

Lower Mississippi Valley

J O I N T V E N T U R E

Management Board Meeting

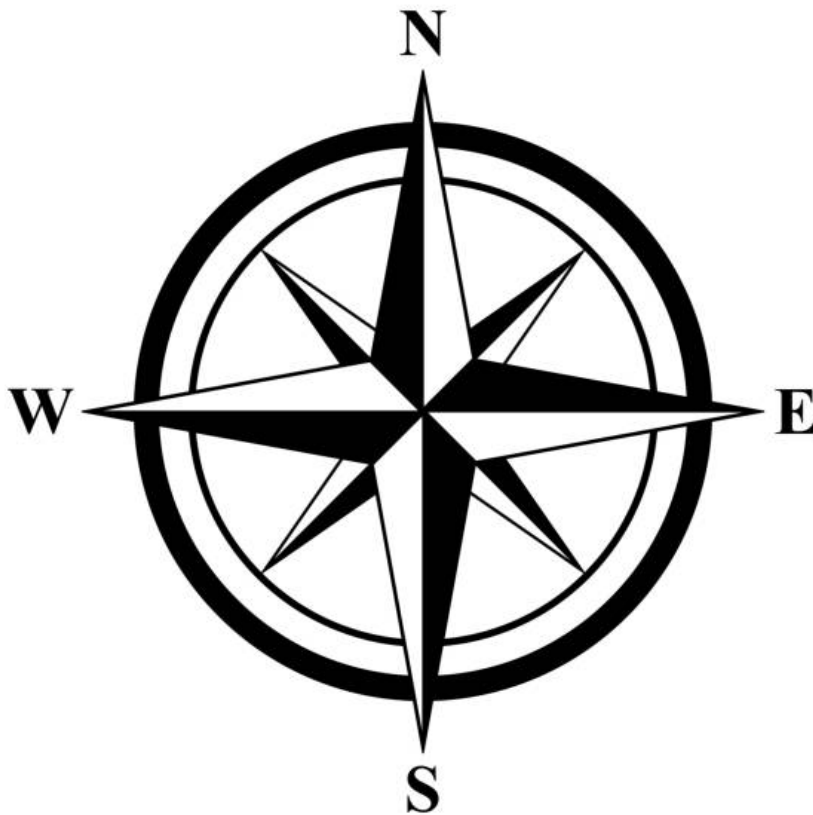


May 11-12, 2022

Memphis, TN - Ducks Unlimited NHQ



The Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture is a self-directed, non-regulatory private, state, federal conservation partnership that exists for the purpose of sustaining bird populations and their habitats within the Lower Mississippi Valley region through implementing and communicating the goals and objectives of relevant national and international bird conservation plans.



The mission of the LMV Joint Venture is to function as the forum in which the private, state, federal conservation community develops a shared vision of bird conservation for the Lower Mississippi Valley region; cooperates in its implementation; and collaborates in its refinement.

Table of Contents

Agenda	
Administration	1
Management Board Contact List	3
Meeting Location History	4
Fall 2021 Meeting Decisions, Action Items, Attendance, and Agenda	5
2022 Budget Forecast	9
Conservation Delivery Coordination	11
MAV Delivery Partnership Reports	
Arkansas MAV CDN Annual Report	13
Louisiana-Mississippi CDN Annual Report	45
WGCPD Delivery Partnership Reports	
Arkansas-Louisiana CDN Annual Report	73
Northeast Texas CDN Annual Report.....	109
Texas Longleaf Team Activity Summary	135
WLEP Activity Summary	151
Communication	155
LMVJV Communications Plan Progress Report.....	157
Science	169
2022 LMVJV Waterfowl Symposium.....	171
Science Investment Recommendations FY2022	173
NAWMP Plan Committee Letter to LMVJV (Triennial JV Report Feedback).....	175
Larger Partnership	177
Understanding Alignments in Spatial Planning - Summary	179
Assoc. of Joint Venture Management Boards – Select 2022 Documents.....	193

LMVJV Spring 2022 Board Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, 10 May

7:00pm Gather in Embassy Suites lobby for those wanting to go for dinner together

Wednesday, 11 May

Organization, Administration, Staff

8:30am Welcome, Introductions, Overview of Agenda
Avian Ecologist Hiring Progress
Status of Climate Science Assistance from USGS
Social Science & Hydrology Capacity
Review Other Fall 2021 Action Items
Budget Status & Outlook

Conservation Delivery Coordination

9:45am ARMAV CDN Annual Report
LA/MS CDN Annual Report
10:30am **BREAK**
11:00am Tri-state Conservation Partnership Report
AR/LA WGCP CDN
Annual Report (Ricky Chastain)
RCPP Social Science (Mini)
NETX CDN Annual Report
Texas Longleaf Team & West-Central Louisiana Ecosystem Partnership Report
12:15pm **LUNCH**
1:30pm Desired Forest Conditions for Wildlife Revision Update (Jeff Denman)

Communication

1:45pm Communication Plan Status Report (Gregg Elliott)

Science

2:10pm October Waterfowl Symposium Preview
Waterfowl Objectives Revision - Timeline, Expectations, etc.
Emergent Wetland Remote Assessment Update
Louisiana Waterthrush Habitat Suitability Tool Update
Updates on Ongoing Research (Marshbird Survey, Drones & Ducks, etc.)
3:00pm **BREAK**
3:30pm Open Pine Spatial Priorities Revision - Species Models (Brad Thornton)
Southeastern Three Billion Bird Loss Report
Science Team Investment Recommendation - **Board Decision Needed**
5:00pm **Adjourn for the Day**

Evening Social in NHQ Foyer Immediately Following

Thursday, 12 May

Larger Partnership & Looking Ahead

8:30am NAWMP Plan Committee - LMVJV Report Feedback
Blueprint/JV Priorities Alignment Analysis (Brad Thornton)
AJVMB Recent Documents & Annual Meeting Hi Lights
New Funding Potentials
RAWA - What can/should the LMVJV partnership be doing?
America the Beautiful - NFWF
10:30am **BREAK**
Ivory-billed Woodpecker in the News
Review Action Items
11:30am **Adjourn**



Administration

Name	Title	Organization	Email	Phone	Address
Jeff Raasch ¹ (Chair)	Statewide Wetlands/Joint Venture Program Coordinator	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department	jeff.raasch@tpwd.texas.gov	512.389.4578	Texas Parks and Wildlife 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744
Ron Seiss ¹ (Vice Chair)	Director, Lower Mississippi River Program	The Nature Conservancy	rseiss@tnc.org	601.713.3307	The Nature Conservancy 217 Rocky Branch Road, Covington, TN 38019
Merrie Morrison	Vice President for Operations	American Bird Conservancy	mmorr@abcbirds.org	540.253.5780	American Bird Conservancy 4249 Loudoun Ave., P.O.Box 249 The Plains, VA 20198
Garrick Dugger	Assistant Wildlife Division Chief	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission	Garrick.Dugger@agfc.ar.gov	501.223.6362	Arkansas Game & Fish Commission #2 Natural Resources Dr., Little Rock, AR 72205
Scott Manley	Director, Conservation Programs (MS, TN, AR, LA, AL)	Ducks Unlimited	smanley@ducks.org	601.956.1936	Ducks Unlimited 193 Business Park Dr., Suite E Ridgeland, MS 39157
<i>Vacant</i>		Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources			
Kenny Ribbeck ¹	Chief, Wildlife Division	Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries	kribbeck@wlf.louisiana.gov	225.765.2800	LA Dept Wildlife and Fisheries 2000 Quail Drive P.O. Box 98000, Baton Rouge, LA 70898
Russ Walsh	Executive Wildlife Director	Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, & Parks	russw@mdwfp.state.ms.us	601.432.2202	Mississippi Dept of Wildlife, Fisheries, & Parks 1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS 39211-6374
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Jeremy Everitts	District Biologist (AR, LA, MS)	National Wild Turkey Federation	jeveritts@nwtf.net	301.667.1072	43 J Hawks Drive Greenbrier, AR 72058
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Patrick Lemons	Wildlife Program Manager, Region 1	Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency	patrick.lemons@tn.gov	731.697.5200	200 Lowell Thomas Drive Jackson, TN 38301
Kristin Madden ¹	Deputy Chief, Migratory Birds	US Fish and Wildlife Service (Albuquerque)	kristin_madden@fws.gov	505.248.6878	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service 500 Gold Avenue SW, Albuquerque, NM 87102
Mike Oetker	Deputy Regional Director	US Fish and Wildlife Service (Atlanta)	michael_oetker@fws.gov	404.679.4000	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service 1875 Century Blvd., Atlanta, GA 30345
Mike Langston	Deputy Director, SC Climate Science Adaptation Center	US Geological Survey	mlangston@usgs.gov	405.290.8348	201 Stephenson Parkway, Suite 2100 Norman, OK 73019
<i>Vacant</i>		USDA Forest Service, Region 8			
Mike Sullivan	State Conservationist, Arkansas	USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service	michael.sullivan@ar.usda.gov	501.301.3100	U.S.D.A. NRCS Room 3416, Federal Building 700 W. Capitol Ave, Little Rock, AR 72201-3215

¹Executive Committee

Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture Management Board Meeting Locations 2002-2022

Fa/Wi 2022	Arkansas
Sp/Su 2022	Tennessee (Memphis, DU Headquarters)
Fa/Wi 2021	Video conference (in-person meeting not possible due to COVID-19 issues)
Sp/Su 2021	Video conference (in-person meeting not possible due to COVID-19 issues)
Sp/Su 2020	Video conference (in-person meeting not possible due to COVID-19 issues)
Fa/Wi 2020	Video conference (in-person meeting not possible due to COVID-19 issues)
Sp/Su 2019	Texas (Jefferson)
Fa/Wi 2019	Louisiana (Cypress Bend)
Sp/Su 2018	Louisiana (West Monroe)
Fa/Wi 2018	Mississippi (Natchez)
Sp/Su 2017	Missouri (Cape Girardeau)
Fa/Wi 2017	Tennessee (Dyersburg)
Sp/Su 2016	Arkansas (Wildlife Farms)
Fa/Wi 2016	Louisiana (Baton Rouge, after SEAFWA; October 19-20 OR 20-21)
Sp/Su 2015	Mississippi (Tara Wildlife)
Fa/Wi 2015	Tennessee (Millington)
Sp/Su 2014	Texas (Caddo Lake State Park)
Fa/Wi 2014	Florida (SEAFWA)
Sp/Su 2013	Louisiana (Lafayette)
Fa/Wi 2013	Oklahoma (SEAFWA)
Sp/Su 2012	Arkansas (Heber Springs)
Fa/Wi 2011	Tennessee (SEAFWA)
Sp/Su 2011	Arkansas (Eureka Springs)
Fa/ Wi 2010	Mississippi (SEAFWA)
Sp/Su 2010	Arkansas (5 Oaks Lodge)
Fa/Wi 2009	Georgia (SEAFWA)
Sp/Su 2009	Oklahoma (Broken Bow)
Sp/Su 2008	Mississippi (Vicksburg)
Sp/Su 2007	Texas (Tyler)
Sp/Su 2006	Mississippi (Vicksburg)
Sp/Su 2005	Arkansas (Winrock)
Sp/Su 2004	Louisiana (Buras)
Fa/Wi 2003	Alabama (SEAFWA)
Sp/Su 2003	Texas (Big Woods on the Trinity)
Sp/Su 2002	Mississippi (Tara Wildlife)

<u>2-Day Location "Box Score"</u>	
Arkansas	5
Louisiana	5
Mississippi	5
Texas	4
Tennessee	3
Missouri	1
Oklahoma	1

Bold = Multi-day meeting
 Gray = Planned



Administration

➤ Future Board Meeting Locations

- 2022 Spring: Ducks Unlimited National Headquarters, Memphis, TN; date TBD
- 2022 Fall: Arkansas; details TBD

Responsible: K. McKnight; All Applicable Board Members - Ongoing

➤ Capacity Needs

All four needs (Avian, Hydrological, Human Dimensions, Climate) deemed worthy of pursuit, with Avian Science Coordination and Hydrological Science Coordination capacities slightly edging ahead of the other two in priority.

- Additional **Avian Science Coordination Capacity** likely possible through changes in LMVJV's staff expenses (retirement) and anticipated future USFWS 1234 fund allocation. Will not know for certain until the FY2022 federal budget is final. Details of organizational affiliation still TBA. More discussion with the Management Board will occur before action is taken.

Responsible: Primary, K. McKnight – Job Announcement (via ABC) out early May 2022

- **Hydrological Science Coordination Capacity**, potentially secured through collaboration with Ducks Unlimited (and others), is under consideration.

Responsible: Primary, K. McKnight & S. Manley – Discussed, nothing firm; ongoing

- **Climate Science Coordination Capacity** likely available through South Central Climate Adaptation Science Center resources. JV Office Staff will work with Mike Langston & USGS to flesh out details and communicate with the Board on progress.

Responsible: M. Langston & K. McKnight – Ongoing discussion of details with USGS

- Limited **Social Science Coordination Capacity** may be available through new hires by USFWS in Southeast Region.

Responsible: K. McKnight & A. Mini - Dr. Shannon Westlake (USFWS) is assisting with RCPP Social Science needs in advisory role. Dr. Elena Rubino (U. Arkansas at Monticello) serving on the JV Science Team & Advisory Group to RCPP social science

Habitat Delivery Coordination

➤ Wetland Reserve Easement Landowner Videos

- Videos will be finalized and distributed to WRE landowners by the end of 2021. Management Board members will receive thumb drives with video files as well.

Responsible: Brock and Seiss - Complete

Science

➤ **Climate Change Addressed in Desired Forest Conditions for Wildlife Revision**

- Relevant aspects of climate change are being considered to be included in DFCW Revision. South Central Climate Adaptation Science Center could provide valuable input if desired.

Responsible: K. McKnight, S. Brock, and M. Langston - Ongoing

Communication

➤ **Private Landowner Conservation Champion – 2021 Nominations**

- Nominations due to McKnight by 17 November

Responsible: Board Members – 2021 Champions Selected

October 27, 2021 Management Board Call/Meeting Participants

Board Member	Organization
Laurel Barnhill	US Fish and Wildlife Service, Southeast
Garrick Dugger	Arkansas Game & Fish Commission
Jeremy Everitts	National Wild Turkey Federation
Dan Figert	Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources
Mike Langston	US Geological Survey
Patrick Lemons	Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
Kristin Madden	US Fish and Wildlife Service, Southwest
Scott Manely	Ducks Unlimited
Merrie Morrison	American Bird Conservancy
Joel Porath	Missouri Department of Conservation
Jeff Raasch	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Kenny Ribbeck	Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Mike Sullivan	Natural Resources Conservation Service
Eddie Taylor	U.S.D.A. Forest Service
Partners/Guests	Organization
Tim Caughran	Pheasants Forever/Quail Forever
Ryan Diener	Pheasants Forever/Quail Forever
Justyn Foth	USFWS-HQ
David Graves	Arkansas Game & Fish Commission
Dale James	Ducks Unlimited
Chad Kacir	Natural Resources Conservation Service - LA
Tim Landreneau	Natural Resources Conservation Service - LA
Stacey Shankle	Trust for Public Land
LMVJV Office Staff	
Bill Bartush	WGCP Partnership Coordinator
Steve Brock	MAV Partnership Coordinator
Blaine Elliott	GIS Applications Biologist
Keith McKnight	Coordinator
Anne Mini	Science Coordinator

LMVJV Management Board Agenda - 27 October 2021

9:00-Noon (CDT)

ADMINISTRATION

9:00	Welcome, Introduce New Faces	Raasch
	Spring 2021 Action Items Status	McKnight
	Budget	
	Spring 2022 Venue!	
	Operational Plan Assessment - Year 3	McKnight

COMMUNICATION

9:20	Private Landowner Conservation Champion	McKnight
	Request for Nominations & Summer <i>Leaders on the Land</i>	

SCIENCE COORDINATION

9:25	Marshbird Planning - Working Group Composition	Mini
	Waterfowl Planning	Mini
	Plan Committee Report	
	Quick Updates on Revision Process	
	Manomet Workshop (Stats on on-line, plan for 2022)	Mini
	Louisiana Waterthrush	Mini
	Open Pine Re-Planning	Mini
10:00	Break	

DELIVERY COORDINATION

10:05	WGCPD Delivery Coordination Summary	Bartush
	RCPP; Texan by Nature; NETX CDN/TLIT Collaboration	
10:15	MAV Delivery Coordination Summary	Brock
	WRE Videos; Forest Markets; DFCW Revision	

