



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist III



Quarterly Partners' Report

Andrew White - Livingston, Linn, and Carroll Counties

October – December 2019

Position Update

This quarter has been an extremely busy one working with the MO PF/QF team and partners sorting out details and gearing up for the General CRP sign up. Additionally, I head the planning committee for our signature event, the Missouri PF/QF State Convention. Planning has been in full force, with the convention being right around the corner. On top of all this, I have continued to provide quality technical service to producers and partnering staff, as well as to the North Missouri half of our team.

Partnering for Pollinators



Conservation Planning

- 71 Landowner Contacts
- 31 Site Visits
- 11 Conservation Plans Written/Modified
- 17 Status Review/Checkout
- 70 Eligibility/Ranking Assessments

Last year planning started on a pollinator project, which was backed by PF/QF, Corteva Agriscience, and 4-H on a national scale. We have hosted numerous youth pollinator projects across the state over the years. However, this Youth Pollinator Habitat Project was the first of its kind to be installed in Missouri under this unique partnership.

With planning in place, roughly 30 children and parents of the Work to Win 4-H club out of Malta Bend descended upon Corteva Agriscience's research station in Miami. They teamed up with staff from Corteva, PF/QF in Missouri, Corner Covey QF Chapter members, and MDC in late November to help complete the project and learn quite a bit about pollinators along the way.

Programs	Acres Impacted
FSA	660.1
NRCS	306.21
OTHER	94.5
TOTAL	1,060.81



The day started with a quick breakfast leading into an educational station rotation, where each station visited further educated the groups on the importance of pollinators with hands-on activities to further drive the point home. Once all stations had been visited, we ended the morning with seeding a 1 ac plot to a highly diverse mix of native grass and wildflowers. This plot will not only provide habitat for pollinators in the future, it will be a place where folks can visit to see the beauty of nature and learn more about pollinators in the future. A big thank you to those involved in making this project a success.



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October – December 2019

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
Conservation Desktop Training	Mandatory USDA training for switch in mapping/planning platforms.
MDC PLS Division Conference	Attended the MDC PLS Division conference with MO PF/QF team to represent partnership, network with partner staff, and to learn about what PLS is accomplishing.
Women on the Wing Team Training	MO PF/QF team training on WOTW efforts and what direction we are headed with it. Training led by Kim Cole, MO PF/QF Outreach Coordinator.
Monthly NRCS Programs Webinar	Listened in as NRCS State Office staff covered updates and other relative information regarding current and future cost share program policies. This webinar is part of a monthly training series to keep the needle moving for conservation.
Pack Test and Training	Completed Pack Test and training to obtain Red Card Certification.
Nebraska Rx Fire Conference	Attended the NE RX Fire Conference with Wes Buchheit to further learn fire culture in NE and bring back information on ways for Missouri to further adopt RX Fire.

Outreach & Education

- Planning CRP Outreach efforts for team, including workshops
- Have been meeting and will continue to meet with local QF chapters to assist with habitat projects as well as youth and women's event planning and execution
- Met with Corteva, MDC and Corner Covey Chapter leaders to discuss PF/QF pollinator project progress

Looking Forward

- Assist local chapters with upcoming banquets
- Cohost CRP Workshop series with partners, targeting landowners
- 2020 Missouri State Convention and MO Quail Summit
- Continued coordination of the planning process for the Missouri PF/QF State Convention
- Continue serving as the daily team lead for North Missouri PF/QF FBB team



Opening weekend of the upland bird season, a majority of the MO PF/QF team we able to get together to hunt some MRAP areas. A few teammates saw success when they harvested their first-ever bird!

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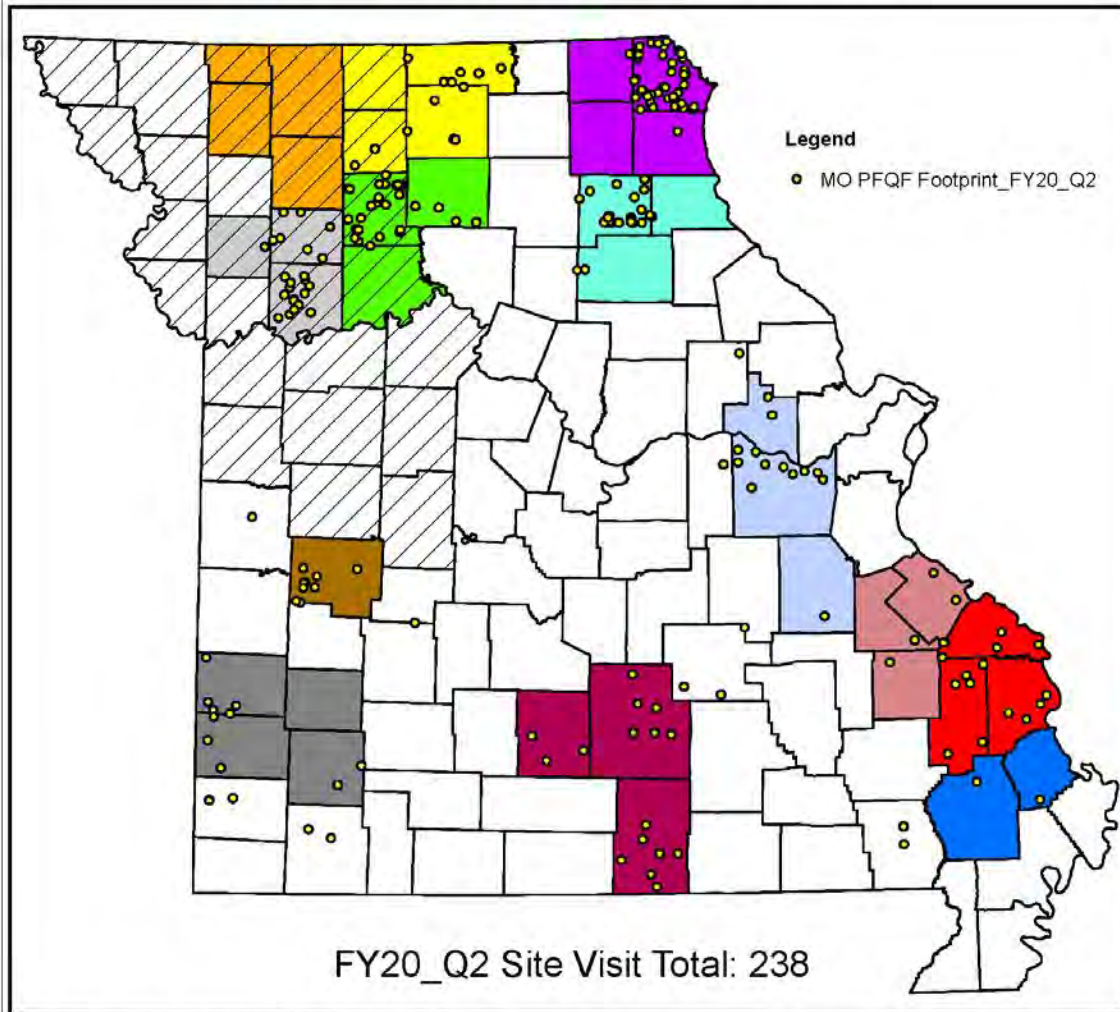
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FY20 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT MAP October 2019 - December 2019



*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.

Updated: 1/10/2020



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

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Colby Sharp - Texas, Wright, and Howell Counties

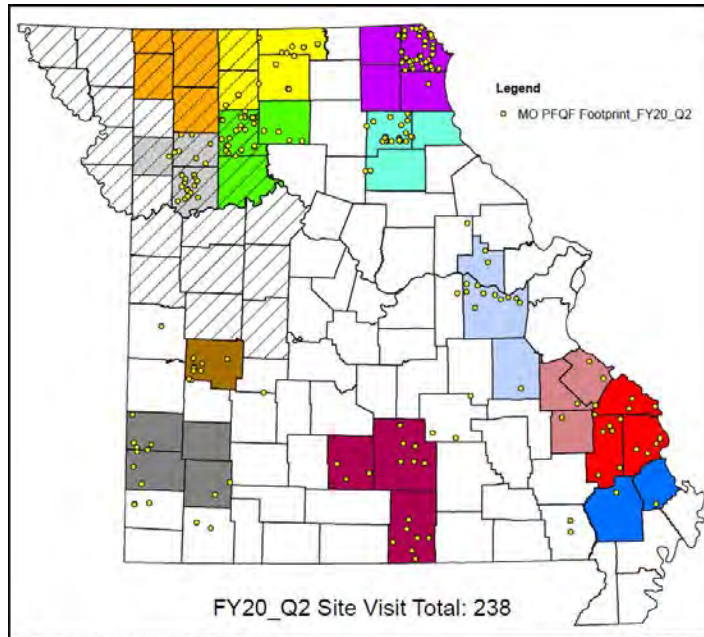
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“Hunting and Habitat”

This past quarter I was able to get out with the Missouri Quail Forever team on my first quail and woodcock hunt (pictured below). It was great to see the habitat that these birds were using in areas where cover was limited to managed conservation areas and/or CRP ground.

When I wasn't in the field, attending meetings or participating in trainings, I was in the office assisting landowners with questions regarding glade and woodland restoration, pollinator habitat, and forest management. While in the office I also assisted partners with EQIP, CSP, LCAP, and Habitat Challenge Grant contract planning, contract eligibility reviews, map making, and practice checkouts. Check out the map above to see where the Missouri QF team has been hard at work, using their expertise to provide technical assistance to landowners across Missouri.

Missouri PF/QF Biologist Footprint Map October – December 2019



*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured Updated: 1/10/2020



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

Conservation Planning

- 124 Landowner Contacts
- 20 Site Visits
- 6 Conservation Plans Completed
- 5 Status Reviews/Checkouts
- 1 Article Written

Program	Acres Impacted
EQIP	93.51
CSP	7.89
HCG	33
CTA	1.5



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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist Quarterly Partners' Report



Colby Sharp - Texas, Wright, and Howell Counties

October – December 2019

“Disturbance Is Key”

I met Steve Burch last spring when he met with Texas County Soil and Water District on his property to discuss how to properly use a no-till drill. When I arrived on his property I quickly realized that he had been doing great habitat work for many years, with native warm season grasses and shrubby cover present in all open areas. After speaking with Steve, I found that his passion for quail management had been instilled in him many years ago when he could flush 10 coveys a hunt on his grandad’s farm in the ‘60s. Remembering those times, he set out to improve quail habitat on his farm 12 years ago, with planting native warm season grasses on all open acres of his farm. One year after establishing native grasses on the farm he saw a covey and it continued to increase over the years to 3 coveys on his ~70 acre farm.

