



PHEASANTS FOREVER & QUAIL FOREVER

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NEWS RELEASE

MRAP Hunter Mentor Challenge recruits new hunters and promotes public access opportunities

Mentor-mentee pairs hunted on MRAP acres for chance at a grand prize

Columbia, Mo. – December 22, 2020 – Quail Forever and Pheasants Forever in Missouri recently partnered with the Missouri Department of Conservation and others to improve, promote and increase the use of Missouri Outdoor Recreational Access Program (MRAP) properties.



MRAP, created by the Missouri Department of Conservation with help from a federal Farm Bill grant, was designed to increase opportunities for outdoor recreation on private land. Private landowners can work with MDC to enroll their land in MRAP and receive incentive payments for opening those acres up for public recreational activities like hunting, fishing or wildlife viewing.

“MRAP adds over 15,000 additional acres of outdoor recreational opportunity for Missourians and is a tremendous asset,” said Casey Bergthold, Missouri State Coordinator. “With growing interest and continued funding, MRAP is on its way to becoming a critical piece of Missouri’s outdoor experience.”

To help raise awareness about MRAP and increase public recreational opportunities on these properties even further, Quail Forever and Pheasants Forever in Missouri launched the MRAP Hunter Mentor Challenge in October 2020. We challenged hunters to mentor a youth hunter or someone new to hunting on an MRAP property as a way to give them a new experience in the outdoors and try to recruit new hunter-conservationists at the same time. Participants were entered for a chance to win a \$300 gift card for both the mentor and mentee.

“It is inspiring to see Missouri hunters accept our challenge and take new and youth hunters to the field,” said Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II Courtney Nicks. “Many participants expressed their appreciation for these great MRAP properties and the opportunities they provide.”



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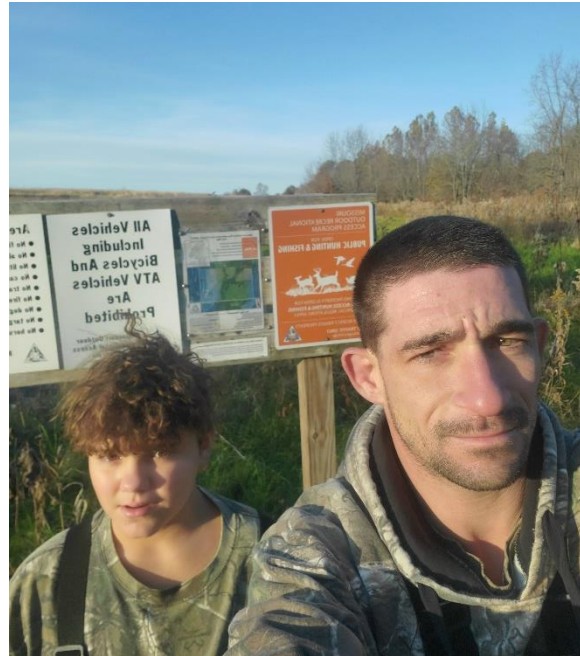


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The Challenge concluded on November 30 and our winning mentor and mentee were drawn on December 11. Congratulations to our winners, Patrick Ledbetter and Jathan Brown! Thank you for taking the MRAP Hunter Mentor Challenge!

We would like to extend our thank you to all the mentors and mentees who participated in our MRAP Hunter Mentor Challenge. We enjoyed seeing your pictures from the field and we are so grateful for your help getting new hunters in the outdoors! If you have questions about the Hunter Mentor Challenge reach out to Courtney Nicks at cnicks@quailforever.org or contact us at missouripfqf.org.

Interested in enrolling your own acres in MRAP? MDC is accepting applications now through January 15, 2021. If you have questions about visiting MRAP properties or want to learn more about enrolling your land in the program, visit mdc.mo.gov/mrap.



About Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever

Pheasants Forever, including its quail conservation division — Quail Forever — is the nation's largest nonprofit organization dedicated to upland habitat conservation. Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever have more than 138,000 members and 760 local chapters across the United States and Canada. Since creation in 1982, Pheasants Forever has spent over \$900 million on 550,000 habitat projects benefiting over 19 million acres nationwide. Visit the Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever in Missouri website or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

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