



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



Brad Pobst - Scott and Stoddard Counties

October – December 2022

RCPP Sand Prairie Restoration Partnership Program

I had several meetings with NRCS and MDC to discuss the ranking and eligibility process for enrolling landowners into this RCPP Program. This program focuses on the restoration and protection of sand prairie communities on private land through voluntary perpetual easements.



Perpetual easements will help protect this critically endangered native community, providing essential habitat for multiple threatened and endangered species. Landowners located in Butler, Dunklin, Mississippi, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Scott, and Stoddard Counties that have remnant sand prairies are eligible for this program. Most of the remnant sand prairies in Southeast Missouri are in Scott, Mississippi, and New Madrid Counties. We have identified ~500 acres of good quality sand prairies left and have enough funds to enroll

200 acres into the perpetual easements. We are in the process of contacting these landowners and encouraging them to apply before the January 13, 2023 deadline.

<u>Conservation Planning</u>		<u>Outreach/Meetings/Trainings/Surveys</u>	
Landowner Contacts	126	Newsletter Articles	2
Site Visits	74	FOSA Meetings	1
CRP Conservation Plans	18	RCPP Sand Prairie Meetings	4
CRP Plan Modifications	28	Quail Surveys (Fall Covey Counts)	13
CSP Plans	1	New Employee Orientation, Minnesota	
Prescribe Burn Plans	5	Missouri Team Meeting, Branson	
LCAP	2		
Acres Impacted	1413		
		<u>Looking Forward</u>	
		RCPP Sand Prairie Ranking	
		Level 2 Burn Training Presentation	
		SE MU Crop Conference Booth	
		CRP Meetings	

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MissouriPFQF.org



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Conservation Reserve Program

2023 Expiring Contracts - Continued to work on status reviews for 2023 expiring CRP contracts. Wrote up reports on 37 contracts that will need to have management work completed next year before re-enrollments. Reports were sent to FSA who sent out letters to the landowners. Several landowners have already contacted me to discuss options on working on the issues with their CRP contracts.



2022 New Contracts - Worked with landowners with new 2022 CRP contracts on ordering seed and discussing options on planting. Here in Southeast Missouri, we are fortunate enough to have both drills and broadcast seeders available for landowners to rent to get their CRP seedings completed. If landowners are planting a seed mixture that contains forbs and NWSG I usually encourage them to consider a dormant seeding. With the snow and cold weather that came through during the Christmas break it was a good time to get this seeding completed. I worked with several landowners who used a vicon seeder that was bought with QF/NWTF/MDC funds to plant their field borders while snow was still on the ground. Snow allows you to see where you have gone and see how the seed is spread out across the area that needs to be planted. The freezing, thawing, and rain will provide the necessary seed to soil contact and will break dormancy that most forb seeds need.



Brad Pobst
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

6458 State Highway 77
Benton, MO 63736

573/545-8007
bpobst@pheasantsforever.org



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Conservation Reserve Program Continued:

You would've thought that CRP signups would have slowed down after October 1 but with more continuous practice available we are able to get contracts started right after the landowners signs the CP2. This allow us to be flexible and getting the conservation plans, maps, job and seeding sheets completed and started. To this end I was able to get the site visits and the paperwork completed for 6 CRP contracts with start dates of December 1, 2022, and January 1, 2023. All these contracts will then be able to get their seedings completed this winter/spring.

Burn Plans - Request for burn plans from landowners in CRP has picked up in the last couple of months. With the requirement that signed burn plans need to be on file at the FSA office landowners are requesting these plans even if they have been burning on their own over the years. Of the 20 burn plan request that I have received most have attended one of my burn workshops that I conducted when I was a PLC for MDC, so they have a good sense on how to conduct a burn. Site visits have been conducted or are scheduled to get these plans completed before spring.

I also met with several landowners that are interested in the CP38E-2 sand prairie practice and flagged boundary lines.

CSP Renewals

Worked with NRCS on a couple of CSP renewal contracts. Conducted site visits and completed enhancement job sheets for Crop Tree Management for Mast Production, Edge Feathering, Summer Roosting Habitat for Native Forest-dwelling Bat Species, Brush Management, Pollinator Planting, Herbaceous Weed Control and Prescribe Fire. .

PF/QF in Missouri Staff

- Brad Pobst** Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II, Scott, Stoddard
- Chad Doolen** Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II, Perry, Bollinger, Cape Girardeau
- Colby Mohler** F88B1- Wetland Specialist, Northeast MO
- Courtney Nicks** Senior Farm Bill Biologist, Randolph, Macon, Chariton
- Ethan Kleekamp** Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II, Jasper, Barton, Dade, Leavenworth
- Haley Lockard** Senior WFLW/Farm Bill Biologist, Cass, Johnson, Pettis
- Heather Jones** Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II, Clark, Lewis, Knox, Scotland
- Jacob Swafford** Senior F88B1 Missouri RCPP, Marion in Columbia
- Jeff Folkerts** F88B1- Wetland Specialist, Northwest MO
- Jonathan Dew** Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II, Linn, Livingston, Carroll
- Josh Marshall** Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II, Putnam, Mercer, Grundy, Sullivan
- Kelley DeZalia** F88B1- Wetland Specialist, Southwest MO
- Lizzy Johnson** Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II, Howell, Texas, Wright
- Logan Baum** Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II, Ray, Caldwell, Clinton
- Valerie Repp** Coordinating Invasive Species Biologist, Stationed in Shannon County
- Wes Buchheit** Prescribed Fire Coordinating Biologist, Statewide
- Wesley Hanks** Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II, Warren, Franklin, Washington
- Will Robinson** Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II, Shelby, Marion, Monroe
- VACANT** Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II, Madison, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve
- VACANT** Coordinating Grazing Lands Biologist, Stationed in Osage
- Habitat Specialists- Shaw Nature Reserve**
 - Dylan Jacobs, Crew Lead
 - Josiah Sutton, Crew
 - Keith Janikula, Crew
 - Ty Price, Crew
- Andrew White** Missouri State Coordinator, awhite@quailforever.org, m. (660) 619-1749
- Lisa McFray** Senior Habitat Partnership Specialist
- Kim Cole** Outreach Coordinator III
- Donnamarie Duffin** Missouri Research & Pollinator Coordinator
- Trevor Day** Regional Representative - North MO
- Ayden Caray** Regional Representative - South MO

For contact information and to learn more about us visit missouriof.org

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



12/9/22

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

Brad Pobst
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

6458 State Highway 77
Benton, MO 63736

573/545-8007
bpbost@pheasantsforever.org



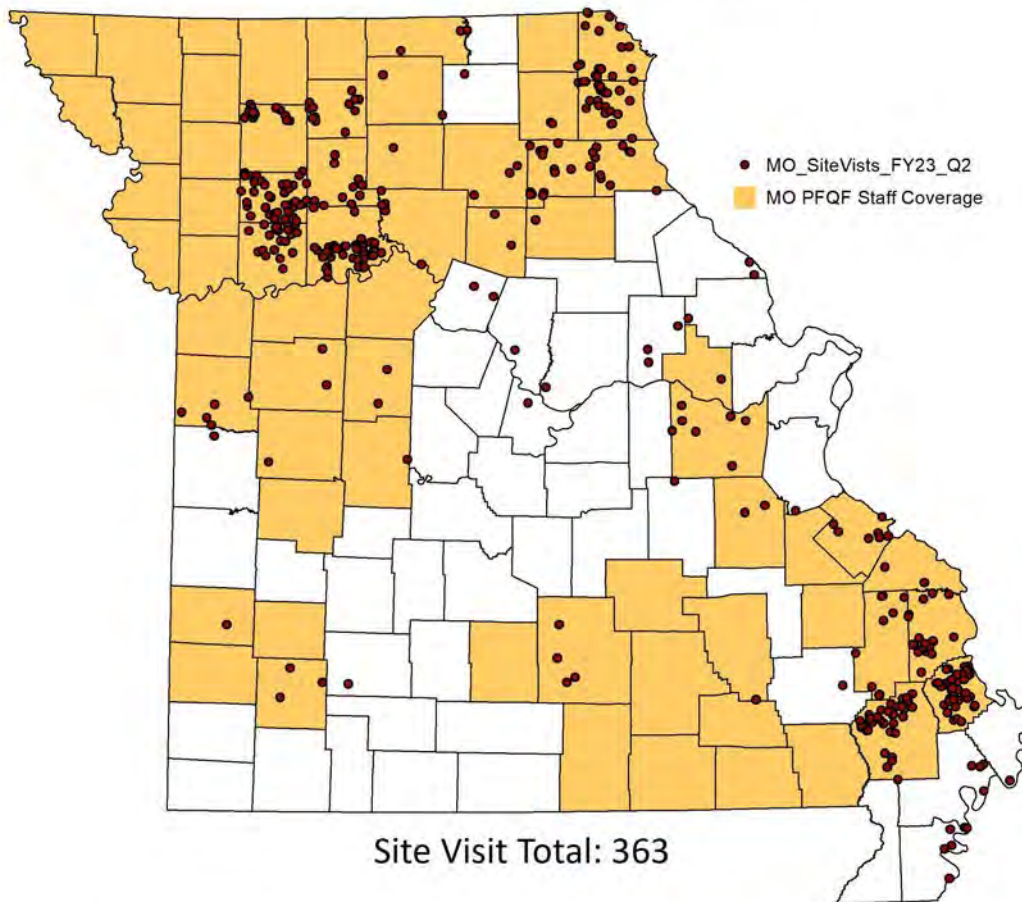
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FY23 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT Oct 1, 2022 - Dec 31, 2022



*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.

Updated 1/13/2023



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6458 State Highway 77
Benton, MO 63736

573/545-8007
bpobst@pheasantsforever.org



Missouri Quail Forever

Quarterly Partners' Report



Chad Doolen - Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, & Perry

Oct - Dec 2022

Working with Working Lands

December brought the launch of Missouri's Native Forage Initiative. This special EQIP funding is first-come-first serve for producers willing to incorporate native plants into their grazing and haying operations. The primary purpose of this program is to increase resilience and sustainability of these operations. However, the focus on establishing and utilizing native species of grasses is a win-win-win for agricultural production, soil health, and wildlife!

Native grasses, such as Big Bluestem, Little Bluestem, and Indian Grass, are well adapted to Missouri's landscapes and often poor soils. Their deep root systems enhance nutrient exchange and increase the holding capacity of water within the soil horizons. Their foliage provides cover and nesting habitat for wildlife, including Northern Bobwhite. When well-managed, these plants provide forage for livestock during the driest and hottest months of the year. Producers that had native grasses in 2022 were able to maintain plenty of forage for their herds throughout the severe summer droughts.

At only a month into the initiative, as of the end of December, several owners and operators are taking advantage of the fund pool. Cape Girardeau County alone has already preapproved 99 acres. As producers continue to submit applications, we will be able to incorporate more native warm season grasses back into the landscape, benefitting both producer and Northern Bobwhite!



Flowering Indian Grass glows in the evening light (Shannon County, 2009)

Conservation Reserve Program	Acres Impacted
CP2 - Native Warm Season Grasses	98.6
CP9 - Shallow Water Areas for Wildlife	7.4
CP22/31	12.5
CP33 - Upland Bird Habitat Buffer	18.1
Total CRP	136.6
Other Programs	Acres Impacted
Native Forage Initiative	206.0
General EQIP	86.0
Total	292.0

Conservation Planning

- 26 Landowner Contacts
- 16 Site Visits
- 1 Rx Burn Plan

Outreach

- 2 Field Events
- 1 Native Forage Presentation
- 1 4H Grassland Contest



Missouri Quail Forever

Quarterly Partners' Report



Chad Doolen - Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, & Perry

Oct - Dec 2022

Settling In, a Six-Month Perspective

The end of this quarter also marks the end of my first six months as Jackson's Farm Bill Biologist. My first quarter with QF was spent focusing on conducting site visits for expiring CRP contracts and a few meetings and training opportunities. This second quarter has passed with the same swiftness as the first.

Two events dominated October: PFQF's New Employee Orientation and our Missouri State Team Meeting. In early October, PFQF's newest employees from around the country (including several from Missouri) gathered in St. Paul, Minnesota. During the meeting, new staff learned about the organizations programs and policies, outreach for fundraising, and met staff from headquarters. Later in October, the state meeting provided our team with a rare opportunity to see each other face-to-face. The multi-day event offered us team building, chances to learn about and provide input on state-level activities, and even meet representatives from our partner organizations from across the state.

While October was a time for travel and workshops, November allowed for local meetings (with local NRCS, MDC, and SWCD staff) and site visits between holidays. Visiting with landowners offered opportunities to review CRP management, EQIP opportunities, sustainable grazing, incorporating native forage into working lands, controlling invasive species, and even some forest management talks. From my perspective, November rolled smoothly into December's focus on the Native Forage Initiative. As CRP, EQIP, and NFI are going strong, the next quarter is looking to be as eventful and this one.



A site visit is required for each NFI application a USDA office receives. During a site visit, each field that is part of the application will be evaluated for crop or pasture condition and wildlife habitat suitability. The specialized soil probe in the image above is used to measure soil compaction. Plant vigor, amount of bare soil, root abundance and condition, distance to wooded and shrubby cover, etc. are also assessed as part of the evaluation.

Chad Doolen
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

480 W Jackson Trail
Jackson, MO 63755

(573) 243-1467 x6080
cdoolen@pheasantsforever.org



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Chad Doolen - Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, & Perry

Oct - Dec 2022

Outreach & Workshops	Outcome
Mayfield Holler Wildlife Cooperative Fish Fry & Field Tour	Northern Bollinger County's local wildlife cooperative. This annual get-together provides the perfect opportunity to showcase local working lands and wildlife habitat projects.
Missouri Cattlemen's Association Region 3 NRCS Outreach Program	This Fall, the Cattlemen's Association hosted a series of outreach events throughout the state. Area 3's event was held in Williamsville (Wayne County) and provided another great opportunity to discuss the benefits of NWSGs for forage and wildlife habitat.
FFA Grassland Contest (Perry County)	Every year, high school FFA students have opportunities to test their knowledge of evaluating pastures, identifying plants, and assessing wildlife habitat on working farms. This year, NRCS and a local producer held a competition in western Perry County. Quail Forever's biologist served as the judge for the plant identification course.
Woodland Stewardship Hybrid Timber Sale Workshop (MU Extension)	Woodlands in Missouri are defined by herbaceous understories, which can be great habitat for Northern Bobwhite and other species of mammals and birds. MU's workshop provided another opportunity to discuss managing woodlands for wildlife habitat, timber production, and sustainability with local landowners.

MISSOURI CATTLEMEN'S REGION 3 NRCS OUTREACH PROGRAM
 Saturday, October 8th, 2022

Location:
 Henson Farms
 (4108 Wayne Rd A, Williamsville, MO 63197)

9:00a.m. Registration
 9:15 a.m. Welcome & Overview
 9:30 a.m. Soil and Pasture Management-Warren Cork
 10:00a.m. Fencing demonstration-Stan Griggs Wayne County Soil & Water
 10:30a.m. Break
 11:00 a.m. Managing Native and Warm Season Grasses-Quails Forever
 Noon: Lunch -Prepared by Ozark Foothills Cattlemen
 1:00 p.m. Rainfall Simulator-Warren Cork
 1:30 p.m. NRCS Programs Overview-NRCS
 2:00 p.m. Tour Henson Farms

Please RSVP to: Lisa Stockhorst
 Email: Lisa@mocattle.com
 Office: 573-499-9162 ext. 234 or Cell: 573-554-6859



Advertisement for the Area 3 outreach event hosted in early October by the MO Cattlemen's Association in Williamsville, MO.

In addition to QF's presentation, a NRCS District Conservation talked about incentive programs for livestock operations at the Cattlemen's Area 3 Outreach Event.