LOOKING AHEAD

10:45	Big 4 Capacity Needs Primer	McKnight
11:00	Break	
11:05	Big 4 Capacity Needs Discussion	All
11:50	Wrap-up, Action Items, Final Thoughts	All
Noon	Adjourn	

USFWS Management Board Contact List - October 2021

Name	Title	Organization	Email	Phone	Address
Jeff Raasch ¹ (Chair)	Statewide Wetlands/Join Venture Program Coordinator	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department	jeff.raasch@tpwd.texas.gov	512-388-4578	Texas Parks and Wildlife 4209 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78734
Bon Seix ² (Vice Chair)	Director, Lower Mississippi River Program	The Nature Conservancy	bon@tnc.org	601-713-3307	The Nature Conservancy 217 Rocky Branch Road, Covington, TN 38019
Marnie Morrison	Vice President for Operations	American Bird Conservancy	marnie@abbirds.org	540-253-5780	American Bird Conservancy 1240 Loudoun Ave., P.O. Box 249 The Plains, VA 20158
Gerrick Dugger	Assistant Wildlife Division Chief	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission	Gerrick.Dugger@agf.ar.gov	501-223-6382	Arkansas Game & Fish Commission 42 Natural Resources Dr., Little Rock, AR 72205
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Russ Walsh	Executive Wildlife Director	Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, & Parks	russ@mdwp.state.ms.us	601-432-2202	Mississippi Dept of Wildlife, Fisheries, & Parks 1505 Eubank Circle, Jackson, MS 39211-6374
Joel Porath	Wildlife Management Chief-Ozark Unit	Missouri Department of Conservation	joel.porath@dc.mo.gov	573-522-4115 and 3198	Missouri Dept. of Conservation P.O. Box 100, Jefferson City, MO 65102
Jeremy Everitts	District Biologist (AR, LA, MS)	National Wild Turkey Federation	jeremy@nwtf.us	301-867-1072	44 J Hawks Drive Greenville, AR 72038
Jeff Ford	Senior Biologist	Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation	jeff.ford@odwc.ok.gov	918-527-8918	Oklahoma Dept. of Wildlife Conservation 48077 First-Hatchery Rd. Hedden, OK 74338
Patrick Lemons	Wildlife Program Manager, Region 1	Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency	patrick.lemons@tn.gov	774-697-5300	200 Lowell Thomas Drive Jackson, TN 38301
Kristin Madden ⁴	Deputy Chief, Migratory Birds	US Fish and Wildlife Service (Albuquerque)	kristin_madden@fws.gov	505-248-8878	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service 500 South Avenue SW, Albuquerque, NM 87102
Mike Oelker	Deputy Regional Director	US Fish and Wildlife Service (Alaska)	michael_oelker@fws.gov	404-679-4000	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service 1475 Century Blvd., Atlanta, GA 30345
Mike Langston	Deputy Director, SC Climate Science Adaptation Center	US Geological Survey	mrlangston@usgs.gov	405-260-8348	U.S. Geological Survey South Central CASAC 5 Partners Plaza University of Oklahoma
Eddie Taylor	Forest Supervisor, Ksatchie NF	USDA Forest Service, Region 8	edward@fs.fed.us	318-473-7180	USDA Forest Service 2506 Shawspout Highway, Phenixia, Louisiana 71380-2009
Mike Sullivan	State Conservationist, Arkansas	USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service	michael.sullivan@ar.usda.gov	501-501-3100	USDA NRCS 700 W. Capitol Ave., Little Rock, AR 72205-3215

¹Executive Committee

LMVJV FY2022 Budget

Income/Expense Summary

Income	
FY22 Mig Bird Joint Venture (1234)	\$842,461
Partner Contribution & Agreement Funds	
To Agreements	
Science Coordination	\$32,500
Science Project Support	\$70,000
Income Total	\$944,961
Expenses	
Salary & Benefits (USFWS) ¹	\$542,100
Administrative Support ²	\$25,000
Travel	\$8,000
Operational	\$10,726
Regional Office Support (@4.3%) ²	\$36,199
Office Space	\$30,000
ABC Agreement - Science Coordination ³	\$32,500
ABC Agreement - WGCPO PC	\$0
Communications Contract	\$10,000
Science Project Support	\$250,000
<i>(Pending Board Approval 11 May '22)</i>	
Expense Total	\$944,525
Balance	\$436

¹ includes 4 USFWS staff

² ROUGH Estimate

³ Avian Ecologist 3 months

Partner Contributed Funds Summary

Carryover from FY2021	\$145,293
FY22 Contributions	
LDWF	\$17,750
AGFC	
NRCS	(\$91K 5-year balance in carryover)
ODWC	\$5,000
MDC*	\$8,000
TPWD*	\$25,000
TPWD	\$12,000 in kind (office space)
TWRA*	\$11,250
<i>subtotal</i>	<u>\$56,250</u>
 <i>FY22 Subtotal</i>	 \$22,750
Total Available	\$168,043
Withdrawal: Agreement/Project	-\$102,500
Balance	\$65,543

*MDC (\$8,000), TPWD (\$25,000), TWRA (\$11,250) directly to ABC; accounted as reduction in total Science Coordinator & WGCPO PC expense

Agreement / Activity	From PC	From 1234	From 1231	TOTAL
ABC - Science Coordination	\$32,500			\$32,500
ABC - Communications Contract		\$10,000		\$10,000
TBD - Science Project Support	\$70,000	\$180,000		\$250,000



Arkansas MAV CDN

AR MAV Conservation Delivery Network 2021-22 Annual Report

LMVJV Management Board Spring Meeting May 11, 2022

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spring Steering Committee Coordination Meeting - June 21, 2021 Core Agenda Items: Overview previous year activities w/Covid affect<ul style="list-style-type: none">: Working Group Updates: Winter Membership Meeting Planning: Identify theme, core topics, site and agenda	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delta Ag Lands Working Group - Jul 8, 2021 Core Agenda Items: Review previous meeting project coordination and planning<ul style="list-style-type: none">: Discuss current projects opportunities to collaborate: Explore any opportunities to pursue new funding sources: Begin discussing purpose and goals for 2022 Turn-row Workshop	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summer Membership Meeting - Aug 17, 2021 Theme: Desired Forest Conditions for Wildlife (DFCW) Field Tour: Dagmar WMA DFCW treatment sites & discussion Agenda Items: Partner Update - Five Oaks Ag Education and Research Center, Doug Osborne, UoAM<ul style="list-style-type: none">: Partner & Working Group Updates: MAV Forest Markets and Forest Certification - Jeremy Poirier, IP: Forest Bird Habitat Objectives & DFCWs: Two Sides of the Same Coin, Keith McKnight, LMVJV: Project Spotlight: Fall Water Bird Habitat Use in the MS Delta, Jason Hoeksema, UoMiss	8
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delta Ag Lands Working Group - Oct 20, 2021 Core Agenda Items: NRCS Working Ag updates<ul style="list-style-type: none">: Current project updates: Initiate planning for Turn-row Credibility Workshop	13
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fall Steering Committee Coordination Meeting - Jan 20, 2022 Core Agenda Items: Debrief on recent CDN and partner activities<ul style="list-style-type: none">: Initiate planning for winter membership meeting: Identify theme, core topics, site and agenda	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delta Ag Lands Working Group - Feb 3, 2022 Core Agenda Items: Explore potential new project opportunities<ul style="list-style-type: none">: Overview Turn-row planning outcomes from last meeting: Continued to discuss goals and approaches for next Turn-row workshop	19

- **Winter Membership Meeting - Mar 8, 2022** **21**
 - Theme: Forest Carbon
 - Core Agenda Items: Working Group Partner Updates
 - : Forest Carbon & Offsets: The Basics, Ellen Herbert, PhD
Ecological Services Scientist, DU
 - Project Spotlight: Markets for Floodplain Reforestation in the Delta, Jason Milks, TNC
 - : Forest Carbon Programs & NativState, Tim White, Forestry Consultant
 - : NCX - The Data-Driven Forest Carbon Marketplace, Alex Macintosh,
Dir. of U.S. Origination, NCX
 - : Carbon Contracts - Working with AR Landowners, Jeff Denman,
Consulting Forester
 - : Panel Discussion

- **Delta Ag Lands Working Group - Mar 15, 2022** **24**
 - Core Agenda Items: Overview Turn-row planning outcomes from last meeting
 - : Continued developing planning objectives for next Turn-row workshop

- **Delta Ag Lands Working Group - Apr 7, 2022** **26**
 - Core Agenda Items: Overview Turn-row planning outcomes from last meeting
 - : Formulate theme and content for two-day Turn-row fall workshop



Meeting Notes

AR MAV CDN Steering Committee

Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts Off.
4004 McCain Blvd., Ste. 201-B, North Little Rock
Jun 21, 2021

Participants: David Graves (Chair, AGFC), Ryan Diener (Vice-chair, QF), Amanda Mathis (NRCS), Garrick Dugger (AGFC), Jeremy Everitts (NWF), Jay Hitchcock (FWS), Jason Milks (TNC), Jake Spears (DU), Steve Brock (LMJV), Breegan Andersen (TNC)

(Black - Original Agenda; Green - Meeting Notes; Red - Action Items)

Goals: 1) Review/Update planning and activities over the previous year
2) Discuss where we are and potential opportunities for the CDN post-Covid
3) Plan late summer membership meeting

Welcome and Objectives - Graves

Highlight previous years CDN activities (see also Past Meetings summary)

- Aug: CDN's Form & Function, Keith McKnight
- Sep: DFCW Overview, Duck Locascio; DFCW Applied - Private Lands, Public Lands, NRCS
- Dec: New VC & DU member; Winter membership meeting theme and plng
- Feb: Theme - CDN Reboot & Partnership Update; Project Updates: AGFC WRICE Program & GTR Restoration Project; AR-LA CDN Open Pine - RCPP Partnership; NRCS/NWTF WRE Project Update; AR TNC/Kellogg Partnership
- Delta Ag Lands WG: 4 virtual meetings (Oct, Dec, Feb, Mar 4) & in-person (Mar 30) – strategizing around a “Systems Approach” on working lands and new project funding opps

Working Groups: Status/Planning/What's Ahead

- Delta Ag Lands
 - WG continues to consider opportunities to increase working lands conservation delivery
 - Next WG meeting will likely be July 8 at Five Oaks Lodge
 - Need to invite new WG participants at Aug 17 membership meeting
 - Milks: TNC is closing out successful Kellogg water timers project
 - : Recently awarded a new timer project by Cargill (\$487K to install ~200 timers over 3 yrs); Project will target 1800 acres only on rice
 - : Milks will coordinate with WG on support of interested WG partners to help deliver
 - Next Turn-row Credibility Workshop: When & What
 - WG needs to narrow down potential focus for next a workshop; the idea of addressing farm carbon sequestration; this will also be a topic of the July meeting

Actions: Invite new Delta Ag Lands WG participation at the Aug 17 membership meeting

: In addition to Cargill project, WG will continue to explore working Ag delivery project funding opportunities

: WG will initiate active planning for next Turn-row Credibility Workshop

- TCP & Other? Nothing to report

Other CDN opportunities, objectives and priorities?

- Discussed future meeting theme
 - Lengthy discussion on the growing interest and focus on both forest and farm

Action: Consider carbon as meeting theme at next SC meeting

Winter Membership Meeting Planning:

- Potential Dates & Location:
 - Date: Last meeting - Feb 9; 6 months - Aug 9 (late Jul/early Aug window)
 - Agreed on 2nd, 3rd or 4th week of Aug (Tue/Wed/Thu) as possible meeting windows
 - Date will be set based on meeting site and speaker availability
 - Location:
 - Location could be theme and/or field trip driven
 - Past In-person Meetings (most recent first): 1) DeValls Bluff, 2) McGehee, 3) Cook's Lake, 4) Brinkley, 5) White River, 6) Stuttgart, 7) Little Rock, 8) Jonesboro, 9) Hazen, 10) Stuttgart, 11) Tillar, 12) Pineville, 13) Brinkley, 14) Cooks Lake, 15) Clarendon, 16) Brinkley [Detailed summary of past meetings on page 2]
 - Based on field trip/theme, Graves will determine if Brinkley Convention Center is available

Action: Graves - Once speakers are locked with selected date, will contact Brinkley CC to book meeting room
- Potential Meeting Topic/Theme
 - Dec 2020 SC Mtg: Agreed to table DFCW topic until next in-person mtg
 - DFCW information covered in Sep 24, 2020 virtual meeting:
 - DFCW Overview - Duck Locascio
 - AGFC DFCW Mgmt on WMA's - Drew Green
 - DFCW Mgmt on Private Lands - Jeff Denman
 - NRCS WRE Assessment Project - Randy Childress
 - Potential Future DFCW topics previously discussed:
 - Forest Economics - Dr. Pelky
 - Forest Certification/Sustainable Forestry Initiative
 - Forest Stewards Guild (Workshop ahead, possibly this fall)
 - MRT Project Update - Giles Kelly
 - MAV Forest Markets/Ricky O'Neil - POC (Holimon)
 - Other potential presentations
 - Forest Bird Habitat Objectives & DFCWs (McKnight)
 - Delta Wind Birds Research/Fall flooding for shorebirds project - Jason Hoeksema
 - Other?
 - Agreed that DFCW will continue as CDN focus and meeting theme
 - Targeted topical presenters: Jeremy Poirier (IP) - MAV forest markets & certification
: Keith McKnight - JV Bird Plan & DFCW's
 - Draft Agenda: 9:00-11:00 a.m. - Field Trip
: 11:30 - Lunch @ Convention Center
: 12:00-3:00 Presentations

Actions: Brock - Contact Poirier, McKnight & select date based on commitments
: Milks - Contact Dr. Ryland
: Seiss/Brock - Deliver Tri-state Conservation Partnership Update
: Mathis - Deliver NRCS Update

- Field Trip
 - Warranted/Where?
 - Does Stewards Guild workshop adequately address?
 - Past: [most recent first] 1) Choctaw Island WMA/Oct 2018, 2) CRP/Dark Corner/Jul 2018, 3) Prairie Restoration/Jun 2017, 4) Proctor Tire/Dec 2015, 5) Choctaw Island WMA/Dec 2014, 6) Cache River Restoration/Mar 2013
 - For future planning - GTR work, other?
 - Will plan to hold a field trip as part of Aug meeting
 - DFCW treatments applied in recent years on both Wattensaw and Dagmar WMA's

- Drew Green advised that he could coordinate a field trip
- Will go to field first while it's cooler, come back for lunch and then meeting

Actions: Graves will work with Green to determine best WMA and select field trip stops

- Partner Spotlight
 - Who? [See list of previous on pg 3]
 - Possibilities: FWS/Cache Rvr NWR - overview, AFC, ANRC, AGFC/Programmatic (i.e., waterfowl, deer, turkey, non-game), USFS, NRCS, MRLA

Partner Spotlight: Willard Ryland/KKAC

Action: Milks to reach out to Willard Ryland
- Project Spotlight
 - See list of previous & possible future on pg 3
 - Project Spotlight: Jason Hoeksema/water bird research related to late season flooding

Action: Brock - contact Hoeksema to determine availability
- Working Group Updates
 - Delta Ag Lands WG
 - Tri-state Conservation Partnership

Meeting Updates: Delta Ag Lands Working Group, Jason Milks
: Tristate Conservation Partnership, Seiss/Brock

Actions: Milks - Deliver Delta Ag Lands WG Update
: Seiss/Brock - Deliver TCP Update
- Other Updates
 - Regular NRCS Update
 - CWD Update
 - Open floor for brief high-level updates from CDN partners
 - Other?

