



# Coordinating Wildlife Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



**JAKE SWAFFORD - Harrison, Gentry, Worth, Daviess Counties**

**July – September 2018**

### Position Update

Over the past quarter I've kept busy with trainings, outreach, and completing the Regional Conservation Partnership Program- Conservation Stewardship Program (RCPP-CSP) contracts. I provided guidance and technical assistance to NRCS planners as they worked with landowners interested in establishing monarch butterfly habitat through RCPP-CSP. I also assisted the Area Office in reviewing RCPP-CSP contracts to ensure that all wildlife practices were being planned correctly. I was able to attend several terrific trainings too, covering topics like Native Warm Season Grass Grazing Systems and Integrated Monarch Monitoring Program (IMMP). I've also had the chance to do some outreach including talking to the Albany and Bethany Rotary Clubs about monarchs and what I do, discussing programs at the Quail Forever District Meeting, giving monarch updates to the Missourians 4 Monarchs Steering Committee, and presenting to over 600 people on the benefits of pollinators habitat. Now that things are beginning to wrap up for the year it's time to start planning for next year.

### Hundley-Whaley Research Center Twilight Tour and FFA Field Day

The Hundley-Whaley Research Center brought in a variety of speakers for its annual Twilight Tour, which took place on August 28<sup>th</sup>. The annual event includes wagon tours around the 375 acre research center, presentations from speakers on the latest topics in Missouri agriculture, and a free meal. I was lucky enough to be invited to speak about pollinator habitat at the event with topics that ranged from drought to



Jake Swafford talks to the first Tour Wagon about pollinators at Hundley-Whaley Research Center's annual Twilight Tour event. Over 150 landowners were present.

Swabian Hall pigs. This year, tour wagons traveled throughout the Center for about an hour before thunderstorms and heavy rain pushed the event inside, but the event was still a success with over 150 attendees braving the poor weather conditions. I was able to talk about pollinators, their habitat, the

Continued on next page.

#### Conservation Planning

- 61 Landowner Contacts
- 49 Projects with Acres
- 26 Eligibility/ Ranking Assessments
- 15 Quality Assurance Reviews
- 22 Site Visits

Programs	Acres Impacted
RCPP- CSP	2,613.8
CP21 Filterstrips	37.94
CP22 Riparian Buffer	<b>70.82</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,722.56</b>



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**July – September 2018**

benefits to agriculture, and programs available to help establish habitat with those in attendance. While the weather held out I even got to use the pollinator plot near the front of the Center as an illustration of what quality habitat looks like.

I was fortunate enough to be able to present at the same location the next day for the FFA Field Day that Hundley-Whaley Research Center hosts each fall. High school agricultural education classes from the surrounding area are invited to participate in a day of learning about agriculture, natural resources, farm safety, higher educational opportunities and more. With much better weather than the night before, I talked to 455 students from 13 different schools about pollinators, their habitat, and why they are important to them. Students were also interested in learning about monarch butterflies and the challenges they are facing.

Both events were a lot of fun and seemed to spark a lot of interest in the communities I work in every day. I'm excited I had the opportunity to contribute to these events and hope to be invited back next year!

### Outreach & Education

- Presented at Hundley-Whaley Research Center for the annual Twilight Tour and FFA Field Day discussing pollinators with over 600 individuals.
- Talked with Albany Rotary Club about Quail Forever, what I do, and monarch/pollinator habitat.
- Attended Grazing/Native Warm Season Grass Training to become more familiar with the benefits and limitations of NWSG for livestock and wildlife.
- Attended Integrated Monarch Monitoring Program (IMMP) Training to get more information on how to monitor monarch habitat quality and population numbers.

### Additional Work

- Participated in Conservation Federation of Missouri's Affiliate Summit.
- Helped coordinate and attended Quail Forever 2018 Missouri Team Meeting.

### Looking Forward

- I will begin to work on FY19's General EQIP signup which recently announced it's application deadline.
- I will attend the Monarch Conservation Partners Meeting in Nebraska this November.
- Continue to coordinate and plan a RCPP Partners Meeting prior to Monarch Conservation Partners Meeting.
- Begin to work with Indiana NRCS staff to advertise and develop information for their current RCPP program signup.
- Continue coordinating Monarch RCPP conservation programs across Northwest Missouri.
- Working with Monarch Coordinators from Oklahoma and Iowa, we will continue to deliver RCPP efforts across its range.
- I will continue providing technical assistance to landowners in Harrison, Gentry, Worth, and Daviess counties who are interested in establishing habitat for Monarchs, quail, and other upland wildlife.

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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



**Daniel Bollinger - Scott and Stoddard Counties**

**July – September 2018**

### Position Update

As a Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist, I continue to provide advice and tools to Scott and Stoddard county landowners who share an interest in improving wildlife habitat and conserving natural resources. Some forms of advice include prescribed fire, strip disking, edge feathering, herbicide applications, pollinator and forb plantings. Whether landowners are enrolled in a federal, state, or local cost share programs; or doing habitat work on their own, it is my pleasure to provide technical guidance.

### CRP Summer

The past three months passed by so quickly, sometimes you have to stop and smell the multiflora roses withering away from a herbicide treatment. July 16th through September 30th was crunch time for many landowners to preform CRP mid-contract management before the USDA fiscal year ended on September 30th. Many landowners contacted USDA offices about management; and I enjoyed visiting with each landowner at their CRP fields to help decide which management practices would best suit their wildlife interests. Some landowners chose traditional methods such as strip disking to thin native grasses and provide bare soil for quail and other wildlife. Other landowners opened up to the idea of prescribed fire when benefits were presented with safe burning advice. Results desired from prescribed fire included stimulating native forbs in native warm season grass stands and suppressing tree sprouts. A few landowners chose herbicide treatments, especially in areas where invasive species such as Sericea Lespedeza, Johnson Grass, and Autumn Olive exist. No matter the management technique, landowners will be pleased to see more wildlife on their property while conserving natural resources.

I appreciate partnering agencies for their help, and will continue to work close with partners when they need my assistance. It is a privilege to work with folks who have years of experience in the field and truly care about the resources we help manage. Together, we must continue to build strong relationships with landowners who manage natural resources during this short time on earth, so that future generations will continue to enjoy the great outdoors as our Creator intended.