Chad Doolen
 Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

480 W Jackson Trail
 Jackson, MO 63755

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cdoolen@pheasantsforever.org



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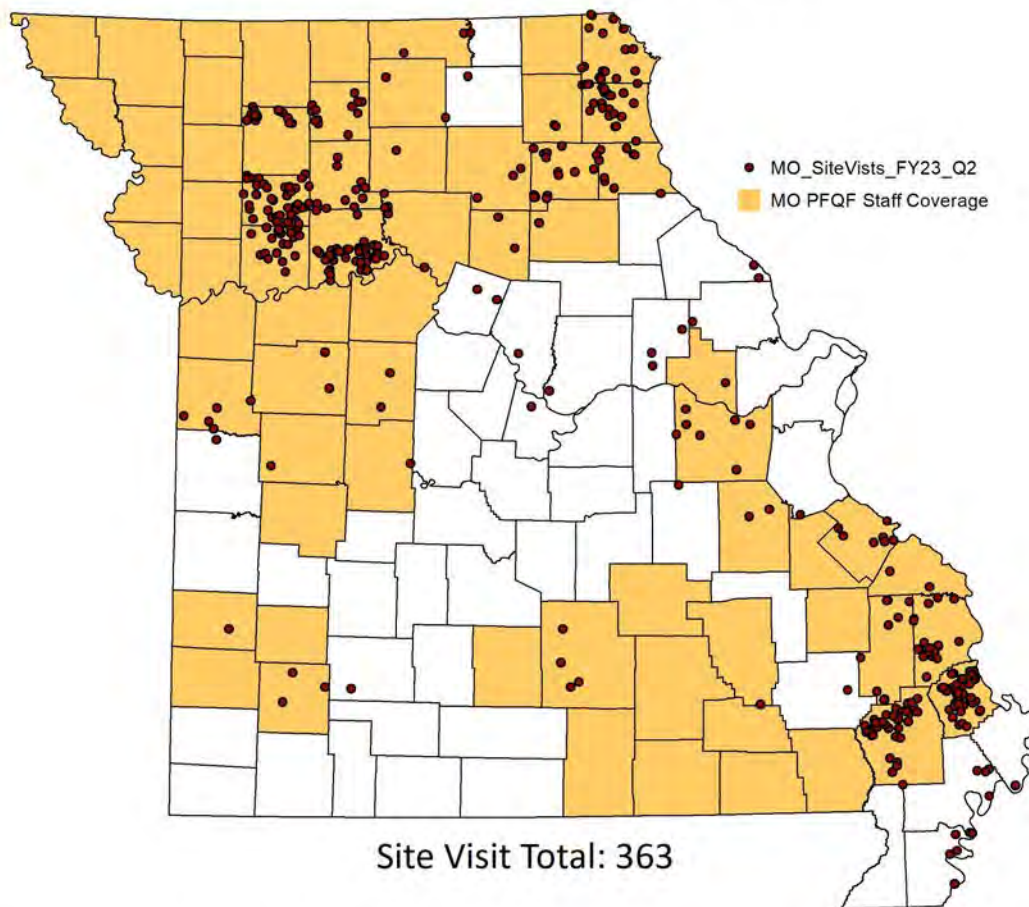
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Oct - Dec 2022

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Updated 1/13/2023



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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

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Jackson, MO 63755

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cdoolen@pheasantsforever.org



Position Update

This past quarter was packed tight with many big accomplishments. WET 2 finished construction and closed many wetland restoration projects, the Central Missouri Prescribed Burn association made huge strides in preparing for the upcoming burning season, and the Missouri Quail Forever Team was able to get together for various team building exercises and to learn from many of our great partners. I personally was able to interact with many landowners, including those at the Boone County Ag Producers Listening session, where I was able to hear the producers' point of view and their concerns for the future. This next quarter, we will continue covering Northeast Missouri conducting on-site easement monitoring, topographic surveys, and planning for upcoming restorations.



Central Missouri's Prescribed Burn Association at our interest meeting held at the MO Soybean Association facility



Conservation Technical Assistance Summary

Conservation Planning

- 21 Landowner Contacts
- 19 Site Visits
- 3 Topographic Surveys Completed
- 2 Wetland Conceptual Designs
- 900+ Acres Impacted



WET2 finish a water control structure in Callaway County

Trainings/Meeting Type	Outcome
Missouri PFQF Team Meeting	Bonded and collaborated with the MO PFQF family via various team building exercises and trainings, and shared ideas with many partners I was fortunate to meet
Ag Producer Listening Session	Interacted with Ag producers of Boone County and discussed their conservation and production concerns
MO Prescribed Burn Association	Discussed items for the upcoming year in regards to membership, equipment, and burning schedule and requirements





Moving Forward

- 58 easements due for On-Site Monitoring
- Continue moving forward with 2023's new WRE Applicants
- 2023 Missouri Wetlands Summit— Learn about current wetland management and future trajectories
- 2023 Missouri Natural Resources Summit— Learn about uses and management of MO's natural resources
- MDC Fire Management Level 2 Training— Incident Commander & Rx burn boss
- MO WET Teams In-person Training— great opportunity to meet and learn from WET members from across the state

Below: Setting WCS with Callaway County Landowner



Below: Missouri Quail Forever at our Team meeting at Table Rock Lake

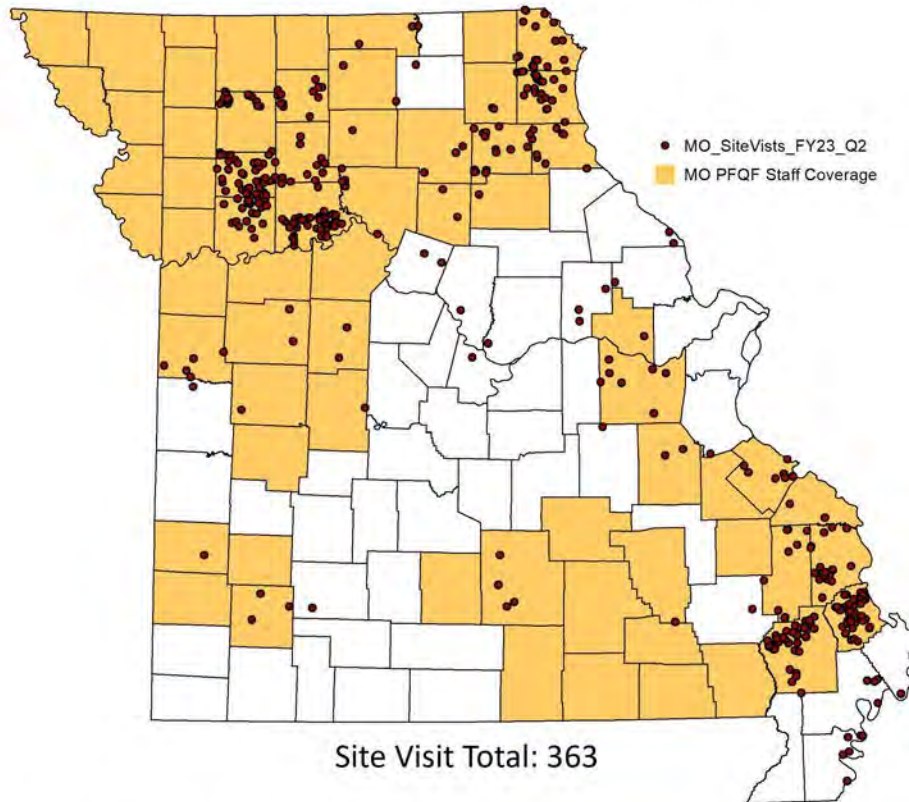




Second Quarter of FY23

From October 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022, our team recorded 844 landowner contacts and 363 site visits. The team impacted 5,333 acres. Outreach efforts reached **768 participants** through workshops, meetings, and trainings.

**FY23 MISSOURI PF/QF
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Senior Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist Quarterly Partners' Report



Courtney Nicks - Randolph, Chariton, & Macon Counties

October–December 2022

Activity Highlights

Conservation Planning

<i>Landowner Contacts</i>	78
<i>Site Visits</i>	14
<i>Projects with Acres</i>	16

Outreach

<i>Quarterly Partner Report</i>	
<i>QRL CTA Postcard</i>	

Partner Meetings/Trainings

<i>QF Team Meeting Planning Calls (4)</i>	
<i>QF Team Meeting</i>	
<i>5S Training</i>	
<i>Maximizing Performance Training</i>	

Chapter / PBA Activities

<i>QF Chapter Meetings</i>	3
<i>MTQF Quail Hunt</i>	3
<i>MTQF Banquet</i>	1

Total Acres Impacted: 222.43 acres

Enhancing our Impact

In October, our Missouri Quail Forever Team met at Table Rock, MO where we discussed our successes, pitfalls, and needs moving forward. We trained staff on new resources and priorities, and set goals for the upcoming year. It was enlightening to hear from both our tenured and new staff, as well as representatives from our partners, each bringing a different perspective to the table. MDC, NRCS, and USFW professionals were present to talk about the strength of our partnerships and our bright future together. Ultimately, it is clear that our Quail Forever Staff are excited to tackle our existing challenges with new innovative methods and adapt to the growing demands of each of our positions. To move beyond goal setting, we developed internal committees to handle the topics we felt needed more focus. The formation of the Outreach Committee, Professional Development Committee, and Quail Restoration Focus Group will help to improve various aspects of our team and extend our reach within our respective communities.



QF Staff Q & A Discussion



Generational Differences Training

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

Moberly USDA Office
2995 County Rd. 1325
Moberly, MO 65270

m. 573-694-5316
P. 660-263-1169
cnicks@quailforever.org



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October–December 2022

Quail Restoration Landscapes

During our Team Meeting in October we created an internal focus group to help identify the needs within our Quail Restoration Landscapes (QRL) across Missouri. Several of our biologists work within these areas and are often tasked with landowner awareness.



An example of the templates created to enhance outreach within our QRLs.

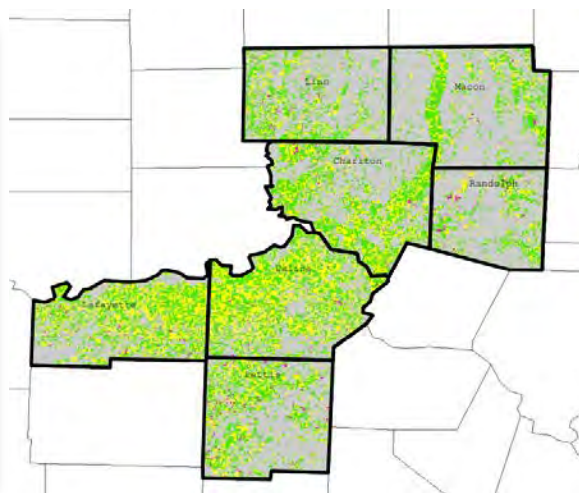
The main goal is to help explain habitat management incentives offered through state and federal funding opportunities. Within my coverage area the Thomas Hill QRL, northwest of Moberly, surrounds the Thomas Hill Reservoir. I will utilize our committee to create innovative ways that enhance our communication of programs and incentives used to support quality habitat throughout the area.

Precision Placed Field Border/ Pollinator Habitat Opportunity

Missouri Farmers and Landowners have the opportunity to turn marginal acres into quality habitat and maximize profitability within their farming operations. By buffering the edges of a crop field with native vegetation, input costs are reduced in areas that often lose money. This opportunity is offered in select Missouri counties shown below.



Field border along a planted corn field.



Counties currently offering the Precision Ag RCPP

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

Moberly USDA Office
2995 County Rd. 1325
Moberly, MO 65270

m. 573-694-5316
P. 660-263-1169
cnicks@quailforever.org



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October–December 2022

Chapter Success Drives Conservation Success

MTQF October Banquet

Mark Twain Quail Forever had an outstanding turnout for their October 2022 Banquet! So many supporters joined us in celebrating the mission of Quail Forever and helped raise funds for 2023 youth events, scholarships, and habitat projects. This annual event raises funds that make a significant impact locally. In 2022 alone, the chapter assisted with 5 habitat projects impacting 44 acres, helped establish cover crops and food plots on over 1,500 acres through a seed program, and supported 9 local high school trap teams through donations of ammo, clays, and financial support. The chapter also recruited dedicated volunteers to offer mentored Dove Hunting and Quail Hunting opportunities to 30 new hunters and/or youth hunters.

December Quail Hunt

MTQF's annual Quail hunt was a hit. Participants from miles around showed up to participate in this fun and exciting event. With the appropriate permits, the chapter released 100 birds (quail and chukar) for the hunters to pursue. Our mentors had a blast as they shared this beloved tradition with new hunters and today's youth. A big shout out to our dedicated QF members and supporters that make these events possible.



MTQF Mentored Quail Hunt, photos courtesy of Tammy Muhr.

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Senior Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist
Randolph, Chariton, & Macon Counties

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Moberly, MO 65270

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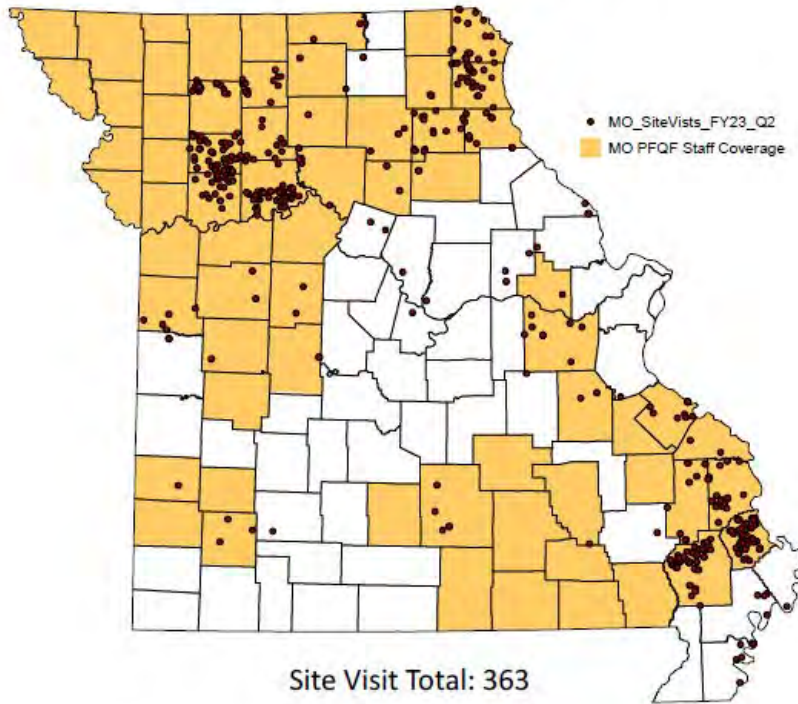
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CONNECT WITH US!

@MissouriQF Missouri Quail Forever MissouriPFQF.org



This field border offers invaluable cover to quail, rabbits, and other wildlife during inclement weather.

Upcoming...