Meeting Updates: NRCS, Amanda Mathis

Action: Mathis to coordinate or deliver NRCS update

Appendix:

Previous Organization Spotlights:

- Feb 2021: None
- Feb 2020: None
- Oct 2019: Audubon (Scheiman)
- Feb 2019: TNC (Milks)
- Summer 2018: Quail Forever (Diener)
- Winter 2017/18: National Wild Turkey Federation (Everitts)
- Summer 2017: Dale Bumpers White River NWR (Hitchcock)
- Winter 2016/2017 AR Natural Heritage Commission (Holimon)
- Spring 2016: AGFC Private Lands (Groves)
- Fall 2015: Ducks Unlimited (Callicutt)
- Spring 2015: AR PFW Program (Krystofik)

Project Spotlights:

Summary of Previous:

- Feb 2021: AGFC WRICE & GTR Restoration (Luke Naylor); AR-LA CDN RCPP (Bill Bartush);

- NRCS NWTF WRE Project (Sid Munford); AR TNC/Kellogg Partnership (Jason Milks)
- Feb 2020: APHIS/NRCS Feral Swine Eradication & Control Pilot Prog. (Robert Byrd)
 - Oct 2019: White River NWR Habitat Development/Mgmt on "The Farm" (Hitchcock)
 - Feb 2019: AGFC/Waterfowl Rice Incentive Conservation Enhancement Program (Graves)

List of Potential/Future Project Spotlights Presentations:

- Monarch & Pollinator Habitat (Deiner)
- NFWF/Wetland Rehab (Massey)
- NFWF/Northern Cache River - Irrigation Efficiency (Milks)
- Active Floodplain Easement Program efforts (Mathis)
- TNC Flood Team Update
- AR Forestry Association - Forest Assessment

Past Meetings:

Summary of Past Membership Meetings:

- Winter 2021 (Feb/Zoom Mtg): Theme - CDN Reboot & Partnership Update; Project Updates: AGFC WRICE Program & Green Tree Reservoir Restoration Project (Naylor); AR-LA CDN Open Pine - RCPP Partnership (Bartush); NRCS/NWTF WRE Project Update (Munford); AR TNC/Kellogg Partnership (Milks)
- Summer 2020: Themes - CDN Overview and DFCW
Aug 6 (Zoom): CDN's Form & Function, Keith McKnight
Sep 26 (Zoom): DFCW Overview, Duck Locascio; DFCW Applied - Private Lands, Jeff Denman; Public Lands, Andrew Green; NRCS, Randy Childress
- Winter 2020 (Feb/DeValls Bluff, TNC): Theme - *Quail, Monarchs & Native Plant Management in the MAV*; Native Seed, Monarch Partnership and Grasslands Management presentations; DFCW overview and discussion
- Summer 2019 (Oct/McGehee, Circuit Clerk Off): Theme - *Managing Wetlands for Waterbirds*; Marshbird Habitat Restoration & Mapping Emergent Wetlands (AGFC); **Field Trip**: Choctaw Island WMA - Wetland Habitat Management for King Rail, Wading Birds and Shorebirds
- Winter 2019 (Feb/Cooks Lake): Theme - *Invasive Fauna - Addressing Fish & Swine in Arkansas*; Fish: Snakehead and Asian Carp; Feral Swine: AGFC, NRCS, APHIS Program overviews; all Sec of Ag; **Onsite field demonstration** of remote controlled hog trap
- Summer 2018 (Jul/Brinkley Conv Ctr): Theme - *Enhancement of BHW Plantations and Wetlands in the Delta*; Treatment Decisions for BHW Plantations (Dupuy), **Field Trip**: Wetland Restoration Planning Tools (Foti); CRP Plantation & Dark Corner
- Winter 2017/18 (Jan/White River NWR, St Charles): Waterfowl Theme - *DU Prvt Lands Study* (Callicutt), White-fronted Goose Movements (E. Massey), AGFC GTR Mgmt Plan (Naylor), MSU Mallard Telemetry Study Highlights (Callicutt)
- Summer 2017 (June/Stuttgart): Grand Prairie Restoration (Holimon); Bobwhite Quail Initiative (Asher); Revised Delivery Png Tool (Elliott); AR County Quail Work (Groves); **Field Trip**: Stuttgart Airport Prairie Restoration
- Winter 2016/2017 (January/Little Rock): Turn-row Credibility WS (Brock); NRCS New CSP (Mathis); MAV Infrastructure presentations: Greene Co unpaved rds (Knighten); Energy dvlp overview (Inebit); 3 Rvrs Study (Phillips); 2017 WREP Proj (Milks)
- Summer 2016 (June/Jonesboro): WRP Forest Mgmt Doc(Brock); AGFC WQ & Wildl (Cox); TNC Working Lands, WQ & Wildl - Departee Ck (Milks)
- Fall 2015 (Dec/Hazen): WRP Reclamation (Groves); **Field Trip**: Proctor Tire Hydrology Restoration (Milks)
- Spring 2015 (May/Stuttgart): MAV Hydrology & For Health (Keim/Milks); Farm Economics (UA Coop Ext)
- Fall 2014 (Dec, Tillar) - Cache Rvr NWR Forest Mgmt; State Water Plan; **Field Trip**: Choctaw Island WMA Wetland Habitat Restoration
- Summer 2014 (Jun, Pineville) - Project List Planning Meeting

- Summer 2014 (Jul, Brinkley): 2014 Farm Bill Update; Ducks Unlimited AR Rice Program; Overview of recent project planning mtg
- Fall 2013 (Dec, Cooks Lake) - Gulf BP Settlement Funds; Various Project Updates - Cypert Farm Acq; Hydro Restoration Lower Cache River; WRP/CRP Hardwood Plantation Evaluation; Bayou Bartholomew Alliance - Landscape; Wapanocca MRBI
- Spring 2013 (Mar, Clarendon): CDN Project updates; Project prioritization protocol; White River Blueways; **Field Trip** - Lower Cache River restoration project
- Fall 2012 (Aug, Stuttgart): Overview Draft DPT MapBook; Wapanocca MRBI Update; WREP - Cache River and Bayou DeView; Boeuf River MRBI; Review of CDN Strategic Proj Planning List; Ranking Exercise To Identify Immediate Priorities
- Spring 2012 (Mar, Mayflower): New Projects/Ideas; Final draft of Delivery Plng Tool; Development of Proj Ranking Factors; Applying Partner Opportunities: USFWS PFW Funding Opportunities; WFF Grant Opportunities; NRCS Programs Funding Opportunities

Notes

Planning Meeting

AR MAV CDN - Delta Ag Lands Working Group

Five Oaks Lodge, 1895 AR-152, Humphrey

July 8, 2021

Participants: Jason Milks, David Graves, Garrick Dugger, Jake Spears, Steve Brock, Scott Manley, Roger Cousins, Alice Weeks, Emily Wood, Willard Ryland, Breegan Andersen,

(Black - Original Agenda; Green - Meeting Notes; Red - Action Items)

Goals/Topics:

- Overview of Cargill & Kellogg funding and explore partnership opportunities
- Discuss how we might identify and pursue other working Ag funding opportunities
- Next Turn-row Credibility Workshop – What/When/Where

- **Welcome** - Milks
- **Mar 30 meeting outcome**
Brock provided a brief overview and highlights of discussion and outcomes from the Mar 30, Devall's Bluff WG meeting
 - Issues/opportunities
 - Conservation Goals & Objectives
 - Funding Opportunities
 - Capacity Commitments
- **Kellogg/Cargill Project Opportunity**
 - Overview
 - Project strategies
 - Milks updated the group on the current Kellogg Foundation - Water Pump Timer project:
 - ~35 rice producers participated in original project and installed about 200 water pump timers
 - Cost to purchase and install pumping timers is covered by project @ ~\$1000 each
 - Enough project funding still available to buy 50 additional timers
 - Milks suggested it may be beneficial for DU to develop sign-up sheet to share with interested landowners to help track and coordinate interest (both Kellogg & Cargill projects)
 - New Cargill Project:
 - Also a water pumping timer project
 - 3 yr., \$480K grant awarded to TNC targeting 25K acres for all Ag commodity types
 - Also, particular focus on increasing minority farmer participation
 - Cargill requesting primary focus on delivering in White & St Francis River Watersheds, but can work beyond these two areas
 - Minority farmers within these two watersheds will have priority for receiving timers
 - Dugger inquired if fact sheets for this and/or Kellogg project are available for landowners; Milks advised he plans to develop and will include participating partner logo's (KKAC, DU, Assoc. of Conservation Districts and NRCS)

- Partner interest and opportunities
 - Manley - DU projects and associated staff to potentially support these projects
 - Six staff members working on Rice Program RCPP in AR; a total of 20 staff working on all RCPP DU/partner projects; currently three RCPP, as well as a technical assistance agreement with NRCS
 - These projects include a lot of private lands technical support
 - Networking with pump timer projects (or potential WG projects) exists as long as it aligns with DU program objectives
 - Currently, all project work in AR is rice centric
 - Cousins - shared there are several new NRCS IWM technical staff that may be able to support the projects

Actions: Milks will work with Andersen and key partners on development and distribution of project flyer(s), including inclusion of partner logos

- **Can we identify other project opportunities?**

- What are other funding sources
 - Private Sources
 - Working within/alongside established programs (NRCS/State/NGOs)
- Aligning opportunities with partner objectives/priorities/targets
 - Briefly discussed other potential project opportunities the WG might pursue
 - Carbon sequestration seems to be one of the biggest potential drivers for future project opportunities

Actions: Milks will evaluate current and future project opportunities through TNC channels

- **Turn-row Credibility Workshop**

- Past & Themes: 2017 - General: Year in Life/Economics/Terminology/Conservation Planning : 2019 - IWM
- Next Workshop: When/Theme/Where
 - Next workshop should place primary focus on highest priority resource concerns
 - Based on previous workshop themes, should the next WS be focused on either conventional or conservation tillage
 - Focusing too heavily on state of the art farming may cause us to lose more practical Turn-row focus
 - Should developing farm carbon sequestration opportunities be incorporated
 - Key resource concerns to continue targeting – water quality/quantity, soil conservation, wildlife
 - Keep our audience front and center - technical professionals
 - Though turn-row credibility is a foundational goal, keep end-game in mind - more wildlife habitat on farms through a systems approach
 - WG can also discuss the potential need for landowner/producer targeted workshops e.g. regenerative AG
 - Is landowner/producer education a core goal of the CDN?

Agreed to schedule the next WG meeting during middle two weeks of Oct to plan Turn-row WS

Actions: Brock/Milks will develop meeting notes and distribute to the WG
: Will also develop Doodle Poll and distribute to schedule Oct WG meeting

Meeting Notes

Arkansas MAV CDN

Summer Meeting

Tuesday - Aug 17, 2021

Convention Center, Brinkley, AR



(Black - Original Agenda; Green - Meeting Notes; Red - Action Items)

Meeting Theme: Desired Forest Conditions for Wildlife (DFCW)

Arrive & organize for Field Trip

Field Trip to Dagmar WMA DFCW treatment site visits & discussion:

- During stops at several BHW stands on the WMA, participants enjoyed presentations by Drew Green highlighting past DFCW treatments and related outcomes; site presentations were followed by great Q&A and discussion (see Appendix w/site trip map and participant pics)

Lunch (Sponsored by AR TNC & Walton Family Foundation)

Partner Updates

- Doug Osborne, U of A Monticello
 - Doug Osborne provided an update of the new Five Oaks Ag Education and Research Center. The Center was established as a partnership with George Dunklin, Five Oaks, University of Arkansas Division of Ag, and the University of Arkansas at Monticello ([Five Oaks Partnership](#)).
 - University of Arkansas at Monticello created a new Graduate Certificate in Waterfowl Habitat and Wetland Management. To date, the Five Oaks founded program has hired 4 graduate certificate students, 1 graduate assistantship, and 1 postdoc research associate. The mission is to provide hands-on management training for students and to advance the research of bottomland hardwoods and waterfowl. The Research Center can be made available to our conservation partners as we look for future opportunity to collaborate on regionally important research and management efforts. Please visit the website (www.fiveoaksrec.org) or reach out to the FoAgREC Director, Dr. Douglas Osborne (osborne@uamont.edu).
- Open Floor for Hot Updates

Working Group Updates

- Tri-State Conservation Partnership, Steve Brock/Ron Seiss
 - Outreach WG: near completion of 7 video series for WRE landowner wetland and forest mgmt; the WG plans to dvlp addt WRE mgmt videos in the future; also recently completed annual WRE new enrollment outreach – mailed info flyers to 6626 landowners in AR, LA & MS
 - Forest Mgmt WG: Planning to develop a non-commercial treatment guide for easement landowners; also plans for hosting a forest markets workshop for MS WRE landowners
 - Funding & Project Dvlpmnt: Awarded ~\$20M in FY21 for Tri-state WREP project, includes ~\$1M in partner match, will restore ~6K acres; Since 2015, MAV partners have received ~\$125M in WREP funds including ~\$5M in partner contributions with ~40K acres protected & restored; FY22 WREP proposal recently submitted, includes \$5M funding request targeting 1.5K acres restored
 - Coordination: Multiple actions targeted at improving awareness & relationship with ACEP/WRE national NRCS office staff, including joint virtual mtg w/Tri-C leadership; Plans are underway for a MAV field trip
 - Wetland Conservation Policy Coalition - ongoing policy planning, particularly planning for next FB

The mission of the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture is to function as the forum in which the private, state, federal conservation community develops a shared vision of bird conservation for the Lower Mississippi Valley region; cooperates in its implementation; and collaborates in its refinement.

- Working Ag Lands, Jason Milks (Chair)

- Looking ahead

- The WG met on Jul 8th for the fifth time in the past 10 months and continues to focus on developing strategies for improved working Ag lands collaboration and coordination in the MAV; Currently, WG partners are supporting AR TNC's ongoing work with Kellogg Foundation and Cargill, who are funding work with farmers to install irrigation pump timers to address MAV water quantity priorities; The timer projects also allow CDN partners to connect and build relationships with landowners/farmers which fosters additional working Ag conservation opportunities
- The WG also initiated discussions on planning the next Turn-row credibility workshop and is in the process of scheduling a fall meeting to dig deeper into workshop planning

- Opportunity to participate

- The WG is open and welcomes additional CDN member participation

Action: Please contact Milks or Brock if you would like to participate in the Working Ag Lands WG

MAV Forest Markets and Forest Certification - Jeremy Poirier, International Paper

- Poirier highlighted some key facts relating to IP, it's products and how market demands are changing production priorities:
 - IP is a world leader in renewable, fiber-based packaging, pulp and paper; 80K employees, in 24 countries, w/24K customers, HQ in Memphis
 - IP copy paper (i.e., uncoated freesheet) demand/production has consistently and significantly declined w/ever growing demand for corrugated packaging spurred by ecommerce; Vicksburg Mill uses mostly pine but does require some HDW pulp to make white exterior for corrugated boxes
 - Major market shifts in the region are influencing fiber demand i.e., Transfer of IP landownership to TIMO/REITs, Loss of ~3.6MM annual tons of hardwood pulp demand due to 3 MAV mill closures or mill production shifts, also hardwood lumber demand reduction due to sawmill closures, growing wood pellet industry, and aging logger and trucking work force; MS River levels and extended flooding is also impacting product availability for Vicksburg Mill
 - IP Customer Questions/Expectations: Customers want 'low-risk' to environment from suppliers, more transparency, forest certification for "proof of sustainability", climate friendly products, greater understanding of carbon impacts from product sources, also growing demand for lighter end products and use of more recycled products, as well interest in alternative fiber sources
- Poirier also highlighted the dichotomy between the industries forest "management experience and sound science" vs societal perspectives driven primarily by "emotion & belief" e.g., Industry: long-term sustainability and good forest mgmt = good habitat harvesting = degradation vs. Society View: timber cutting negatively impacts wildlife and is not part of carbon solution
- Key challenges: primary customer base is not US based; high quality websites and web-based outreach tools are not highly effective; the forestry community operates in too many silos and we all assume someone else is dealing with critical O&E; and harvesting trees is a difficult story to tell effectively through typical O&E methods and is coupled with innate perception that industry reps are biased
- Forest Certification: Highly accepted by IP customers; In the next 20 years it will likely be required to sell pulpwood; Poirier helps manage Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification program for IP; The program is free to approved landowners
- Key points: Not all paper mills are the same; Important for partners to build relationships with wood suppliers; Using trees for end products is a challenging message for much of public; IP customer expectations are changing rapidly; Certification may become a requirement to move pulpwood to the mill

Forest Bird Habitat Objectives & DFCWs: Two Sides of the Same Coin, Keith McKnight, Coord., LMVJV

- LMVJV partnership has an acknowledged and innate responsibility to work in support of priority forest breeding birds (FBB) in the MAV e.g., MAV is used by 11 forest birds w≥5% global pop., including 33% of all Prothonotary Warblers and 11% of all Swainson's; As part of its FBB focus, JV has been working for many years to address needs and objectives grounded in development of partnership-based of FBB [population-based](#) and [landscape-level](#) planning tools such as [Forest Area to Support Landbird Population Goals for the MAV](#), the [MAV Forest Breeding Landbird Population Goals & Quantitative Habitat](#)

[Objectives](#) (FBBPG/QHO), the [FBB Reforestation decision support model](#) and JV's DFCW document [Restoration, Management and Monitoring of Forest Resources in the MAV: Recommendations for Enhancing Wildlife Habitat](#)