CRP field managed with disking

**EQIP Acres Impacted: 46 acres**

- Conservation Planning**
- 139 Landowner Contacts
  - 60 Site Visits
  - 23 Status Review/Check outs

CRP Practices	Acres Impacted
<b>CP1</b> Introduced Grass and Legume Establishment	554.6
<b>CP2</b> Native Grass, Legume, and Forb Establishment	207.2
<b>CP33</b> Upland Bird Habitat Buffer	66.3
<b>CP38</b> Early Successional Quail Habitat	413.3
<b>CP42</b> Pollinator	135.8
<b>Other CRP</b>	242
<b>Total</b>	<b>1619.2</b>

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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



Daniel Bollinger - Scott and Stoddard Counties

July – September 2018



Panoramic of 74 acre CRP field managed with prescribed fire

### Outreach & Education

- Assisted MDC with Molly French Garden Club Tour on Sand Prairie Conservation Area

### Additional Work

- Attended NRCS Equipment Training
- Participated in Idle Lands Program meeting with MDC
- Participated in QF Missouri Team Meeting in Kirksville, MO
- Attended FOSA and MDC staff meetings in my area to engage with partner agency employees.

### Looking Forward

- I will continue to engage with State, Federal, and NGO partners to improve wildlife habitat and create new habitat opportunities.
- I will continue providing technical assistance to landowners in Scott and Stoddard counties who are interested in improving or managing habitat for monarchs, quail, and other wildlife.
- I will continue to provide technical assistance to landowners and planners with FSA, NRCS, MDC and other wildlife related programs.
- I will be attending NRCS UTV training, EQIP teleconference, and other NRCS trainings for program instructions.
- I will assist with Fall Quail Covey Surveys.
- I will be participating with QF prescribed Fire Committee; and work to complete S130/S190 fire training.
- I will attend QF New Employee Orientation.
- I am planning a Quail Habitat Management Workshop for Landowners during January 2019.
- I am preparing and promoting the upcoming Prescribed Fire Workshop.
- I will assist in planning and conducting Youth Pollinator and Youth Hunt events with Bootheel Bobwhite Quail Forever Chapter.

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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II **USDA**

## Quarterly Partners' Report



**Andrew White - Livingston, Linn, and Carroll Counties**

**July – September 2018**

### Position Update

A majority of this quarter was spent on CSP-RCPP, sprinkled in with a bit of CRP and EQIP-Drought. Additionally, I was tasked in co-developing our annual state staff meeting, as well as mentoring newer teammates through some of the more difficult aspects of our jobs as resource professionals. To say it was a busy quarter would be an understatement. However, being busy means that we were all accomplishing great things for conservation here in Missouri.

### Monarch Magic with Landowners

This past spring was my first interaction with Joe Neptune and, at that time, there weren't many opportunities available that aligned with the management goals he had in place for his properties. His father had previously enrolled numerous acres in CP42 (Pollinator Habitat) within CRP and Joe was wanting to stick close to that to compliment what had already been started. Knowing this goal, I suggested to Joe that the Monarch Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) would be a great fit for his property.

To initialize the process, Joe invited me out to take a look at his properties, so we could get an idea of the appropriate areas to potentially install the monarch habitat if his application was accepted. While riding along for the tour of his land, I noticed that with the mixture of hardwood timber, idle land, CRP, and annual crops, this property was already a haven for upland wildlife. As we continued the tour, Mr. Neptune casually said something that struck a chord with me. "Although the cost-share payment will help, I am doing this because it is the right thing to do. It may not be a complete solution to what has been done here year after year to add to the detriment to the monarch, but I really feel it is a step in the right direction."

This left me rather speechless. This is a landowner, who is willing to make managing for monarch and other pollinators a priority, right up there next to deer, turkey, and quail. I knew at that moment this project was going to be an exciting one. With the conservation plan completed, 30.4 acres of high-quality monarch habitat will be planted over the next four years. Additionally, to further compliment this planting, a fruit tree planting, treatment of herbaceous invasives, and over crop plantings will be utilized to further benefit not only the monarch butterfly, but a plethora of other pollinators and upland wildlife. I believe this relationship has been forged thanks to the magic of the monarch. Joe and I are both excited to watch as this project blooms into the coming years.



Joe Neptune and family.

Programs	Acres Impacted
CRP	630.9
CSP	2,479.08
HCG	8.26
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,118.24</b>

#### Conservation Planning

- 192 Landowner Contacts
- 96 Site Visits
- 85 Conservation Plans Written/Modified
- 12 Status Review/Checkout
- 77 Eligibility/Ranking Assessments
- 4 Rx Burn Plans Completed



# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II **USDA**

## Quarterly Partners' Report



Andrew White - Livingston, Linn, and Carroll Counties

July – September 2018



### Outreach & Education

- Was interviewed by local radio station regarding the New Hunter Dove Initiative to help generate interest across the area.
- Assisted the Shortgrass Chapter of Quail Forever, MDC and NWTf with NHDl safety meeting and mentored hunts.

Photo of a newly emerged Monarch Butterfly taken during a RCPP-Monarch Verification Site Visit.

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
<b>NBCI Grazing NWSG for Bobwhite Quail</b>	Attended a two day training led by the NBCI on the establishment and rotational grazing of NWSG as a benefit and management tool for the bobwhite quail and other upland wildlife.
<b>CRP SU51 Training Conference Call</b>	Participated in training led by NRCS on timelines and planning guidance in relation to the most recent CRP signup 51.
<b>MO PF/QF District Meeting</b>	Spoke to chapters about various projects and accomplishments made over FY18.
<b>MO PF/QF Annual Team Meeting</b>	Attended the annual MO PF/QF team meeting where we set goals for the coming year, received training on various job duties and toured the Union Ridge Conservation Area.

### Looking Forward

- Continued involvement with CSP-RCPP Monarch and EQIP by assisting landowners in carrying out their respective conservation plans by staking out areas to be seeded. I am also currently working with NRCS office staff to develop a guideline checklist for installing monarch and pollinator plots.
- Participate as partner in a nation-wide workload study being conducted by NRCS
- Receive UTV training with NRCS office staff in Elsberry, MO in October.
- Will assist Poosey Conservation Area manager , as well as with NBCI fall quail covey counts in October.
- Host a QF Landowner Assistance station at the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Poosey Conservation Area Fall Driving Tour, in Livingston County, on October 21.