After looking at the property it was evident that there had been little disturbance in the past few years, the native warm season grasses had become too dense, and non-native cool season grasses were encroaching into the field along the edges. At the same time Steve noticed a decline in not only quail numbers on the property but also decreased use by turkeys. With this in mind, I created a property management plan for prescribed burning, and discussed edge feathering and TSI on the property to get good habitat back on the ground and get the property headed back in the right direction.

After reviewing the plan Steve said “management is exciting me again after looking at this plan” and he is eager get out and put disturbance back on the property. He explained that he understands now more than ever that managing habitat for quail is a continuous process and not a one-and-done. He looks forward to getting started this spring with cedar removal and prescribed fire.



Established native warm season grasses (top and middle), and glade to be restored in the months to come (bottom).



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Colby Sharp - Texas, Wright, and Howell Counties

October – December 2019

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
Private Land Services Division Conference	Attended PLS conference where I learned about what partners were doing throughout the state.
S-130/ S-190 Wildland Firefighting Training	Participated in Wildland Firefighter Training with the National Wildfire Coordinating Group to work towards obtaining Red Card.
NRCS Conservation Planner Curriculum: On the Job Training	Attended NRCS training where I learned how to use conservation planning tools such as Graze4, Russel2, and many others.
NRCS/USFS Ecological Site Description Training	Participated in Eco. Site Description training/meeting where we discussed how to best obtain site descriptions and new updates to the data.
Scenic Rivers Invasive Species Partnership Meeting	Attended Invasive Species partnership meeting where I got an understanding of the direction the committee was going in and the goals of the partnership.
NRCS Programs Meeting	Attended NRCS programs meeting where I was updated on new Farm Bill program rules at this point.
MDC Elk Zone Tour	Attended MDC Elk Zone Tours where I learned about private land management in the elk priority geography.

Looking Forward

- Attend MFA Grass and Legume Production Training
- Participate in NRCS FOSA Conservation Desktop Training in Texas County Office
- Attend 2020 Quail Summit in Columbia, Missouri
- Assist with putting on the 7th Annual Quail Forever State Convention in Columbia, Missouri
- Attend NRCS Area 4 Programs Meeting
- Attend Missouri Natural Resource Conference
- Complete Pack Test to obtain Wildland Firefighter Red Card
- Participate in NRCS FOSA Quality Assurance Review
- Continue to assist landowners and producers with Farm Bill programs, while continuing to further my understanding of EQIP, CSP, Farm Service Agency's CRP, and MDC's LCAP planning



Native grasses and forbs on MDC Conservation Area during Missouri Quail Forever Team Hunt.

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

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



Courtney Nicks - Marion, Monroe & Shelby Counties

October–December 2019

PARTNERS UNITED

This quarter began in Springfield Missouri, where Quail Forever biologists were invited to join Private Land Conservationists during the Missouri Department of Conservation's (MDC) Private Land Services State Meeting. The opportunity to spend quality time with our professional counterparts was incredibly beneficial. Sharing conservation success stories and comradery with our MDC partners helped shape new relations that will undoubtedly strengthen our productivity as we continue working together. The warm welcome felt by our Quail Forever team definitely set the stage for future success and encouraged our team to do even more.

As our partnerships grow, our ability to expand our footprint becomes limitless. Improving our connection with landowners enhances our impact on the Missouri landscape. Operating at this level, we create opportunities to mold wildlife benefits into more productive landscapes resulting in benefits for everyone.



Activity Highlights

Conservation Planning

- 90 Landowner Contacts
- 28 Site Visits
- 31 Projects with Acres
- 3 Trainings

Outreach

- 1 Workshops/Tours
- 2 Publications

Total Acres Impacted: 770.74 acres

CRP Workload

The past few months I spent in the field evaluating expiring CRP contracts proposed for re-enrollment. Having over 70 contracts expiring in Shelby county, I have worked with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) to inventory expiring fields in preparation for future offers. I anticipate this workload increasing as new offers are presented. Several workshops will be held to discuss proper establishment and maintenance for new contract holders in my area.



A Shelby county landowner initiated mechanical tree removal to re-enroll these acres.

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2019 Mark Twain Quail Forever Banquet

Once again MTQF hosted an exciting and very successful annual banquet on October 5th. With over 60 sponsors and nearly 280 attendees, the local support was incredible. The Madison community center was packed as the attendees participated in numerous raffles and games, bid on silent and live auction items, and enjoyed a delicious Prime Rib dinner.

Our very own Quail Forever State Coordinator, Casey Bergthold, served as our Master of Ceremonies and kept the crowd engaged throughout the entire evening.

QF volunteers did an amazing job executing this event. As usual, the chapter donated funds to local FFA chapters to help the event run smoothly. This year, our helpers came from South Shelby and Monroe City. The students did a great job serving food, running raffles and showcasing auction items.

As the evening came to an end, continuous praise came from attendees. There is no doubt the bar was raised once again and MTQF will be expected to produce more memorable events for years to come.

MTQF looks forward to using the raised funds locally for habitat, youth engagement, and so much more.



Banquet Hall



Women's Table



Banquet in Action

PROVIDING THE BEST TECHNICAL SERVICE POSSIBLE

The second week of October, Quail Forever biologists, Haley Lockard, Wes Buchheit and I, attended the NRCS Conservation Planners Training in Columbia, MO. This was a one week training aimed to enhance necessary skills to better serve our landowners. As technical service providers, we are the bridge connecting programs to people. The course taught how to evaluate conservation concerns and how to use NRCS resources to make sound decisions. Understanding these tools and processes will help us to evaluate and propose better options as we continue to work with landowners.



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Quarterly Partners' Report

Courtney Nicks - Marion, Monroe & Shelby Counties

October–December 2019

Habitat Highlights

Working with landowners to create habitat improvements is rewarding! Here are just a few examples of great improvements I came across this past quarter.

Great People Doing Great Work!



First year Conservation Stewardship Project (CSP), Brush Management. Spraying over 100 acres of multiflora rose in a wooded understory.



Prescribed fire on 7 acres to prepare for this winter's Pollinator seeding through EQIP.

Growing Our Team

When I started working for Quail Forever two years ago, there were 7 field staff positions, 1 Regional Representative, a Monarch Coordinator and State Coordinator. In a very short time we have added an additional 6 field positions, another Regional Representative, an Outreach Coordinator, and a Habitat Partnership Specialist. To say we are growing and growing fast, is an understatement.

Increasing our footprint has been incredibly rewarding. Working with a team of passionate conservationists dedicated to improving every day, makes me proud. However, as we grow and become more widespread it is difficult to maintain strong working relationships. In an attempt to keep us all connected, this year the team took a day off and headed to the field.

Sharing a day behind the bird dogs brought our efforts full circle. As a team, we were able to experience some of Missouri's great public hunting areas and even had members of our team harvest their first wild quail. That's what it is all about! Improving habitat that offer people experiences like these. Something that is quite literally irreplaceable.





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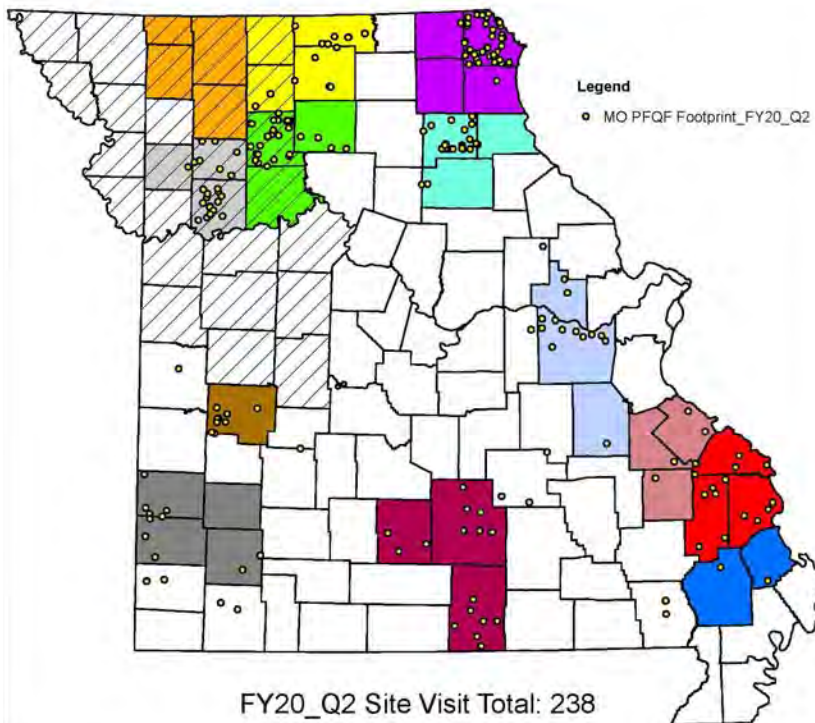
Quarterly Partners' Report

Courtney Nicks - Marion, Monroe & Shelby Counties

October–December 2019

Looking Forward, I will...

- Continue to meet with landowners and provide technical assistance, promoting wildlife friendly practices pertaining to HCG, EQIP, and CRP programs
- Attend MDC's Quail Summit
- Host the Quail Forever State Convention with the Missouri Quail Forever team
- Assist FSA with CRP field reviews and planning
- Attend QF Chapter meetings and upcoming banquets
- Attend MNRC presenting a poster of Missouri's Prescribed Burn Associations



UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES!!!

- ◆ January 24th, MDC Quail Summit, Columbia MO
- ◆ January 24th, Hops for Habitat, Columbia MO
- ◆ January 25th, Quail Forever State Convention, Columbia MO
- ◆ February 29th, Mid-Mo Uplanders AL Gustin Pollinator Event
- ◆ February 29th, Mid-Mo Young Guns Chapter Banquet
- ◆ Statewide CRP informational workshops

Visit

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

for details and to find more great events near you!

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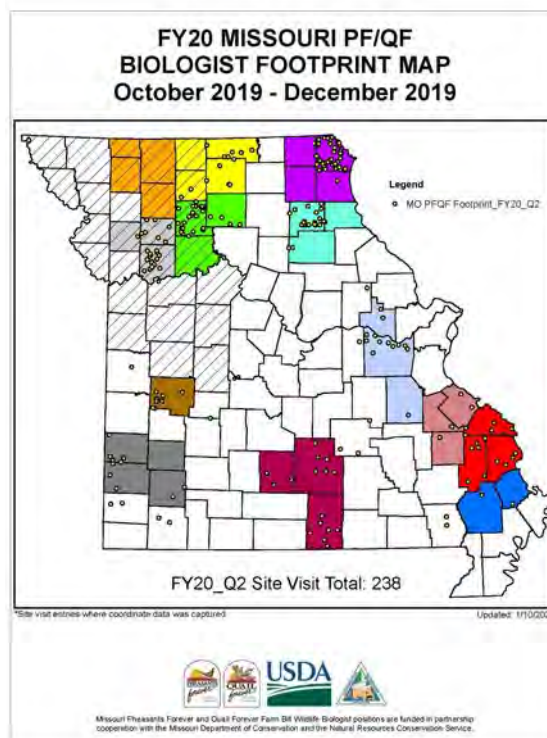


Erin Forsythe—Jasper, Lawrence, Barton, Dade Counties

October—December 2019

This Past Quarter...