- To achieve its identified forest habitat objectives, the JV focuses on a suite of forest restoration and mgmt strategies including support of targeted reforestation/afforestation, forest management and monitoring, as well forest protection
- As a key example, the JV recently updated its FBBPG/QHO (hyperlinked above) document, which identifies the need for an additional 1.73MM acres of reforestation to meet FBB habitat objectives
- All of these MAV forest planning and implementations objectives and strategies reflect the importance of the JV's DFCW guidelines i.e., the critical importance of forest configuration and structure to meet obj's
- Over the past year, the JV partnership has contracted two editors and established a technical working group to complete a needed update and revision to the original 2007 DFCW document; the technical working group is open to CDN participants interested in supporting the effort

Action: Please advise Jeff Denman (jbdenman2011@gmail.com) or Steve Brock (steve_c_brock@fws.gov) if you would like to participate in the DFCW Revision Technical Working Group

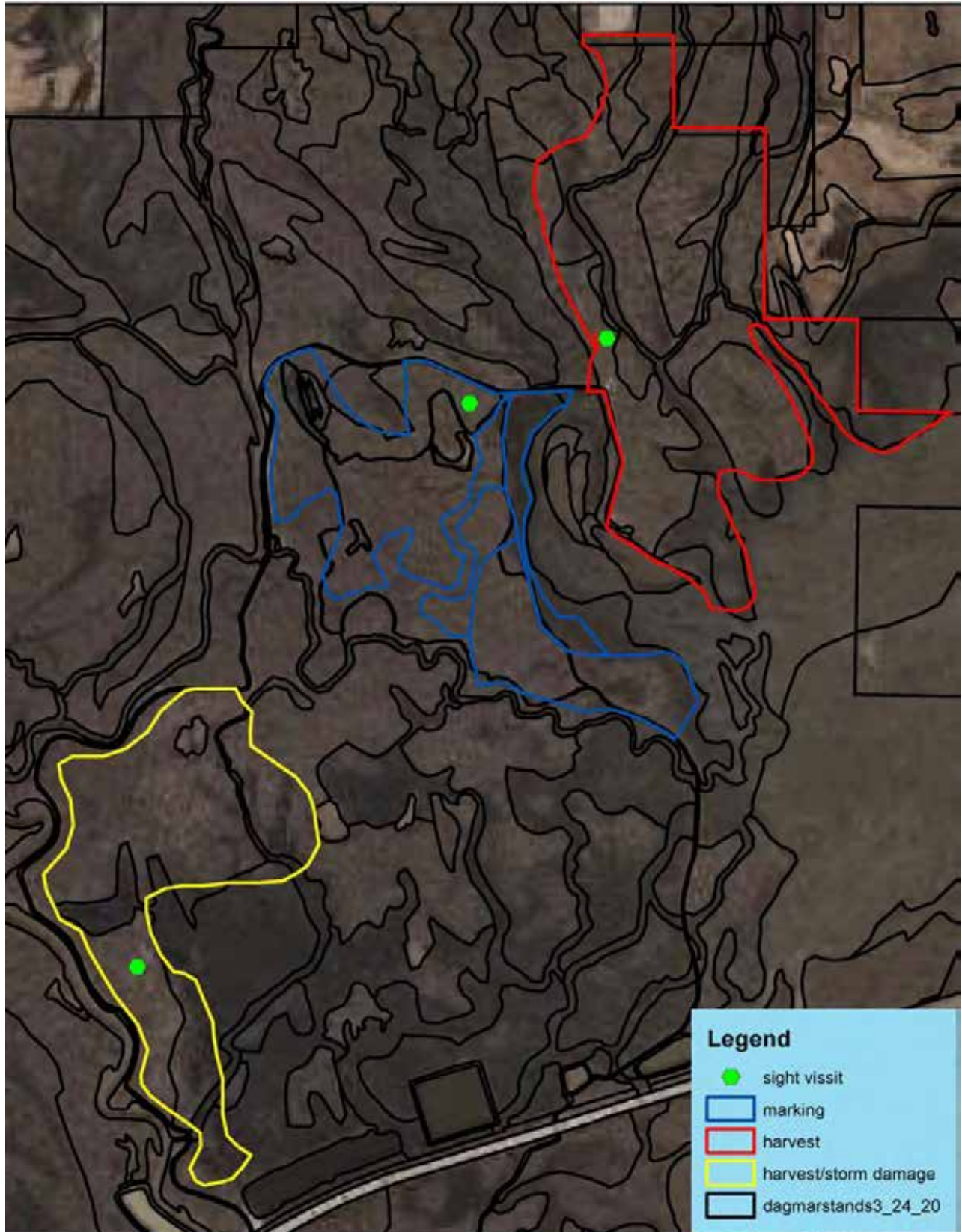
Project Spotlight: Fall Water Bird Habitat Use in the MS Delta, Jason Hoeksema, Univ. of Miss.

- It is estimated that more than 500,000 shorebirds of 27 species, move through the MS Delta each spring and fall migration; the region is critically important for these birds as a refueling stopover
- Historically, the Delta provided an abundance of shorebird habitat along the edges of fluctuating backwaters of the MS River and its tributaries; due to significant hydrologic alterations throughout the region most of the historic habitat has been lost
- A number of **Audubon WatchList/Priority Bird Species** regularly migrate through the Delta, such as the Semipalmated Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper, Western Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, and American Golden-Plover
- As part of its shorebird focused interest and mission, [Delta Wind Birds](#) is working to create stopover habitat in Ag working lands and protect existing natural stopover habitats within the MS Delta; Hoeksema working with EPA on a new farmer to farmer research project:
 - o Project based on utilizing tailwater on working Ag lands to create fall shorebird habitat on crop fields, without pumping groundwater
 - o The initial phase of the study was conducted from 2018 to 2020 in Sunflower Co., MS; it included three flooded and three unflooded harvested corn fields with focus on quantifying bird usage
 - o USDA hypothesized that holding surface water in fall has additional benefits, especially denitrification and sediment retention; In 2019 & 2020 the project collected data on denitrification, sediment runoff, bird & macroinvertebrate densities, as well as subsequent corn yields on study fields
 - o The initial results indicate that fall flooding in harvested fields benefited denitrification, improved sediment retention, improved soybean yield in the following crop season (4% increase in flooded vs unflooded fields) and an increase in shorebird use in flooded fields
- The study is now being extended to included
 - o 4 farms in the Sunflower River basin in MS
 - o 5 whole-field treatments including 1) control, 2) passive flood (boards only), 3) fall flood, 4) winter flood, 5) fall + winter flood
 - o 3 years evaluating corn/soybean rotation
- The expanded project will also look at:
 - o Effect of flood timing (fall vs. winter)
 - o Effect of crop rotation (corn vs. soy)
 - o Consistency among farms
 - o Effects on soil health
 - o Mechanism of any yield effects

Q&A

Wrap up & Adjourn - David Graves

Field Trip – Dagmar WMA





Attendees

David Graves, AGFC
Alice Weeks, AACD
Andrew Green, AGFC
Garrick Dugger, AGFC
Daniel Standley, NWTF
Kyle Ladham, ANHC
Jaron Metts(?)
Tabitha Holloway, AFD
Trey Franks, AFD
Katherine Allen, UAM
Katherine Cody, UAM
Cassandra Hug, UAM
Morgan Meader, QF
Allison Menefee, QF
Patrick Phillips, UAM
Brandon Bennett, UAM
Cole Howard, UAM
Starla Phelps, UAM
James Borland, UAM
Katie Hickle, UAM
Sid Munford, NWTF

Alyssa Minaue, UAM
Ethan Dittman, UAM
Emma Counce, Univ of MS
Jason Hoeksema, Univ of MS
Doug Osborne, UAM
Tucker Collins, AGFC
Jake Spears, DU
Bryan Ander(?), UAM
Giles Kelly, Wildlife MS
Matthew Sieja, FWS
Jeff Denman, Retired FWS
Brian Lockhart, Retired USFS
Bailey Knous, UAM
Keith McKnight, LMVJV
Tyler C, UAM
Mohammad Barauineh, UAM
Jason Milks, TNC
Jeremy Poirier, IP
Keith Weaver, FWS
Karen Rowe, AGFC

Meeting Notes

CDN Delta Ag Lands Working Group Virtual Planning Meeting Oct 20, 2021

Welcome and Objectives – Milks

- NRCS Working Ag Updates:

AR NRCS is part of a USDA pilot project for Climate Smart Ag and Forestry practices

- Includes 9 counties from priority watersheds
- What's offered:
 - Nutrient Management
 - Soil Health Practices
 - Irrigation Water Management
 - Green House Gases (GHG), including Methane
- Have flexibility to integrate and deliver at local level

NRCS is now actively filling vacant positions:

- Have filled 40 slots – primarily Soil Cons & Technicians
- Big need for training

Existing project updates

- Kellogg
- Cargill
 - Landowner flyers
 - Other activities

Initiate planning for next Turn-row Workshop

- Purpose/objectives of T-R Workshops
 - Agree on target audience
 - Who is Turn-row WS's designed for e.g., CDN members vs training for new staff
 - Need to provide bread & butter training but offer/incorporate innovative content also
 - Primary planning should be targeted for CDN members first
 - Turn-row WS's will always be open to additional (non-traditional CDN) participants
 - Update on LA/MS planning
 - Brock shared that LA/MS MAV CDN Working Ag WG has decided that instead of doing two-day WS's as in the past, it will shift to multiple one-day field training tours throughout year
 - WG discussed and agreed that the two-day Turn-row WS model is preferred
- Theme of next workshop
 - Review past workshop agenda's (Pg 2)
 - 2019 post-workshop questionnaire results (Pg 2)
 - Breakdown core topics of theme
 - Other?
 - Potential topics:
 - Past discussions relating to "Systems Approach"
 - Regenerative Ag
 - Is this topic better suited for full CDN membership meeting?
 - Lots to still learn on the subject and not sure enough content for workshop yet.
 - Whole Farm Planning
- Workshop Logistics:

- Location
 - Discussed 880 acre farm in Newport
 - Discovery Farms (Jennifer Jackson)
 - Best potential date(s)
 - Summer 2022
 - Funding
 - TNC may have access to private foundations with objective for training
 - When to initiate CDN outreach
- Next steps/Action Items
 - Set next WG planning meeting
 - Nail down Turn-row WS topic/exact location(s)/date

2017 & 2019 General Agenda's

Turn-row Credibility Workshop I	Turn-row Credibility Workshop II
Grand Prairie Center, Stuttgart / Date: Oct 2017	Location: Grateful Acres, Lonoke / Date: Aug 2019
✓ Advanced Ag Terminology – Jarrod Hardke (UA Ext)	✓ Groundwater Decline & AR Water Plan - Jim Battreal (ANRC)
✓ Conservation Planning Basics – Amanda Mathis	✓ Irrigation Water Management Primer - Charolette Bowie (NRCS)
✓ A Year in the Life of a Farmer – Peyton Daniel (Producer)	✓ Pipe Planner: Matt Lindsey (Delta Plastics)
✓ Agricultural Economics - An Overview of On-Farm Business Decisions and the Factors That Influence Them - Dean Bell (Farm Consultant)	✓ Utilizing the Discovery Farm Program to Promote Conservation - Lee Riley (UA Ext)
✓ Panel Discussion	✓ IWM & Conservation Planning - Kevin Cochran (NRCS)
	✓ IWM throughout the Year: A Producer's Perspective - Cathy Seidenstricker (Producer)
	✓ Panel Discussion
Day Two	Day Two
Field Stop 1, Bauman's Farm - CRP Planting Rates, Dates, Pest Pressure Field Stop 2, Hampton's Farm - Native Warm Season Grass Management, Whole Farm Conservation Management, Applied Irrigation Practices Field Stop 3, Seidenstricker's Farm Headquarters - Common Farm Implements, Irrigation Pit Development, Native Prairie Field Stop 4, Seidenstricker's ULM Farm - Active Conservation Planning, Opportunity for Workshop Participants, Economic Considerations for Conservation Planning	Field Stop 1, Morris Farm - Rice/Corn/Bean Irrigation Water Management, Flow meters, surge valves, soil moisture sensors, Irrigation reservoir and tailwater recovery, Advanced IWM using Alternate Wetting and Drying Field Stop 2, Bevis Farm - Corn/Bean rotation - incorporating soil health practices, No till, cover crops, soil water holding capacity Field Stop 3, Tour of Bayou Meto Control Structure

MAP 2019-2020 CONVENTIONAL FARMING

TOPIC: WORKING AG LANDS					
Turn-row Credibility Workshops:					
Conventional Farming	High	Medium	Low	None	
	10	9	7	1	
No/Minimum Till & Soil Health	High	Medium	Low	None	
	10	12	5		
Irrigation and Water Management	High	Medium	Low	None	
	11	13	3		
Farm Conservation Planning	High	Medium	Low	None	
	12	8	6	1	

Meeting Notes

AR MAV CDN Steering Committee

Arkansas ACD Off., Little Rock
Jan 20, 2022



(Black - Original Agenda; Green - Meeting Notes; Red - Action Items)

Participants: David Graves (Chair, AGFC), Ryan Diener (Vice-chair, QF), Amanda Mathis (NRCS), Bill Holimon (ANHC), Ron Seiss (TNC), Garrick Dugger (AGFC), Jeremy Everitts (NWTF), Jay Hitchcock (FWS), Jason Milks (TNC), Jake Spears (DU), Steve Brock (LMVJV)

- Goals:
- 1) CDN activities review/debrief & objectives
 - 2) Discuss winter membership meeting objectives/themes
 - 3) Formulate winter meeting agenda and logistics

Welcome and Objectives - Graves

- Welcome (Graves) – Highest priority is to address winter membership meeting planning; we'd hoped to get the process started in Dec but since forced to postpone, we need to address objectives and work to accomplish core meeting planning and then get save-the-date out ASAP

Debrief on recent activities - Brock

- Summer Meeting – Meeting was very successful; Managed to squeeze it in before Covid restrictions began re-intensifying; had a great turnout with 42 attendees; the DFCW field trip and related meeting presentations were effective at meeting our CDN goals for the subject
- Delta Ag Lands WG – Has met 5 times over the past 8+ months; In addition to fostering some positive collaboration on working lands projects (particularly via AR TNC project funding), is now focusing specifically on planning the next Turn-row Credibility Workshop; WG Mtg Feb 3
- Tri-State Conservation Partnership – The long-term effort to develop 7 WRE Mgmt. videos for landowners is now complete; AR, LA & MS State NRCS offices are now mailing the videos on thumb drives, along with a professionally designed and printed video information card, to all easement owners in each state; Access to the videos is now posted on the [JV website](#)
- Other?

Winter Membership Meeting Planning:

- **Date**
 - Date: Generally first two weeks of Feb
 - Need to identify date and send save-the-date ASAP
Committee agreed on Mar 8 for the projected meeting date; dependent on scheduling meeting site and presenters
- **Meeting Topic/Theme**
 - Consider potential/next topic(s)
 - Farm/Forest Carbon
 - Public Lands?
 - Other potential presentations
 - Winter Water?
 - Other?