*\*If you would like to discuss habitat projects on your land or if you know someone else that is interested in wildlife habitat work, please contact me using the information below.\**

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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



Courtney Nicks - Marion, Monroe, & Shelby Counties

July–Sept 2018

### Position Update

I just finished the first quarter of FY19. It was definitely a quarter worth writing home about! Three months packed with great trainings, events, and new landowner contacts. It began with the “Using Native Warm



2018 NWSG Demonstration Plot

Season Grasses in Grazing Systems” workshop. Hosted by the MU Forage Research Center in Linneus, MO. This opportunity was provided by grants given to the Center for Native Grasslands Management and National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative. We discussed the benefits of native warm season grasses (NWSG) in grazing systems and were able to observe these systems first hand. Demonstration plots showed side-by-side comparisons of NWSG and CSG (cool season grass) pastures experiencing drought conditions in July. All in all, forage availability in

NWSG systems far exceeded that of CSG, which primarily consisted of brown fescue fields at that time. It was a great representation of how NWSG could be utilized during times of crisis, such as severe drought. These systems also revealed opportunity for cattle weight gains during summer months when CSG failed to do so.

As August approached, severe drought spread through the counties and by the second week of August emergency grazing on CRP acres was initiated. I spent the next few weeks determining eligibility and reporting back to FSA. During this time I also assisted Jamie Ebbesmeyer, Private Land Conservationist, in organizing the Mark Twain Prescribed Burn Association (MTPBA) annual meeting and Mark Twain Quail Forever (MTQF) annual dove hunts. During September, I had the privilege to assist with the annual Envirothon training day held at the Mark Twain Visitor Center in Perry, MO. I provided information that the students would be tested on in the wildlife portion of the Envirothon. Lastly, I finished up the month with the Missouri Quail Forever Team meeting, where we were able to evaluate the past year and set new goals for 2019.

### Quarterly Highlights:

#### Conservation Planning

- 100 Landowner Contacts
- 24 Site Visits
- 3 Outreach Events
- 3 Conservation plans
- 11 Status Reviews

<b>Acres Impacted</b>
<b>376.5</b>



2018 Dove Hunt

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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



Courtney Nicks - Marion, Monroe, & Shelby Counties

July- Sept 2018

### Mark Twain Prescribed Burn Association (MTPBA)

The MTPBA has done it again! Completing another successful season of prescribed fire, 221.4 acres were impacted this past spring. Burns were initiated to meet mid contract management requirements for CRP acres, control invasive species, and/or set back CSG to promote wildlife friendly species. In celebration of a job well done, the annual PBA cookout was held in

Stoutsville, MO. Jamie Ebbesmeyer and myself led a field tour for the group to observe first hand, the impacts they made on the property from a burn conducted earlier this year. We found a plethora of native warm season grasses including little bluestem, big bluestem, Indian grass, and switch grass. Forbs such as partridge pea, wild bergamot, and common milkweed were also flourishing, and several monarchs and other pollinator species were observed using the acres. It was exciting to see so many folks intrigued about the impacts they had made. In total, we had 20 PBA members attend and had 10 prescribed fire requests for the coming fall and spring combined. We also elected new officers that are excited to hit the



Landowners making a difference!

#### Mark Twain PBA Committee

- Dave Harmon (President)
- John Gilmore (Vice President)
- Ferris Stenemeyer (Treasurer)
- Eugene Durbin (Board Member)
- Bill McKinney (Board Member)
- Verle Hugnot (Board Member)

ground running. Dave Harmon, new President of the PBA has made efforts to reach new landowners and create more support for the organization through social media. Creating a Facebook page and MTPBA closed group will allow more fluid communication with the community and current members. Having an opportunity to share our efforts as we move forward, will undoubtedly help spread the word of how our landowners are creating better wildlife habitat. It is an exciting time and I am looking forward to our upcoming efforts and advancements.



(Monarch Caterpillars)

### Outreach and Education



(red fox)

On September 13th, I assisted with the Envirothon training at the Mark Twain Visitors Center. I provided a training that covered material for the wildlife portion of the Envirothon exam that will be held in October. Several skins, skulls, and plants were identified during the training. I also discussed broad ecology topics that will likely appear on test day. Four additional sections were covered during the training by other professionals: Forestry, Aquatics, Soils, and Current Issue. A total of six schools and eight teams are participating this year in the Envirothon competition. These included three teams

from Moberly, and one team from each additional school, Kirksville, Atlanta C-3, South Shelby, North Shelby, and LaPlata.



(Sericea Lespedeza)

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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

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Courtney Nicks - Marion, Monroe, & Shelby Counties

July– Sept 2018

### 2018 Mark Twain Quail Forever Dove Hunt

Hunter with dove limit



Thanks to contributions from the Kendrick family, Quail Forever, MDC, and NWTF we had a phenomenal 10 acre field of sunflowers to host the annual MTQF dove hunt. I helped organize the event; including the development of outreach flyers, online signup for participants and volunteers, as well as orchestrating mentor and mentee pairing.

We kicked off with an opening day hunt, September 1st, and had a great turnout and some very excited participants. Thirteen hunters checked in for the morning hunt and 12 new hunters checked in for the evening effort. Each hunter was paired with an experienced mentor who joined them in the field while hunting. At the end of the day, a total of 128 birds had been harvested. In addition to the hunt, there were opportunities for shooting clay birds, shooting pellet guns, gun cleaning, and dove cleaning. Food was prepared for the hungry hunters as they came back from the field. The stories, the laughter and smiles were a sight to see, making the event well worth the effort.

Our second hunt, scheduled for September 8th, was canceled because of heavy rains. However, our dedicated members made sure it wasn't a missed opportunity and made efforts to reschedule the event the following weekend. We had 6 hunters and 7 mentors attend the hunt on September 15th. Almost limiting out, they harvested 149 doves. Together the hunts offered many youth hunters and an adult hunter an opportunity to learn gun safety, hunting techniques, and experience the great outdoors. It was a great success!

2018 September 1st Dove Hunt



Trainings/Meetings	Outcome
NWSG Grazing Workshop	This workshop was offered through NBCI and the MU Grazing School to educate professionals about the advantages of NWSG grazing systems.
Civil Rights Training	NRCS training to discuss employee rights and resources.
PBA Annual Meeting	Led by QF and MDC staff to re-energize members and recap PBA efforts.
Quail Forever Missouri Team Meeting	This was a three day meeting held for Quail Forever staff in Missouri. We discussed accomplishments, expectations, and goals.