- Precision Ag RCPP deadline Jan 13, 2023 and supporting workshops
- Ongoing Native Grass Initiative RCPP signup
- CFM Wetland Summit, Feb 1-3
- Missouri Natural Resource Conference, Feb 7-9
- 2023 Pheasant Fest, Feb 17-19
- FBB Intern Job Announcement
- Local QRL Outreach
- Staff Trainings

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

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

Moberly USDA Office
2995 County Rd. 1325
Moberly, MO 65270

m. 573-694-5316
P. 660-263-1169
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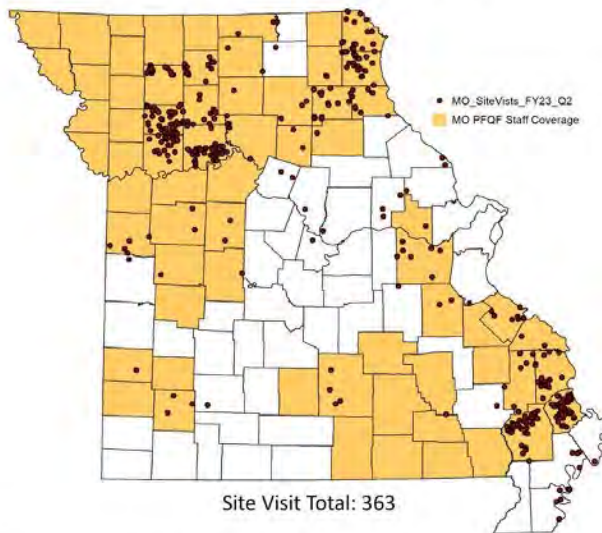
October – December 2022

Position Update

August 2nd 2022 my husband and I welcomed new life to this world. Hallie Lynn Johnson was born and I started my maternity leave, then returned to work in late October. Since I have been back to work I have been busy getting back in touch with landowners that I had to put on hold for the twelve weeks I was off. I have spent a lot of time conducting site visits for EQIP applications for the 2023 fiscal year and working on conservation plans. Since the Agency rolled out a new program in November called 2023 EQIP Climate Smart Agriculture Native Forages Initiative Using ACT NOW, I have been working diligently on getting those applications approved so landowners can start site prep and planting of native warm season grasses. Looking forward into 2023 I will be working on assessing, ranking and mapping EQIP applications and working on performing practice checkouts on last years EQIP and LCAP contracts.



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Conservation Planning

- 28 Landowner Contacts
- 7 Site Visits
- 2 Eligibility and Ranking Assessments

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Lizzy Johnson
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II
- Howell, Texas, & Wright Counties -

USDA Service Center
6726 State Highway 63
Houston, MO 65483

(417) 260-1246
ejohnson@quailforever.org



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Quarterly Partners' Report



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

October—December 2022

Quail in the Classroom

The outreach and education component of my position has always given me great pride and satisfaction—I love seeing the lightbulbs go off when I've connected well. In my time with the organization, the vast majority of my workshops, webinars, and other speaking engagements have centered on monarch butterfly and pollinator habitat; certainly a fun and pressing topic, but it's always a welcome change when I get to focus solely on quail and upland bird habitat. Thus, I was thrilled to field a request from a local third grade teacher wanting a biologist to come present to her students on a locally rare and declining species.



Third-graders at Willard Elementary taking in their first sight of a once-ubiquitous SW Missouri bird.

The students had recently completed a lesson on the Endangered Species Act, and had written individual reports on the typical exotic, charismatic species we often fawn over as youngsters—Siberian Tigers, Giant Pandas, Blue Whales. When they had the idea to raise money for wildlife conservation, their teacher wasn't thrilled to risk sending their hard-earned cash to a foreign organization with no assurance it wouldn't just contribute to overhead. Rather, she wanted something relevant to their own locale, and after researching nearby conservation organizations, landed on us as a potential partner. I obliged, and we scheduled it for later that same week.

Thinking back to my third-grade self, I knew immediately that pictures alone weren't going to cut it. So I contacted a Lawrence County breeder that supplied me with a pair of birds; one bob and one hen. And just like that, my presentation had written itself. *Continued —>*

Conservation at a Glance

- 28 Landowner Contacts
- 5 Site Visits
- 1 Presentation—60 participants
- 1 Workshop—25 participants

Program Involvement	Acres Impacted
RxP Planning	11
HCG/LCAP	15.6
Total	26.6

Ethan Kleekamp
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II
Lawrence, Jasper, Barton, Dade

10763 State Hwy. 39
Mt. Vernon, MO 65712

(417) 466-7107; ext. 3
ekleekamp@quailforever.org



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October—December 2022

Quail in the Classroom

“Inquiry-based learning”, a strategy which allows students to generate their own curiosity and desire to learn, is often a more engaging approach than simply delivering information and hoping it sticks. Seeing the Bobwhite pair had students absolutely clamoring over each other to ask about what they eat, where they live, how many eggs they lay, how long they live, what eats them, and more—in essence, *they* decided they wanted me to teach them more about quail ecology and life-history. That’s when I turn to a slide show of photographs showing a nesting hen, a chick, a covey, critical habitat, lost habitat, and more. By the end of my third presentation of the day, I was requested to do no fewer than five field visits to help them size up the habitat at their family homes and farms, and at least two boys indicated they were going to berate their dads for all the recreational mowing they were doing!



Third-grade students learning about quail ecology and life-history, and wanting to figure out ways they themselves could help out.

As for their donation, I told the teacher to hang on to their money, and that there might soon be an opportunity to pair with a local chapter to establish a plot of native habitat on their school-grounds. My visit to Willard Elementary had been just one month prior to a chapter-start meeting in Springfield that garnered great interest. I always encourage the chapters I work with, particularly upstarts, to consider youth-pollinator projects in their communities as a way to ingratiate themselves. Willard Elementary just so happens to have an expansive campus of mowed fescue, and now a slew of third-graders demanding they take action to help out a charismatic little bird and all of its habitat associates that could really use a helping hand. Given their level of engagement, and the burgeoning enthusiasm surrounding a new Springfield Quail Forever chapter, I’m optimistic we can make that happen.



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



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

October—December 2022

Additional Outreach

In October, MDC Private Lands Conservationist, Rick Rath, and I hosted a prescribed fire workshop in Dade County, allowing landowners to get hands-on experience with burn planning, fire-break layout, hand-tool use, and ignition sequences. The resulting certification allows them to receive burn plans and prescribed burning cost-share from MDC to better manage their properties safely and effectively.



Local landowners gathered at Sloane Conservation Area in Dade County to gain hands-on experience with prescribed burning.

New Beginnings



A tired new dad about to leave the hospital with his baby girl.

November of 2022 is sure to go down as one of the most stressful, exhausting, disruptive, yet marvelous times in my life. That month, my wife, Maeve, and I welcomed our first child, Daphne, to the family. You know going in that life is about to change—perspectives and priorities take a dramatic shift. I was not, however, expecting how quickly and completely I would begin viewing my world through the lens of fatherhood. Would *this* be best for her 20 years from now, would *that* be something I did or didn't want her to experience; am I doing right by her in every facet of my personal and professional life? Would she be proud of the occupation I've assumed and its impact on the world? That answer, is sure to be a resounding yes. Myself, and fellow QF biologists, have assumed the arduous, and largely undervalued task of putting the natural world back together, but we have the privilege of knowing it is a just, moral, and important vocation. I know she'll be proud of what we are doing here, which further adds to the reasons the job is worth the sacrifice.

Ethan Kleekamp
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II
Lawrence, Jasper, Barton, Dade

10763 State Hwy. 39
Mt. Vernon, MO 65712

(417) 466-7107; ext. 3
ekleekamp@quailforever.org



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

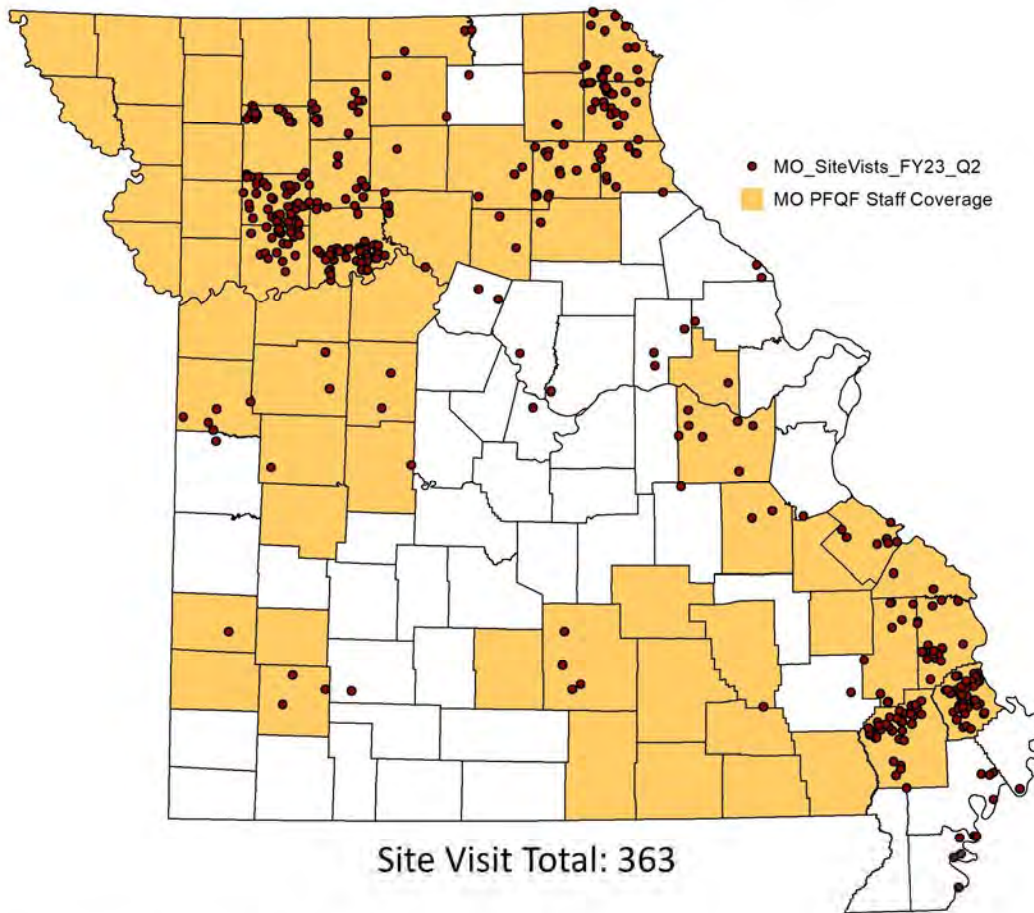
Quarterly Partners' Report



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

October—December 2022

FY23 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT Oct 1, 2022 - Dec 31, 2022



*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.

Updated 1/13/2023



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Ethan Kleekamp
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II
Lawrence, Jasper, Barton, Dade

10763 State Hwy. 39
Mt. Vernon, MO 65712

(417) 466-7107; ext. 3
ekleekamp@quailforever.org



Missouri Quail Forever Quarterly Partners' Report



Haley Lockard - Cass, Johnson, Pettis

Oct—Dec 2022

X-Marks the Spot

Throughout the summer, I met with several landowners interested in quail and/or Monarch habitat. With the announcement of the EQIP and RCPP sign-ups we were able to make progress toward getting these projects funded. This quarter, I spent several days in the field touring properties, providing suggestions for wildlife planting, woody cover, and grassland management; as well as outlining the process for ranking and contracting for EQIP. We will continue ranking applications and hopefully have a good idea of which projects are funded in March. I'm excited to see these projects from last summer and fall move forward to fields of wildlife habitat.



Original survey marker: a rock with an "X" carved in it to mark the property corner.

The fall is also busy for participants with contracts from last year. After working on site prep all summer. November opens the door to finally put seed on the ground for wildlife plantings. Site preparation is one the most important steps for a successful native seeding. When converting from cool season grasses, it is best to spray the field at least twice. I like to clean off the thatch with a prescribed burn before broadcast seeding ahead of a good snow. Participants can also drill their seed. However, pay extra attention to the seeding depth. Unlike most crops, native grasses and forbs should be planted no more than one-quarter inch deep. After drilling, almost 50% of the seed should be visible in the furrow or soil surface.



Quarter Highlights

Conservation Planning

- 73 Landowner Contacts
- 14 Site Visits
- 21 seed mix reviews
- 4 Habitat Plans

Total Acres Impacted: 327.38



Missouri Quail Forever Quarterly Partners' Report



Haley Lockard

Oct—Dec 2022

Outreach...

- **Oct 8th** Habitat booth at the *Central Missouri QF* chapter Shells for Support at the Sedalia Rod & Gun Club. I spoke with several participants about quail habitat, cost-share programs and invasive species control.

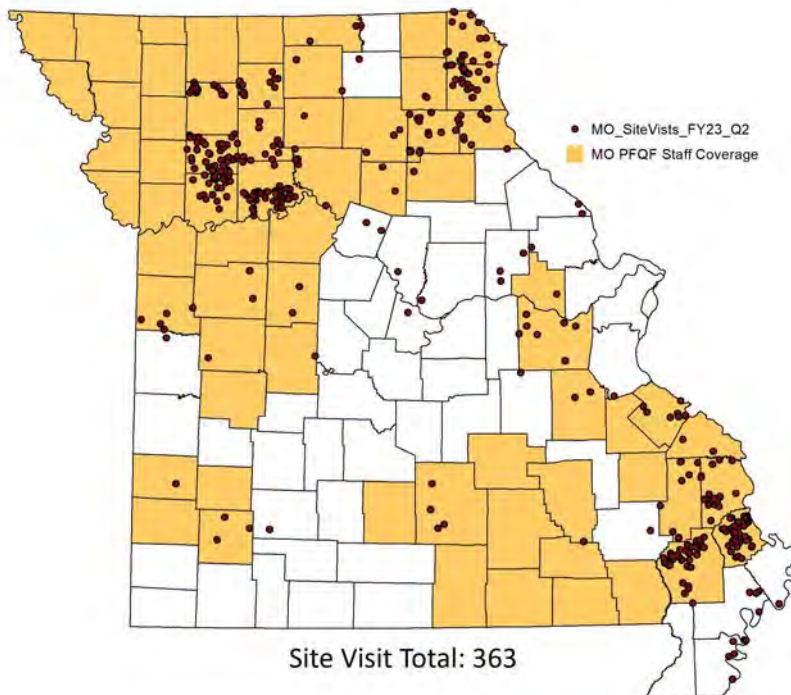
Trainings & Meetings...

- **Oct 17-20th** Annual Missouri Team Meeting in Branson. All staff from Missouri came together with partners for training, goal setting, and team building.
- **Nov. 3rd** I hosted a virtual training for our staff on the new activity reporting system.

Looking Forward...

- Continue to provide technical assistance to landowners
- Assist NRCS with EQIP and RCPP applications and conservation planning
- Plan Prescribed Burning workshop with MDC PLC
- Quail Camp January 27-29
- Hire new staff to fill the Ste. Genevieve FBB vacancy
- Several outreach events and presentations
- WLFW survey of EQIP contracts utilizing Acoustic Recording units to evaluate practice effectiveness

FY23 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT Oct 1, 2022 - Dec 31, 2022



Haley Lockard
Senior WLFW Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

816-884-4432 x 3936
hlockard@quailforever.org



Farm Bill Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



Heather Jones - Clark, Scotland, Knox, Lewis Counties

October – December 2022

Quail Restoration Landscapes & Fall Covey Counts

This fall I was able to assist in my first round of Fall Covey Counts within the Ten Rivers Quail Restoration Landscape (QRL). To conduct the surveys, I would arrive at my sampling site about 45 minutes before sunrise to listen for the distinctive "koi-lee" whistle of the Northern Bobwhite call, not be confused with the unmistakable "poor-bob-white" or "bob-white" whistle that occurs in the spring. During my wait for that infamous call, I would hear the distant sounds of farm equipment already hard at work, cattle, turkeys, owls, various songbirds, and on occasion see a buck meander past my sampling site.

During the late summer and early fall months quail begin to shuffle and form coveys made up of different broods. Some coveys could be as large at 20-30 birds. The fall covey call is meant to announce each coveys' location, allowing them to occupy different areas and limit resource competition.

The purpose of the covey-call survey within the QRL is to measure the habitat management impacts on local quail populations within a particular landscape. The Ten Rivers QRL was founded in 2012 through



Photos taken October 2022 during fall covey

the efforts of the local Pheasants Forever chapter, landowners within the QRL, and Missouri Department of Conservation. The QRL is 11,039 acres that have been identified as a focus area for quail management. Comprised of private landowners, this area receives unique incentives to implement quail friendly practices such as pollinator planting, edge feathering, and prescribed burning.

