, Monroe & Shelby Counties

January-March 2021

Bobwhite Quail Study

In February I had the opportunity to reconnect with a good friend and former colleague, Blake Baum. I met Blake in the summer of 2018. We worked together for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) at Big Cottonwood Wildlife Management Area, outside of Oakley, Idaho. After our summer working for IDFG, I went on to pursue a career in conservation and Blake went back to school to work on his Masters degree at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. As luck would have it, I am now working for Quail Forever and Blake is working on a Quail study as part of his Masters program. He was kind enough to let me visit for a few days and work with him and his crew on this project. This is currently a ten year study on the first National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative Quail Focal Area in Illinois, Burning Star State Fish and Wildlife Area. His part of the project is focusing on the effects of habitat management and raptor abundance on Bobwhite population ecology and habitat selection. While I was there I helped them set traps, open new trap sites, check traps, collar and band birds, and track birds that had already been collared using radio telemetry. In addition to trapping and tracking birds, Blake and his crew conduct an ongoing raptor survey to determine raptor abundance and proximity to highly used quail habitat.



Blake and his crew preparing seed to set morning traps



Blake setting a trap



A set trap

ADD @MISSOURIQF on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter

You can find us on YouTube @Missouri Quail Forever





Quarterly Partners' Report





William Robinson- Marion, Monroe & Shelby Counties

January-March 2021

Bobwhite Quail Study Cont.

A typical day on this study starts at 5am so that traps can be baited and set before sunrise. Once the traps are set the crew goes out with radio telemetry equipment to track birds. This allows them to track mortality as well as take a look at habitat selection. The traps that were set that morning get checked around 10 am and then get reset. The birds that were caught get banded, were collared, and released. After the traps are reset, the crew heads out to prepare trapping sites for the next week. The reset traps get checked again around 1 pm. A typical day ends between 3 and 4 in the afternoon. I thoroughly enjoyed my time in Illinois. It's always fun to reconnect with friends and even more fun when we have the opportunity to work on something we are both passionate about. It provided me with a chance to learn more about trapping methods, learn about and use radio telemetry equipment, and see first hand how the data for these important studies are collected. I am thankful to be in a position where trips like this are possible! It was an extremely valuable experience for me. If you have any questions about the study feel

Looking Forward

- Attend the Level 3 Fire Management Course
- Continue assisting with CRP Sign-Up 55 and 56
- Put together wildlife focused EQIP contracts
- Start to look at CRP contracts that expire in 2022



Bobwhite Quail that was trapped



Trapped Quail are then placed in this box to be processed



Bobwhite quail being banded

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