### Looking Forward, I will...

- Continue to be available to landowners and provide technical assistance.
- Continue the NRCS curriculum to become an apprentice conservation planner.
- Develop a plan to execute outreach efforts.
- Complete NRCS UTV training.
- Attend the Fire Summit held in Ardmore, OK in October.
- Assist with the Envirothon event held in October as a test grader.
- Develop a poster to present at 2019 MNRC for QF seed study.

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

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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



Ethan Kleekamp - Ray, Caldwell, & Clinton County

July – September 2018

### Position Update

I have continued to gain valuable experience and knowledge while serving the farmers and landowners of Ray, Caldwell, and Clinton county as a Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist. After spending a brief spring getting acclimated in my new position, I encountered many new challenges and opportunities as the hot, dry summer hovered over Northwest Missouri. As difficult as it can be for agricultural producers, drought can be a highly effective teacher, and proved an effective backdrop for promoting native forages, cover crops, and wildlife habitat on “thin” or otherwise unproductive acres.

### A New Prairie Umbrella Species

My last several months have largely focused on assisting landowners enrolled in the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), particularly those who elected to establish monarch butterfly habitat as one of their property’s enhancements. The Monarch’s plight has been widely publicized over the last several years, and now NRCS’ CSP program is an instrumental part of a national, collaborative effort to strategically deliver pollinator habitat along the species’ migration corridor, which happens to encompass the breadth of Northwest Missouri. Landowners have had various reasons for participating in the program, and those that required additional effort to recruit to the monarch cause have often asked “*what’s so special about Monarchs anyhow?*”.

Others eager to make a difference for the butterflies have wanted to know specifics about desirable habitat and how we might assess an area for monarch suitability. Either way, one of the most common inquiries is why *Quail Forever* is putting so much effort into *butterfly* conservation.

The best way to convince hesitant or skeptical landowners is to educate them on the incredible phenology of the monarch butterfly. They are certainly more willing to convert an acre or two of hayfield or row-crop after learning that their property could be an integral nursery and nectaring area sustaining a multigenerational migration. - *Continued on next page*



A Monarch and a Great Spangled Fritillary sharing a swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnate*)

**Conservation Planning**

- 101 Landowner Contacts
- 46 Site Visits
- 27 Conservation Plans Written
- 32 Status Reviews / Checkouts

Program Involvement	Acres Impacted
Conservation Stewardship Program	291.2
Conservation Reserve Program	319.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>610.49</b>



# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



Ethan Kleekamp - Ray, Caldwell, & Clinton County

July – September 2018

### Monarchs Continued

In September, before their own habitat conversions even began, landowners stopping by the office were excitedly asking whether I thought the butterflies they were seeing were southbound migrants or fifth generation Missouri monarchs, demonstrating how a little knowledge can lead to great enthusiasm, and hopefully promote a strong conservation ethic.



Left - Monarch Butterflies mating on wingstem (*Verbesina alternifolia*).

Below - Monarch caterpillars feasting on common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*).



The second common landowner inquiry is also one of great interest to QF, NRCS, and other national partners involved in the monarch effort: *How do you determine monarch habitat suitability?* To answer this, we have turned to NRCS' Monarch Butterfly Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide. In short, fields with no chemical drift from adjacent crops, high milkweed stem density, and a high density and richness of nectaring forbs is considered excellent habitat. Because most of the CSP contracts in my area are converting hay land, we can safely assume a dramatic increase in suitable habitat. However, with some farms converting marginal monarch habitat, these "WHEGs" allow us to more accurately measure baseline conditions, and can ultimately help quantify the specific effect our restoration efforts have on monarch populations.

We generally consider Bobwhites a keystone prairie and savanna species, and have often catered our restoration efforts to their specific habitat needs. Through a combination of specific life-history needs and strong public support, quail and other so-called "umbrella" species offer an opportunity to conserve many of the organisms reliant on similar habitat types. It just so happens that high quality monarch habitat meets all the brood-rearing requirements of quail. So, as the monarchs are riding these recent cold fronts south, we'll be riding the wave of monarch enthusiasm to conserve quail and other upland wildlife throughout Missouri!

### Outreach & Education

- In August, I represented Quail Forever at the Missouri State Fair invasive species outreach event. Together with personnel from MDC, DNR, MODOT, and Grow Native, we provided



Invasive plants info table at the MO State Fair

identification and treatment advice to numerous fair onlookers and passersby's. Visitors were particularly interested to hear the importance of biodiversity for a natural community to resist nonnative invasion, and were eager to learn of native "replacements" following invasive removal. The showcased plants (especially the Sericea Lespedeza!) brought the most questions, and we were able to help landowners figure out the best approaches to combatting invasive plants encroaching on their pastures, hayfields, and wildlife habitat seedings.

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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



Ethan Kleekamp - Ray, Caldwell, & Clinton County

July – September 2018

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
<b>Grazing Native Warm Season Grasses</b>	Attended a 2-day workshop at MU's Forage Systems Research Center hosted by the Center for Native Grassland Management and the National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative. The University of Tennessee's Dr. Patrick Keyser provided information on establishing and managing NWSGs, from both a livestock production and wildlife habitat perspective.
<b>NRCS Civil Rights Training</b>	Attended an NRCS-sponsored civil rights training which featured presentations on First Nations Peoples in NRCS and on Native American history in Missouri. The training proved a good reminder of the different ethics and relationships people have with the land around them, and how to honor and respect these differences.
<b>Missouri Quail Forever Team Meeting</b>	Spent several days in September with Quail Forever staff from across Missouri to recap accomplishments from our last fiscal year, and to set goals and expectations for the coming year. This served as a great opportunity to learn about the various challenges and opportunities that exist in different parts of the state, and how QF personnel are working with their partners to educate the public and conserve wildlife throughout Missouri.