I am currently working with our newly formed internal QRL Committee within our Missouri PF/QF. Our committee is working hard to establish a plan to increase awareness of Missouri QRLs and increase landowner involvement within the designated QRLs. To see a map of current QRL in the state of Missouri visit shorturl.at/aktK6



Conservation Practice Highlight—Incorporating Cover Crops

I wanted to quickly highlight cover crops, a conservation practice we are implementing on our family farm in Lewis County. There are a variety of benefits to adding cover crops to your operation. Not only can cover crops provide winter forage for wildlife, but they also improve soil health by being a nitrogen source or nitrogen scavenger, break up soil compaction, provide erosion control, limits weeds, improve water quality, and conserve soil moisture. Choosing a wildlife friendly cover crop mix that contains turnip, radish, rye, clover, and/or rape is excellent winter forage for wildlife. Cover crops that contain legumes (red clover, crimson clover, peas, beans) can fix a lot of nitrogen (N) for following crops. As a result, a producer may be able to reduce the amount of nitrogen fertilizer applied to fields.

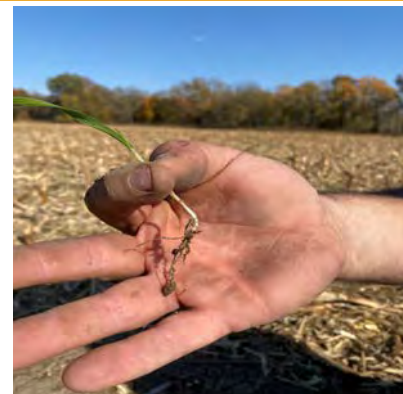


Photo of the nitrogen fixing nodes present on the roots of a cover crops

Heather Jones
Farm Bill Biologist II
Clark, Scotland, Knox, Lewis

23923 State Route 81
Kahoka, MO63445

660-727-2955 ext 119
hjones@quailforever.org



Farm Bill Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



Heather Jones - Clark, Scotland, Knox, Lewis Counties

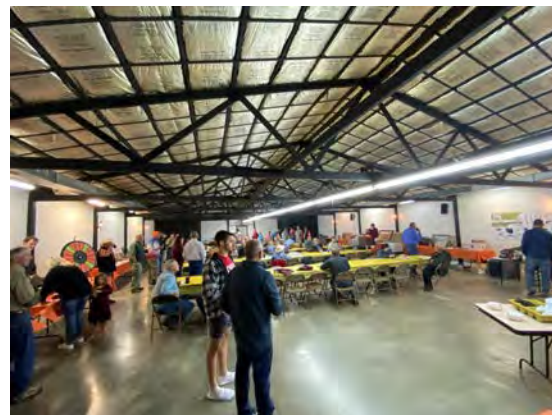
October – December 2022

Outreach & Education



Lewis County students participating in Invasive Musical Chairs at Conservation Day on October 13

- **Marion County Master Naturalist Field Day October 8, 2022** - I met with the Marion County Master Naturalist to present at a field day in Lewis County. I presenting information on brush and invasive species management strategies from mechanical to chemical.
- **Conservation Day October 13, 2022** - Lewis County Soil and Water District held their annual Conservation Day for all Lewis County sixth grade students. Students rotated through stations where they learned about a variety of conservation topics from water quality to pollinators. I presented to students about invasive species and the importance of managing invasive to maintain native plant communities. Students also participated a fun game of “Invasive Music Chairs” game.
- **Whistling Bobs Annual Banquet October 15, 2022** - I attended and assisted at the annual Knox County Whistling Bobs Chapter Banquet. It was a great time and wonderful turn out!



Whistling Bobs Banquet in Edina, MO on October 15

- **Mizzou Women in Natural Resources Club Meeting December 15, 2022** - I coordinated a virtual visit with the Women in Natural Resources Club at the University of Missouri. The club was interested in meeting with women



Ten Rivers Youth Chukar Hunt in Monticello, MO on December 10

working in the field of conservation. Speakers included Kim Cole (Outreach and Education Coordinator), Valerie Repp (Coordinating Invasive Species Biologist), and myself. We discussed our passion for conservation and the avenues we took to our current positions.

- **Ten Rivers Youth Hunt December 10, 2022** - The local Pheasants Forever/Quail Forever Chapter held their annual Youth Chukar Hunt in Monticello, MO. They held a morning and afternoon session for youth, serving lunch between sessions. It was a great turn out of kids and they all had a great time! Huge thank you to the Ten Rivers PF/QF Chapter for putting this on, my own 10 year-old son was able to participate and had the best time on his first ever upland experience!

Heather Jones
Farm Bill Biologist II
Clark, Scotland, Knox, Lewis

23923 State Route 81
Kahoka, MO63445

660-727-2955 ext 119
hjones@quailforever.org



Farm Bill Biologist II

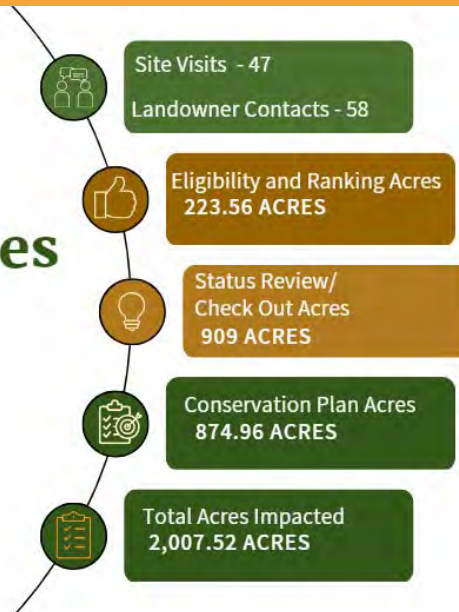
Quarterly Partners' Report



Heather Jones - Clark, Scotland, Knox, Lewis Counties

October – December 2022

Activities at a Glance



Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever New Employee Orientation	I attended the PF/QF New employee orientation on October 4-6 in Minnesota. There were about 35 new members in attendance from several different states. It was great to meet and put faces to the PF/QF leadership. I was able to connect with several new biologist from other states and feel I have resources in surrounding states!
Prescribed Burning for Missouri Land Managers Certification	On October 14th I attended the Missouri Department of Conservation Prescribed Burning for Land Managers Certification training. At the workshop we learned about safety, equipment, and burn plans.
Women Owning Woodland Lunch and Learn Series	During the month of October and November, MU Extension hosted Lunch and Learning virtual presentations. The topics varied from land management, native seed collection, and plant identification. These were a great opportunity to learn while eating lunch!
Behind the Scenes of Bumble Bee Identification	I attended the Virtual Atlas Bumble Bee training on identification on November 21st. This summer, I plan to continue to participate in the Missouri Atlas Bee data collection and this training will help in positively identifying bee species I collect.
Warm Season Grass Establishment Workshop	On November 15th I attended the Native Warm Season Grass Establishment Workshop in Monroe City. Presenters discussed NWSG establishment timeline, management, and cost-share options for the Native Forage Initiative. It was a very valuable training presented by our partners at NRCS and MDC.

Looking Forward I Will Be...

- MDC Level 1 Fire Management Training on January 31st
- Missouri Natural Resources Conference (MNRC) on February 7-9
- MDC Level 2 Fire Management Training on February 21-23
- CRP 2nd Year Seeding Checks
- CRP Expiring Checks



Photo from PF/QF New Employee Orientation in October 2022

Heather Jones
Farm Bill Biologist II
Clark, Scotland, Knox, Lewis

23923 State Route 81
Kahoka, MO63445

660-727-2955 ext 119
hjones@quailforever.org



Sr. Coordinating Wildlife Biologist Quarterly Partners' Report



JAKE SWAFFORD - Missouri

October – December 2022

Position Update

The past 3 months have been busy. I've been working to update and announce a new sign up for the RCPP - Program Restoring and Improving Monarch Ecosystems (PRIME) for its second year. There have been lots of opportunities to meet and collaborate with conservation partners on shared goals and special initiatives, several of which are already being acted on. The partnerships in Missouri conservation cannot be beat! The Farm Bill Biologist Internship program I wrote about last quarter was a success and was recently approved for Summer 2023 with even more positions. Thanks to Courtney Nicks for taking on future efforts with the internship program. The past quarter was fall of course, and I was able to spend quality time outdoors hunting and hiking. I'm looking forward to the many chances I'll have to network with partners over the next several months and to be working toward a full staff of Coordinating Wildlife Biologist here in Missouri.

RCPP– PRIME Holds Second Sign up to Improve Monarch Habitat

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) known as PRIME – Project for Restoring and Improving Monarch Ecosystems held its second sign up this fall. An announcement inviting landowners to apply for PRIME along with 6 other innovative RCPP projects went out this November. This project aims to increase monarch and pollinator habitat in Northwest Missouri through land management practices and short-term land rental payments. PRIME will target lands currently enrolled in and expiring from Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), enhancing monarch habitat by maintaining and restoring diverse native plant communities.

RCPP projects are unique in that they are projects funded through USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service and led by partners like Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever. This project is led by QF with support from the Missouri Department of Conservation and the Saint Louis Zoo.

The purpose of PRIME is to establish and enhance monarch butterfly habitat across Northwest Missouri, its primary route through the state on its annual migration. Along with planting pollinator friendly plant species, PRIME is encouraging landowners to maintain and manage existing habitat for these at-risk pollinators. Prescribed burning is a terrific tool for maintaining and enhancing monarch butterfly and other wildlife habitat. PRIME offers financial assistance for prescribed burning, burn plan development, and other supporting practices. Missouri

Description
Program Restoring and Improving Monarch Ecosystems (PRIME) is a partner project funded through the USDA's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). This project is led by Missouri Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever with support from the Missouri Department of Conservation and the Saint Louis Zoo.

Geography
Andrew, Atchison, Benton, Buchanan, Cadwallader, Carroll, Cass, Clay, Clinton, Daviess, DeKalb, Gentry, Grundy, Harrison, Henry, Holt, Jackson, Johnson, Lafayette, Livingston, Mercer, Nodaway, Pettis, Platte, Ray, Saline, and Worth Counties.

Land Uses
1. Cropland
2. Pasture
3. Associated Aglad

Priority Resource Concerns
1. Terrestrial Habitat

Monarchs in Missouri
The purpose of PRIME is to establish or enhance monarch butterfly habitat.

Benefits
RCPP allows a variety of NRCS conservation activities to help partners, agriculture producers, and private landowners address local and regional natural resource challenges related to soil, water, wildlife, and other natural resources.



Sr. Coordinating Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



JAKE SWAFFORD - Missouri

October – December 2022

Pheasants & Quail Forever also offers incentives for those interested in working with prescribed fire contractors to carry out land management activities.

Applications for PRIME's FY23 signup closed on January 13th, and partners are excited to get to work planning. If you missed your chance this year, don't worry, PRIME is expected to return for additional projects soon.

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
SRISP Board Meeting	Attended the Scenic Rivers Invasive Species Partnership (SRISP) board meeting to review the SRISP strategic plan and annual goals.
Pollinator Habitat Working Group	Participated in the monthly PF/QF Pollinator Habitat Working Group planning for a new website and upcoming pollinator outreach events/material.
Native Forages Trainings	Participated in both the NRCS and MDC Native Forages Initiative training which details delivery of the new conservation program assisting landowners establish native warm season grasses for haying and grazing.
Mid MO Prescribed Burn Association Meeting	Assisted with Mid MO PBAs first official meeting promoting prescribed fire use by private landowners in central MO.
Ecological Sciences Staff Meetings	Participated in the NRCS Ecological Sciences Teams monthly staff meetings discussing current conservation issues, NRCS technical assistance policy, business tools, and special initiatives delivery.

Looking Forward

- I will continue to lead the delivery of the Monarch PRIME- RCPP during it's second signup.
- Finish certification as a drone pilot.
- Coordinate advertisement and onboarding of Missouri Grassland CWB position.
- Work with State Coordinator and partners to identify conservation priorities and assist with special initiatives to address them.
- I will continue providing technical assistance to landowners in Missouri who are interested in establishing habitat for Monarchs, quail, and other upland wildlife.
- Work with partners to strategically engage as a Sr. Coordinating Biologist to strategically provide lift to shared initiatives and priorities.



@MissouriQF



Missouri Quail Forever



MissouriPFQF.org

Jake Swafford
Sr. Coord. Wildlife Biologist
Missouri

601 Business Loop 70W, Suite 250
Columbia, MO 65203

(573) 881-1224
jswafford@quailforever.org



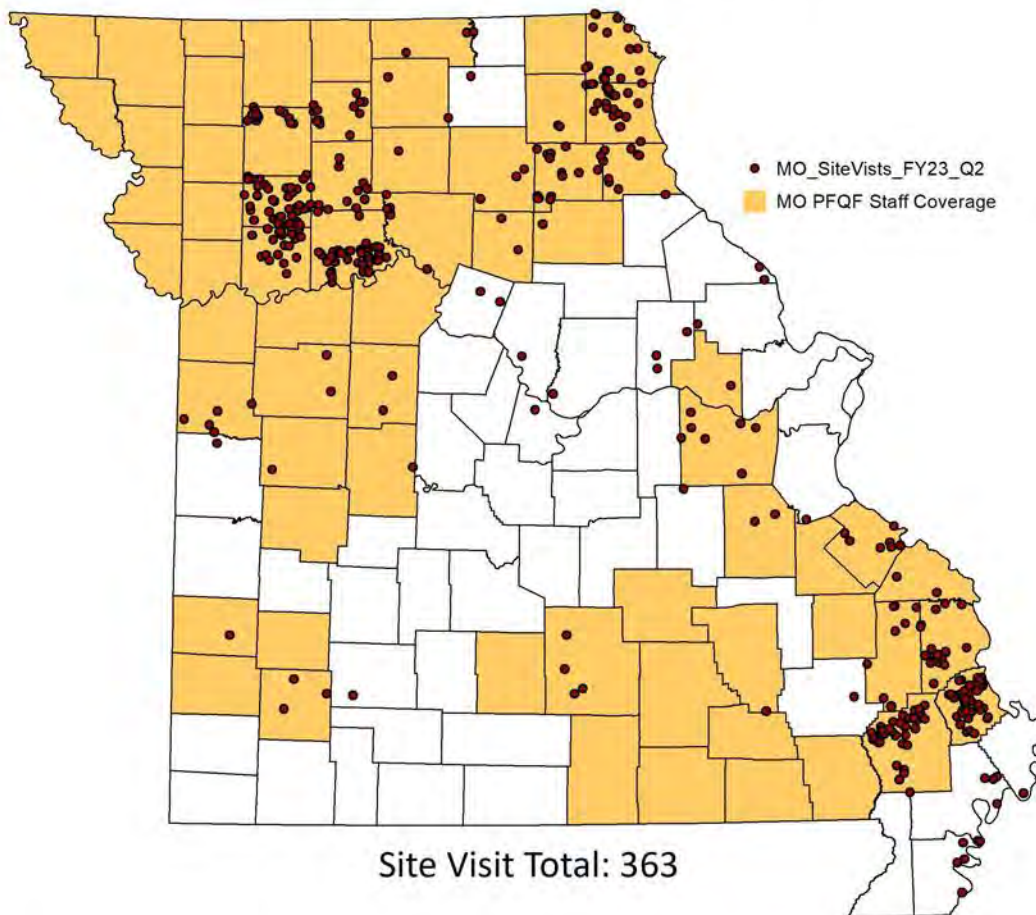
Sr. Coordinating Wildlife Biologist
Quarterly Partners' Report



JAKE SWAFFORD - Missouri

October – December 2022

**FY23 MISSOURI PF/QF
BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT
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Updated 1/13/2023



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Jake Swafford
Sr. Coord. Wildlife Biologist
Missouri

601 Business Loop 70W, Suite 250
Columbia, MO 65203

(573) 881-1224
jswafford@quailforever.org



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II **USDA**

Quarterly Partners' Report



Jeffrey Folkerts, Northwest Counties

October—December 2022

Position Update

Just finishing up my first six months as FBB on the WETs 1 team in NW Missouri, I want to acknowledge the help that I have gotten in this position from staff on the team as well as at PFQF. ACEP-WRE is a big program with a ton of moving parts, partners and concepts. Fortunately, I have had the support of NRCS/MDC partners and our PFQF team to help me navigate this new position and get the trainings I need to support wetland conservation and restoration efforts through the easement program.