I have had the opportunity to work with a landowner in Barry County. His main objective is enhancing the property he owns and also rents, converting it back to great quail and other wildlife habitat. He grew up hearing the quail whistling and is eager to help improve their habitat. As a group, the landowner, operator and I, have decided to tackle this massive project in phases. We will begin this project in 2020 with seed bed preparation to implement native forbs and grasses. We will also be implementing Forest Stand Improvement on his wooded acres to increase green browse and wildlife cover. This has been a fun challenge and I am excited to see the



Conservation Technical Assistance Summary

- (56) Landowner Contacts
- (14) Site Visits
- (4) Trainings/ workshops
- (0) Burns
- (2) Outreach
- (9) Survey and Data Collection



Team Quail Hunt in Northern Missouri

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Missouri Quail Forever

Quarterly Partners' Report



Erin Forsythe–Jasper, Lawrence, Barton, Dade Counties

October—December 2019

Training/Workshops	Outcome
MDC Private Lands Service Conference	Network with partners, listen to informational presentations
USDA Programs Training	Learned more about EQIP, CSP, and CRP to better help us with the planning and contracting, also learned about MRAP.
Area 4 Staff Training 2020 Programs	Discussed what is new for 2020 programs from the 2018 Farm Bill, Learned about new practices being offered and changes to current practices
Conservation Desktop Training	Learned how to use the conservation desktop for planning and contracting for federal cost share

Looking Forward

- **MFA Cropland Training** Jan 7th-9th, 2020
- **Spring Calving Clinic** Jan 14th, 2020
- **Spring River QF Chapter meeting** Jan 21st, 2020
- **MDC Quail Summit** Jan 24th, 2020
- **Missouri Quail Forever State Convention** Jan 24th-25th, 2020
- **Area 4 Staff Training 2020 Programs** Jan 30th, 2020
- **Personality Profile Training** Feb 3rd, 2020
- **Missouri Natural Resources Conference** Feb 4th-6th, 2020
- **Area 4 Staff Training 2020 Programs** Feb 19th, 2020
- **Spring Forage Conference** Feb 25th, 2020



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Quarterly Partners' Report



Ethan Kleekamp - Ray, Caldwell & Clinton Counties

October—December 2019

HIDDEN GEMS OF RAY COUNTY

Roy and Randy Hartman want quail. They came to me in the fall of 2018 with tales of the “old days”, stories that always seem to get me a little starry-eyed, and more than a little annoyed at having missed out. They wanted to learn what they could do to return their farm to the bobwhite haven it once was. I remember asking them what they currently had on their place. A rotational grazing system...several fields of native grass...a lot of timber. It sounded promising to me, but it wasn't until much more recently that I discovered just how special their piece of Western Ray County truly is.

While on an October hike touring the Hartman family farm this fall, an accompanying forester laughed at my exclamation upon finding a patch of little blue flowers.

“Jeez, you'd have thought you stumbled on a pair of 180-inch deer sheds!”

I enthusiastically explained how much more significant and unique this discovery was than some littered antlers, and how it confirmed the hope and suspicion I held about the property. The specimen in question was *Gentiana puberulenta*, commonly known as Downy Gentian or Prairie Gentian, and while some similarly conservative prairie species had caught my eye on an earlier visit, this was certainly not a species I had ever encountered on a CRP pollinator planting or other prairie reconstruction: we were indeed traipsing through one of Ray County's hidden prairie remnants.

What this uncommon prairie-obligate told us was that this 15-acre, open ridgetop had likely never been intensively cultivated, and it might harbor many more unique holdover species from what is a largely long-lost prairie past.



The early October blooms of Downy Gentian, *Gentiana puberulenta*, adorning the Hartman 's prairie ridgetop.

Continued —>

Conservation at a Glance

- 113 Landowner Contacts
- 25 Site Visits
- 1 Habitat Workshop/Tour (46 People)
- 3 Presentations Given (80 People)
- 4 NBCI Fall Covey Counts

Program Involvement	Acres Impacted
Habitat Challenge Grant / LCAP	21
Conservation Stewardship Program	11.1
Total	32.1

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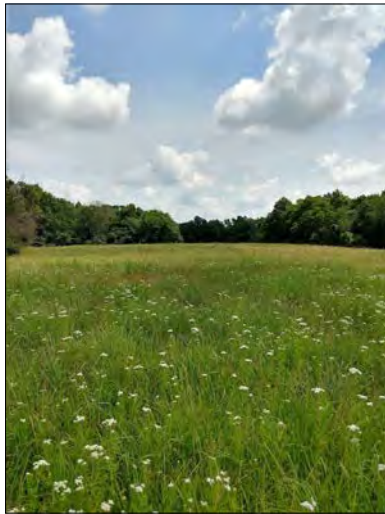
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Ethan Kleekamp - Ray, Caldwell & Clinton Counties

October—December 2019

HIDDEN GEMS *Continued*

In the ~11,000 years since the last glaciation event, tallgrass prairie grew to dominate the plains region, covering more than 15 million acres in Missouri; approximately one third of the state. This diverse and dynamic ecosystem contained hundreds of species of native



A field of Big Bluestem, Slender Mountain Mint, and Rough Blazing Star dancing in the June breeze on the Hartman family farm.

grasses, forbs, and shrubs, and supported a similarly diverse suite of animal life. However, intensive agricultural and urban development over the last two hundred years has almost entirely eliminated native prairie from Missouri. In fact, less than one percent remains today.

These prairies, with their seed banks and microbial networks that took centuries, perhaps millennia, to develop, can be destroyed overnight. Their recovery, however, is a different story. Despite our best efforts to restore prairie through programs like CRP, EQIP, and CSP, we can never truly resurrect the diversity and function of true, native prairie. We are left instead with a mere shadow of what was once here, making hidden remnants like the Hartmans' so incredibly special and ecologically valuable. As acclaimed biologist and author, E.O. Wilson, keenly observed, "biological diversity is the key to the maintenance of the world as we know it", and we are now reliant on remnants like these to carry that biodiversity forward into the future.

Unfortunately, this remnant wasn't immune to the problems plaguing many other sites throughout Ray County and across Missouri. Having gone without any prescribed fire or haying in the last ten years, the southern half of the Hartman's prairie has seen a severe encroachment of Autumn Olive, Eastern Red Cedar, Bush Honeysuckle, Persimmon, and Sericea Lespedeza. Mixed up in the excitement of finding so many rare and unique species was the reality that Roy and Randy had more than their fare share of work cut out for them — Enter MDC's and Quail Forever's Habitat Challenge Grant.



Persimmon, Cedar, Autumn Olive, and Sericea Lespedeza invading parts of the Hartman prairie.

Continued —————>

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October—December 2019

HIDDEN GEMS *Continued*

Through matched contributions from the Missouri Department of Conservation and the Heartland Chapter of Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever, Roy and Randy were able to secure funds to assist with the brush removal, prescribed fire, and invasive weed treatment needed to restore their prairie to its former luster. Eager to start and true to form, they've jumped right in with a chainsaw and skid-steer to start reclaiming the ridgetop.

Following the brush clearing and a subsequent prescribed burn, this spring the Hartman's will catch their first glimpse of the native seedlings they might be able to day-light. Also awaiting them is a continued, intricate struggle to battle these invasive species while minimizing their negative impacts on their prized native flora. A regiment of well-timed prescribed fires, a keen eye, and cautious herbicide application will hopefully be the ticket to a successful restoration.



Randy (left) and Roy (right) take a breather and pose for a tough-guy shot.



A section of brush cleared by chainsaw, skid-steer, and elbow grease.

All of the discovery and excitement these last few months does beg the question: with a little targeted outreach, how many hidden prairie gems like this one can we uncover from the rocky hills of Ray County? That's a question I eagerly look forward to answering, and thanks to the Hartmans, I think we have a strong blueprint for how to approach any that emerge!



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Ethan Kleekamp - Ray, Caldwell & Clinton Counties

October—December 2019

OUTREACH & EDUCATION

2C Quail Focus Area Workshop / Tour

In late October, MDC Private Lands Conservationist, Nate Mechlin, and I hosted a quail management workshop in Southeast Caldwell County showcasing the habitat improvements Randy Farmer had made on his property. With combined support through the CRP Bobwhite Quail S.A.F.E. Program and MDC's Landowner Assistance Program, Randy has been able to create an extensive matrix of early successional brood-rearing habitat, woody escape cover, and annual grain food plots to maximize winter survival.



Nate Mechlin (Left) describing his strategy for planning edge-feathering and down-tree-structure locations.

Following a morning covey count, workshop attendees were given the opportunity to tour the property, ask questions, and interact with neighboring farmers, hunters, and other wildlife enthusiasts. Among the major focal points were 1) the importance of maximizing forb-rich nesting and brood-rearing acreage on your farm, 2) that you can really never have *too much* woody escape cover, and 3) that annual grain food plots are a luxury—they certainly help, but don't break the bank planting them if your farm doesn't yet meet the other quail life-history needs.



A local contractor making quick work of some hedge and locust for a 2C workshop edge-feathering demonstration.

Perhaps the highlight of our workshop was the edge-feathering demonstration a local contractor provided for attendees. As much as we stress to landowners to *kill grass* and *loosely stack*, nothing hits home quite like a live demo of hedge, locust, and shingle oak hitting the deck in an ideal arrangement. Seeing another 30' x 50' edge-feathering come together in under ten minutes was pretty exciting for Randy Farmer as well!



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October—December 2019

OUTREACH & EDUCATION

Corteva Grows Pollinator Habitat

As part of a new partnership between Corteva Agriscience, 4-H, and Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever, Sweet Springs' Corner Covey QF chapter hosted a youth pollinator event at the Corteva research station in Miami, MO in late November. Youth ages 5-15 were treated to various lessons and activities relating to native plants, bee-keeping, and quail and pheasant habitat. A personal highlight was getting to orchestrate the predator-prey game, in which the quail-kids used our imitation woody cover to dodge hawk-kids while moving from roosting habitat to feeding areas. They could easily conceptualize the importance of cover size, arrangement, and abundance as their comrades were quickly picked off following habitat removal. I knew the lesson hit home when I prompted the players to observe the barren, tilled expanse of crop field just across the highway.



Youth attendees proudly posing by a sign declaring their 1-acre contribution to MO pollinator habitat.

“Wow, there’s nothing out there”, noted a sullen, adult observer. “They don’t stand a chance.”

“That doesn’t have to be the case”, I encouraged. Perhaps now equipped with this first-hand experience, these kids and adults will find a way to help ensure that it isn’t always so.



Kids look on to learn the fate of the raindrops hitting our nonnative grass lawn and native prairie vegetation.