### Looking Forward

- This upcoming quarter guarantees to bring numerous questions, challenges and learning opportunities. Among these will be spearheading the redesign of the Missouri Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever website. In addition to updating staff and chapter information, we will be looking to add recurring newsletters and calendar updates, and to provide a compendium of technical resources for landowners pursuing their own habitat restoration projects.
- Now that the contracting work has all been completed for this year's CSP participants, landowners will be requiring a fair amount of technical assistance to help them decipher their plans and execute their conservation practices to NRCS standards. This will likely consist of additional conversion recommendations, seed ticket verification, and follow-up site visits to confirm appropriate locations and site preparation for native forb and grass establishment.
- After spending the last several months planning CSP and CRP contracts, I will now be turning my attention to the upcoming Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) enrollment period. I am anticipating strong interest in EQIP wildlife programs in my work area, and am eager to meet with landowners to help develop plans for their farms.
- The next several months will also offer several professional development and education opportunities. Among these will be an MDC Fire Management Level II course, and training to assist with fall covey counts using the National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative protocol.
- Lastly, I am particularly excited to assist my local PFQF chapters with their upcoming youth hunts, and if given an opportunity, to pursue some birds of my own!



Touring a thriving NWSG pasture in the heat of Northwest Missouri's drought as part of the grazing workshop field day



# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

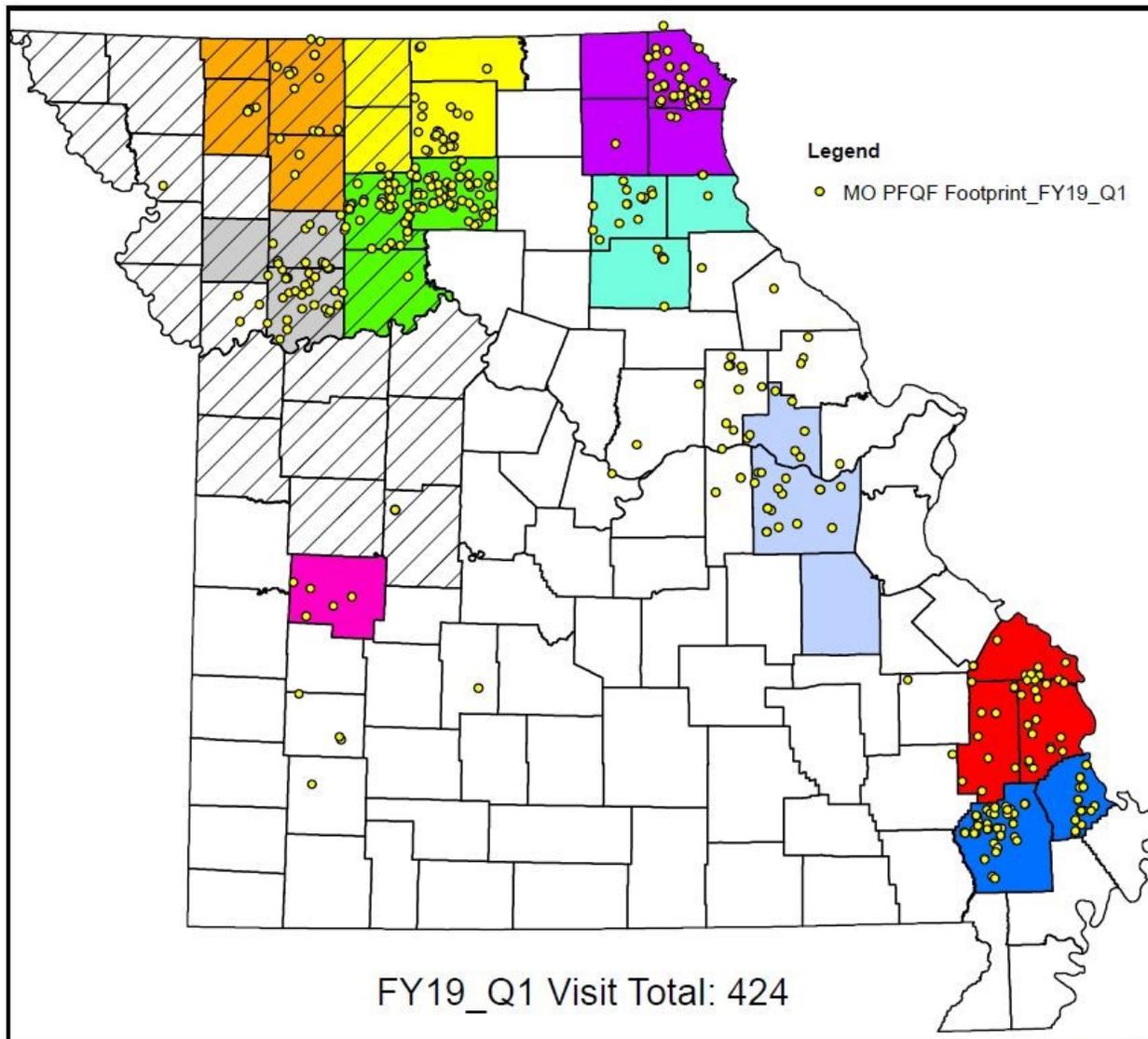
## Quarterly Partners' Report



Ethan Kleekamp - Ray, Caldwell, & Clinton County

July – September 2018

### FY19 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT MAP July 2018 - September 2018



Updated: 10/11/2018



# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



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

July – September 2018

### Position Update

This past quarter has been filled with many opportunities to learn new skills and develop relationships with new landowners. At the beginning of the quarter, I provided assistance to landowners as severe drought hit Sullivan county. As the quarter continued, I assisted FSA with CRP reenrollments. In between these events, I was able to attend workshops that increased my technical skills and knowledge. All in all it has been a productive quarter and I look forward to the challenges and experiences of next quarter.

### Quarterly Projects and Work



Male and female quail spotted during field checks

Early on in the quarter, NRCS provided a cover crop program to assist landowners in the drought stressed region of Missouri. This sign up kept the entire office busy and I quickly jumped in to assist the area landowners and farmers. I took a place at the front counter aiding landowners with EQIP applications. I provided advice on cover crop mixes that would benefit their livestock, soil, and wildlife. Assisting with applications offered me the opportunity to meet several area landowners and discuss my role in Sullivan county as their Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist.

As the drought sign up concluded I began conducting eligibility assessments for the Farm Service Agency's CRP Reenrollment. These assessments took me all over Sullivan and Putnam county where I

developed an appreciation of the various landscapes, habitat, and topography within North Missouri's counties. I had the privilege of seeing many remnant native plants and wildlife each day as I drove to these various sites. It was refreshing being outdoors and seeing the work that is being done to benefit wildlife habitat and the results it brings. Upon completion of the assessments I learned how to write conservation plans and assisted NRCS in completing conservation plans for Sullivan and Putnam counties. I was able to speak with many landowners about their mid-contract management and how to best maintain their CRP acres. With the plans now signed, I look forward to seeing how these properties evolve over the coming years.