Working with wetlands is a complex puzzle, as they are systems that vary greatly in character from site to site but just as importantly from year to year. Taking a long-term approach to managing habitat and understanding the implications of management choices 5, 10, or 25 years from present is a daunting task. To my advantage, working with seasoned experts provides knowledge invaluable to expanding my understanding of these systems.

Learning to see what they see on the landscape, and find solutions to management challenges is a project of years. As we head into the late winter/early spring I am looking forward to new projects and a return to a more field orientated workload. I'm excited to visit to visit established and ongoing wetland easements and observe our newest easements as they are reestablished as healthy wetland habitats.



Floodplain WRP Tract on Mud Creek in Livingston Co, Missouri

Jeffrey Folkerts
Farm Bill Biologist II
Wetland Specialist

Chillicothe USDA Center
1100 Morton Parkway
Chillicothe, Missouri 64601

m. 203-980-9269
o.660-646-6220 ext 3273
jfolkerts@quailforever.org



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II **USDA**

Quarterly Partners' Report



Jeffrey Folkerts, Northwest Counties

October—December 2022

Refreshing the Seedbank

Late summer and fall are important seed maturation periods for wetland plants. Whether these plants are primarily wind pollinated like our sedges, or by insects in flowering species they are often dispersed at least to some extent by water. This dispersal method known scientifically as *hydrochory*, is a fancy way of saying that these plants rely on flooding to help spread their seeds to suitable habitats.

Seeds dry and loosen on their stalks during this season waiting for flooding to disperse them across the landscape, often being laid down along with sediment in what is known as our seedbank. This dispersal is both a challenge and opportunity in our efforts to manage wetland plant communities. On one hand it means that natural wetland communities often contain the resources to reestablish themselves once hydrology is restored. The other side of this coin is that overbank flooding across the landscape can facilitate the spread of invasive species like Common Reed and Reed Canary Grass.



Lotus (*Nelumbo*) and sedge (*Carex*) seed heads in late December 2022.



Invasive Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) growing along a roadside ditch in Linn Co, Missouri.

Jeffrey Folkerts
Farm Bill Biologist II
Wetland Specialist

Chillicothe USDA Center
1100 Morton Parkway
Chillicothe, Missouri 64601

m. 203-980-9269
o.660-646-6220 ext 3273.
jfolkerts@quailforever.org



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II **USDA**

Quarterly Partners' Report



Jeffrey Folkerts, Northwest Counties

October—December 2022

In the Next Quarter

- In the beginning of the new calendar year, with the winding down of waterfowl season, we are getting back to onsite monitoring and consultations with easement landowners.
- Attend MDC Fire Training Levels 2 and 3 to become certified to write prescribed burn plans.
- Assist local PFQF chapters with upcoming banquets and events.
- Work with the WETS Area 1 team to survey, plan and oversee construction of new ACEP-WRE easements.
- Develop outreach resources for new wetland education events with a focus on biodiversity and habitat improvement for game and nongame wetland species.

Conservation Planning

- 2 Landowner Contacts
- 19 Compatible Use Authorizations and Wetland Management Plans written
- 2,893 Assessed Acres
- 2 Conceptual Wetland Designs

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
New Employee Orientation	Traveled to headquarters in Minnesota with PFQF's new cadre of wildlife professionals who are working to put habitat on the ground nationwide.
Missouri PFQF Team Meeting	Our state team gathered together to discuss current objectives, meet with our agency partners, and develop intraorganizational contacts across the state.
Bottomland Hardwood Management Training	Attended a training put on by the Missouri Society of American Foresters in Cape Girardeau addressing ongoing research into techniques for reestablishing our bottomland hardwoods.



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

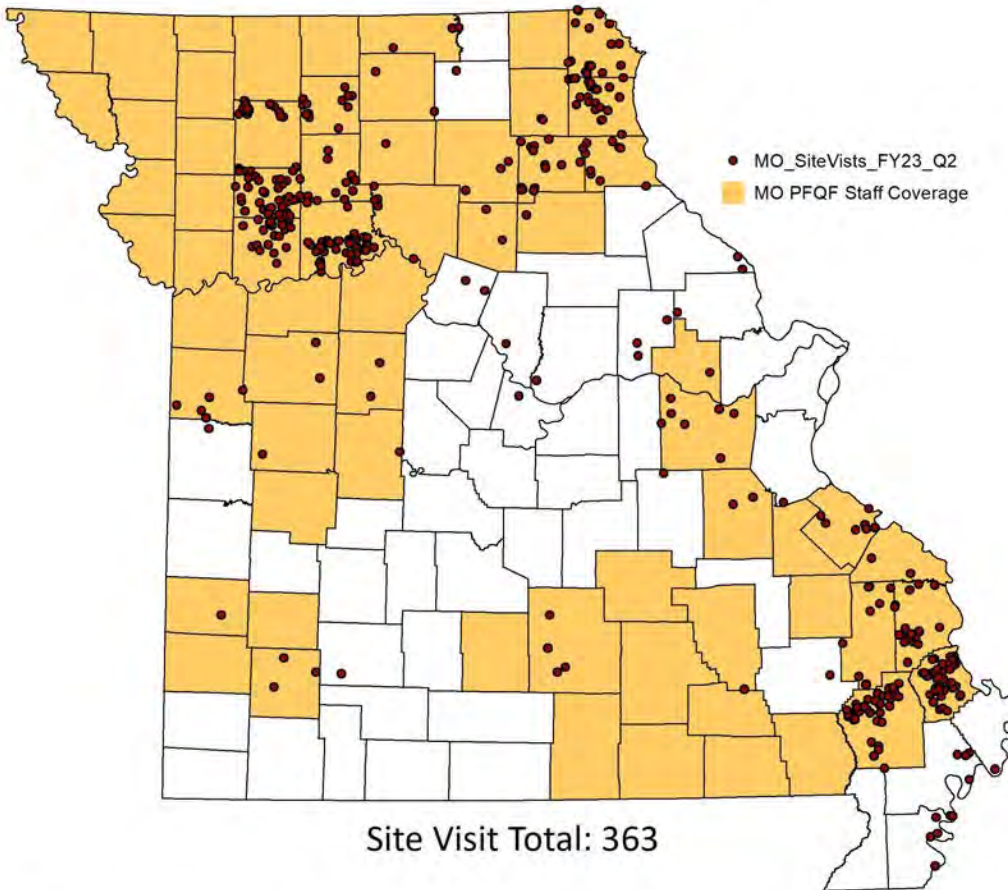
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Jeffrey Folkerts, Northwest Counties

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Jeffrey Folkerts
Farm Bill Biologist II
Wetland Specialist

Chillicothe USDA Center
1100 Morton Parkway
Chillicothe, Missouri 64601

m. 203-980-9269
o.660-646-6220 ext 3273
jfolkerts@quailforever.org



Farm Bill Biologist II Quarterly Partners' Report



Jonathan Dew - Livingston, Linn, Carroll

October–December 2022

Position Update

The beginning of the quarter started out fast and furious just like the last with numerous site visits to complete status reviews. Speaking with landowners/producers about their properties and conservation has quickly become my favorite aspect of this position. Hearing their passion for conservation inspires and drives me to provide my best work possible. I was able to complete 52 site visits, which included status reviews and helping FSA with flagging newly established CRP fields. In early October, I was able to complete two covey counts in Carroll County in conjunction with the local PLC. During those counts, I was only able to observe a few coveys, but was thrilled to hear a couple pheasants as well.



This is a dormant pollinator plot with two species of wildflowers pictured: Purple Coneflower and Gray-headed Coneflower.

Wildlife Benefits of Pollinator/Monarch Plantings

Submitted by Jonathan Dew, Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II



Pollinator plantings include a high diversity of native warm season grasses and forbs (wildflowers) that provide great habitat for a variety of wildlife species. A popular tool used in conservation, a pollinator planting is typically composed of twenty or more species of forbs that bloom at various times throughout the year and several species of clump forming grasses. The forbs attract pollinator species such as butterflies and bees, and many other native insects that provide a protein rich food source to newly hatched chicks and poults. Quail, pheasants, and turkeys are all species that will often take advantage of prime nesting cover offered in these plots as well. Don't forget about the winter! These plots may lose their color and look a little dreary, however, the diverse mix offers an incredible amount of vegetative structure and significant seed source, which is valuable throughout the cold winter.

Next time you are considering how to benefit wildlife on your own place, think about the incredible difference a small pollinator planting could make. The benefits don't stop with birds, you will notice that whitetail deer also frequent these plots year-round to utilize optimal foraging potential and bedding opportunities.



Whitetail deer that located on a local producer's monarch plot



Dormant pollinator plot, showing purple coneflower and gray-headed coneflower

During late November and December, field visits slowed down due to weather and hunting season. This allowed me to focus on completing Ag Learn courses to gain my Level 1 Conservation Planner Certification. Recently, I was offered the opportunity to write an article for the annual Missouri Quail Forever Newsletter. This article was focused on the wildlife benefits of pollinator/monarch plantings. I encourage anybody who is interested in the most recent MO Quail Forever Information to sign up for the monthly newsletter. As I receive more requests to visit the field, I'm excited to see what the new year brings.

Jonathan Dew
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

1100 Morton Parkway
Chillicothe, MO 64601

660-646-6220 x 3294
jdew@quailforever.org



Missouri Quail Forever

Quarterly Partners' Report



Jonathan Dew - Livingston, Linn, Carroll

October–December 2022

Mo All-Team Meeting

In October, I was able to attend my first MO All-Team Meeting at the Watermill Cove Resort in Branson, Missouri. This was my first time getting to meet and interact with the rest of the team on a professional and personal level. I spent the majority of the meeting listening and



learning from the vast amount of knowledge and experience from not only our staff but also the partners that joined us. The daily discussions included a number of trainings/presentations on a variety of topics ranging from Farm Bill Programs to chapter involvement. As a result of the team meeting, a QRL subcommittee was formed. The committee was created to assess the needs of our staff working in Quail Restoration Landscapes and Priority Areas to improve in our landowner engagement. The knowledge I gained from the team meeting was invaluable, and the team bonding and camaraderie was just as important. It was interesting to see how different, but also similar, our backgrounds and passions were. I look forward to growing these newly established relationships for the benefit of

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
Poosy Driving Tour	Hosted a table during the 36th annual self guided tour of Poosy Conservation Area. The goal of this event was tour the beautiful fall scenery as well as observe a few of the awesome habitat projects taking place. Approximately 1350 people attended this event.
PF/QF Orientation	Traveled to Vadnais Heights, Minnesota with a few of the newly hired team members to attend the new employee company orientation. This was a great time to learn about the position and network with other new hires from all over the country.
MO All-Team Meeting	The meeting was an amazing opportunity to meet the rest of the MO team as well as partners from MDC and USFWS to discuss issues and goals for the upcoming year.
NRCS Native Forage Initiative	This online presentation was given to explain the new EQIP-Native Forage Initiative and MDC incentive program.

Jonathan Dew
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

1100 Morton Parkway
Chillicothe, MO 64601

660-646-6220 x 3294
jdew@quailforever.org



Missouri Quail Forever

Quarterly Partners' Report



Jonathan Dew - Livingston, Linn, Carroll

October–December 2022

Outreach & Education

Poosey Conservation Area Driving Tour

On October 6th, Josh Marshall and I hosted a table at the 36th annual Poosey Conservation Area tour hosted by MDC and partners such as the Missouri Master Naturalists. The self-guided auto tour featured a presentation of multiple active habitat projects/stations for the public to interact with. Station topics included the management oak-hickory timber stands and early successional habitat that benefit bobwhite quail. Even though we battled the wind most of the day, the fall weather was perfect and people showed up in droves. Visitors arrived on horseback, ATV's, trucks, and wagons to make the trek through the rugged terrain. About halfway through the tour, visitors arrived at an open area where multiple partner booths were set up. We spent our day speaking with producers about the organization and what we do as Farm Bill Biologists. The event was a huge success! With a whopping 1350 participants, we were able to showcase the implementation of conservation on the landscape to an incredibly large audience



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

Jonathan Dew
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

1100 Morton Parkway
Chillicothe, MO 64601

660-646-6220 x 3294
jdew@quailforever.org



Missouri Quail Forever

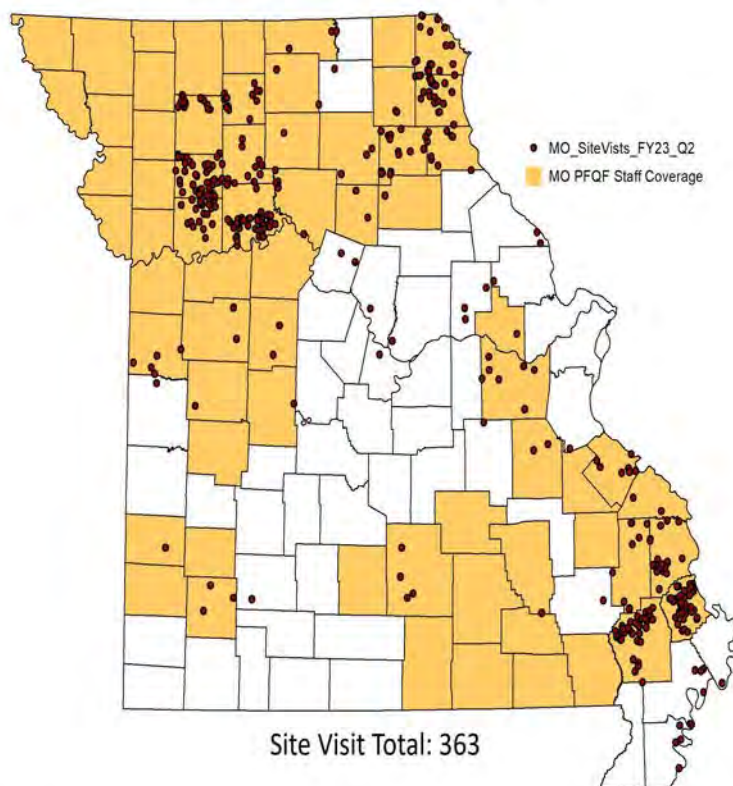
Quarterly Partners' Report



Jonathan Dew - Livingston, Linn, Carroll

October–December 2022

FY23 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT Oct 1, 2022 - Dec 31, 2022



*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.

Updated 1/13/2023



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.

Leaving Our Mark On Missouri

- The Farm Bill Biologist across the State recorded 844 Landowner Contacts and 363 Site Visits.
- Total Acres Impacted is 15,589.
- Outreach efforts reached 768 participants through workshops, meetings, and trainings.

Conservation Planning

- Site Visits-52
- 54 Landowner Contacts
- Total Acres assessed 1189
- 3 Chapter Meetings
- 4 Events/Trainings

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

Jonathan Dew
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

1100 Morton Parkway
Chillicothe, MO 64601

660-646-6220 x 3294
jdew@quailforever.org



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II **USDA**

Quarterly Partners' Report



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

OCT – DEC 2022

Quarterly Overview

Quarter two has been filled with multiple opportunities to work in the field and interact with landowners. I have been busy planning and preparing for the most recent EQIP sign-up. Through this sign-up, I am working with several landowners interested in enhancing the wildlife habitat on their property. I have had the opportunity to attend several trainings and outreach workshops, as well as, assisting neighboring counties with final CRP checks. One of the biggest incentives this quarter is the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Native Forage Initiative. This is going to be a great tool to help livestock producers. No matter where we are in a season, there are always plenty of opportunities to support landowners with conservation.