Weatherby Lake Pollinator Project

December provided an opportunity to present to a group of 3rd through 5th grade students about prairie hydrology and plant biology at the Weatherby Lake youth pollinator event. Hosted by the Weatherby Lake Improvement Company, the event featured presentations from Monarch Watch, Goats on the GO, and the Heartland Chapter of Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever. The ever-popular root board wowed students with its representation of 10-15' prairie root systems, and our homespun tabletop rainfall simulator amazed viewers of all ages as water pooled up and ran off of our bluegrass lawn sample while fully infiltrating our tray cut from a native grass and forb planting. Through this demo, hopefully they now grasp the importance their native seeding has for both pollinators AND their lake.



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



Ethan Kleekamp - Ray, Caldwell & Clinton Counties

October—December 2019

	Additional Activities
MDC Private Lands Division Conference	Joined other Quail Forever biologists and MDC Private Lands Conservationists in Springfield for several days of talks, breakouts, and field trips in early October. Highlighted by Dr. Doug Tallamy's presentation on back-yard conservation strategies, this gathering provided inspiration and talking points in spades.
MDC Level I Fire Training	Rounded out my MDC fire credentials by circling back and earning my Level I certificate. Now with I, II, and III under my belt, I am ready to expand my prescribed fire experience and continue my support of landowners looking to do the same.
Hardin High School Guest Lecture	Presented to the Hardin, MO high school ecology class about prairie ecosystems and the 2C Quail Focus Area successes. Students learned how they can impact wildlife habitat and profitability on their own family farms.

LOOKING FORWARD

As we embark on the '20s, I know many challenges and opportunities await. Among those I am most looking forward to are:

- The Missouri Quail Summit
- The Missouri PFQF State Convention
- The Missouri Natural Resources Conference
- The Heartland Chapter's 35th Annual Banquet
- The return of Woodcock and their courtship dances
- EQIP and General CRP Rankings & Planning



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

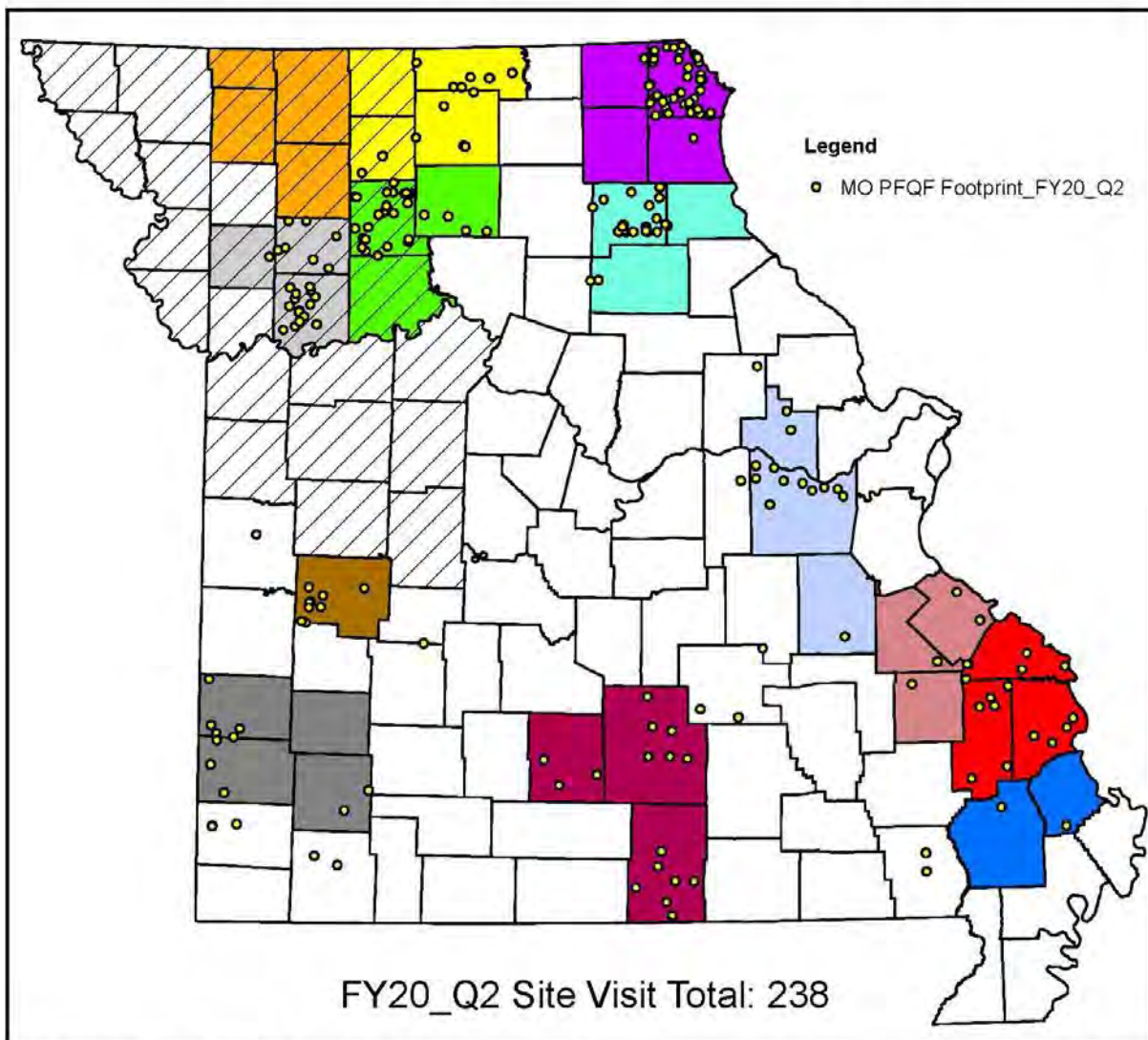
Quarterly Partners' Report



Ethan Kleekamp - Ray, Caldwell & Clinton Counties

October—December 2019

FY20 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT MAP October 2019 - December 2019



*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.

Updated: 1/10/2020

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Missouri Quail Forever Quarterly Partners' Report



Haley Lockard - Clark, Knox, Lewis, Scotland

Oct - Dec 2019

To start of the quarter, I spent a great deal of time on professional development with numerous trainings and networking opportunities. October was also busy with landowners applying for cost share options for plans we discussed over the summer. It is rewarding to know that people want to pursue conservation plans you spent time carefully preparing. There are a lot of great landowners in my counties that are incorporating wildlife into their overall property management.



It's Finally Here!

The big anticipation of the year had been the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) sign-up. In preparation for a busy winter and spring, we got started as soon as we could on field checks for expiring acres in my counties. On each visit, I evaluate the plant composition/ structure and look for areas of other resource concern such as erosion, invasive species, woody vegetation encroachment. Early evaluations will provide landowners with more information to base their re-enrollment decisions on. I have had several people ask about their options and think many are interested in pursuing wildlife friendly mixes. A huge win for upland game in NEMO!

The General CRP sign-up officially opened on December 9, 2019 and is open until February 28, 2020. At the same time, USDA opened up enrollment for Continuous CRP practices (there is no sign-up deadline). There are many options available to establish or enhance native warm season grasses and wildflowers to benefit all wildlife in both General (whole fields) and continuous CRP (field borders). Areas or whole fields that are continually low yielding are good location to consider for CRP. If you know anyone interested in CRP, let me know and I'd be happy to discuss how CRP could work with their property.



Quarter Highlights

Conservation Planning

- 39 Landowner Contacts
- 46 Site Visits
- 2 seed mix reviews
- 1 Habitat Plan
- 4 Fall Covey Surveys

Total Acres Impacted: 1,436

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Missouri Quail Forever Quarterly Partners' Report



Haley Lockard - Clark, Knox, Lewis, Scotland

Oct - Dec 2019

Outreach...

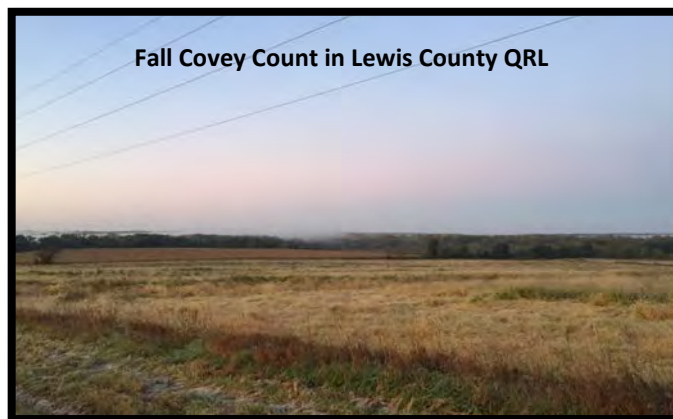
- **October 5** Mark Twain Quail Forever Annual Banquet
- **October 12** Whistling Bob's Quail Forever Annual Banquet
- **December 4** Precision Agriculture in MO presentation to USFWS Partners for Wildlife Staff
- **December 7** Ten Rivers PF Annual Youth Pheasant Hunt

Trainings & Meetings...

- **October 1-3** MDC Private Land Services Conference
- **October 7-11** NRCS Conservation Planner Part 2 Training
- **October 23-24** MDC Farm Bill Programs Training
- **November 7** NRCS FOSA Staff Meeting

Don't miss these upcoming opportunities...