After a productive exchange, vetting what the committee knows and mostly does not know about emerging farm & forest carbon markets, there was agreement to pursue these as a meeting theme for Mar 8

- 1) Opening speaker to highlight Carbon Sequestration purpose/goals/objective – seeking to give CDN members a general foundation for what it is, isn't and the track it's headed down nationally

Action Item: **Jake** will reach out to DU's new Ecosystem Services staff member (@ Memphis HQ) to discuss the objective and ask if she can/will deliver

- 2) **Farm Carbon**: Agreed we'd start with outreach to **Indigo** to determine if someone on their staff could deliver a general overview. Will also check into **Adam Chappell's** involvement with Indigo. (Note related hyperlinks w/each)

Action Item: **Mathis** will make Indigo and Chappell inquiries

- 3) **Forest Carbon**: Per Diener's experience with the topic, we will coordinate with Jeff Denman (working with NCX) and Tim White (working with NativState) to assess which carbon group may be best and willing to speak to the CDN

Action Items: **Diener** will coordinate with key QF staff member to reach out to Tim White to gather Intel

: **Brock** will reach out to Denman for same (**Status: completed, Denman will participate**)

: **Diener/Brock** will compare notes and follow up

- 4) **Cooperative Extension**: Multiple inquiries are being made to determine if AR Coop Ext has a staff professional responsible for this topic

Action Item: For those that are doing outreach to Coop Ext, please share your findings with the group (**Status: Coop Ext contacts did not bear fruit wrt any staff carbon expertise**)

• **Field Trip?**

- Relevance of upcoming Stewards Guild workshop to our planning?
- **Past**: [most recent first] 1) DFCW Dagmar WMA/Aug 2021, 2) Choctaw Island WMA/Oct 2018, 3) CRP/Dark Corner/Jul 2018, 4) Prairie Restoration/Jun 2017, 5) Proctor Tire/Dec 2015, 6) Choctaw Is. WMA/Dec 2014, 7) Cache River Restoration/Mar 2013
- For future planning - GTR work, other?
Committee agreed that since a field trip was conducted as part of the August membership meeting, none was warranted for the March meeting

• **Meeting Location**

- Location could be theme and/or field trip driven
- Past In-person Meetings (most recent first): 1) Brinkley, 2) DeValls Bluff, 3) McGehee, 4) Cook's Lake, 5) Brinkley, 6) White River, 7) Stuttgart, 8) Little Rock, 9) Jonesboro, 10) Hazen, 11) Stuttgart, 12) Tillar, 13) Pineville, 14) Brinkley, 15) Cooks Lake, 16) Clarendon, 17) Brinkley [Detailed summary of past meetings below]
Committee discussed Stuttgart and Loanoke as generally central potential meeting sites and determined to check availability Rice Research & Extension Center in Stuttgart
Action: **Hitchcock** will reach out to contacts at the Rice Research & Extension Center in Stuttgart wrt meeting room availability and cost (**Status: Facility reserved Mar 8**)
: Nail down lunch funding and catering

• **Organizational Spotlight**

- Who? [See list of previous on pg 3]
- Possibilities: FWS/Cache Rvr NWR - overview, AFC, ANRC, AGFC/Programmatic (i.e., waterfowl, deer, turkey, non-game), USFS, NRCS, MRLA

• **Project Spotlight?**

- MRT Project Update - Giles Kelly
- AGFC RICE Update
- Review previous planning list (below)

Neither an Organizational or Project Spotlight possibility were discussed in the meeting

Action: These will be tabled and further considered if needed for the final agenda

- **Working Group Updates**

- Delta Ag Lands WG: New Chair/Update current planning
- Tri-state Conservation Partnership

Updates for both WG's will be included in meeting agenda

Action: Confirm commitment from Milks and Seiss, respectively

- **Other Updates**

- Forest Stewards Guild Workshop – Did not discuss in SC meeting
- Regular NRCS Update – Will also plan to include in meeting agenda
- CWD Update – Table until next SC planning meeting
- Open floor for brief high-level updates from CDN partners
- Other?

Action: Need to get update on Stewards Guild workshop and share in mtg as appropriate
: Confirm Mathis availability for NRCS Update

Appendix

Organization Spotlights:

- Aug 2021: None
- Feb 2021: None
- Feb 2020: None
- Oct 2019: Audubon (Scheiman)
- Feb 2019: TNC (Milks)
- Summer 2018: Quail Forever (Diener)
- Winter 2017/18: National Wild Turkey Federation (Everitts)
- Summer 2017: Dale Bumpers White River NWR (Hitchcock)
- Winter 2016/2017 AR Natural Heritage Commission (Holimon)
- Spring 2016: AGFC Private Lands (Groves)
- Fall 2015: Ducks Unlimited (Callicutt)
- Spring 2015: AR PFW Program (Krystofik)
- Some Potentials:
 - o State Agency/Programs: Waterfowl (Naylor); WMA Management; Private Lands; Turkey; Forestry
 - o Extension Service
 - o Federal: NRCS Programs - Easements, Other Programs; FSA; Ecological Services; Refuges (White Rvr, Cache, Felsenthal); US Forest Service
 - o NGO's: TNC; Audubon, Five Oaks Ag Education and Research Center

Project Spotlights:

- Aug 2021: Fall Water Bird Habitat Use in the MS Delta, Jason Hoeksema, Univ. of Miss.
- Feb 2021: AGFC WRICE & GTR Restoration (Luke Naylor); AR-LA CDN RCPP (Bill Bartush); NRCS NWTF WRE Project (Sid Munford); AR TNC/Kellogg Partnership (Jason Milks)
- Feb 2020: APHIS/NRCS Feral Swine Eradication & Control Pilot Prog. (Robert Byrd)
- Oct 2019: White River NWR Habitat Development/Mgmt on "The Farm" (Hitchcock)
- Feb 2019: AGFC/Waterfowl Rice Incentive Conservation Enhancement Program (Graves)

List of Potential/Future Project Spotlights Topics:

- Monarch & Pollinator Habitat (Deiner)
- NFWF/Wetland Rehab (Spears recommends update for fall/winter 2022)
- NFWF/Northern Cache River - Irrigation Efficiency (Milks)
- Active Floodplain Easement Program efforts (Mathis)
- TNC Flood Team Update
- AR Forestry Association - Forest Assessment

Past Meetings:

- Summer 2021 (Aug/Brinkley): Theme: Desired Forest Conditions for Wildlife (DFCW); **Field Trip**: Dagmar WMA; MAV Forest Markets and Forest Certification (Jeremy Poirier, IP); Forest Bird Habitat Objectives & DFCWs: Two Sides of the Same Coin (McKnight)
- Winter 2021 (Feb/Zoom Mtg): Theme - CDN Reboot & Partnership Update; Project Updates: AGFC WRICE Program & Green Tree Reservoir Restoration Project (Naylor); AR-LA CDN Open Pine - RCPP Partnership (Bartush); NRCS/NWTF WRE Project Update (Munford); AR TNC/Kellogg Partnership (Milks)
- Summer 2020: Themes - CDN Overview and DFCW
Aug 6 (Zoom): CDN's Form & Function, Keith McKnight
Sep 26 (Zoom): DFCW Overview, Duck Locascio; DFCW Applied - Private Lands, Jeff Denman; Public Lands, Andrew Green; NRCS, Randy Childress
- Winter 2020 (Feb/DeValls Bluff, TNC): Theme - *Quail, Monarchs & Native Plant Management in the MAV*; Native Seed, Monarch Partnership and Grasslands Management presentations; DFCW overview and discussion
- Summer 2019 (Oct/McGehee, Circuit Clerk Off): Theme - *Managing Wetlands for Waterbirds*; Marshbird Habitat Restoration & Mapping Emergent Wetlands (AGFC); **Field Trip**: Choctaw Island WMA - Wetland Habitat Management for King Rail, Wading Birds and Shorebirds
- Winter 2019 (Feb/Cooks Lake): Theme - *Invasive Fauna - Addressing Fish & Swine in Arkansas*; Fish: Snakehead and Asian Carp; Feral Swine: AGFC, NRCS, APHIS Program overviews; all Sec of Ag; **Onsite field demonstration** of remotely controlled hog trap
- Summer 2018 (Jul/Brinkley Conv Ctr): Theme - *Enhancement of BHW Plantations and Wetlands in the Delta*; Treatment Decisions for BHW Plantations (Dupuy), **Field Trip**: Wetland Restoration Planning Tools (Foti); CRP Plantation & Dark Corner
- Winter 2017/18 (Jan/White River NWR, St Charles): Waterfowl Theme - *DU Prvt Lands Study* (Callicutt), White-fronted Goose Movements (E. Massey), AGFC GTR Mgmt Plan (Naylor), MSU Mallard Telemetry Study Highlights (Callicutt)
- Summer 2017 (June/Stuttgart): Grand Prairie Restoration (Holimon); Bobwhite Quail Initiative (Asher); Revised Delivery Png Tool (Elliott); AR County Quail Work (Groves); **Field Trip**: Stuttgart Airport Prairie Restoration
- Winter 2016/2017 (January/Little Rock): Turn-row Credibility WS (Brock); NRCS New CSP (Mathis); MAV Infrastructure presentations: Greene Co unpaved rds (Knighten); Energy dvlp overview (Inebit); 3 Rvrs Study (Phillips); 2017 WREP Proj (Milks)
- Summer 2016 (June/Jonesboro): WRP Forest Mgmt Doc(Brock); AGFC WQ & Wildl (Cox); TNC Working Lands, WQ & Wildl - Departee Ck (Milks)
- Fall 2015 (Dec/Hazen): WRP Reclamation (Groves); **Field Trip**: Proctor Tire Hydrology Restoration (Milks)
- Spring 2015 (May/Stuttgart): MAV Hydrology & For Health (Keim/Milks); Farm Economics (UA Coop Ext)
- Fall 2014 (Dec, Tillar) - Cache Rvr NWR Forest Mgmt; State Water Plan; **Field Trip**: Choctaw Island WMA Wetland Habitat Restoration
- Summer 2014 (Jun, Pineville) - Project List Planning Meeting
- Summer 2014 (Jul, Brinkley): 2014 Farm Bill Update; Ducks Unlimited AR Rice Program; Overview of recent project planning mtg
- Fall 2013 (Dec, Cooks Lake) - Gulf BP Settlement Funds; Various Project Updates - Cypert Farm Acq; Hydro Restoration Lower Cache River; WRP/CRP Hardwood Plantation Evaluation; Bayou Bartholomew Alliance - Landscape; Wapanocca MRBI
- Spring 2013 (Mar, Clarendon): CDN Project updates; Project prioritization protocol; White River Blueways; **Field Trip** - Lower Cache River restoration project
- Fall 2012 (Aug, Stuttgart): Overview Draft DPT MapBook; Wapanocca MRBI Update; WREP - Cache River and Bayou DeView; Boeuf River MRBI; Review of CDN Strategic Proj Planning List; Ranking Exercise To Identify Immediate Priorities
- Spring 2012 (Mar, Mayflower): New Projects/Ideas; Final draft of Delivery Png Tool; Development of Proj Ranking Factors; Applying Partner Opportunities: USFWS PFW Funding Opportunities; WFF Grant Opportunities; NRCS Programs Funding Opportunities

Meeting Notes

Delta Ag Lands Working Group

Virtual Planning Meeting

Feb 3, 2022 – 10:00 a.m.

Participants: Jason Milks, David Graves, Garrick Dugger, Jake Spears, Steve Brock, Amanda Mathis, Alice Weeks, Willard Ryland, Breegan Andersen, Jay Hitchcock

Welcome and Objectives – Milks

- Dugger advised that he has asked Jason Jackson to fill his position on the WG

Existing project updates

- Any important updates on existing projects
- Any new project opportunities?
 - WRice - had a great year with ~4K acres under contract w/40 fields available for hunting most weekends during the season; received ~300 applications per weekend and 500 applications last weekend of season; Also strong landowner interest, AGFC turned away ~8K addt acres of requests
 - Next season, AGFC will also be receiving EQIP dollars via NFWF that will be used to increase fall flooding to ~10K acres; EQIP funding provided for next 3 years; The addt EQIP funded acres will not be available for hunting
 - KKAC - Investing significant work toward outreach to Historically Underserved Producers; awaiting results from this year's WRE/WREP applications submitted/supported by KKAC outreach work

Overview of Key Outcomes from Last Meeting

- Target time frame to host is summer 2022
- Agreed purpose/objectives of T-R Workshops
 - Should be bread & butter working Ag training also w/innovative content
 - Targeted for CDN members first, but welcoming other cons professionals as feasible
 - o NRCS has 40 to 60 new entry level staff that would benefit from Turn-row training
- Potential workshop themes discussed
 - Systems Approach
 - Regenerative Ag: Topic may be better for full membership mtg; also discussed whether there is enough material on the topic for a two-day WS
 - Whole Farm Planning
- Potential Locations for Workshop
 - 880 acres farm in Newport
 - Discovery Farms (Jennifer Jackson)
 - o Hitchcock shared that he has reached out to a refuge farmer (Michael Oxner); the Farmer works in the Bald Knob/New Port area with refuge manager Paul Province; farmer is willing to speak in a workshop
- Next steps/Action Items
 - Brock will work with Milks to share out Doodle Poll for Mar 14 to 24 window to set next Working Group meeting
 - Next meeting will focus specifically on identifying highest priority training topics and crafting an agenda outline; then identifying best training location and date for the workshop

Workshop Agenda

- Target Date
- Specific Theme
 - Breakdown list of topics/presentations/field stops
 - Day 1 - Classroom
 - Day 2 - Field
- Location
- Logistics
 - Hotel
 - Food
 - Transportation
- Other?

2017 & 2019 General Agenda's

Turn-row Credibility Workshop I	Turn-row Credibility Workshop II
Grand Prairie Center, Stuttgart / Date: Oct 2017	Location: Grateful Acres, Lonoke / Date: Aug 2019
✓ Advanced Ag Terminology – Jarrod Hardke (UA Ext)	✓ Groundwater Decline & AR Water Plan - Jim Battreal (ANRC)
✓ Conservation Planning Basics – Amanda Mathis	✓ Irrigation Water Management Primer - Charolette Bowie (NRCS)
✓ A Year in the Life of a Farmer – Peyton Daniel (Producer)	✓ Pipe Planner: Matt Lindsey (Delta Plastics)
✓ Agricultural Economics - An Overview of On-Farm Business Decisions and the Factors That Influence Them - Dean Bell (Farm Consultant)	✓ Utilizing the Discovery Farm Program to Promote Conservation - Lee Riley (UA Ext)
✓ Panel Discussion	✓ IWM & Conservation Planning - Kevin Cochran (NRCS)
	✓ IWM throughout the Year: A Producer's Perspective - Cathy Seidenstricker (Producer)
	✓ Panel Discussion
Day Two	Day Two
Field Stop 1, Bauman's Farm - CRP Planting Rates, Dates, Pest Pressure Field Stop 2, Hampton's Farm - Native Warm Season Grass Management, Whole Farm Conservation Management, Applied Irrigation Practices Field Stop 3, Seidenstricker's Farm Headquarters - Common Farm Implements, Irrigation Pit Development, Native Prairie Field Stop 4, Seidenstricker's ULM Farm - Active Conservation Planning, Opportunity for Workshop Participants, Economic Considerations for Conservation Planning	Field Stop 1, Morris Farm - Rice/Corn/Bean Irrigation Water Management, Flow meters, surge valves, soil moisture sensors, Irrigation reservoir and tailwater recovery, Advanced IWM using Alternate Wetting and Drying Field Stop 2, Bevis Farm - Corn/Bean rotation - incorporating soil health practices, No till, cover crops, soil water holding capacity Field Stop 3, Tour of Bayou Meto Control Structure

MAR 2019 AR MAV CDN Membership Survey

TOPIC: WORKING AG LANDS					
Turn-row Credibility Workshops:					
Conventional Farming	High	Medium	Low	None	
	10	9	7	1	
No/Minimum Till & Soil Health	High	Medium	Low	None	
	10	12	5		
Irrigation and Water Management	High	Medium	Low	None	
	11	13	3		
Farm Conservation Planning	High	Medium	Low	None	
	12	8	6	1	

General Meeting Notes

Arkansas MAV CDN

Winter Meeting

Tuesday - Mar 8, 2022

Rice Research & Extension Center,

AR Agricultural Experiment Station

2900 AR-130, Stuttgart

Meeting Videos Posted to JV Website: <https://www.lmvjv.org/ar-mav-meetings>

Meeting Theme: Forest Carbon

- 9:30-9:45 Welcome - David Graves (Chair)
- 9:45-10:15 Working Group Update & Partner Highlights
- Delta Ag Lands Working Group - Jason Milks (Chair)
 - NRCS Current Highlights - Amanda Mathis (NRCS)
 - Open Mic: Hot Updates from Other CDN Partners
- 10:15-11:00 Forest Carbon & Offsets: The Basics, Ellen Herbert, PhD
(Ecological Services Scientist, DU)
- 11:00-11:30 Project Spotlight: Markets for Floodplain Reforestation in the Delta, Jason Milks (TNC)
- 11:30-12:30 Lunch (Sponsored by AR TNC & Walton Family Foundation)
- 12:30-1:00 Forest Carbon Programs & NativState, Tim White (Consultant Forester, NativState)
- 1:30-2:00 NCX - The Data-Driven Forest Carbon Marketplace, Alex Macintosh
(Director of U.S. Origination)
- 2:00-2:15 Carbon Contracts - Working with AR Landowners, Jeff Denman (Consultant Forester)
- 2:15-3:00 Speaker Panel - Question & Answer Session
- 3:00 Wrap up & Adjourn - David Graves



Participant List
AR MAV CDN Membership Meeting
March 8, 2022

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Email</u>
David Graves	AGFC	david.graves@agfc.ar.gov
Keith McKnight	LMVJV	steven_mcknight@fws.gov
Andrew Green	AGFC	andrew.green@agfc.ar.gov
Michael Laure	NativState	jmlaure@gmail.com
Tucker Collins	AGFC	james.collins@agfc.ar.gov
Jake Spears	DU	jspears@ducks.org
Randy Childress	NRCS	randy.childress@usda.gov
Amanda Mathis	NRCS	amanda.mathis@usda.gov
Tim White	Golden Oak Forestry	tim@goldenoakforestry.com
Jen Sheehan	AGFC	Jennifer.sheehan@agfc.ar.gov
Breegan Andersen	TNC	breegan.andersen@tnc.org
Robby Buffington	NativState	rbuffington@nativstate.com
Robert Stainton	NativState	robert@nativstate.com
Stuart Allen	NativState	stuart@nativstate.com
John Hollmann	NativState	jhollmann@nativstate.com
Lucas Rougeau	NativState	lrougeau@nativstate.com
Stacy Kirk	NativState	kirkfarm@yahoo.com
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Jeff Denman	Denman Co	jbdenman2011@gmail.com
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Brian Cockrell	Forestry Division	briancockrell77@yahoo.com
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Willard Ryland	KKAC Org	willardryland65@gmail.com
Andy Cameron	NativState	acameron@nativstate.com
Garrick Dugger	AGFC	garrick.dugger@agfc.ar.gov
Sherry Pfaffenberger	NRCS	sherry.pfaffenberger@usda.gov
Brooks Morehart	NRCS	brooks.morehart@usda.gov
Morgan Meador	QF	mmeador@quailforever.org
Alison Menefee	QF	amenefee@quailforever.org

Jason Milks	TNC	jmilks@tnc.org
Roger Manguam	AGFC	roger.manguam@agfc.ar.gov
Marshall Handcock	NRCS	marshall.handcock@usda.gov
Ellen Herbert	DU	eherbert@ducks.org
Alex Macintosh	NCX	alex@ncx.com
Kenny Nalley	NativState	Kenny.nalley@yahoo.com
Robert Floyd	Forestry Division	robert.floyd@agriculture.arkansas.gov
John Pressgrove	Forestry Division	john.pressgrove@agriculture.arkansas.gov
Gwen Handcock	NRCS	gwen.handcock@usda.gov
Doug Akin	NRCS	douglas.akin@usda.gov

Virtual Participants

Alice Weeks	ACD
Beth Kadwell	NRCS
Bryce Burke	NRCS
Daniel Standley	NWTF
Jeremy Everitts	NWTF
Ron Seiss	TNC
Tate Wents	ADA
Ryan Diener	QF
Lauren Seal	

Meeting Notes

Delta Ag Lands Working Group

Virtual Planning Meeting

Mar 15, 2022 - 1:30 p.m.

Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83362876547?pwd=TjRJRT3NEaVBSWo4ZXhUcVQvR3BKUT09>

Participants: Jason Milks, David Graves, Jason Jackson, Jake Spears, Steve Brock, Amanda Mathis, Alice Weeks, Willard Ryland, Breegan Andersen, Jay Hitchcock

-
- Goals:
- 1) Briefly highlight/coordinate on possible Turn-row Credibility WS Objectives
 - 2) Clearly identify specific WS topics
 - 3) Select best location(s) to satisfy selected topics & dates
 - 4) Consider Logistic
 - 5) Define and assign action items
-

Welcome and Objectives – Brock

- Reviewed outcomes from previous meeting
- Outlined goals for meeting – really need to focus specifically on Turn-row WS goals and logistics

Potential objectives previously discusses for workshop

- Will be two-day workshop (1 day classroom & 1 day field)
- May want to focus on a “Systems Approach” to Working Ag
 - Whole Farm Planning
- Regenerative Ag may be better for CDN membership meeting
- Some potential site options might be farm in Newport and/or Discovery Farms
- See Page 2 for past WS agenda’s

Ideas and Suggestions:

- Ryland - Could consider Ag Carbon as a potential topic
 - Greenway Equipment (Newport) might be good central site for field trip
- Mathis - Reached out to Area Cons for input; with 70+ new employees, almost any Working Ag topic(s) would benefit new staff; some potential topics raised by Area Cons include Climate Smart Ag, Soil Health, Resource Inventory Assessment, Basic Farmer Jargon, Farm Equipment
 - Also, last workshop didn’t clearly make waterfowl/water management connection, so could be good to address these as many staff do not have a clear understanding of the why’s of winter water management as EQIP/CSP practices; also could utilize a VPA program participant to explain their involvement and its benefit to overall farm mgmt
 - Must make certain we keep/integrate farmers perspective
- Graves - Joint agreement that we should plan WS for benefit of CDN members first and foremost and invite/include other conservation prof’s (who will also benefit)
- Buck - Lacy Farms may be good location to highlight water management i.e., using oxbow as water source and/or inclusion of dirty corners away from irrigation pivots
 - Raft Creeks Bottom WMA has done a great deal of water management enhancements and could be good place to demonstrate a variety of practices
- Brock - Ag Carbon is excellent topic but we may want to hold it for the Fall full membership mtg
 - Instead of annual farm planning, we could narrow down to a topic like “After the Harvest” and address both farmer planning perspective and fall/winter water mgmt

- Milks - Could have farmer(s) offer their perspectives on and contrast farm field/water management and water management for wildlife
- Other - Could include a topic similar to “Year in the Life of a Farmer” e.g., by Michael Oxner
 - Site visits highlighting Public & Private farm management challenges (Note: concern has been raised about the future of coop farming on NWR’s and whether it will have real value as a Turn-row topic)
 - Keith Scoggins may good for regenerative Ag topic

Develop proposed WS agenda

- Finalize Specific WS Theme & Topics: What message(s) do we most want to convey to participants
 - Some suggestions:
 - After the Harvest
 - Off Season Farm Management Planning and Implementation
 - Winter Farm Planning & Management Practices
 - Fall Farm Management – Cover Crops vs Winter Water
- Location: What’s best MAV sites to convey theme/topics
- Agenda Breakdown:
 - List of topics/presentations/field stops for
 1. Day 1 - Classroom
 2. Day 2 - Field
- Target Dates?
 - Some suggested date windows
 - Last two weeks of Aug or 1rst two weeks of Sep
 - Post Harvest: Late-Oct to Mid-Nov
- Logistics
 - Hotel
 - Food
 - Transportation
- Other?

Actions & Next Working Group Meeting?

- Brock will share out Doodle Poll to schedule the next meeting, then lock it in
- Will also develop draft spreadsheet for each member to offer workshop topic ideas; will consolidate responses in preparation for next meeting

Agenda

Delta Ag Lands Working Group

Virtual Planning Meeting

Apr 7, 2022 - 2:30 p.m.

Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81254645660?pwd=bHdnM2hTVmJ4Z212U0dWZ3g5ZlVGUT09>

Working Group: Jason Milks, David Graves, Jason Jackson, Jake Spears, Steve Brock, Amanda Mathis, Alice Weeks, Emily Wood, Willard Ryland, Breegan Andersen, Bubba Groves, Jay Hitchcock

-
- Goals:
- 1) Outcomes from last meeting
 - 2) Review specific WG input
 - 3) Developed workshop agenda details
 - 4) Discuss/plan workshop site visit
-

Review outcomes and objectives addressed from last meeting - Milks

- Generally agreed theme: Post-harvest farm management & planning
 - Fall/winter objectives, priorities and practices

Develop Workshop agenda

- Results of working group input to topics/sub-topics/speakers/sites
 - Review combined spreadsheet
- Finalize specific WS theme
- Breakdown topics, sub-topics and agenda – Classroom and Field Day
 - Speakers?
- Locations – Classroom and field stops
 - WG planning site visits/tour
- Target Date(s)
- Other Logistics
 - Hotel
 - Food
 - Transportation
- Other?

Next Working Group Meeting?

2017 & 2019 General Agenda's

Turn-row Credibility Workshop I	Turn-row Credibility Workshop II
Grand Prairie Center, Stuttgart / Date: Oct 2017	Location: Grateful Acres, Lonoke / Date: Aug 2019
✓ Advanced Ag Terminology – Jarrod Hardke (UA Ext)	✓ Groundwater Decline & AR Water Plan - Jim Battreal (ANRC)
✓ Conservation Planning Basics – Amanda Mathis	✓ Irrigation Water Management Primer - Charolette Bowie (NRCS)
✓ A Year in the Life of a Farmer – Peyton Daniel (Producer)	✓ Pipe Planner: Matt Lindsey (Delta Plastics)
✓ Agricultural Economics - An Overview of On-Farm Business Decisions and the Factors That Influence Them - Dean Bell (Farm Consultant)	✓ Utilizing the Discovery Farm Program to Promote Conservation - Lee Riley (UA Ext)
✓ Panel Discussion	✓ IWM & Conservation Planning - Kevin Cochran (NRCS)
	✓ IWM throughout the Year: A Producer's Perspective - Cathy Seidenstricker (Producer)
	✓ Panel Discussion
Day Two	Day Two
<p>Field Stop 1, Bauman's Farm - <i>CRP Planting Rates, Dates, Pest Pressure</i></p> <p>Field Stop 2, Hampton's Farm - <i>Native Warm Season Grass Management, Whole Farm Conservation Management, Applied Irrigation Practices</i></p> <p>Field Stop 3, Seidenstricker's Farm Headquarters - <i>Common Farm Implements, Irrigation Pit Development, Native Prairie</i></p> <p>Field Stop 4, Seidenstricker's ULM Farm - <i>Active Conservation Planning, Opportunity for Workshop Participants, Economic Considerations for Conservation Planning</i></p>	<p>Field Stop 1, Morris Farm - <i>Rice/Corn/Bean Irrigation Water Management, Flow meters, surge values, soil moisture sensors, Irrigation reservoir and tailwater recovery, Advanced IWM using Alternate Wetting and Drying</i></p> <p>Field Stop 2, Bevis Farm - <i>Corn/Bean rotation - incorporating soil health practices, No till, cover crops, soil water holding capacity</i></p> <p>Field Stop 3, Tour of Bayou Meto Control Structure</p>

Louisiana-Mississippi CDN

LA/MS MAV Conservation Delivery Network 2021-22 Annual Report

LMVJV Management Board Spring Meeting May 11, 2022

Contents

	<u>Page</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spring Steering Committee Meeting - Jun 9, 2021 1 Core Agenda Items: Review previous years CDN accomplishments : Summer Membership Meeting Planning : Identify theme, core topics and agenda	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summer Membership Meeting - Jul 29, 2021 4 Theme: Desired Forest Conditions for Wildlife Agenda Items: Partner Spotlight – Quail Forever, Austin Klais : Partner & Working Group Updates : MAV Forest Markets and Forest Certification - Jeremy Poirier, IP : DFCW & BHW Plantation Management - Duck Locascio, LDWF : Delivering DFCW on Private Lands - Jeff Denman, Forest Consultant : Panel Question and Answer - Poirier, Locascio, Denman	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working Ag Lands Working Group – Oct 6, 2021 7 Core Agenda Items: Review history and purpose of WG : Address fundamental objectives and goals : Set goals for next Turn-row Credibility Workshop	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fall Steering Committee Planning/Virtual – Oct 13, 2021 10 Core Agenda Items: Review and Update relevant action items : Winter membership meeting planning : Identify theme, core topics and agenda	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Winter Membership Meeting – Dec 8, 2021 13 Theme: Advancing Fall Flooding Agenda Items: Partner Spotlight - Delta Wind Birds, Jason Hoeksema (Univ of Miss) : Partner & Working Group Updates : Project Spotlight – WLFW/LA Shore Birds, Karis Ritenour (Manomet) : Waterfowl RICE, Luke Naylor (AGFC) : Fall Water Bird Habitat Use in the MS Delta, Jason Hoeksema : Winter Flooding Effects on Soil Health and Pathogens in Rice Systems, Lexi Firth, (MSU/REACH)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working Ag Lands Working Group – Jan 12, 2022 19 Core Agenda Items: Review outcomes and action items from previous meeting : Discuss possibility of developing proposed CSP Enhancement : Initiate detailed planning for next Turn-row Credibility Workshop	

- **Working Ag Lands Working Group – Feb 14, 2022** **23**
 - Core Agenda Items: Review outcomes and action items from previous meeting
 - : Update on work of CSP Enhancement sub-committee
 - : Continued formulating objectives for Turn-row Credibility Field Days

- **Working Ag Lands Working Group – Mar 24, 2022** **24**
 - Core Agenda Items: Reviewed draft CSP Enhancement
 - : Continued planning for fall Turn-row Fields Days in LA and MS

Meeting Notes

LA/MS MAV CDN Steering Committee

Omega, LA

June 9, 2021 - 9:30 a.m.

Participants: David Breithaupt (Chair/LDWF), Houston Havens (Vice-chair/MDWFP), Kevin Nelms (NRCS MS), Dustin Farmer (NRCS LA), Jim Bergan (TNC LA), Darrin Hardesty (MDWFP), John Hanks (LDWF), Erin Cox (Refuges, LA), Seth Swafford (Refuges, MS), Todd Sewell (USFS - Delta NF), Michael McVay (DU), Ron Seiss (MAV TNC), Steve Brock (LMJVJ), Austin Klais (QF), Terry Johnston

(Black - Original Agenda; Green - Meeting Notes; Red - Action Items)

- Goals:**
- 1) Review/Update planning and activities over the previous year
 - 2) Discuss where we are and potential opportunities for the CDN post-Covid
 - 3) Plan summer membership meeting

Welcome & Call Objectives

- Welcome (Breithaupt)

Topics

- Highlight previous years planning and CDN activities (see Past Meetings summary)
 - May, 2020 SC meeting: First big Covid discussion; plans to shift CDN focus to DFCW
 - Jul, 2020 Membership: First one-hour Zoom webinar; broad DFCW overview (Locascio); FSG Workshop objective
 - Sep, 2020 SC meeting: Decision to move from Dec to Feb
 - Feb, 2020 Membership: JV Bird Plan/DFCW & MRT WRE Project Intro
- Working Groups: Status/Planning/What's Ahead
 - Working Ag Lands
 - Should we reconvene the WG?
 - What are additional working Ag educational opportunities for Turn-row WS?
 - ✓ Addressed whether the CDN should accept responsibility to make Turn-row a primary training tool for new NRCS employees
 - Affirmed that Turn-row WS's are for benefit of CDN membership and other NRCS training benefits are secondary
 - ✓ Who is currently on the WG?
 - Agreed to:
 - ✓ Identify who is currently on the WG and coordinate group to identify potential new Chair before July meeting
 - ✓ Invite new participants at July membership meeting
 - ✓ SC members volunteering to participate in WG: Swafford, Nelms, Breithaupt, Havens, Klais, McVay, Farmer, Brock
 - Bergan also offered comments on Leading Harvest organization and evolving farm carbon accreditation

Actions: Brock will cross check old WG member list and reach out to any additional as well as those above, to address Chair nomination prior to July membership meeting
: Post the CDN meeting, work with Chair to schedule WG planning meeting
: Bergan will share information on Leading Harvest w/SC – Done: leadingharvest.org

- TCP - nothing to report; will give regular update at July meeting
- Other?
 - Is establishing a CDN Forest Mgmt WG is needed?
 - Agreed to ask for input and possible CDN participants at July meeting

Action: Add Forest Mgmt WG topic to July agenda

- Identify other CDN opportunities, objectives and priorities?
 - Discussed using social media (e.g., podcast, Facebook) more effectively as a CDN outreach tool
 - ✓ Could explore who in cooperative extension could provide a good “how to” future presentation
 - ✓ May also be someone with expertise on DU staff
 - Discussed the rising development of carbon sequestration related management issues and opportunities in both the forestry and working Ag arena’s
 - Agreed that the topic should be explored for the next membership meeting theme
Action: Add Carbon Sequestration Forest/Farm as a discussion topic for Fall SC meeting