MDC Fall Driving Tour

The staff at the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC), Poosey Conservation Area, hosted their annual drive-through fall color tour. This tour allows the public to use a predetermined set of roads to enjoy the vast and vibrant changing colors of Missouri's finest hardwood trees. About halfway through the tour, there is a place with booths of various conservation professionals that the public can stop and interact with. This year, I was able to assist fellow Quail Forever biologist, Jonathan Dew, host an information booth at the tour. It was a full afternoon visiting with various folks and talking about native habitat, wildlife, and the local community that use to live in the Poosey area. We received multiple history lessons about the historic community that resided in Poosey during the mid 1800's. Today, Poosey is a great place to hunt and fish. There are two large lakes and multiple ponds that offer small boat recreation and quality fishing. Deer are abundant and quail numbers are high as a result of the habitat work completed when Poosey was identified as a Quail Focus Area. I am glad I was able to help with the tour this year and I hope to help with future events or workshops. In the mean time, I will have to make time to take advantage of the outdoor opportunities that Poosey offers.



Information booth at the Poosey driving tour.

Prescribed Fire For Missouri Landowners

I was able to help with a workshop that was hosted by my MDC Private Lands Conservationist (PLC) counterpart. In early December, he hosted a Prescribed Fire for Missouri Landowners workshop. This workshop was directed at landowners who have an interest in using prescribed fire to manage their property. By taking this workshop, they learn how to properly and safely use fire as a management tool and apply it to the landscape. Upon completion of this course, they are able to apply for a burn plan from a local PLC or Quail Forever Biologist. The burn plan will tell the landowner how to use fire to reach their conservation goals. I was able to help teach a portion of the workshop covering tools and equipment commonly used on prescribed fires. I was also able to engage in conversations and questions from the participants. Between sessions, I talked with several new landowners on topics that ranged from boosting quail numbers on their property to building monarch habitat in unused areas in a homeowners association. I enjoyed being able to interact with landowners and I hope to help with more of these events as they are scheduled. Training landowners to properly execute fire as a management tool on their farm will ultimately add more quality wildlife habitat to the landscape.

Joshua Marshall
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

23487 Eclipse Drive
Milan, MO 63556
- Sullivan, Grundy, Putnam, and Mercer Counties -

660-425-2770
Jmarshall@quailforever.org



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II **USDA**

Quarterly Partners' Report



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

OCT – DEC 2022

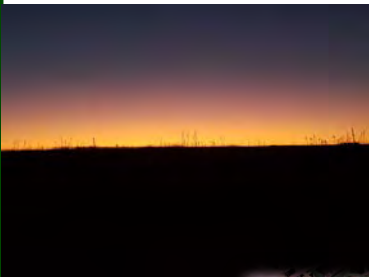
Projects, Meetings, and Activities

As I mentioned in my overview, I have been attending several meetings and project workshops. One such project is the Native Forage Initiative that was released from NRCS. This initiative is a quick option to provide cost share to livestock producers interested in adding native grasses or annual forage to their operation. The goal is to add diversity to a livestock operation, provide forage during the peak summer months, and increase livestock gain while decreasing inputs. This initiative has had multi partner support from MDC to MFA, and many in between. There is value to adding summer forages to a livestock operation and we want to do everything we can to help landowners with that transition. There have been several workshops hosted in my area and several more in my surrounding counties all with the goal of educating landowners on this program and process. The state as a whole has already processed several successful applications and we are well on our way to making a positive impact for livestock producers and wildlife.



A cow and calf utilizing native forages in late June.

I worked on several additional projects this quarter. I conducted my annual fall covey counts orchestrated by the National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative. During these surveys I heard a few coveys of quail and several rooster pheasants. I was even fortunate enough to bust a covey of ten birds on my last survey. In addition to these surveys, I assisted several neighboring counties with their CRP field reviews. They were short staffed and unable to complete a portion of these checks and I was happy to extend my field season and take a look at the fields. Lastly, I attended our team meeting in early October that provided an opportunity to connect with partners and our QF/PF staff.



Covey roost site & sunrise during fall surveys.



2 of 3 Hen pheasants seen on the family farm in NWMO during deer season.



**Joshua Marshall
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II**

**23487 Eclipse Drive
Milan, MO 63556
- Sullivan, Grundy, Putnam, and Mercer Counties -**

**660-425-2770
Jmarshall@quailforever.org**



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II **USDA**

Quarterly Partners' Report



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

OCT – DEC 2022

Trainings and Outreach	Summary
MDC Landowner Burn Workshop	A workshop to teach landowners how to safely utilize RX fire.
Poosey Fall Tour	Information booth for driving tour participants.
Native Forage Workshop	NRCS workshop to promote the native forage initiative.
Missouri Quail Forever & Pheasant Forever Team Meeting	Yearly team meeting to discuss team goals and recap past successes.

Looking Forward

- February 7-8 MNRC
- February 7 Missouri Native Forage & Grassland Establishment & Management Workshop
- February 17-19 Pheasant Fest & Quail Classic
- February 25-26 Conservation Federation of Missouri Annual Conference

Quarterly Numbers

- 97 Landowners Contacted
- 36 Site Visits

Program	Impacted Ac.
CRP Programs	1,669.02
Total	1,669.02



MO PF/QF Team 2022

We have a lot of great content on our YouTube and social media pages and we are updating them daily. Subscribe to our pages for the latest information on conservation programs and happenings in Missouri.



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

Joshua Marshall
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

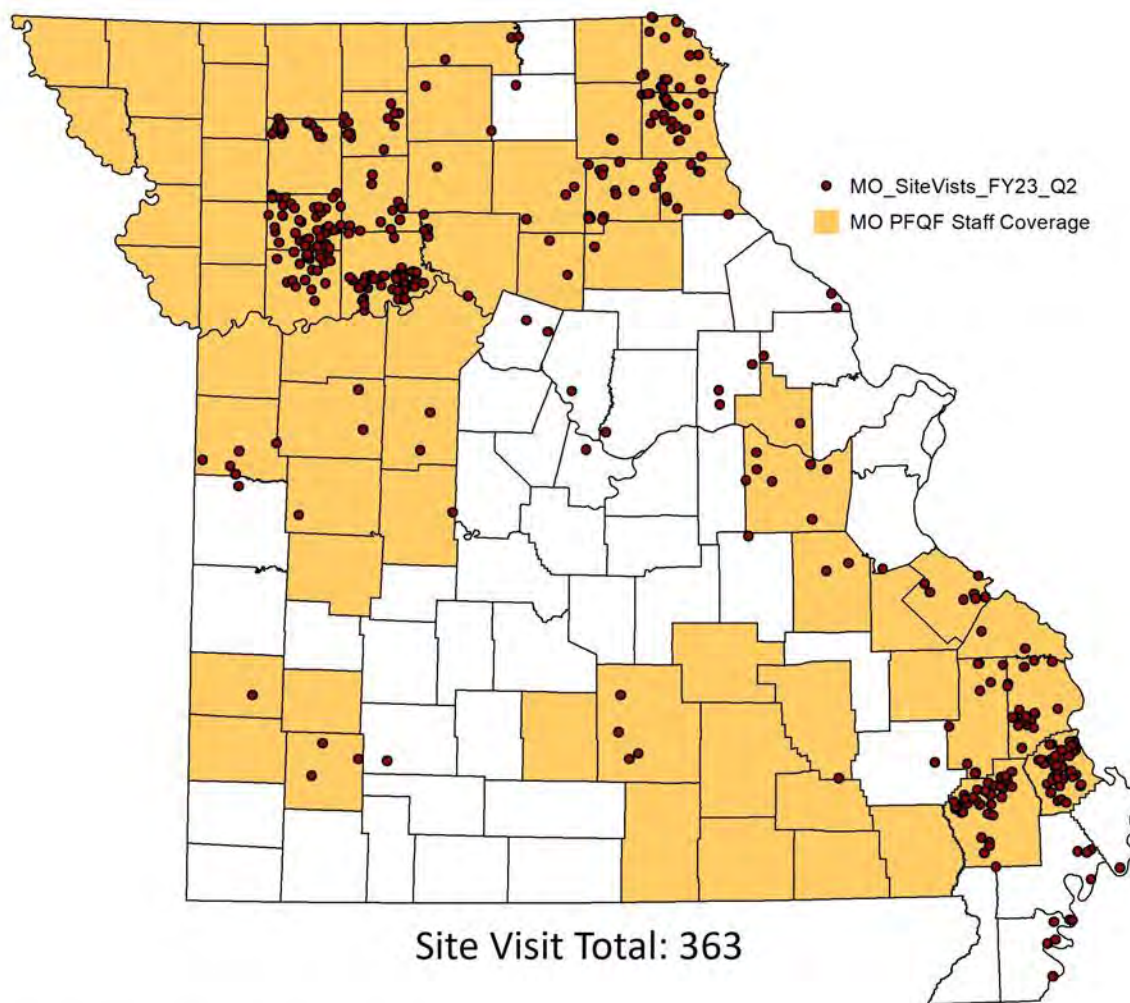
23487 Eclipse Drive
Milan, MO 63556

660-425-2770
jmarshall@quailforever.org

- Sullivan, Grundy, Putnam, and Mercer Counties -



FY23 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT Oct 1, 2022 - Dec 31, 2022



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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Kelsey DeZalia— Southeast Missouri

October 2022-December 2022

Consideration of aiming for the male in a flock, I believe, comes directly through mentorship. Most hunters started out with a mentor, or someone who guided them to their first steps into waterfowl hunting, whether that's flooded timber or a flooded farm field.

Mentorship to focus on taking the drakes manifests various benefits. First and foremost, the recognition of conservation. Hens lay the eggs. Allowing hens to pass through, I believe, is a direct reflection on respect for the species' future. Now, if you've accepted the challenge of introducing someone new to waterfowl hunting, and you're trying to get them hooked and excited; I understand. Anything and everything (legal) should be celebrated!

Taking the drake is a goal that comes through hunter development. But mentoring new hunters to take the drake is also leading them to success in many areas. Ever heard of "group shooting"? Raise your hand if you've ever shot into a group of ducks because there are so many and you're still developing your eye to focus on one. **Raises hand**

It's not a perfect game. You'll get overwhelmed, your ADHD will kick in, you will lose focus in the swarm, or all of the above. However, keeping it in the back of your mind that "the next group that comes in, I need to find the greenhead" will inevitably tune those focusing skills and produce an improved wing-shooter. Group shooting rarely works for me; but there have been moments when the stars align, and I take the drake (purposefully). Those are the moments are forever imprinted on me, as a new hunter.

"Take the Drake"



Northern pintail



Northern shoveler



Green-winged teal



Wood duck



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Kelsey DeZalia— Southeast Missouri

October 2022-December 2022

Water Management

Hunting WRE

Moist-soil habitats were typically wet in spring, dry in summer, and wet again in the fall and winter months. Under this natural system, waters left behind after the flood receded, slowly dried up through evaporation and transpiration. The drying process slowly exposed soil that was moist and warm. This condition favored the germination of native, annual, seed-producing plants consumed by waterfowl.

There are too many factors, over which we cannot control, to presume that each year's habitat will be the same as the last. Including: amount of rainfall, sunlight (or lack of it), temperature, wind, soil conditions, and seed bank all play a part in the final habitat product.

When and at what rate you drain water from the moist-soil pool is very important. For ideal vegetation response, the slower the draw down, the better— inches per week over the course of about a month.

WRE Blind Policy

Constructing a hunting blind on a WRE, whether it's for wetland or upland-type, is allowed through the CUA. However, prior to the 2014 Farm Bill, the verbiage in the structure policy read "rustic and customary for the locale". Vague, right? The way this was mainly interpreted is: it needs to be hidden enough in the environment to not be an obvious eye sore. However, with that Farm Bill came the change in dimensions. We have run into cases around the state where landowners have built these permanent, impressive, but, now, out of compliance blinds on their property. Missouri requested a waiver to the current 80 sq. ft., standard to the Environmental Protection Division (EPD) which would allow up to 180 sq. ft. The EPD granted this, but only to the extent of utilizing until repair or replacements are necessary; then the new or improved blind would have to meet up-to-date standards. As I drone on about policy, the main point here is, if you're going to put up/build a blind, *please* do not pour money into it and consider being able to move it. The next Farm Bill could eliminate blinds all together; and if that's the case, we will be required by federal law to ask you to remove it. *Remember:* we are only the messengers.



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Kelsey DeZalia— Southeast Missouri

October 2022-December 2022

Long Live the Hunt

Respect for all things wild is passed down through generations. It emanates from the recognition that this pursuit is fueling you; whether it's your mind, body, or soul.

The most beautiful thing about WRE is the “perpetual” that is tied with most of them. Forever habitat, forever advocating for the natural world.

It is our responsibility as land stewards, managers and if you're lucky enough, mentors, to continually advance in our methods for the next generation.



MDC employee, Tommy Marshall, with son Grady



Youth waterfowl opening weekend: Dylan and Kendall (my husband and niece)

We grow; mainly through observation. Have you completed a Rx fire recently and seen favorable wildlife results, flora or fauna? Did you drawdown your wetland pool slowly and seen an influx of sedges? On the other hand, have you applied something that did not yield the desired response?

We listen. Have you maintained a semi-permanent wetland pool and have heard the frogs, toads and insects chorus come to life? Have you completed a timber/forest stand improvement project and heard the gobble of a few more turkeys or songbirds?

We experiment. It's important to remain curious rather than complacent. Experiment with wetland de-watering or flooding timing, food plot choices, application of chemical or prescribed fire! Alter or stagger management methods.

Progress may come in the form of self-motivation which will require us to plow through the necessary work to shift towards a more sustainable, native system and give back to the species and/or habitats we hold so close. To preserve our love of the pursuit, we learn to alter the habitat (or not), in favor of wildlife and wild places.

Long live the habitat, long live the hunt, long live the mentorships, friendships and memories.