Last quarter a project was started with a Sullivan County landowner and the USFWS. I enjoyed this project because it show cased what happens when conservation partners come together to help a landowner reach their goals. Through this joint project, we were able to help the landowner conduct management operations on *Sericea lespedeza* and create forest openings through woody cover control. This project involved contributions of five different partners. The landowner conducted the work himself, while The Missouri Department of Conservation, Quail Forever Chapter, USFWS, and National Wild Turkey Federation provided funding. QF and USFWS also provided technical assistance. **This project demonstrates that that we truly go farther together!**

CRP Practices	Impacted Ac.
CP21	15.72
CP22	98.87
CP33	14.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>129.19</b>

#### Conservation Planning

- 50 Landowner Contacts
- 25 Site Visits
- 17 Status Reviews Conducted
- 3 Conservation Plans Completed



# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



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

July – September 2018

### Outreach & Education

- I attended the Western District QF/PF Chapter Meeting where I met several QF/PF chapter members. Specifically, I met a gentlemen that put me in contact with his father, a landowner within one of my counties, that I am now working with. During the meeting I also gave a brief update highlighting what I have been working on since I joined the team in April.

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
<b>North Area Soil and Water Conservation District Meeting</b>	SWCD District meeting which involved updates from partners, recap from the previous years goals and work , and discussion about the next years goals and programs.
<b>Western District QF/PF Chapter Meeting</b>	Introduced myself to the QF/PF chapters that were present at the Western District meeting and shared some of the work I had been doing since I started.
<b>Missouri QF State Team Meeting</b>	Recap of Quail Forever efforts last year and assisted with developing team goals for the new Fiscal year.
<b>UTV Training</b>	Attended the NRCS certified UTV training which will allow me to better serve the landowners I work with.
<b>Area 2A FOSA Meeting</b>	Area 2A FOSA held a meeting to discuss new programs and protocols and to bid farewell to our Retiring DC.
<b>NRCS EQIP Working Group</b>	Assisted my Area 1 FOSA with organizing EQIP application questions for the upcoming EQIP sign up.

### Looking Forward

- Continue working with Landowners to further planned projects.
- Work with the Green Hill PBA President to plan spring burns.
- Assist with the FY19 EQIP sign-up.
- Attend Quail Forever New Employee Orientation in Minnesota, January 2019.

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



### Position Update

July turned dry and hot in the west central and southwest Missouri. As cool-season grasses, particularly tall fescue, slowed in growth the native warm-season forages continued to increase in tonnage. This set the stage for showing the benefits of adding native forages into grazing systems on farms for economic and wildlife purposes. Tall fescue hay produced half the normal tonnage this year while native forages continued producing the same number of hay bales as previous years.

### Evening Pasture Walks Popular for Landowners

When pastures run out of grass and producers start hauling hay to their livestock in the middle of summer they begin searching for ways to change-up the management of their grazing system. Many landowners across Missouri have planted native warm-season grasses (NWSG) and forbs on their property for various reasons. Some CRP was planted to NWSG. In other cases recreational landowners planted natives for wildlife cover. Yet other landowners planted native grasses and forbs as part of their grazing system seeking to diversify the forages. In the summer of 2018 several evening pasture walks were scheduled to let landowners see first hand how these native forages were being grazed. The host farmer explained how the natives were planted, how they are managed, and how well the livestock gained weight. During each evening Bobwhites could be heard whistling. At the events on Steve Clubine's farm the producers attending could see the abundant forb cover in his pasture. Steve explained the cattle grazed the native forbs along with the grasses and the pasture provided excellent brood habitat for grassland birds including quail that hatched there.



Steve Clubine hosted three pasture walks during the summer on his farm in Benton County. Photo by Aimee Coy

#### Conservation Planning

- 34 Landowner Contacts
- 13 Site Visits

Other Programs	Acres Impacted
EQIP	16
CTA	180
<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>



### Outreach & Education

- Made final preparations for the field tour to be held during the upcoming Private Lands Partner Day being held in Southwest Missouri.
- Taught Junior High students from Osceola summer school the practical use of Algebra in a wildlife biologist job. A field exercise was conducted calculating field acreage and grazing stocking rate.
- On Aug. 7th a meeting was conducted to officially form the Upper Osage Prescribed Burn Association with 12 members. The purpose is to educate landowners in the PBA on the safe and appropriate use of prescribed fire.
- Taught Osceola summer school elementary students about mammals found in the Missouri grasslands.
- Helped with a field day hosted in Dade County to show NWSG grazing to biologists from the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission and to the manager from the Twelve Stone Ranch.
- Attended MO QF Chapter District meetings in Kansas City and Springfield to give update on quail in grasslands in this part of Missouri.

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
<b>Grazing School (Vernon Co.)</b>	Presented a talk about the benefits of grazing native forages for farm economics and for wildlife use. The grazing school was conducted by staff from Missouri University Extension and from Natural Resource Conservation Service. 28 producers attended with some located in the Upper Osage Grassland Geography.
<b>Landowner NWSG Grazing Workshop</b>	35 producers attended the workshop on the benefits of using native forages in a grazing system. Classroom presentations were followed by field tour of native forages being grazed.
<b>Landowner Native Forage Pasture Walks.</b>	Assisted with three evening pasture walks during the hot dry summer to show 104 landowners and producers the benefits of using native warm-season forages during the summer in a grazing system. Bobwhite quail were seen or heard at each walk.

### Looking Forward

- Talk about importance of prescribed fire on private lands during the Private Lands Partners Day field tour in Southwest Missouri on the Haubein ranch scheduled for Oct. 3rd.
- Prepare Prescribed Burn Plans for landowners in FOSA.
- Missouri Quail Forever team grazing committee—draft pamphlet for landowners using native forages.
- Assist Missouri Conservation Dept. Private Land Services conduct a Landowner Prescribed Burn Workshop in the Upper Osage Grassland geography. .



# Missouri Quail Forever

## Quarterly Partners' Report



Wes Buchheit - Bollinger, Cape, and Perry Counties

July-September 2018

### Position Update

Where has the summer gone? Time flew by as a large portion of the summer was spent assisting landowners and FSA/NRCS staff with CRP re-enrollment offers and eligibility for CP21 (herbaceous filter strip) and CP22 (riparian forest buffer). Other landowner assistance work included providing recommendations for controlling the ever so abundant sericea lespedeza, evaluating pollinator plantings, providing guidance for growing season prescribed burns, and working with landowners to properly prepare this winter's EQIP, CSP, MDC LAP, and QF Habitat Challenge Grant pollinator plantings.

