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Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever and partners hire Biologist to lead Scenic Rivers Invasive Species Partnership

New Coordinating Wildlife Biologist to serve in Southeast Missouri

EMINENCE, Mo. – August 11, 2021 – Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever in Missouri is excited to announce that Valarie Repp was hired to serve as the Coordinating Wildlife Biologist leading the Scenic Rivers Invasive Species Partnership (SRISP), a brand-new position that will address the spread of invasive plants in the Scenic River Region. She started her new position August 9.

Stationed in Eminence, MO, Valarie will lead the SRISP efforts and help coordinate the first Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) in the state. She will work with partners in a 9-county area (Ripley, Shannon, Carter, Butler, Reynolds, Texas, Dent, Howell, and Oregon) to help protect critical habitat by slowing the spread of invasive plants and building awareness of invasive species issues.

The SRISP was developed in 2018 to focus on three federally protected rivers within the state: Current, Jacks Fork and Eleven Point. Partners involved include the Missouri Department of Conservation, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Midwest Invasive Plant Network, Missouri Invasive Plant Task Force, L-A-D Foundation, National Park Service, National Wild Turkey Federation, Inc., Natural Resources Conservation Service, The Nature Conservancy, Missouri Department of Transportation and local soil and water districts.



This area was chosen because it is one of the state's most ecologically diverse landscapes containing unique, intact habitats, scenic qualities, and recreational opportunities. The Scenic River Region contains diverse ecosystems where invasive species are sparse; however, there are



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some parts of this region where they are established and causing significant negative impacts on habitat, recreation, and agriculture. The SRISP is focused on addressing these impacts and mitigating the negative effects invasive species have on the landscape in the Scenic River Region.

Valarie earned her degree in natural resources and environmental science, specializing in restoration ecology from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in 2017. She previously worked for the U.S. Forest Service for 3 years on the Mark Twain National Forest as a Biological Science Technician focusing on invasive plant species removal before joining the Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever in Missouri team.

“I am excited to have this opportunity to work towards eradicating invasive plants in this beautiful area,” said Repp. “I’ve always enjoyed kayaking the pristine rivers as well as hiking in the Scenic Rivers region and I can’t wait to help landowners and partners eliminate invasive plants and replace them with habitat-friendly natives.”

If you are interested in learning more about the SRISP or getting guidance related to invasive species in Missouri, contact Valarie at vrepp@quailforever.org or 618-218-3026.

About Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever

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

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