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Kelsey DeZalia— Southeast Missouri

October 2022-December 2022

Conservation Technical Assistance & Trainings/Meetings Attended



Conservation Technical Assistance Summary
• 24 landowner contacts
• 9 site visits
• 6 MDC whistle count surveys
• 2 Rx plans, 6 CUA's, 2 WRE shrub plantings, 1 WRE pollinator planting

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
Quail Forever Professional Development Committee Inauguration	Oct. 2022– At the QF State meeting, committees were assembled/created to meet the needs of the team
Duck Creek Conservation Area Final Training	Oct. 13, 2022– The final session in the rotation of learning and observation of public area wetland management
Monthly WETs (MDC/NRCS) TEAMS Meeting	Oct., Nov., Dec. 2022– To keep everyone up-to-date regarding wetland relating deadlines, documents, polices
Sand Prairie RCPP	Nov. 2, 2022– Training developed to inform applicable partners on the new easements for sand prairies
NRCS MO Native Forage Initiatives Roll Out	Dec. 2, 2022- Missouri's Initiative for Native Forage Initiative Bulletin Planning criteria; EQIP contracting using ACT NOW process; Training and awareness initiatives
Native Forages Initiative - MDC Incentive and 512 - Pasture and Hay Planting Training	Dec. 6, 2022-Policies, application/planning processes and documents, grassland focal areas
QF ArcGIS Pro Training	Dec. 14, 2022– Getting started in ArcGIS as we transition from ArcMap

Kelsey DeZalia
FBB– Wetland Specialist
Southeast Missouri

480 W. Jackson Trail
Jackson, MO 63755

573-755-6090 ext. 6095
kdezalia@quailforever.org



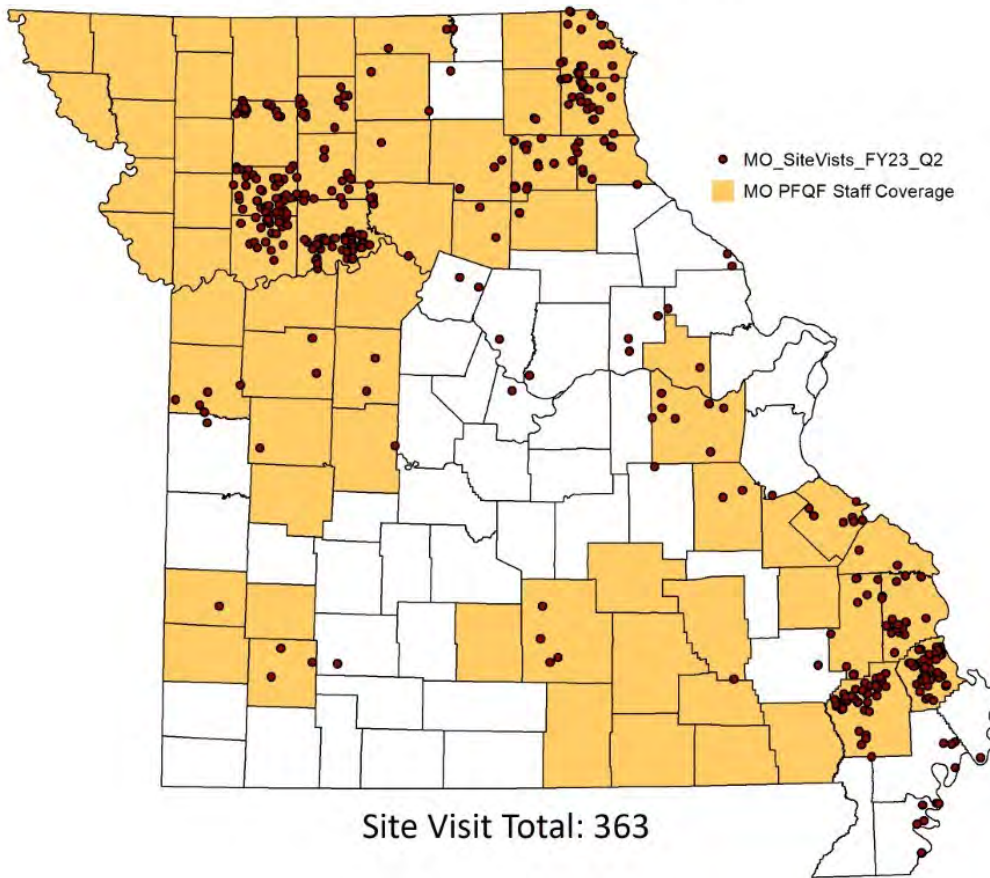
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist Quarterly Partners' Report



Kelsey DeZalia— Southeast Missouri

October 2022-December 2022

FY23 MISSOURI PF/QF BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT Oct 1, 2022 - Dec 31, 2022



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Updated 1/13/2023



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Kelsey DeZalia
FBB– Wetland Specialist
Southeast Missouri

480 W. Jackson Trail
Jackson, MO 63755

573-755-6090 ext. 6095
kdezalia@quailforever.org



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



Logan Baum - Ray, Clinton, and Caldwell Counties

October - December 2022

Second Quarter of FY23

From October through December of 2022, Our team had a total of 844 landowner contacts and 363 site visits. 10727.99 acres were assessed through delivery activities and another 4861.32 acres were planned/treated though habitat recommendations.

Conservation Technical Assistance Summary

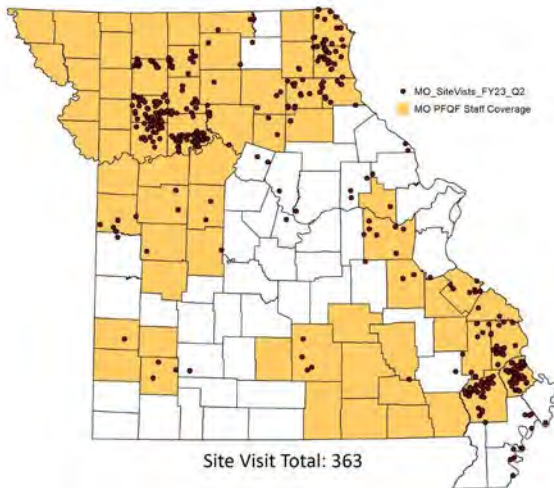
Team Outreach

- Outreach/Events: 18
- Outreach/Event Participants: 768

Activity Highlights

Landowner Contacts	47
Site Visits	32
Status Reviews/ Checkouts	73
Trainings Attended	7
Total Acres Impacted	1954.11

FY23 MISSOURI PF/QF
BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT
Oct 1, 2022 - Dec 31, 2022



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Big Bluestem and Indian grass on a 50pt CP2 in Ray Co.





Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II



Quarterly Partners' Report

Logan Baum - Caldwell, Clinton, and Ray Counties

October - December 2022

This quarter brings the end of expiring CRP Checks. As we prepare for the upcoming signup, I continue to have more conversations with landowners about the condition of their enrolled CRP acres, and discuss ways to improve them. These conversations lead to a lot of questions. In Caldwell County at the beginning of October, FSA hosted a panel style CRP talk for landowners. This panel consisted of representatives from FSA, NRCS, MDC, and me as a representative of Quail Forever. We had discussions about brush management within CRP fields, how to manage Invasive species like Sericea Lespedeza, and introduced a variety of CRP practices beyond the commonly used CP1 (introduced grass planting) and CP2 (native grass planting). We also discussed how to appropriately allow the persistence of shrubby cover in existing CRP fields.

After the CRP talk, I had further discussions with landowners about practices where more shrubby cover would be allowed. SAFE projects, such as 38E-4D(continuous) and CP-4D (general) were discussed as they are practices that allow shrubby cover to be established within the planned acres. Shrubby cover requirements of a 38E-4D include one shrub planting covering a minimum of 1500 square feet, along with a choice to create shrubby cover such as downed tree structures and/or edge feathering equaling 1% of the contracted acres.

I have also discussed a CP-42 pollinator plot with many landowners. This practice is offered in both General and Continuous signups. The Continuous signup has particular limitations such as with a CP42, there is a limit of no more than 10 acres per tract which is not to exceed 10% of the cropland acres on the farm. With the talks about the different CRP practices available, There seems to be much more excitement around more pollinator



Seed dispersal of Common Milkweed on a CP2 Native Grass Planting in Caldwell Co



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II



Quarterly Partners' Report

Logan Baum - Caldwell, Clinton, and Ray Counties

October - December 2022

practices as well as more native grass planting practices. I expect to see more of these practices with the upcoming signup.

his quarter also saw the deadline for EQIP applications to be submitted. All applications were required to be submitted by the middle of November so that the process of assessing, ranking, and planning could begin. Additionally, the introduction of the Native Forage Initiative. This is an initiative that allocated 1.5 million dollars for native grass plantings. These plantings used practice code 512 (Pasture and Hay) and 810 (Annual Forages for Grazing Systems). We use the ACT NOW process which has allowed for more efficient allocation of the funds. This program has been very successful, and the 1.5 million dollars was quickly committed to currently preapproved, approved, and obligated applications. This initiative is an exciting opportunity for Landowners to obtain cost share funding to implement the use of native grasses, benefitting not only their operation but the wildlife as well. NRCS is continuing to accept applications for the Native Forage Initiative.

Left: Stand of Switch Grass on a 50 Point Mix CP2 Native Grass Planting in Ray Co



Black and White Photo on Right: Big Bluestem on a CP2 Native Grass Planting in Ray Co.



Logan Baum
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II
Caldwell, Clinton, Ray Counties

500 Wollard blvd
Richmond, MO 64085

816-776-2267 ext. 3
lbaum@quailforever.org



**Valarie Repp- Butler, Carter, Dent, Shannon, Reynolds, Ripely, Oregon, Texas, and Howell Counties
October—December 2022**

Fall Presents Plenty of Learning Opportunities!

This quarter I was fortunate enough to attend several conferences and meetings across the state to learn about partner programs to new botanical discoveries to innovative solutions for invasive species. In October, the Missouri Quail Forever Team gathered for a week of learning and team building. Our habitat strike team crew presented on their work they had accomplished during their first year, which included cedar clearing off glades, timber stand improvements, invasive species treatments, prescribed burns, and native plant seed collection. For only being around for one, the crew has put up some impressive accomplished acres, and I'm looking forward to seeing what they can do in 2023. Our wetland specialists also gave a presentation on what their position entails and what projects they have completed with landowners to improve and create quality wetland habitat. At the end of the week I left feeling excited about our team and what work we are accomplishing across the state.



Justin also introduced a new invasive that was spotted near the Rolla/Jefferson City area. Currently, this ornamental fern looks like it is not over-aggressive, but folks still need to monitor for it in their management areas.

I also got to attend the Missouri Botanical Symposium and the Upper Midwest Invasive Species Conference (UMISC) during this quarter. At the MO Botanical Symposium, Justin Thomas gave an excellent overview of new sightings of rare species that were found in the state, most of them occurring right here in the scenic rivers region. It was exciting to see that some of these species had never been recorded in Missouri before but are now coming up as isolated patches in a different region than where they are mostly located. Other presentations included tales of writing two botanical guidebooks concurrently (which I do NOT recommend!) and how the state of Arkansas is using citizen science data from platforms like iNaturalist to record rare and heritage

plant data. UMISC was a jam-packed three day conference that I attended virtually that focused on a wide array of topics dealing with invasives. The highlight of the conference and the session I was most excited to attend was a special session with a specific focus on CISMAs. Speakers spoke on how their CISMAs formed and what they specifically focus on. They talked with how they work with partners and private landowners. They also discussed some fun projects they have completed in public areas, like offering free buckets at trailhead



Coordinating Invasive Species Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Valarie Repp- Butler, Carter, Dent, Shannon, Reynolds, Ripely, Oregon, Texas, and Howell Counties October—December 2022

to pull garlic mustard and offering giveaway for whoever pulled the most invasive plants during the year. I learned so much and gained some great new contacts to connect with when I need help with our CISMA. That session left me very inspired and ready to start applying some new techniques to the scenic rivers CISMA.

Education and Outreach

This quarter I was able to attend a few events and share information about invasive species as well do a major press release in conjunction with MDC. In October, I helped prepare a wild game dinner at the Women GO WYLD weekend hosted by WildHERness. The SRISP was also able to have a booth that displayed information on different invasive plants and the proper treatment methods for each. I also got to teach a class for the Missouri Master Naturalists program for the Meramec Chapter on how to identify common invasives found in southern Missouri. With MDC, the SRISP released a story on the county road right-of-way treatments that were completed with LSR funds this summer. In one week, the article had reached over 24,000 people and had over 800 engagements on Facebook alone.

The SRISP's booth (left), along with Missourian's for Monarchs and Quail Forever had information available during the Women GO WYLD event in October. Nearly 75 women participated during the weekend-long program



@MissouriQF



MissouriPFQF.org



Prescribed Fire Coordinating Biologist



Quarterly Partners' Report

Wes Buchheit - Missouri

October - December 2022

PBA Development and Opportunities

Prescribed Burn Association (PBA) development and support has been at the center of this last quarter. More and more Missourians and Missouri landowners have been seeing the outreach from conservation organizations on the topic and have been reaching out through the Missouri Prescribed Fire Council (MPFC) website to find a local PBA or wanting help starting one in their area.

We have been using a collaborative approach to start PBAs and plan meetings. After fielding local landowner interest, we have been hosting a virtual exploratory meeting open to all resource professionals (including staff from Missouri Department of Conservation, Missouri State Parks, MPFC, National Deer Association, Natural Resources Conservation Service, National Wild Turkey Federation, Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever, The Nature Conservancy, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service) serving the area and the initial landowners that were the "spark". We discuss how a PBA could



Above: Local citizens/landowners gather to steer the PBA startup during the Macks Creek formation meeting.

function within the proposed area and then begin planning a public in-person [PBA Interest Meeting](#) in which we invite any and all to come out to learn about PBAs and give them the opportunity to participate in forming a PBA.

From there, we organize PBA Formation Meeting in which we have attendees introduce themselves and we encourage landowners/community members to volunteer for

leadership roles to form a 5-7 person board. That board then works together to lead the effort to organize the group, line out the structure of the PBA, and get the group responsibly burning. A community-led group results in a grass-roots PBA with the greatest potential to have positive impacts on the landscape long-term. The local resource professionals provide technical assistance through burn unit layout, burn plan preparation, providing training, etc. as position duties and schedules allows.

Continued on page 2

Conservation Planning

- 54 Landowner Contacts
- 1 Site Visit
- 68.4 Acres Impacted
- 3 Burn Plans Developed/Reviewed
- 10 Workshops/Webinars/Meetings Hosted
- 104 Meeting Attendees



Prescribed Fire Coordinating Biologist



Quarterly Partners' Report

Wes Buchheit - Missouri

October - December 2022

PBA continued

Missouri has six established PBAs with ongoing efforts to form new ones in the Branson, Macks Creek, West Plains, and Steelville areas (see map on page 3). The Branson and Macks Creek efforts now both have established boards of passionate community members taking the reigns. The West Plains PBA Interest Meeting is scheduled for January 26th with the follow-up Formation Meeting on February 23rd. An exploratory meeting has resulted in a planning committee organizing an Interest Meeting tentatively scheduled for May 12th for a PBA that could work within Crawford, Dent, Phelps counties and reach into surrounding counties.



Above: The Foothills PBA completed a grassland fall burn.

Just as PBAs are a collaborative effort to apply prescribed fire, PBA

development is a collaborative effort across agencies, organizations, and community members to connect people and provide them with the resources to be successful. If you have interest or questions about a PBA in your area, please reach out to me, contact info below, or to moprescribedfire@gmail.com. We would be happy to assist the conversation to pursue the opportunity. You may be the "spark" to get another PBA enhancing habitat in Missouri.



Left: Attendees get to know each other before the board nomination session at the formation meeting in Branson.