### Conservation Technical Assistance Summary

<u>Conservation Planning</u>	CRP Practices	Acres Impacted	Other Programs	Acres Impacted
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 95 Landowner Contacts</li> <li>• 45 Site Visits</li> <li>• 24 Conservation Plans Written</li> <li>• 5 Pollinator/monarch seeding plans written</li> </ul>	CP1	30	EQIP	17.5
	CP21	99.7	CSP	35.7
	CP22	238.8	MDC LAP	2.6
	CP33	22.8	QF Chapter	-
	CP38	105	Non-Program	29.8
	CP42	20.7	<b>Total</b>	<b>85.6</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>517</b>		

### Outreach & Education

- Assisted MDC and QDMA staff presenting the Landowner Prescribed Burn Workshop for the Ste Gen County wildlife cooperative.
- Presented "Early Successional Management for Deer" to landowners in Fredericktown.
- Hosted Quail Forever booth at MDC Nature Center's Conservation Day Festival.
- Attended Quail Forever Chapter District Meeting and gave position update to chapter members.
- Attended MDC SE Private Land Services staff meeting.
- Presented "Benefits of Grazing Natives" at NRCS/MU Extension Grazing School.



*Monarch butterfly caterpillar feeds on swamp milkweed plant along CP22 strip.*

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# Missouri Quail Forever

## Quarterly Partners' Report



Wes Buchheit - Bollinger, Cape, and Perry Counties

July-September 2018

### Quail in an Overlooked Landscape

I was on the road headed out towards the western border of Perry County to meet with a landowner who had converted his CP2 (native warm season grass) to a CP38 (bobwhite quail habitat) who wanted a second opinion on how the planting was looking. Looking out the windshield, I was taking in the surrounding landscape that went from the mostly open “barrens” of Perry County to the ever-increasing oak-hickory woodland landscape classified as the Ozark Border. I began to wonder how a quail would ever find these tailored CP38 fields I was headed towards in a mostly wooded landscape.



I stepped out of the truck to introduce myself and shake the hand of the landowner, Mark Loehnig. His polite welcome to the farm and eagerness to talk habitat was quickly interrupted by the sharp “Bob-White!” call of a quail along the brushy fence row and then another, even closer, near the old grown-up pond, both bordering the newly planted CP38 native forb and grass planting. There was a total of five bobs calling on this underestimated piece of land. As I stood shell-shocked for a moment, I surveyed the surrounding landscape still wondering if I was hearing correctly, but the continued calling contradicted my doubt.

*Continued on next page*

*Left: Ragweed canopy view from above with the forb seedlings below. Plenty of insects for protein in the summer and seed production for the winter.*

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
<b>Federal Conservation Programs Meeting</b>	Provided input for resource concerns for EQIP and CSP in Perry and Cape Counties.
<b>MDC Landowner Coop CWD Sampling Meeting</b>	Discussed the opportunity/logistics of landowner cooperatives to collect CWD samples during deer season to increase CWD surveillance.
<b>MO Quail Forever Team Meeting in Kirksville</b>	Met with partnering agencies, finalized FY19 team goals, provided updates on special initiatives, and continued to build the team relationship.
<b>Cape and Perry County SWCD Meetings</b>	Provided overview/update of landowner projects and other position happenings.

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# Missouri Quail Forever

## Quarterly Partners' Report



Wes Buchheit - Bollinger, Cape, and Perry Counties

July-September 2018

### Quail in an Overlooked Landscape (Cont.)

Looking at the map, I saw that Mark's farm had adequate amount of open land scattered across the property, a factor for quail with which some properties in this landscape can struggle. However, it was when we started touring the farm that I began to see more of the reasoning for the calling bobs.

The newly planted CP38 fields were in their first growing season. The forbs were short because they were establishing their root system, but the 3ft tall canopy of common ragweed provided excellent brood rearing habitat. Mark and his family had used prescribed fire to maintain the other fields in a wildlife friendly state over the years. This spring the sprawling wooded draws and a few small woodlands were managed with prescribed fire and thinning by the chainsaw. The additional sun to the woodland floor from thinning and fire consuming the leaf litter stimulated the herbaceous woodland plant community creating brood cover and food sources. The thinning put cut trees on the ground and the fire top-killed small diameter stems which resprouted to create dense woody escape cover crucial for quail—making more of the fields useable for quail.

Quail do survive in woodland landscapes where there is enough open land. However, they can thrive in the landscapes when the intermixed woodlands are responsibly managed through thinning and prescribed fire. These practices make those previously overlooked acres useable for quail and other wildlife. Mark and his family plan to expand their burn program to include more acres of the farm, including woodlands. The next time I meet Mark on the farm, I won't be caught off guard to hear quail. In fact, I'll be surprised if I don't hear more bobs voicing their trademarked call!



*Mark conducting growing season burns to stimulate forbs and set back tree sprouts.*



*Early September plant response, 2 weeks post-burn. Note the 6 inch green grass that will grow tall enough for adequate winter cover.*