- **January 25** 7th Annual PFQF in Missouri State Convention
- **February 28** Last day to sign-up for General CRP
- **February 29** Ten Rivers PF Annual Banquet in Canton, MO
- **April 3** Women Caring for the Land Prescribed Fire Workshop in Madison, MO



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Missouri Quail Forever

Quarterly Partners' Report



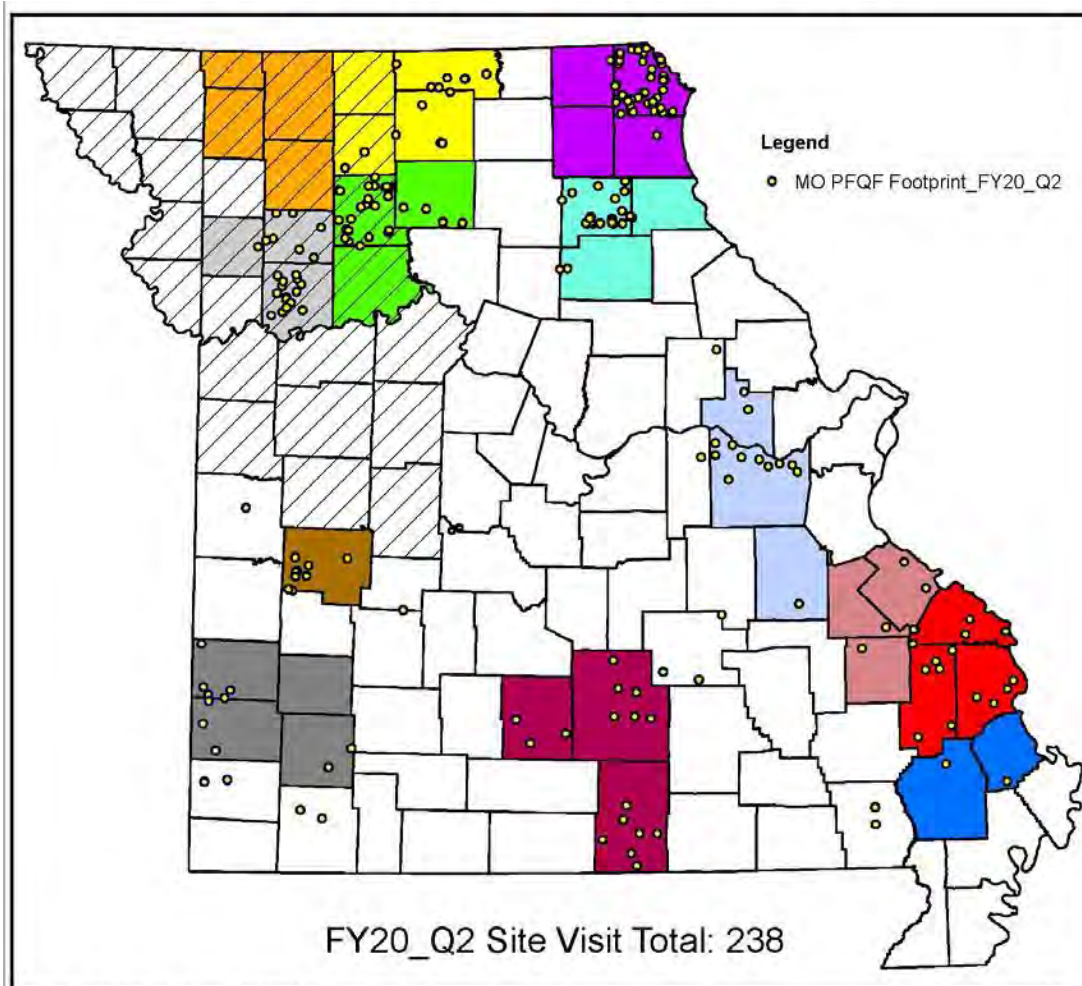
Haley Lockard - Clark, Knox, Lewis, Scotland

Oct - Dec 2019

Looking Forward...

- Continue to provide technical assistance to landowners
- MFA Agronomy Trainings Jan 7-9
- Missouri Quail Summit Jan 24
- PFQF in MO State Habitat Convention Jan 25
- NRCS Conservation Desktop Training Jan 29-30
- Missouri Natural Resource Conference Feb 4-6
- Women caring for the Land Prescribed Burning Workshop April 3
- Assist NRCS with conservation planning for EQIP, CRP, and CSP
- Indian Pride Learning Center Butterfly Garden
- CRP establishment and Management Workshops this Spring/Summer

Missouri PF/QF Biologist Footprint Oct. - Dec. 2019



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

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Coordinating Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



JAKE SWAFFORD - Harrison, Gentry, Worth, Daviess Counties

October – December 2019

Position Update

Over the last 3 months I've been focused on coordinating the monarch RCPP program as it heads into its final year. I've also had the opportunity to continue to develop my leadership skills while participating in PF/QF's Leadership Development Program. In early December, FSA announced a General CRP signup that has kept all of our Quail Forever team busy as we work to promote and deliver this important conservation program across the state.

Pollinator Habitat Working Group

During our National Meeting over the summer, PF/QF staff from across the country came together to begin developing an organization wide approach to pollinator conservation and habitat. The newly formed Pollinator Habitat Working Group (PHWG) is made up of 24 employees, which span the organization in both job duties and location.

The primary goal of this working group is to assist "The Habitat Organization" find the best path forward as we continue to

deliver pollinator habitat and act as leaders in the pollinator arena. With several meetings under our belt, the working group is off to a great start, with individual committees focusing on everything from public outreach to internal improvements. The PHWG is currently working to develop pollinator and other species-specific fact sheets, design pollinator focused programs at



A pollinator planting in Northwest Missouri providing crucial habitat for monarch butterflies and pollinators as well as quail, pheasants, and other wildlife.

local levels, adjust reporting requirements for PF/QF field staff to better share our impact on pollinators, and develop an organization wide pollinator conservation plan.

I am excited to be a part of this working group and am eager to share ideas from Missouri partners and chapters with the group. Likewise, if you have questions or would like additional details on the PWHG and what we're working on, don't hesitate to reach out.

Conservation Planning

- 30 Landowner Contacts
- 13 NRCS Cons. Planner Contacts
- 5 Conservation Plans Completed
- 1 Status Review

Events	# Attended
Agency or Partner Training	2
Professional Development	1

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Coordinating Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



JAKE SWAFFORD - Harrison, Gentry, Worth, Daviess Counties

October – December 2019

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
Monarch RCPP Partners Call	Coordinated and hosted the Monarch RCPP Partners call in October, the 3rd conference call we've had during the project. Participants included all 8 states in the project geography as well as NFWF, PF/QF, and NRCS partners.
PF/QF Leadership Development Training	Participated in PF/QF's Leadership Development Program (LDP). This 9 month program helps emerging leaders within the organization develop their leadership skills. I started the program in July and will finish in March.
Pollinator Habitat Working Group Call	Participated in PF/QF's Pollinator Habitat Working Group quarterly meeting to discuss progress toward goals and hear updates from each of the sub-committees in the group.

Outreach & Education

- Attended 2nd Leadership Development Program session at national headquarters to continue leadership program and begin working on case studies.
- Delivered radio program for Harrison County discussing dormant seedings and best management practices (BMP's) while planting warm season grass and pollinator mixes.

Additional Work

- Assisted in reviewing wildlife/pollinator seed mixes for upcoming plantings.
- Developed reports for the Monarch RCPP and continued to assist with delivery across its range.
- Assisted with development of a new RCPP project proposal for Missouri.
- Reviewed CRP promotional material and worked to update it for General CRP sign-up 54.

Looking Forward

- I will work with local and Area Office staff to renew my NRCS conservation planner certification.
- Coordinate and plan a RCPP Partners Meeting for early 2020 to discuss financial assistance balances for the final year of the agreement.
- Working with the Monarch Coordinator in Oklahoma, we will continue to deliver RCPP efforts across its range.
- Continue participation in PF/QF's Leadership Development Program thru April 2020.
- Assist with CRP sign-up as my time allows.
- Attend Missouri Natural Resources Conference (MNRC) in February 2020.
- Maintain my role in the Pollinator Habitat Working Group and sub-committees.
- Assist with the coordination and delivery of FY20 EQIP and CSP signups in Missouri and other RCPP states.
- I will continue providing technical assistance to landowners in Harrison, Gentry, Worth, and Daviess counties who are interested in establishing habitat for Monarchs, quail, and other upland wildlife.

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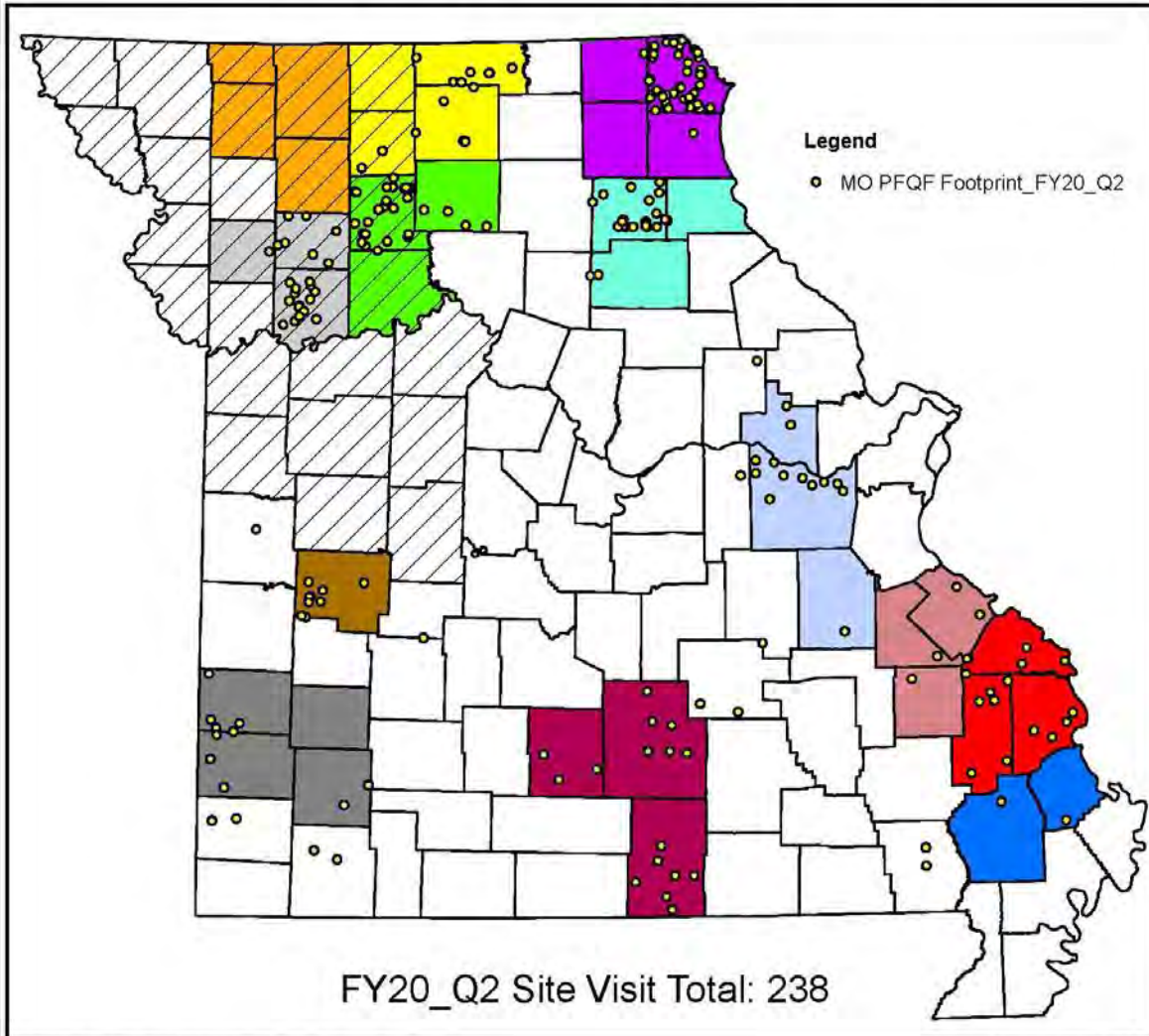
Coordinating Wildlife Biologist Quarterly Partners' Report



JAKE SWAFFORD - Harrison, Gentry, Worth, Daviess Counties

October – December 2019

FY20 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT MAP October 2019 - December 2019



*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.