Wes Buchheit
Missouri Prescribed Fire Coordinating Biologist
Perryville, MO

573-517-8860
wbuchheit@quailforever.org



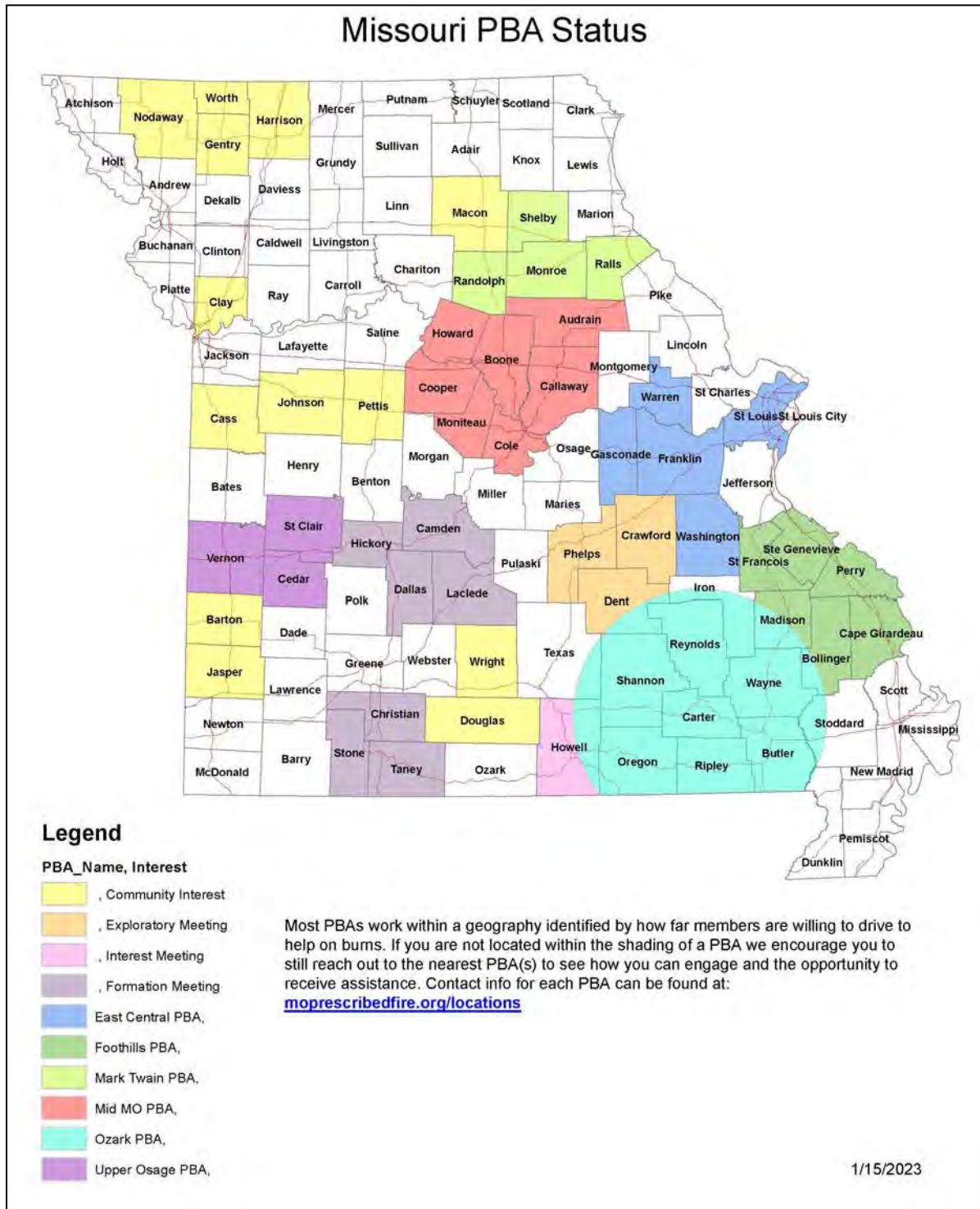
Prescribed Fire Coordinating Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Wes Buchheit - Missouri

October - December 2022



Above: Map of the existing PBAs in Missouri and PBA development opportunities.



Prescribed Fire Coordinating Biologist



Quarterly Partners' Report

Wes Buchheit - Missouri

October - December 2022

Missouri Prescribed Fire Council

Promoting and protecting the responsible use of prescribed fire - moprescribedfire.org

- Prescribed Burn Associations
- Log Your Burn
- Log Your Burn Data Summaries
- Law & Liability
- Contractor List
- Weather Resources
- Calendar of Events
- Grant Applications
- Contact Us

Training/Meeting	Outcome
Mid MO PBA Board Meetings (2)	Attended the board meetings to provide guidance to the newly formed PBA.
Branson Area PBA Interest Meeting	Coordinated calls for the planning committee of the public Interest Meeting and follow-up Formation Meeting.
Macks Creek Area PBA Interest Meeting	Coordinated calls for the planning committee of the public Interest Meeting and follow-up Formation Meeting.
West Plains Area PBA Exploratory Meeting	Hosted a virtual meeting with partners discussing the overview of a PBA, local interest, and direction forward to plan a public PBA Interest Meeting January 26 in West Plains followed by the Formation Meeting February 23.
Northeast-Midwest Regional Prescribed Fire Council Coordinating Group Networking Forum	Shared the forum details through the MPFC email and attended the forum to learn about how PBAs function in other states.

Outreach Effort	Outcome
Assisted the MDC press release for the Hollister and Macks Creek PBA Interest Meetings	Reached 29,043 MDC email subscribers to build interest in PBAs in those locations and elsewhere in the state.
November MPFC Newsletter	Provided MPFC election results and PBA Interest Meeting flyers to 1,314 subscribers.
MPFC Facebook page	Shared partner posts regarding MDC's new prescribed fire training format, PBA Interest Meetings, and the formation of the Mid MO PBA.



Wes Buchheit
 Missouri Prescribed Fire Coordinating Biologist
 Perryville, MO

573-517-8860
 wbuchheit@quailforever.org



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Wesley Hanks - Franklin, Warren, and Washington

October-December 2022

Burn Plan Writing

Prescribed burning can realistically be implemented as a management tool anytime between August and May, however, most burns in this area occur between December and April. This means, for approved plan burn writers, the months leading up to this season can be busy ensuring landowners have useful and meaningful burn plans to guide them. The first steps in planning a burn is to evaluate the potential burn unit to determine what management objectives are present, and if a fire is the management tool to achieve those objectives. Having clear objectives for the burn is very important because that will determine timing of the burn and how fire is applied to the unit. This initial evaluation also gathers important information that goes into the burn plan to describe the fuels that are present which will inform how the fire is expected to behave. Once the unit is defined, it is time to identify where burn lines will be located and what type of burn lines need to be constructed or if there are any existing features that can be used such as roads and creeks. Knowing where the firebreaks will be located will also help identify any potential hazards within or adjacent to the unit such as nearby homes or utility lines. When discussing possible fire line options, it is also important to discuss with the landowner what types of equipment and other resources they have access to so that you don't put something in the burn plan they just can't accomplish. After all this information is gathered from the field it's time to head back to the office and put the information into a burn plan that can be implemented by the landowner. The prepared burn plan will have detailed descriptions about unit including exact location of the unit, fuels present, and the topography of the unit. The unit specific objectives will be clearly defined along with the timing and weather conditions prescribed to achieve their objectives. Firebreak type and location along with potential hazards will be stated in the plan, but more importantly they will be shown on accompanying maps. These maps are very important because they will include contour lines, showing the topography, along with planned ignition sequences based on the topography and planned wind direction. Burn plans also highlight who needs to be contacted prior to the burn to ensure the appropriate authorities know. Burn plans do take a significant time to write, but the outcome is a useful resource for landowners who are looking to improve the wildlife habitat on their property.



Burn plans for grassland units will often call for a disked firebreak with a mowed, fuel reduction line as shown here

Photo Credit: Lia Heppermann, MDC

Trainings/Meetings/Outreach	Outcome
MO QF Team Meeting	Engaged with State partners, connected with QF staff from across the state, and discussed goals and priorities for the next year.
MDC Prescribed Burn Manager Trainings	Assisted MDC staff with two field portions of the prescribed burn manager trainings at Busch CA and in Jefferson county. Led the discussion on the safe and effective use of prescribed fire for private land owners.
Impacts for Prescribed Fire on Ticks Webinar	Learned about recent research on prescribed fire's impact on tick populations and tick bourn illnesses.
Native Forage Initiative Trainings	Learned about policy and procedures about the new Native Forage Imitative from both NRCS and MDC staff.
Area 3 Planners Meeting	Received updates from NRCS staff on program policies and timeline.

Wesley Hanks
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist
 Franklin, Warren, Washington

1004 Vondera Ave
Union, MO 63084

(636) 649-3108
whanks@quailforever.org



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



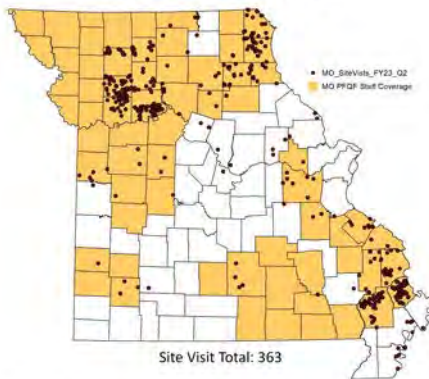
Wesley Hanks - Franklin, Warren, and Washington

October-December 2022

Conservation Planning

- 50 landowner contacts in 8 different counties
- 14 Site Visits
- 3 CRP Plans Covering 19.3 ac
- 10 Burn Plans Written For:
 - 54.3 ac of Grassland Habitat
 - 339.6 ac of Woodland Habitat

FY23 MISSOURI PF/QF
BIOLOGIST FOOTPRINT
Oct 1, 2022 - Dec 31, 2022



Burn plans written for woodland habitats will often call for a raked or leaf blown line like the one shown above. Existing access trails cleared to bare soil make excellent firebreaks through woodland habitats.

• Attend EC PB A's winter meeting on February 11th.

Looking Forward

- Work with landowners to develop plans and reserve cost-share for projects through LCAP and HCG.
- Assist NRCS staff with ranking and planning for current EQIP applications.
- Work with local vendors to spend NWTF Superfund grant to have a broadcast seeder built to be used by local landowners.
- Attend the MO Natural Resource Conference, February 7th-9th to connect with other natural resource professionals and learn about new research in the natural resources field.
- Attend a workshop on establishing and managing native forages prior to MNRC.
- Host a booth at the MNRC career fair to share information on Quail Forever and possible careers with QF.
- Assist the MO River Valley Chapter of QF with their annual fundraising banquet.
- Through landowner contacts I will continue to share the Quail Forever mission and help get anyone interested involved with their local QF chapter.
- Attend an Escaped Fire Suppression Training for both QF staff and PBA members.
- Present on Small Game Management and share QF's mission at a day long workshop hosted by MDC at Powder Valley Nature Center on March 24th.

Wesley Hanks
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist
Franklin, Warren, Washington

1004 Vondera Ave.
Union, MO 63084

(636) 649-3108
whanks@quailforever.org



Position Update

The second quarter has come and gone. It was full of contracting, assisting landowners, and spending time in the great outdoors identifying plants and assessing habitat. I'm sure that the third quarter will be equally as productive and fulfilling.

Conservation

Conservation, by definition means prevention of a wasteful use of a resource. It is a broad definition that covers a wide variety of things. However, when most people think of conservation they think about wildlife, about habitat, and about the future. In the United States alone, there are nearly 15,000 registered non-profits focused on the environment and animal welfare. The point is, lots of people think preventing the wasteful use of resources, as well as, preserving wildlife populations is pretty important stuff. Maintaining and improving quality wildlife habitat, especially in the Midwest, is a key component of that conservation. My favorite part of the job is meeting, and building relationships with landowners that care. People that genuinely care about improving habitat, grazing practices, or implementing sustainable farming that works hand in hand with conservation of critical habitat, especially for grassland birds. These landowners make a difference. It is a pleasure to work with folks that want to make an impact on the landscape. Most folks don't want to make the change just to kill bigger deer, or more turkeys. Rather, they want to leave the land better than they found it. They understand the importance of conservation and want to do their part to move the needle in the right direction. After a busy second quarter I am looking forward to a third quarter dedicated to building and maintaining these meaningful relationship while providing assistance to landowners that want to make a difference.

Q2 FY23 Activity Highlights

- ◆ 57 Landowner Contacts
- ◆ 22 Site Visits
- ◆ Mark Twain QF Chapter Banquet
- ◆ Mark Twain QF Youth Quail Hunt



A CRP field in Shelby County, MO. It is full of native grasses and forbs. Little bluestem is especially beautiful in the fall months.



Shrub planting and pollinator planting in Shelby County, MO.



Marty shares his conservation journey with the students.



Students attempt to catch bugs in a restored grassland.



Group Picture!

All photos on this page were taken by Kim Cole

Education and Outreach

In October, I had the opportunity to assist with hosting a field trip for the 6th grade classes in Paris, MO. Marty Gipson was kind enough to host the group on his farm in Monroe county. Marty purchased the farm and got to work right away with the help of Casey Bergthold, who was the Quail Forever Biologist at the time. Marty has put ground into CRP, he has completed timber stand improvement, edge feathering, built a wetland, and has used extensive prescribed fire to manage the habitat he created. The tour was comprised of three stations. Casey led a wetland station, and talked about how wetland ecosystems are beneficial for a multitude of organisms. Kim Cole (Quail Forever) led a grassland station that covered the importance of native prairies for insects, grassland birds, and other native fauna. Lastly, I led a woodland station that looked at the benefits of TSI, edge feathering, and prescribed fire for deer, turkey and quail populations in Missouri. Each station contained an educational activity to illustrate the relationship between management, and the native flora and fauna. It was a great day and I hope we can do it again in the future!



Chapter Spotlight– Mark Twain Quail Forever

Over the last few years I have had the distinct pleasure of working with the Mark Twain chapter of Quail Forever. They are a dedicated group of volunteers that care deeply about wildlife, habitat, the local community, and getting youth involved in the outdoors.

They put on several events this fall, including, a youth dove hunt in September, a banquet in October, and a youth Quail hunt in December.

The banquet is a local favorite. The event space was packed. It is an evening full of fun and fellowship where like minded folks can gather to support a cause that matters to them. The volunteers do a great job every year, but this year was especially successful. Hats off to all of the volunteers that worked so hard to bring everything together, and a sincere thank you to everybody that attends the banquet and makes it a success every year!

The youth quail hunt was another great event. It was hosted on the Kendrick Farm outside of Paris, MO. The chapter supplied quail, chukar, and mentors. There were several volunteers that brought their hunting dogs to accompany the hunters in the field as well. It was a beautiful day and everyone had a good time.

The Mark Twain Quail Forever Chapter works hard every year to put on these great events and to give back to their community!



Above: Hunters, mentors, dog handler, and bird dog in the field chasing Quail and Chukar!

Below: Hunters with their mentors after a successful hunt.

Photo Credit: Tammy Muhr





Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

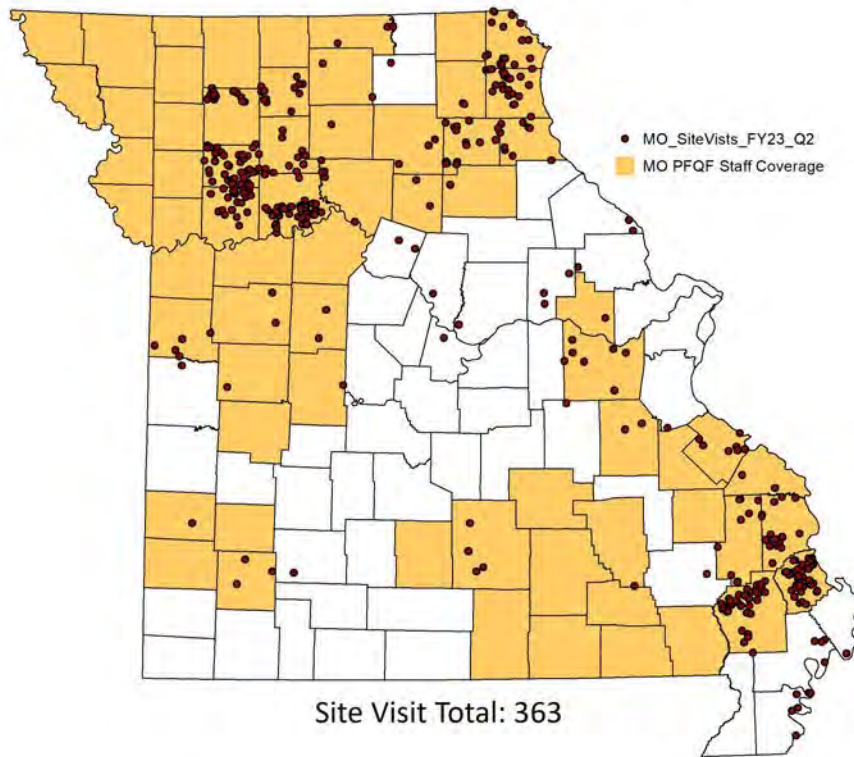


Quarterly Partners' Report

William Robinson– Marion, Monroe & Shelby Counties

October-December 2022

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*Site visit entries where coordinate data was captured.

Updated 1/13/2023



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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You can find us on YouTube @Missouri Quail Forever**

William Robinson
Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II
Marion, Monroe & Shelby Counties

Shelbyville USDA Office
210 E. Main St.
Shelbyville, MO 63469

m. 314-825-6574
P. 573-633-2211 ext.112
wrobinson@quailforever.org