# Missouri Quail Forever

## Quarterly Partners' Report

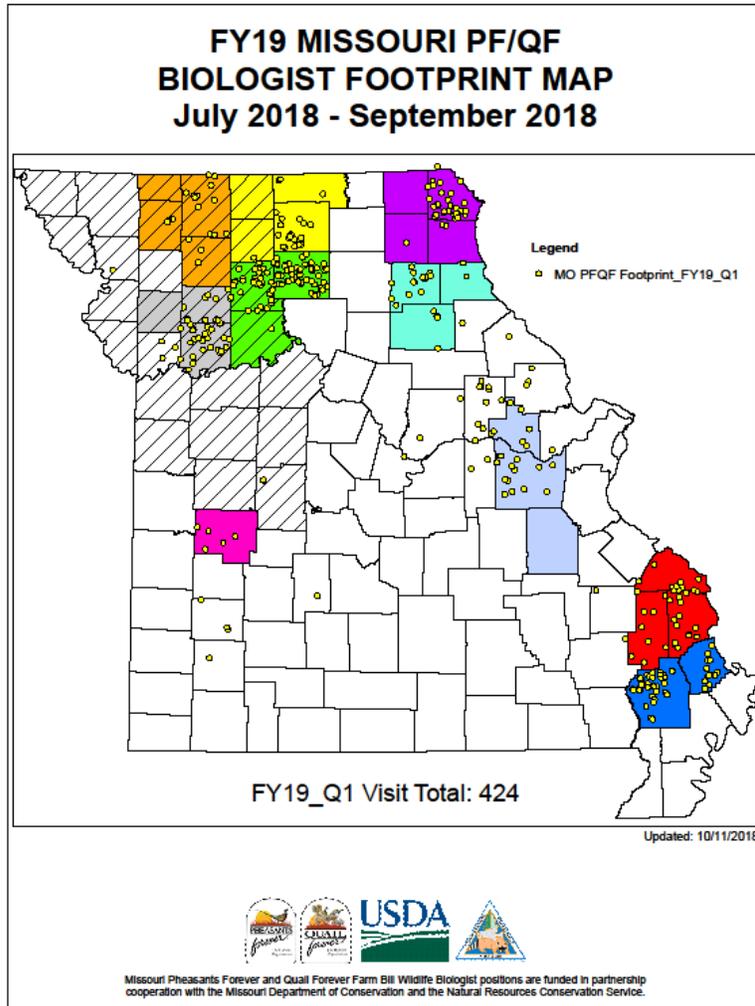


Wes Buchheit - Bollinger, Cape, and Perry Counties

July-September 2018

### Looking Forward

- Bootheel Bobs QF Chapter fundraising Banquet Oct. 20.
- NRCS UTV Safety Training.
- Participating in NRCS Work Cycle Study.
- Complete AgLearn courses to work towards obtaining NRCS Apprentice Conservation Planner certification.
- Complete NWCG S-130/S-190 Fire Training.
- Work with the MO QF prescribed fire committee to identify burn plan writing BMPs and provide mapping template for the QF Team.
- Help coordinate prescribed fire trainings for QF team and landowner Prescribed Burn Association members.
- Landowner Prescribed Burn Workshop at MDC Cape Regional Office Feb. 12.
- Assist and support 3 southern MO QF biologists in newly created partnership positions that will be joining the team this winter. Job announcements to be released soon.
- Continue to assist landowners with site visits to identify landowner objectives and habitat opportunities.
- Spend time outdoors with family and friends during the fall/winter hunting seasons.



Quail Forever Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist map of landowner site visits.

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

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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



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

**July–September 2018**

### Reaching New Audiences

The first quarter of fiscal year 2019 has started off great, continuing to work with landowners on high quality wildlife habitat projects. One common theme that was clear over the past three months has been reaching out to new audiences and promoting Quail Forever's (QF) and our Partner's missions. This took shape in a couple of different ways. First was a youth and new hunter dove hunt and second was a presentation on monarch conservation aimed at backyard gardeners.

In partnership with the National Turkey Federation (NWTF) and the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) the local Missouri River Valley Chapter of QF hosted several youth and new hunter mentored hunts. During the first couple weekends of September both youth hunters and adults who were new to hunting or getting back into it came out to New Haven, MO to hunt doves on private property. Many participants traveled from the suburbs of St. Louis to see what dove hunting was all about. During the hunts we had both young and old alike harvest their first ever game animal. As a group, participants learned hunter safety and how to clean and care for the meat they just harvested. In the field hunters were paired with mentors who taught them dove hunting techniques and offered pointers on improving their shooting. I, and I'm sure other mentors as well, were able to have conversations with hunters about why hunting is important for wildlife and habitat management and how QF plays a role putting habitat on the ground. I believe that all 18 hunters, regardless if birds were flying that day or not, came away from the hunt with smiles on their faces and the drive to pursue other outdoor experiences.



First time dove hunter with his harvest.

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
<b>MO QF Team Meeting</b>	Connected with QF staff from around the state and set teams goals and priorities for fiscal year 2019.

- Conservation Planning**
- 62 Landowner Contacts
  - 6 Habitat Proposals & Conservation Plans
  - 49 Site Visits
  - 5 Prescribed Burn Plans Written

Program Eligibility/Status Reviews	Count
Conservation Stewardship Program	22
Conservation Reserve Program	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>

Planned Acres by Program	Acres
Conservation Technical Assistance	48.9
Habitat Challenge Grant	177.4
Landowner Assistance Program	65
<b>Total</b>	<b>291.3</b>

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# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

## Quarterly Partners' Report



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

**July–September 2018**

### Reaching New Audiences (Cont.)

I also had the chance to reach a group of non-consumptive outdoor enthusiast whose primary objective is to provide habitat for the monarch butterfly in their backyard garden and small areas near their homes. On September 13<sup>th</sup> I was asked to present to a group of 85 monarch enthusiast in Washington, MO. The group consisted of both monarch gardening pros and many with very little experience looking to learn something new. The evening started with basic monarch ecology and why their populations have been declining. Followed by information on what different conservation groups are doing about it, specifically Missourians for Monarchs Collaborative and the role that QF and our partners play in the collaborative. Those who attended this evening workshop not only walked away understanding what QF is doing to increase monarch and pollinator habitat but why we as an organization are concerned about it.



Monarch enthusiast in Washington, MO learn about planning gardens to benefit monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

Engaging our current conservation partners and who we might think of as our “traditional” hunting and conservation base is always important, but it is just as or maybe even more important to engage with new groups and individuals. Adding members and partners is the only way for QF to continue growing and promote its’ mission of getting folks outdoors and improving wildlife habitat.

### Outreach & Education

- Youth, first time, and reactivated hunter dove hunt hosted by MO River Valley Chapter of QF in New Haven MO.
- Presented on Monarch ecology and Missourians for Monarchs to a local group of monarch enthusiast.
- Attended local district QF meeting and chapter meetings of the MO River Valley and Gateway chapters.

### Looking Forward

- EQIP application deadline has been set for Nov. 16th, and I will be working with landowners interested in completing habitat improvements with Federal cost-share.
- On Oct. 26th I will presenting to students at Oakville High School about QF, its’ mission, and upland bird hunting.
- I will continue to help landowners achieve their habitat management goals utilizing both state and federal cost-share programs.
- Through landowners contacts I will continue to share the Quail Forever mission and help get anyone interested involved with their local QF chapter.

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