Updated: 1/10/2020



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

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II **USDA**

Quarterly Partners' Report



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

OCT – DEC 2019

Quarterly Overview

The second quarter of FY 2020 did not seem very busy until I looked back at all the opportunities that I had the privilege participating in. There were many new experiences for me to reach new sets of land-owners and several chances to continue building relationships with partners continuing the mission of increasing habitat for wildlife in Missouri. The end of the quarter really started gaining momentum as we hurdled into the new year with new opportunities to make an impact.

Building Relationships

The quarter started off with a three day meeting in Springfield Missouri at the Missouri Department of Conservation's Private Lands Services Division Meeting. We began with a Quail Forever Team meeting in which all members of the Quail Forever Missouri team were able to get together, catch up, and set personal and professional goals for the year. These times of comradery are important for us because it gives us a chance to share success stories, seek advice from peers, and enjoy each others company. We finished out the week with our MDC counterparts, learning new things and having a few laughs along the way. During the conference, we heard and learned from wildlife professionals, took a field day tour of some SW Missouri habitat, and finished by recognizing some well deserving Private Land's staff for their hard work. It was a fantastic time of bonding with our counterparts from across the state.



Wes & Wesley during our team ax throwing activity.



Prescribed fire during the field tour.

Increasing Public Awareness

In October and November, I had the opportunity to help out with two events that were both new to me. The first was a Lady Landowner workshop hosted by the University of Missouri Extension Council For Linn and Sullivan Counties. I presented on the services that I offer as a Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist and how I can help landowners reach their conservation goals. After all the presentations, we ate lunch which provided an opportunity to connect 1 on 1 with the women who attended. The second event I assisted with was the Northwest Regional Envirothon Competition. During this event I was the team guide for 5 students from Norborne, MO. They were a great group of students who were smart, respectful, and fun to work with. While my main role was to ensure they made it to each station, I was afforded the opportunity to provide additional knowledge about wildlife, my job, and conservation. After we completed the stations, assisted them by telling them what questions I knew they answered correctly and which ones they answered incorrectly. I was amazed at the knowledge they possessed in several of the topics and enjoyed answering their questions. They scored third overall and were able to advance to State. I know they will do well there and I hope to see some of them working in the conservation field in the near future.



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



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

OCT – DEC 2019

Fall Surveys

For a second year, I was able to help the National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative with their annual Fall Covey Count. It is one of my favorite events because it was the first real survey I conducted while in college. I also assisted Roeslein Alternative Energy with a few surveys on their property. They are doing a lot of work on their farms to meet growing energy requirements as well as helping to sustain wildlife. Working with them has been a learning experience and I look forward to more opportunities in the future.

CRP is Here

The USDA announced the 54th CRP Sign-Up on December 9th. This is the bread and butter of a Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist. It is our greatest opportunity to engage with landowners and create or improve habitat on Missouri's landscape. During the first day of the sign-up, my schedule started to fill up. My time is filled with meeting farmers on their property, examining the habitat, and making recommendations to help them reach their goals. December was only the beginning. I know January and February will hold many more landowner meetings, partner conferences, and time in the field. This sign-up also provides a great opportunity to team up with new partners in my office. I look forward to the new challenges and experiences this sign-up will bring. I am also excited to see how the Quail Forever Missouri team will make a positive impact on Missouri's landscape.



Little Bluestem in a Pollinator plot.

Fruits of Our Labor

Most of our team got together for our annual team hunt. This year the hunt took place in North Central Missouri and I had the privilege of hosting half the team at my house for a night. It was a good day and a half of hunting, telling stories, and making memories. We encountered several coveys of quail and I was able to harvest my first bird in over 5 years. Times like these are what inspire us to keep doing our job day by day. We hope that through the work we do, we can share hunts like these with future generations.



Team Members during the hunt.

A successful quail hunt.



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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



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

OCT – DEC 2019

Trainings and Outreach	Summary
Pack Test and Federal Fire Refresher	Conducted the federally required pack test and refresher classes for my red card qualifications.
Farm Bill Training	Attended a training hosted by the Missouri Department of Conservation covering all Farm Bill programs under the 2018 Farm Bill.
Lady Land Owner Meeting	Presented at a lady land owner meeting along with the Missouri Department of Conservation, NRCS, MU Extension and SWCD.
Fall Covey Counts	Conducted 5 fall covey counts for NBCI and Roeslein Alt. Energy.
MDC Private Lands Division Conference	Attended the MDC Private lands Division Conference in Springfield, MO.

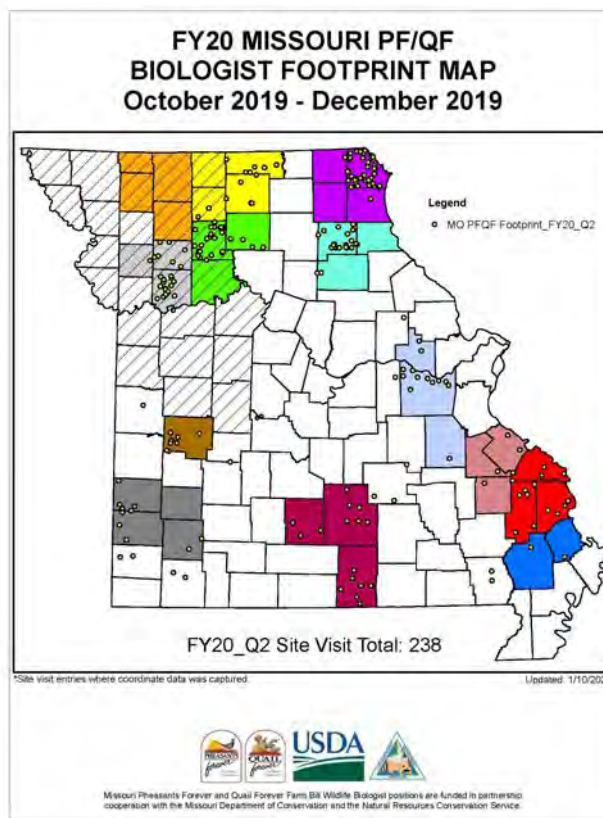
Looking Forward

- JAN 24-25 The Missouri State Habitat Convention
- FEB 3-6 Missouri Natural Resource Convention
- JAN 21 & JAN 28 (2) CRP Landowner Meetings
- Jan 28 & JAN 30 Conservation Desktop training

Quarterly Numbers

- 61 Landowners Contacted
- 16 Site Visits
- 2 Outreach Events

Program	Impacted Ac.
CRP Programs	87.1
CSP	49.8
Total	136.9



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

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Kelsey DeZalia— Stoddard and Scott Counties

October 2019-December 2019

New Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Sign up!

For all that haven't heard yet, we are in the middle of a CRP sign up! General sign up ends **February 28, 2020**. A site visit by your local biologists for contracts expiring in 2020 (re-enrollments) would be highly suggested as varying requirements have changed. Stop in to your local FSA office or visit with your local Quail Forever biologist for further information.

Quail Forever and partners hosted CRP workshops across the state! Here are the details for the couple that took place in my specific counties.

Scott County

January 23 at 5:30PM

USDA office breakroom, Benton, MO

Stoddard County

January 29 at 5:30PM

USDA office meeting room, Dexter MO

If you missed the workshops but are still interested in CRP, contact me to set up an appointment where we can talk about your habitat and farm goals.

What do you want to learn about?

I'd like to hear from you on what workshops you would like to attend! Reach out to me to let me know what workshops you would be interested in attending. Or if you have specific questions about your property, I'd be happy to make a visit and answer questions to help make your plot meet your goals.

What have I been up to?

Besides hitting the ground running with workshops and coordinating my first youth pollinator event:

Conservation Summary Report	
• 20 landowner contacts	• Planned CRP workshops
• Provided direct CTA for 15 landowners	• Attended SWCD board meeting
• Corteva/QF Youth Pollinator event	• Assisted landowners in 3 counties



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Kelsey DeZalia - Scott and Stoddard Counties

October 2019-December 2019

Upcoming Events:

Stay up to date on events around the state by following **missouriqf** on Instagram and/or **Quail Forever and Pheasants Forever in Missouri** on Facebook.

Corteva & QF Partner Up!

For the last couple of months I've been enjoying partnering up with Corteva Agriscience (New Madrid). We have coordinated a youth pollinator event involving 4-H chapters from different counties in SEMO occurring the end of February! This educational event will provide the kids with varying educational stations to discuss the importance of pollinators while also letting them have a hands-on experience in seeding the plot.

Corteva has been an active partner with the Missouri Department of Conservation in creating pollinator plots around their facility in the past. They have been a great example on how partnerships can help create valuable habitat. Quail Forever is excited to be involved in this event.

State Convention

Pheasants and Quail Forever are hosting the annual State Convention Jan 25th. Go to — <https://pheasantsforeverevents.org/event/4104> for more information! We would love to see you there.

Upcoming Fundraiser

The local Quail Forever chapter, the Bootheel Bobwhites, will be hosting their annual Fundraiser February 1, 2020! It will be held at St. Dennis Catholic School in Benton, MO. Contact myself or anyone from the chapter if you're interested in a raffle (that you do not need to be present to win) or if you would like to attend.



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Coordinating Wildlife Biologist Quarterly Partners' Report



Len Gilmore—St. Clair Co.

Oct – Dec 2019

Position Update

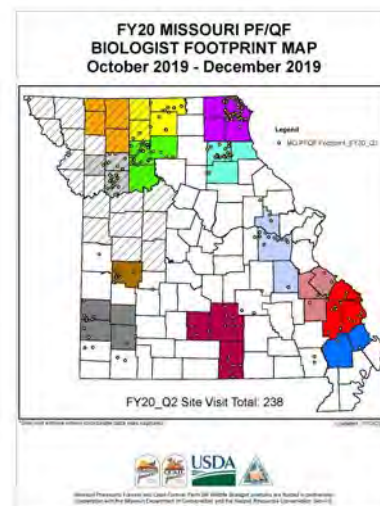
Around the first of November the expansion for the Upper Osage Grassland geography was approved by Missouri Dept. of Conservation. This expansion adds another 13,700 acres to the 125,800 acre geography that covers portions of Cedar, St. Clair, and Vernon Counties in west central Missouri. During November and December the expanded acres were surveyed for land cover types to identify grassland and cropland. The grassland was identified as cool-season grass such as tall fescue, as native prairie remnant, planted warm-season grass, or a combination of the three. Also, the use of the grassland was determined as grazed, hayed, or idle such as with CRP. The expansion was requested because of the amount of grassland and potential cooperators that live within this community. This community that is carved out of the landscape has potential to provide enhanced grassland production of both forage and wildlife.