- Summer Meeting Planning
 - As a result of the usual Dec CDN meeting being moved to Feb this year, discussed whether to stay with a Feb/Aug meeting schedule or roll back to historic Dec/May
 - ✓ Will host a late July meeting this year
 - ✓ Then go back to Dec/May schedule with next meeting Dec 2021**Action: Brock will work with Breithaupt/Havens to coordinate late Sep virtual SC meeting to initiate planning for Dec membership meeting**
 - July meeting agenda:
 - Continue DFCW?
 - Previously agreed on DFCW goals/topics for the CDN:
 - 1) Technical info/education for effective delivery
 - 2) Implementation e.g., understanding/fostering markets, forest certification
 - From Sep 2020 SC Mtg: DFCW Potential Topics:
 - DFCW Form & Focus - covered in July, any review needed?
 - *Moving WRE plantations to DFCWs (Dupuy)*
 - *Implementation of DFCW on private lands (Denman)*
 - Forest Markets: Status & Future/Forest Certification/Sustainable Forestry Initiative
 - *Jeremy Poirier (IP), Status of forest products market and certification*
 - NRCS WRE Forest Assessments (LSU AG, Delta State, Silvia Terra)
 - Forest Economics
 - DFCW Management on Public Lands - WMA/Refuges
 - Training Opportunities/Needs (Forest Stewards Guild Workshops)
 - Any other priority topics to consider?
 - SC agreed to stay with DFCW focus pursuing the following presentations:
 - ✓ Plantation Management Overview – Dupuy/Locascio
 - ✓ DFCW on Private Lands – Jeff Denman
 - ✓ Status/Future of MAV Forest Market – Jeremy Poirier
 - Actions: Brock/Breithaupt will reach out to Dupuy and/or Locascio**
: Brock will reach out to Denman
: Breithaupt will reach out to Poirier
: Breithaupt/Seiss/Brock will review Denman’s AR CDN presentation to offer talking points
- Partner Spotlight - see Summary
 - Quail Forever – Austin Klais
- Project Spotlight
 - MRT Project Update - Giles Kelly (discussed update for summer meeting)*
 - Hold this for potential spotlight in Dec Meeting
- Working Group/Partner Updates
 - TCP (Seiss/Brock will provide TCP update)
 - NRCS Update (Nelms will provide NRCS update for MS)
 - Other?
- Hot Happenings?
- Meeting Location?
 - Last discussed TR Complex Visitors Center
 - Site Review: good option for MS; New: Decent location w/good meeting space;

Kitchenette; Good lunch space with large covered area outside

- Agreed to host the meeting at TR Visitors Center if possible
- If not possible, will default to Hinds Community College, Vicksburg

Action: **Swafford** will work with TR Project Leader to determine if we can host at VC
: **Brock** will coordinate work w/community college to schedule there if necessary

- o Field Trip? No field trip for this meeting

Past Meetings

Summary of Past Meetings:

- Feb 10, 2021 (Zoom) – Highlighting DFCW: Forest Bird Habitat Objectives & DFCWs (McKnight) & WRE Plantation Project Objectives (Kelly, MRT); Chronic Wasting Disease Update (LA & MS)
- July 22, 2020 (Zoom) - DFCW Overview (Locascio); One hour webinar
- Winter 2019 (Delhi) - “Addressing the Feral Swine Challenge”; JV Shorebird Plan (Mini); Turn-row WS Highlights (Nelms); Swine Research Update (Strickland, MSU); LA & MS Swine Mgmt. (APHIS)
- Summer 2019 (Vicksburg) - “Mississippi Alluvial Valley Flooding”; CWD Updates; Mississippi River Watershed Mgmt & Update; State Agency Flooding Update-Wildlife & Related Impacts
- Winter 2018 (Tensas NWR) - “Approaches to Wetland Restoration in the MAV”; Upper Ouachita NWR Restoration (Bergan), Tensas NWR Andrews Bend planning (Hortman)
- Summer 2018 (Vicksburg) - CWD: “We’ve got the Chronic”
- Winter 2017 (Delhi) - MAV Delivery “Tools in the Tool Chest”
- Summer 2017 (Vicksburg) - DU Prvt Lands Habitat Study (D. James); LDWF WRP Waterfowl Habitat analysis (Olszack); White-front Goose Study (E. Massey)
- Winter 2016 (Delhi) - LDWF Waterfowl Mgmt (Smith); NRCS WLFW (Breithaupt); New CSP (Nelms); Focus on revised Project List (Callicutt)
- Spring 2016 (Vicksburg) - Only major speaker topic was WRP Forest Mgmt Doc
- Fall 2015 (Delhi) - Waterfowl focus, DU overview and MBHI results
- Spring 2015 (Vicksburg) - MAV Hydrology & For Health and DFC for Wildlife Update
- Fall 2014 (Delhi) - Public Lands: Refuge GMO issue, LA BB Research and Feral Swine
- Spring 2014 (Vicksburg) - New Farm Bill, MS DEQ Water Quality, several JV tools
- Fall 2013 (Delhi) - Gulf Spill Funding, MS REACH, LA NRCS Working Lands Strategies
- Spring 2013 (Vicksburg) - MSU Precision Farming Tool, JV FRCWG Update/MS Issues and NRCS new 612 Planting Specs
- Summer 2012 (Vicksburg) - 1st Mtg, all startup planning

Partner Spotlight Summary

- Winter 2019 - LA SWCD (Breaux)
- Summer 2019 - Mississippi River Landowner Alliance (Bucky Murphy)
- Winter 2018 - Tensas NWR (Hortman)
- Summer 2018 - MDWFP/Turkey Program (Butler)
- Winter 2017 - LDWF/Deer Program (Bordelon)
- Summer 2017 - Refuges/TR Complex (Swafford)
- Winter 2016 - NWTF (Dutoit)
- Spring 2016 - MS PFW (Austin)
- Fall 2015 - Ducks Unlimited (Callicutt)
- Spring 2015 - MS TNC (Lemmons)
- Some Potentials:
 - o State Agency/Programs: Waterfowl (Havens/Olszack); WMA Management; Private Lands; Turkey (Cedotal); MS Museum of Nat Science (Birds)
 - o Extension Service: MS & LA
 - o Federal: NRCS Programs - Easements, Other Programs/ FSA; Ecological Services; Refuges: North LA Refuge Complex, North MS Refuges Complex, St Catherine Creek; US Forest Service: Delta NF
 - o NGO’s: TPL; TNC (LA); Audubon (MS & LA); Wildlife MS/MRT; Quail Forever; Delta Wind Bird

Meeting Notes

Louisiana-Mississippi MAV CDN

Summer Meeting

Thursday - Jul 29, 2021

Hinds Community College Campus, Vicksburg, MS

(Black - Original Agenda; Green - Meeting Notes; Red - Action Items)

Meeting Theme: Desired Forest Conditions for Wildlife

Welcome and Introductions - David Breithaupt, CDN Chair

- Breithaupt welcomed attendees and thanked the meetings sponsor, the Lower Delta Partnership (LDP), for snacks and lunch; Coordinator, Meg Cooper, shared a brief overview on the work of the LDP and their upcoming events, including the Great Delta Bear Affair scheduled for Oct 23 in Rolling Fork, MS

Partner Spotlight – Quail Forever, Austin Klais (LA) & John Mark Curtis (MS)

- QF Highlights:
 - o 17K members nationally; 3 Pillars of QF Mission: Member O&E, Habitat Dvlpmt & Mgmt, Policy Advocacy; QF works locally with: Chapters, thru its Tech Staff, along with its Cons Partners
 - o Habitat dvlpmt is a key focus of QF: Working Ag (crop & pasture), forest mgmt both BHW and pine, also prairie restoration & mgmt
 - o QF also works with: Prescribe burning associations, monarch & pollinator initiatives & Integrated Veg Mgmt. on ROW's

Current Organization Updates & Hot Highlights:

- NRCS, Dustin Farmer – Highlights
 - EQIP: Sign-up for FY21 is complete; Program focus this FY on carbon sequestration; Also, soil health, grazing & pasture mgmt, as well as forestry and wildl habitat
 - CRP: Forest Mgmt Incentive payment still available; New and renewal CRP applications eligible for 10% inflation incentive and specific climate smart incentive payments; **Clear 30** is new 30 yr CRP that requires WQ criteria and includes incentive of 23.5% of soil rent rate
 - LA Feral Swine Pilot: Working in 6 Parishes with LA Dept of Ag and Cons Districts; targeting removal of 2500 swine in FY21
 - Pasture & Hayland Practice Standard chg'd: interim practice had been developed for this FY called Annual Forages for Grazing Systems (810)
 - WREP: Two projects currently active in LA (& broader MAV) - 1) Batture WREP and 2) Tri-state WREP
 - Next LA State Technical Comm meeting to be held in Oct
- Open Floor for Partner Updates

Working Group Updates

- Tri-State Conservation Partnership, Ron Seiss or Steve Brock
 - Outreach WG: near completion of 7 video series for WRE landowner wetland and forest mgmt; Working Group plans to dvlp addt WRE mgmt videos in the future; recently completed annual WRE new enrollment outreach – mailed info flyers to 6626 landowners in AR, LA & MS
 - Forest Mgmt WG: Planning to develop a non-commercial treatment guide for easement landowners; also plans for hosting a forest markets workshop for MS WRE landowners
 - Funding & Project Dvlpmt: Awarded \$20M in FY21 for Tri-state WREP project, includes \$1M in partner match, restores 6K acres; Since 2015, MAV partners have received ~\$125M in WREP funds including ~\$5M in partner contributions with ~40K acres protected & restored; FY22 WREP proposal recently submitted, includes \$5M funding request targeting 1.5K acres restored
 - Coordination: Multiple efforts targeted at improving awareness & relationship with ACEP/WRE staff in the national NRCS office, including Zoom mtg w/Tri-C leadership with plans for MAV field trip
 - Wetland Conservation Policy Coalition – ongoing work on policy priorities, particularly planning for next FB

- Working Ag Lands, Steve Brock
 - Looking ahead
 - The CDN steering committee recently discussed next steps for the WG and potential for a third Turn-row Credibility workshop; the WG is seeking a volunteer for a new Chair; hoping to host a working group planning meeting in the Fall to evaluate priorities and initiate Turn-row workshop planning
 - Opportunity to participate
 - The WG is open and welcomes additional CDN participant participation
- Action: Please advise Breithaupt, Havens or Brock if you would like to participate in the Working Ag Lands WG

MAV Forest Markets and Forest Certification - Jeremy Poirier, International Paper

- Poirier highlighted some key facts relating to IP, it's products and how market demands are changing production
 - IP is world leader in renewable, fiber-based packaging, pulp and paper; 80K employees, in 24 countries, w/24K customers, HQ in Memphis
 - IP copy paper (i.e., uncoated freesheet) demand/production has consistently and significantly declined w/ever growing demand for corrugated packaging spurred by ecommerce; Vicksburg Mill uses mostly pine but does require some hardwood pulp to make white exterior for corrugated boxes
 - Major shifts in region are influencing fiber demand: Transfer of IP landownership to TIMO/REITs; Loss of use ~3.6MM annual tons of hardwood pulp due to 3 MAV mill closures or production shifts; also hardwood lumber demand reduction due to sawmill closures; growing wood pellet industry; aging logger and trucking work force; MS River levels and extended flooding impacting product availability for Vicksburg Mill
 - IP Customer Questions/Expectations: Wants 'low-risk' to environment from suppliers; transparency; forest certification for "proof of sustainability"; climate friendly products; greater understanding of carbon impacts from product sources; growing demand for lighter end products and the use of much greater recycled products and alternative fiber sources
- Highlighted the dichotomy between the industries forest "management experience and sound science" vs societal perspectives driven primarily by "emotion & belief" e.g., Industry: long-term sustainability and good forest mgmt = good habitat harvesting = degradation vs timber cutting negatively impacts wildlife; also its not part of carbon solution
- Key challenges: primary customer base is not US based; high quality websites and web-based outreach tools are not highly effective; the forestry community operates in too many silos and we all assume someone else is dealing with critical O&E; harvesting trees is a difficult story to tell effectively through typical O&E methods coupled with innate perception that industry reps are biased
- Forest Certification: Highly accepted by IP customers; In the next 20 years it will likely be required to sell pulpwood; Poirier helps manage Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification program for IP; free to approved landowners
- Key points: Not all paper mills are the same; Important for partners to build relationships with wood suppliers; Using trees for end products is a challenging message for much of public; IP customer expectations are changing rapidly; Certification may become a requirement to move pulpwood to the mill

Lunch - Provided by Lower Delta Partnership and The Walton Family Foundation

DFCW & Bottomland Hardwood Plantation Management - Buddy Dupuy, LDWF

- Why manage BHW plantations: To advance the stand toward desired conditions associated with mature natural forests; To create quality habitat for wildlife species of highest concern, sooner than later; In the MAV, there are over a million acres that need or will soon need management
- WRE comprises a significant portion of developing BHW plantation in the AR, LA & MS, totaling more than 700K acres ranging in age between 1 and 28 years
- Active management of WRE is a priority for NRCS; Working with NRCS, partners developed the plantation management tool to help guide management planning and implementation
- Some related DFCW management objectives: Forest-dependent wildlife is responsive to habitat conditions at multiple spatial scales; Forests within suitable landscapes should provide diverse vertical and horizontal structure in terms of tree species, size and age classes and growth forms within a heterogeneous forest canopy with gaps and complex layers
- Fundamental DFCW objectives: Create or enhance habitat conditions for priority wildlife; Maintain a periodic yield of forest products to provide a cost-effective means of implementing DFCW to accomplish habitat objectives
- Commercial forest treatments are the most effective means when stand development <25 years are present in tandem with viable fuel chip or long-wood markets along with viable site conditions; Non-commercial treatment

The mission of the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture is to function as the forum in which the private, state, federal conservation community develops a shared vision of bird conservation for the Lower Mississippi Valley region; cooperates in its implementation; and collaborates in its refinement.

is also a useful tool, with few constraints on treatment options and wider treatment window with regard to site conditions, but can be cost prohibitive

- Dupuy shared numerous pictorial examples of various treatments and habitat responses in Louisiana, along with additional guidance on how to consider treatment alternatives

Delivering DFCW on Private Lands - Jeff Denman, Private Forest Consultant

- Private land ownership in the MAV seems to be dominated by: Organized hunting clubs and family ownerships; With outdoor recreation, including hunting and wildlife observation, as primary management objective
- Private land ownerships are ripe for managing for DFCW
- Generally, landowners are not informed on the availability of expertise for forestry and wildlife habitat mgmt
- Denman highlighted his forestry consulting work with landowners in AR that includes 165 private ownerships, with DFCW based forest plans developed for 60K acres with 18K acres thinned/treated
- Also shared and discussed specific examples of DFCW treatments, with attendees

Panel Question and Answer - Poirier, Locascio, Denman

Some key details shared:

- Discussed one year carbon contracts (payments) now being offered to private landowners by several entity's; one concern raised with regard to growing carbon sequestration interest/markets is the possibility that it could become more profitable for a landowner to not harvest timber
- LDWF is implementing/paying for some non-commercial treatments to remove pulp due to declining markets
- Hardwood demand is rising post-Covid and may create some opportunities to move wood; the opportunity may still be limited by the lack of suppliers/loggers and truckers
- Utilizing firewood permits to treat stands is generally not an effective treatment tool but it can be used to create small openings, but not for whole stand thinning
- Hack & squirt, as a non-commercial thinning method, may be cheaper than feller buncher but it eliminates stump sprouts; there are loggers that are no longer working or running full crews that create an opportunity to contract with them to utilize their feller buncher and experience for non-commercial thinning
- Is setting up a wet yard a feasible alternative for down market periods? General consensus is no – cost prohibitive

Wrap up - Breithaupt

Adjourn

Attendees

Seth Swafford/FWS Refuges - MS

Houston Havens/MDWFP

Michael McVay/DU

Terry Johnston/Retired Professional

Pierce Young/MDWFP

John Hanks/LDWF

Gypsy Hanks/FWS Refuges - LA

David Hayden/LDWF

David Breithaupt/LDWF

Steve Brock/LMVJV

Ray Aycock/Retired Professional

Todd Sewell/USFS Delta NF

Jeremy Ballard/DU

Nathan Yandell/LDWF

Keith McKnight/LMVJV

Ron Seiss/TNC

William Moody/USFWS

Phillip Prutchett/LDWF

James Grant/LDWF

Wade Tracy/LDWF

Nick Biasini/DU

James Austin/FWS ES MS

Lamar Dorris/FWS Refuges MS

Buddy Dupuy/LDWF

Dustin Farmer/NRCS LA

Giles Kelly/Wildl MS

Matt Korgie/USFWS

Jeff Denman/Retired Professional

Brain Lockhart/Retired Professional

Tommy Tuma/LDWF

Daniel Nicholson/MDWFP

Roger Tankesly/MDWFP

Amber Floyd/USFWS

Travis Carpenter/USFWS MS

Sky Kreisler/USFWS

Scott Baker/MDWFP

Ricky Flynt/MDWFP

Duck Locascio/LDWF

John Mark Curtis/QF

Austin Klais/QF

Jeremy Poirier/IP

Meeting Notes

CDN Working Ag Lands Working Group Virtual Planning Meeting Oct 6, 2021 – 9:30 a.m.