Prairie Day Held in Upper Osage Grassland Geography

On a chilly day the second week of October the public was invited to attend a day at Wah'Kon-Tah Prairie near El Dorado Springs, Missouri. Several booths were set up by several partners of the Upper Osage Grassland priority geography that showcased the uniqueness of tallgrass prairie. People were able to participate in guided walks or ride through the trails to see the prairie up close. Landowners were able to see various management on the prairie that could be used on prairies they may have on their farm. Several property owners talked with members of the Upper Osage Prescribed Burn Association (UOPBA) about using prescribed fire on their property. People were able to view and handle much of the burn equipment that the UOPBA acquired and have available to help landowners conduct burns on their property. A Quail Forever biologist was on hand to discuss the need for prescribed burn plans that landowners should use to conduct controlled burns on their land. It was a good day for people to experience the prairie.



Upper Osage Prescribed Burn Association was one of many groups that met the public during Prairie Day.



Conservation Planning

- 17 Landowner Contacts
- 15 Site Visits

Other Programs	Acres Impacted
CSP	12
CTA	270
Total	282



Coordinating Wildlife Biologist Quarterly Partners' Report



Len Gilmore—St. Clair Co.

Oct – Dec 2019

Outreach & Education

- Presented grazing management used on prairie at the Prairie Day event held in October at Wah'Kon-Tah Prairie. This was a coordinated effort by the Upper Osage Grassland management team. Colder temperatures limited the attendance to 57 folks.
- Attended the Landowner Warm Season Grass Grazing Workshop put on by Missouri University Extension in Bates County. I provided information about using native warm-season grasses in a grazing system. I talked individually with most of the eight landowners that attended about planting native forages on their property.
- Assisted with Landowner Prescribed Burn workshop in Cedar/St.Clair County at El Dorado Springs during October to 13 landowners.

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
MDC PLS meeting	Attended training at MO Dept. of Conservation Private Land Services meeting held in Springfield.
MO QF Team meeting.	Attended team meeting/training at Springfield to learn about Women in Working Lands and establish goals and objectives.
West Central QF Chapter meeting	Attended chapt. meeting where results from the SW MO Quail Study were presented. I discussed the importance of grazing for nesting and brood-rearing cover.

Looking Forward

- Provide display at Eagle's Day Event at Truman Visitor Center in Warsaw, MO.
- Attend MO Quail Summit in Columbia, MO.
- Participate in PF/QF State Convention held in Columbia.
- Attend and present at the Missouri Natural Resource Conference at Lake of Ozarks.
- Attend and present at the SW MO Spring Forage Conference in Springfield, MO.



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II



Quarterly Partners' Report

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

October—December 2019

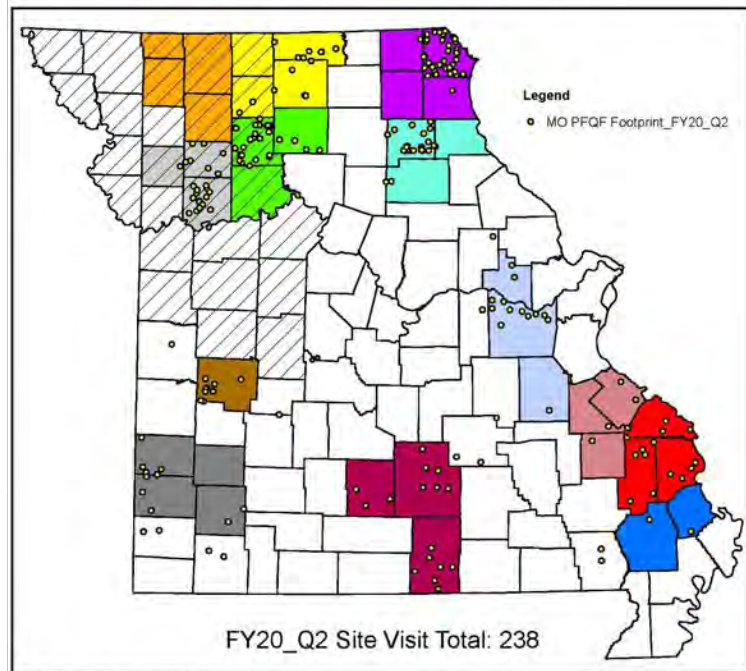
FY20—Quarter 2

From October through December, our Missouri team conducted 248 site visits across 72 counties and logged 771 landowner contacts. Collectively, we presented to nearly 600 workshop and meeting participants at over 20 events. As for surveys, our team conducted 32 fall quail covey counts in several counties.

I was happy to provide several landowners with conservation technical assistance. Because this quarter was prime time for site preparation for pollinator habitat establishment, I received several calls about spraying and seeding recommendations. Other areas of assistance included assisting with EQIP applications, writing a habitat management plan, and answering questions regarding the General Signup for CRP. Additionally, I conducted 2 fall covey counts which included one within the Oak Ridge Quail Restoration Landscape priority area.

Looking ahead, I anticipate a busy CRP signup season for Ste. Genevieve County and look forward to serving landowners interested in improving wildlife habitat.

FY20 MISSOURI PF/QF
BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT MAP
October 2019 - December 2019



*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured Updated: 1/10/2020



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

Conservation Technical Assistance Summary

Conservation Planning	Program	Acres Impacted	CRP Practice	Acres Impacted
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 61 Landowner Contacts 6 Site Visits 3 Conservation Plans written 2 Fall Quail Covey Surveys 	EQIP	-	CP2
	CSP	-	CP3A	37.9
	MDC LCAP	12.65	CP12	0.3
	QF Chapter	-	CP30	-
	Non-Program	5.0	CP38	-
	Total	17.65	CP42	-
			Total	78.1

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II



Quarterly Partners' Report

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

October—December 2019

Increasing Your Hunting Opportunities on Private Land

Did you know that some private lands in Missouri are open to the public for hunting? Through the Missouri Recreational Access Program (MRAP), you can access select private lands for outdoor recreation—for free! Eligible landowners voluntarily sign their property up and, in turn, receive incentive payments for opening their land up for public use. Additionally, landowners can receive bonuses for habitat improvements or by being located within a priority geography area. Each property is unique and access options vary from wildlife viewing only to all-access hunting. The land must be at a minimum 40 continuous acres (unless it's fishing only access) and although many cover types are eligible, 20% or more must have quality wildlife habitat.

In November, our Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever in Missouri team took advantage of this opportunity for our annual team hunt. For some of us on the team, it was our first quail hunting experience—and it did not disappoint! We hunted two different MRAP properties and had great success. When visiting MRAP properties, you'll need to park in the designated parking area (either a lot or along a county road) and sign in at the information board. You'll retain a card with you during your hunt. After your hunt, return to the information board and record your harvests. Completed cards should be placed in the designated drop box.

Protecting our hunting heritage is important because it helps fund our conservation efforts. Programs like MRAP help break access barriers to public hunting opportunities. If you want to know more about enrolling your property, please reach out to your local Quail Forever Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist or Private Lands Conservationist.

To locate an MRAP property near you visit: www.mdc.mo.gov/mrap



Top: Pictured is the typical information board you'll encounter on MRAP properties with sign in/out cards. Area regulations, maps, and other relevant information will be posted here.
Right: Kim Cole and I bagged our first bird. It was a team effort!



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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



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

October—December 2019

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
Conservation Desktop Training	Learned how to use the new program for conservation planning
MDC Private Lands Division Meeting	Met with MDC Private Lands staff
MDC SEPLS Meeting	Met with MDC Private Lands staff to provide update on current projects
Ste. Genevieve County SWCD Board Meetings	Provided updates on current habitat projects and upcoming workshops
St. Francois County SWCD Board Meeting	Provided updates on current habitat projects and upcoming workshops
USDA Programs Training	Learned about Farm Bill Programs, including updates to programs and conservation planning
FOSA Meeting	Met with NRCS and SWCD partners in Madison County to discuss program updates

Looking Forward

- Obtain NRCS Apprentice Conservation Planner and continue working towards Conservation Planner certification
- Host a pollinator and quail habitat tour in June 2020
- Continue getting to know landowners in my counties and building relationships with partners



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



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

October—December 2019

Upcoming Workshops

Quail Management 101: Habitat Basics for Your Property

When: Tuesday, February 18, 7:00 pm

Where: Rice Lecture Hall of the Arts and Science, Mineral Area College, Park Hills

RVSP: www.mdc.mo.gov/events

Where are the quail? How do you attract quail to your property? How can farming promote quality quail habitat? This seminar will cover these questions and will focus on the basics of bobwhite quail ecology and habitat requirements. Participants will learn how to evaluate their property's potential for quail and what programs offer financial assistance for landowners who want to improve quail habitat.

Women Caring for the Land: Wildlife and Pollinator Habitat

When: Tuesday, June 9, 8:30 AM—3:30 PM

Where: Farmington—location details TBD

RVSP: Kim Cole (573) 356-0298 or kcole@quailforever.org

This is a women-centered workshop for female landowners that include a morning meeting and discussion followed by lunch and a hands-on field tour. Farm Bill Wildlife Biologists Rachel Settle and Kelsey DeZalia will talk with landowners about establishing habitat for wildlife and pollinators.

2019 Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever in Missouri Team Hunt



**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 III



Quarterly Partners' Report

Wes Buchheit - Bollinger, Cape, and Perry Counties

October-December 2019

A Highlight of the Quarter

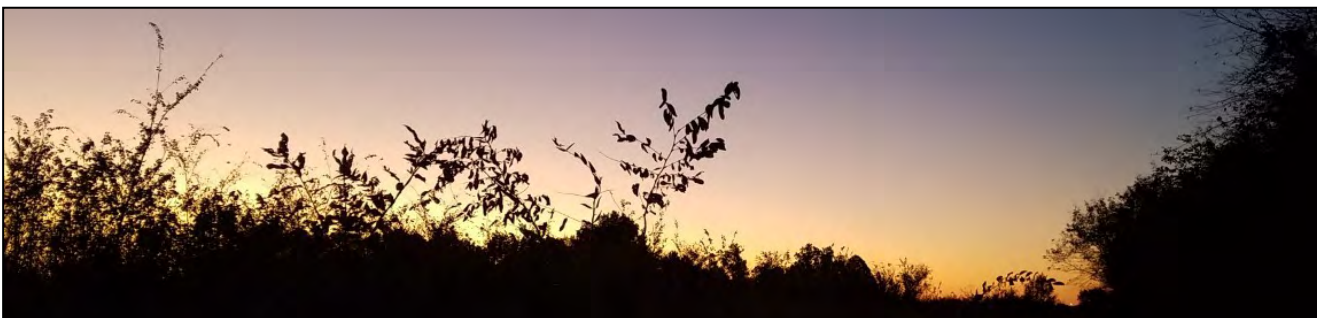
The past three months were productive in assisting landowners move towards their conservation goals of their land and helping them navigate Farm Bill programs to support the work. One aspect stood out, and that was the response from landowners/producers who attended the native forage workshop in August described in my last quarterly report. I had phone calls or office visits with 9 producers and visited 7 farms to further discuss and plan how to best incorporate natives into their operation. I look forward to helping them improve the efficiency of their farms and improving wildlife habitat as a complementary benefit.



Picture from October of established Indiangrass from the native grass forage mix drilled 5 months earlier in May.

<u>Conservation Planning</u>	Conservation Program	Acres Impacted
• 77 Landowner Contacts	EQIP	-
• 19 Site Visits	CRP	12.9
• 2 Conservation Plans Written	CSP	15.3
• 2 Practice Checkouts	MDC LAP	-
• 1 Workshop/Field Tour	QF Chapter	-
• 27 Workshop Participants	Conservation Technical Assistance	4.3
	Total	32.5

The sky at dawn during one of six fall quail covey counts completed in October.





Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist III



Quarterly Partners' Report

Wes Buchheit - Bollinger, Cape, and Perry Counties

October-December 2019

Learn to burn...and when not to!

Many people have heard it before. If you have read other quarterly reports of mine, you probably have read it there too; prescribed fire is an efficient and cost-effective land management tool. The Black River Quail Forever Chapter had heard it too, and they wanted more. The chapter president and habitat chair reached out for the opportunity to host a workshop and a demonstration prescribed burn to provide experience for chapter members and others in the communities surrounding Poplar Bluff. As building the prescribed fire culture in Missouri is a goal of Quail Forever and a goal of my own, I was excited to help with this opportunity.



Classroom portion of the prescribed fire workshop.

With the help of the chapter leaders, Quail Forever Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist Kelsey DeZalia, and Missouri Department of Conservation Private Land Conservationist Kara McSpadden, we presented the MDC Landowner Burn Workshop for 27 attendees in the morning, ate delicious BBQ for lunch sponsored by the chapter, and

then headed to the field for the hands-on experience. We demonstrated the use of the equipment, discussed protective clothing, and reviewed the burn plan which stated the weather conditions suitable for burning. As it turned out, the wind speed was at the low end of the acceptable range of wind speeds to burn of 5-15mph. While low wind speeds sound like safe conditions to burn, the fire is less predictable as it can generate its own wind and move erratically. *Continued on the next page*

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
MDC Private Lands Division Conference	Attended a variety of resource management presentations and received updates from MDC that helps QF better support their priorities.
NRCS Conservation Planning Part 2 Training	Attended the one week training in Columbia working through the 9-steps of conservation planning and working towards Certified Conservation Planner status.
NRCS Conservation Desktop Training	Completed the 2 day course on the new NRCS planning/mapping tool.
Nebraska Prescribed Fire Conference	Attended the conference on behalf of the Missouri Prescribed Fire Council to improve the prescribed fire culture in MO from the experience.

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist III **USDA**



Quarterly Partners' Report

Wes Buchheit - Bollinger, Cape, and Perry Counties

October-December 2019

Our crew gathered at the downwind side of the field to burn and lit our test fire on the edge of the field against the 10ft wide firebreak of bare soil created by a tractor and disk. After a few minutes observing how the fire behaved with the grass and woody sprouts within the field serving as the fuel and with the weather conditions, we saw that the wind died down and the fire had the potential to move unpredictably. We were faced with one of the most difficult decisions involved in prescribed fire, calling off the burn. Even though the crew was there and ready to improve the habitat of those 9 acres, we put out the fire with a combination of hand tools and water. At that point, it is waiting for another day with acceptable conditions to burn.



The crew gathered after putting out the test fire and calling off the burn.



Stringing fire with the drip torch during the demonstration burn with acceptable weather conditions.

Fortunately, the day was not a bust and we were able to create firebreaks with hand tools around a one-tenth acre section of a separate field and conduct a safe burn to demonstrate the process of a prescribed burn for the workshop attendees. While we burned very little that day, the chapter members learned how to conduct a prescribed burn and how to make that difficult but important decision of calling it off.



The Habitat Organization

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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist III



Quarterly Partners' Report

Wes Buchheit - Bollinger, Cape, and Perry Counties

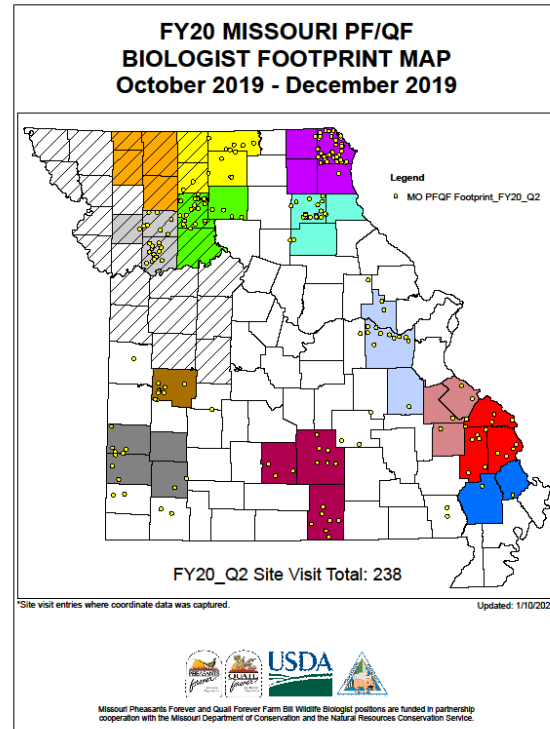
October-December 2019

Outreach & Education

- Assisted with the Black River Landowner Prescribed Burn Workshop and Demonstration Burn in Poplar Bluff

Looking Forward

- Missouri PF/QF State Habitat Convention in Columbia, MO January 24-25.
- Assist with the new and reenrollment CRP offers.
- Hosting CRP informational workshops
 - Perryville January 29
 - Jackson January 30
- Bootheel Bobwhite Chapter Mouse Races Fundraiser Event in Benton February 1.
- Missouri Prescribed Fire Council Meeting February 4.
- Missouri Natural Resources Conference February 4-6.
- Assist NRCS offices with EQIP planning for wildlife/forestry related practices.
- Continue to assist landowners with site visits to identify landowner objectives and habitat opportunities.



The crew gathered after the second successful demonstration burn.



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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Wesley Hanks - Franklin, Warren, and Washington

October–December 2019

Landowner Spotlight

Donald and Wanda Lange purchased their property along the Bourbeuse river in 2005. When they purchased the property, it was a combination of fescue hay, crop, and overgrown old fields. Their son, Brian Lange, began more actively managing the property for wildlife when he learned about Quail Forever's Farm Bill Biologist program in 2011. The primary focus of their management has been early successional habitats by reclaiming old fields and re-establishing native plant communities. Brian began reclaiming portions of old fields with saw in hand, but soon found out that was a daunting task and hired a contractor to come in and remove the rest. Cleared fields were then seeded with a diverse mixture of native grasses and forbs to benefit wildlife. Fescue hay fields were converted to a combinations of wildlife food plots, native grass and forb strips, and native grass hay. Native shrubs were planted to provide food and cover for both quail and turkeys. Along wooded edges, edge feathering has been used to create a shrubby transition from native grasses to big timber. Until recently most of their management has been focused on open areas and their edges. Now that most of those areas are being actively managed, they have turned their attention to managing their timbered acres. They have been working with a local forester to restore their timber to a more open woodland plant community. Continued on next page....



Plantings of native grasses and forbs have provided high quality wildlife habitat across the Lange's property.

Conservation Planning

- 50 Landowner Contacts
- 14 Site Visits
- 3 Burn Plans Written Covering 66.4 ac

Practice Check-Outs	Acres
Pollinator/Monarch Planting	11.8
NWSG Forage Planting	23.9
Total	35.7

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
MDC Private Land Services Conference	Received updates on MDC's goals and priorities to maintain and grow our valuable partnership.
Farm Bill Program Training	Learned more about the ins and outs of Farm Bill programs such as EQIP, CRP, and ACEP to better help landowners navigate those programs.
Conservation Desktop Training	Learned how to navigate and use new conservation planning software used by NRCS.
MDC PLS Regional Staff Meeting	Received updates on regional happenings and visited with PLC's on what they are currently working on.



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Wesley Hanks - Franklin, Warren, and Washington

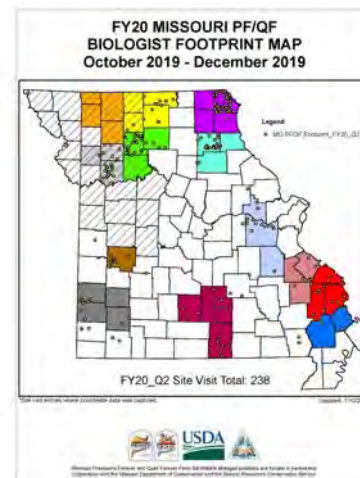
October-December 2019

Landowner Spotlight Cont.

Open woodlands are characterized by an open canopy that allows sunlight to reach the forest floor promoting regeneration of oaks and native grasses and forbs. This has been achieved by cutting down less desirable tree species and those that will open the tree canopy allowing sunlight in. The shrubby and herbaceous understory provides food and cover for white-tailed deer, turkeys, quail, and a variety of non-game wildlife. One key management practice that ties the management of their open ground and timber is prescribed burning. Prescribed fire is not a management tool that is to be used once and then never done again. It is a tool that needs to be implemented every few years and with a specific goal in mind. This is a big part to why the Lange Family's management has been successful. They have been sticking to a burn regime where they burn a portion of their property every year. They have made fire part of their yearly routine. This is made a little easier as they are active members of the East Central Prescribed Burn Association. In March of 2019 the Lange family was recognized by the Missouri River Valley Chapter of Quail Forever with the Polaris Habitat Stewardship Award. This award is given out at the Chapter's annual banquet to a landowner that is actively managing their land to benefit not just quail, but all wildlife. The Lange family understands that wildlife habitat management is an active process and they are dedicated to being good stewards of the land.



Prescribed fire has been a key management tool on Lange's property.



Outreach & Education

- Worked with the Missouri Prescribed Fire Council to host a Federal S130/190 Wildland Firefighting course for East Central Prescribed Burn Association members and MO State Parks employees.
- Presented to the Shamrock Conservation Association of New Haven High School on what Quail Forever is about and the importance of pollinators and their habitats. This is in preparation for a pollinator planting they will be helping with in New Haven in the coming months.

Looking Forward

- Along with FSA I will be hosting a workshop on General CRP sign-up that is currently happening on January 22nd.
- On January 24th I will be attending the MO Quail Summit hosted by MDC.
- January 25th is the 7th Annual Missouri State Convention.
- February 4th-6th is the MO Natural Resource Conference where I will be presenting a poster on the monarch habitat monitoring our team did this past summer.
- Through landowner contacts I will continue to share the Quail Forever mission and help get anyone interested involved with their local QF chapter.