Participants: Austin Klais (Chair), Houston Havens, Darrin Hardesty, Dustin Farmer, David Breithaupt, Kevin Nelms, Seth Swafford, Michael McVay, Jason Hoeksema, James Austin, Michael Schooler, Nathan Yeldell, Steve Nipper, Steve Brock

-
- Goals:
- 1) Address meeting objectives
 - 2) Working Group Purpose/Priorities
 - 3) Initiate planning for next Turn-row Credibility Workshop
-

Welcome and Objectives - Klais

Working Groups Purpose/Priorities – Open Discussion

- Purpose of establishment – why was WG formed? After two years of not meeting together, it may be beneficial to revisit the WG's history:
 - Initially formed the WG to respond to an opportunity for the CDN to propose new CSP Enhancement practices (2013); later hosted an Irrigation Water Management field tour for interested WG and CDN members (2014); WG considered and determined that the idea of hosting a Turn-row Credibility workshop was worthwhile (held 2016); second Turn-row WS held 2019 (see agenda summaries pg 2)
- Highest and best goals
 - Education and outreach only? / Other training topics or opportunities?
 - There are a good number of new employees in multiple organizations; working Ag related training is very beneficial to them
 - We may want to consider doing multiple, less formal single day field tours/training as opposed to the historic two-day workshops:
 - This idea was very well received and accepted by WG
 - Could consider partnering with other non-CDN farm organizations to host tour/field days; suggestion was followed with agreement that keeping the training focused specifically on CDN conservation professionals is important
 - Group acknowledged that hosting the former two-day WS's do provide more opportunity for informal fellowship/networking among participants; WG agreed that providing lunch on-site during the one-day tours will be important to help foster informal networking
 - Would training related to Improved Pastures be beneficial?
 - Very little improved pasture in MS MAV, much more in LA MAV so may be beneficial there
 - Other WG opportunities
 - Does the WG want to pursue developing new/proposed CSP Enhancement practices?
 - Suggestion to consider "Inter-seeding Legumes" as a potential new practice
 - Invitations from NRCS to propose new practices come quickly each year and are relative brief so the WG needs to start well in advance of the usual announcement

Action Item: Does the WG want to form sub-committee to begin working on new CSP Enhancement practices to propose in 2022?

Initiate planning for next Turn-row Workshop

- Purpose of Workshops
 - Steering Committee discussion
The Steering Comm discussed and agreed (in Jul mtg) that Turn-row Credibility WS's should be planned and conducted for the benefit CDN participants first, but to the extent feasible, also support education and training for other conservation professionals outside the Network
 - Other thoughts?

- Theme of next Workshop
 - Review past workshop agenda's (Pg 2)
 - 2019 post-workshop CDN questionnaire results (Pg 2)
 - What's Next?
 - With joint agreement that the WG will shift toward hosting multiple single day field tours, a first step is to form a list of potential field day topics. Initial list: Fall Flooding/Winter Water (include Farm Economics); Improved Pasture; WRE Restoration Process; How are Refuges Managed to Meet NAWMP Objectives; Conventional Till - could include related topics like: Conservation Planning, Conservation Programs, Grazing, Irrigation, Land Leveling, Installed Conservation Practices, Producer Willingness to Incorporate Conservation Practices; Differences and Comparisons of WRE/CRP (this could be CDN meeting theme), could also address Long-term Protection of CRP Forests; Consider past Turn-row WS topics for newer CDN participants e.g, Farm Economics & Irrigation Water Mgmt
 - With regard to fall flooding topic, Hoeksema acknowledgement that farmers he is working with on related research in MS may be good to include in a tour(s) as they can provide producer perspective:
 - Hoeksema could do related presentation on his work at CDN membership meeting
 - Hoeksema also advised he is planning to host related farmer field days (Sunflower Co, MS); could do separate biologist focused field days on same

- Workshop/Tour Logistics: TBD
 - Location
 - Best potential date
 - Funding
 - Breakdown core topics of theme
 - Specific presentations
 - Identify speakers
 - Initiate outreach & get commitments

- Other?

Action Items: Klais & Brock will coordinate to flesh out an initial topic list and share it with the WG for review/additions/edits

: The WG will share the final tour topic list with the CDN at the Dec membership meeting to request review and input on topics and priorities

Next Working Group Meeting

Agreement that next WG meeting will be the second week of Jan, 2022

Action Item: Klais & Brock will coordinate to schedule Jan WG meeting

2016 & 2019 Workshop Agenda's

Turn-row Credibility Workshop I	Turn-row Credibility Workshop II
Location: Lake Providence, LA / Date: Oct 2016	Location: Vicksburg, MS / Date: Oct 2019
✓Advanced Ag Terminology – D. Burns (LSU Ag)	✓Conservation Delivery Network Highlight – S. Brock
✓A Year in the Life of a Delta Farmer - R. Howard	✓Annual Farm Planning and Decisions – J. Allison
✓An Overview of Financial Incentive Programs Available for Conservation on Private Lands - K. Nelms	✓On-Farm Business Decisions and the Factors That Influence Them – D. Bell
✓Agricultural Economics - An Overview of On-Farm Business Decisions and the Factors That Influence Them - J. Hardwick	✓Conservation Planning – T. Johnston
✓Conservation Planning Basics - S. Edwards	✓Irrigation Water and Management (IWM) – P. Rodrigue
✓Panel Discussion	✓Wetland Policy/What You Need to Know – K. Nelms
	✓Panel Discussion
Day Two	Day Two
Tour Howard Property – Visit Individual Sites to Illustrate and Reinforce Concepts Covered in Classroom Lunch Soil Health Rainfall Simulator Demonstration	Stop 1 - Pillow Farms/Eagle Bend Plantation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm Equipment • Irrigation basics - Water Well and related use Stop 2 - Coker Farm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Farm Equipment • Irrigation Equipment Lunch • Pivot Irrigation & Conventional Field Preparation • Irrigation Water Management • Wetlands and Farm Conservation Planning

2019 Turn-row Credibility Post-Workshop Survey

2. Which of the topics or aspects of the workshop did you find most interesting or useful? Core content listed below for your convenience? Respondants selected multiple answers, thus totals below represent cumulative responses for each topic from all completed surveys							
Annual Farm Planning & Decisions	13						
On-farm Business Decisions	10						
Conservation Planning	2						
Irrigation Water Management	6						
Wetland Policy	6						
Panel Discussion	7						
Field Trip	9						
Other?	0						

2019 AR MAV CDN Post-Workshop Survey

TOPIC: WORKING AG LANDS					
Turn-row Credibility Workshops:					
	Conventional Farming	High	Medium	Low	None
		10	9	7	1
	No/Minimum Till & Soil Health	High	Medium	Low	None
		10	12	5	
	Irrigation and Water Management	High	Medium	Low	None
		11	13	3	
	Farm Conservation Planning	High	Medium	Low	None
		12	8	6	1

Meeting Notes
LA/MS MAV CDN Steering Committee
Virtual Fall Meeting
Oct 13, 2021 -1:30 p.m.

Participants: David Breithaupt, Houston Havens, Kevin Nelms, Jim Bergan, Darrin Hardesty, John Hanks, Erin Cox, Todd Sewell (USFS - Delta NF), Ron Seiss (MAV TNC), Steve Brock (LMVJV)

- Goals:**
 - 1) Review/Update planning and activities since last meeting
 - 2) Discuss potential theme and agenda for the winter (Dec) membership meeting
 - 3) Work through meeting logistics and action items

Topics

Review: Summer SC and membership meeting outcomes

- o June SC meeting (Omega)
 - Working Ag WG reboot/Chair/Moving forward
 Efforts have been taken to address goals set to reboot the Working AG WG as discussed in the Omega LA SC meeting (details below)
- o July Membership meeting
 - Debrief on meeting outcomes (e.g., forest markets)
 Discussed forest markets related activities that evolved after the summer DFCW themed membership meeting; Jeremy Poirier (IP) reached out to the partnership in late August to reiterate the situation with increased mill demand for HWD pulp; he indicated that if any partners were interested, he was available to assist with linking WRE landowners/tracts with suppliers; a coordination call was subsequently held with LA and MS leads to discuss the opportunity; since the call, LA NRCS has shared a short list of available tracts, and Nelms has reached out to a key landowner in the S MS delta that has expressed initial interest in pursuing the opportunity
 - No specific action items to address coming out of meeting July membership mtg.

Working Groups: Status/Planning/What's Ahead

- o Working Ag Lands
 Austin Klais has accepted the role of Working Ag WG Chair; the WG held its first planning meeting on Oct 6; the meeting was well attended and a productive planning discussion was had; the WG is moving forward with new Turn-row WS strategy, shifting from hosting the traditional two-day workshop to hosting multiple single day training events; the WG is currently developing a list of potential training topics to be shared with CDN members (in Dec) to review and gather additional input
- o TCP
 The partnership continues its diligent work to complete and distribute the seven video series "Managing Your Wetland Reserve Easement"; anticipate completing the videos within the next month which will be followed as quickly as possible, by a broad mail out of the videos on thumb drives to WRE landowners in AR, LA & MS
- o Other?

Action Items: Share Working Ag WG Turn-row Field Days planning list with membership at Dec meeting for review and input
: In addition to normal TCP updates, share clips of new WRE management videos at Dec mtg

Other CDN opportunities, objectives and priorities? – None raised or offered

Winter Meeting Planning

- o Date: Agreed on Dec 8
- o Location: Since last meeting was in Vicksburg, will plan this mtg. for State Park, Delhi, LA
- o Lunch on-site: Seiss not able to fund Dec food; will coordinate with Meg Cooper (Lower Delta Partnership) to determine interest; Erin Cox indicated that the Black River Refuge Friends Group may be able to assist if needed; Breithaupt advised the LA Wildl & Fisheries Foundation could likely provide backup as well
- o Agenda
 - Theme: What's Next?
 - Discussed Carbon Sequestration as possibility for Dec meeting theme
Utilizing forest and farm carbon as a meeting theme is still an area of interest, but there is also a great deal of uncertainty about applicability and interest from CDN members; New CRP related Clear 30 program was raised as an important carbon related land management topic; Also, the relatively new forest carbon annual contracts that are being offered is relevant to on-the-ground conservation professionals; SC made the decision to table the carbon topic until the next planning meeting (including holding the Clear 30 topic)
 - Public Lands
 - Other priority topics to consider (review past themes pg 2)?
Conversations in the Oct 6 Working Ag Lands WG meeting led to discussions on fostering fall flooding, to include Jason Hoeksema offering to share with the CDN on his fall flooding research
The SC formulated a strategy to focus the Dec mtg around this topic to include:
 - 1) Hoeksema research project overview
 - 2) Manomet project ongoing in LA
 - 3) AGFC's Waterfowl Rice ProjectNelms also suggested that the MSU REACH program coordinator (Beth Baker) could potentially be an alternative if one of the three above was not available
 - o Partner Spotlight (see Summary pg. 2) – SC concluded that highlight from Hoeksema on Delta Wind Birds would serve well for Partner Spotlight; will also ask Manomet speaker to incorporate brief overview of that organization within their project presentation
 - o Project Spotlight
 - MRT Project Update/Giles Kelly – Reconsider for Spring meeting
 - Others?
 - o Working Group/Partner Updates
 - Working Ag – Klais to provide update
 - TCP – Seiss/Brock provide update with WRE video highlight
 - NRCS Update – Farmer to provide update for LA
 - Other?
 - o Hot Happenings – Add to meeting agenda for open input from participants
 - o Field Trip? None

Action Items: **Breithaupt** will contact State Park to reserve meeting room for Dec 8

: **Nelms** will contact Hoeksema to lock in Dec 8 and discuss if REACH could possibly offer a beneficial fall flooding related presentation; also ask to do Delta Wind Birds spotlight

: **Breithaupt** will contact Manomet to pursue project presentation commitment to include brief Manomet highlight

: **Brock** will contact AGFC (Dugger/Naylor) to seek commitment for AR Waterfowl RICE project

: **Brock** will contact Meg Cooper to assess interest in providing lunch/snacks at Dec meeting

: **Brock** coordinate with Klais & Farmer on Working Ag Working Group and NRCS updates

: **Seiss/Brock** coordinate on TCP update

Past Meetings

Summary of Past Membership Meetings (Theme/Topic):

- July 29, 2021 (Vicksburg) - DFCW: Markets & Certification (Poirier); Pltn Mgmt (Dupuy); DFCW on Prvt Lands (Denman); Panel Discussion
- Feb 10, 2021 (Zoom) - Highlighting DFCW: Forest Bird Habitat Objectives & DFCWs (McKnight) & WRE Plantation Project Objectives (Kelly, MRT); Chronic Wasting Disease Update (LA & MS)
- July 22, 2020 (Zoom) - DFCW Overview (Locascio); One hour webinar
- Winter 2019 (Delhi) - "Addressing the Feral Swine Challenge"; JV Shorebird Plan (Mini); Turn-row WS Highlights (Nelms); Swine Research Update (Strickland, MSU); LA & MS Swine Mgmt. (APHIS)
- Summer 2019 (Vicksburg) - "Mississippi Alluvial Valley Flooding"; CWD Updates; Mississippi River Watershed Mgmt & Update; State Agency Flooding Update-Wildlife & Related Impacts
- Winter 2018 (Tensas NWR) - "Approaches to Wetland Restoration in the MAV"; Upper Ouachita NWR Restoration (Bergan), Tensas NWR Andrews Bend planning (Hortman)
- Summer 2018 (Vicksburg) - CWD: "We've got the Chronic"
- Winter 2017 (Delhi) - MAV Delivery "Tools in the Tool Chest"
- Summer 2017 (Vicksburg) - Waterfowl: DU Prvt Lands Habitat Study (D. James); LDWF WRP Waterfowl Habitat analysis (Olszack); White-front Goose Study (E. Massey)
- Winter 2016 (Delhi) - Diverse Agenda: LDWF Waterfowl Mgmt (Smith); NRCS WLFW (Breithaupt); New CSP (Nelms); Focus on revised Project List (Callicutt)
- Spring 2016 (Vicksburg) - Only major speaker topic was WRP Forest Mgmt Doc
- Fall 2015 (Delhi) - Waterfowl focus, DU overview and MBHI results
- Spring 2015 (Vicksburg) - MAV Hydrology & For Health and DFC for Wildlife Update
- Fall 2014 (Delhi) - Public Lands: Refuge GMO issue, LA BB Research and Feral Swine
- Spring 2014 (Vicksburg) - New Farm Bill, MS DEQ Water Quality, several JV tools
- Fall 2013 (Delhi) - Gulf Spill Funding, MS REACH, LA NRCS Working Lands Strategies
- Spring 2013 (Vicksburg) - MSU Precision Farming Tool, JV FRCWG Update/MS Issues and NRCS new 612 Planting Specs
- Summer 2012 (Vicksburg) - 1st Mtg, all startup planning

Partner Spotlight Summary

- July 2021 - Quail Forever (Austin Klais/LA & John Mark Curtis/MS)
- Winter 2019 - LA SWCD (Breaux)
- Summer 2019 - Mississippi River Landowner Alliance (Bucky Murphy)
- Winter 2018 - Tensas NWR (Hortman)
- Summer 2018 - MDWFP/Turkey Program (Butler)
- Winter 2017 - LDWF/Deer Program (Bordelon)
- Summer 2017 - Refuges/TR Complex (Swafford)
- Winter 2016 - NWTF (Dutoit)
- Spring 2016 - MS PFW (Austin)
- Fall 2015 - Ducks Unlimited (Callicutt)
- Spring 2015 - MS TNC (Lemmons)
- Some Potentials:
 - State Agency/Programs: Waterfowl (Havens/Olszack); WMA Management; Private Lands; Turkey (Cedotal); MS Museum of Nat Science (Birds)
 - Extension Service: MS & LA
 - Federal: NRCS Programs - Easements, Other Programs; FSA; Ecological Services; Refuges: North LA Refuge Complex, North MS Refuges Complex, St Catherine Creek; US Forest Service: Delta NF
 - NGO's: TPL; TNC (LA); Audubon (MS & LA); Wildlife MS/MRT; Delta Wind Birds

Meeting Notes

Louisiana-Mississippi MAV CDN

Winter Meeting

Wednesday – Dec 8, 2021

Poverty Point Reservoir State Park



(Black - Original Agenda; Green - Meeting Notes; Red - Action Items)

All presentations have been posted to: <https://www.lmvjv.org/la-ms-cdn-meetings>

Meeting Theme: Advancing Fall Flooding

Welcome and Introductions

- Welcome attendees and thanks to Lower Delta Partnership (LDP) and Walton FF for snacks and lunch

Partner Spotlight - Delta Wind Birds, Jason Hoeksema (Univ of Miss)

- Hoeksema is Professor, Dept of Biology and President of Delta Wind Birds
- Wind Birds = Shorebirds - Organization recognizes the importance of MAV in providing critical migration stopover habitat
- Shorebirds are in Peril: ~60% of species considered “declining” e.g., Endangered-Piping Plover, Threatened-Red Knot and MS Species of Cons Concern e.g., Lesser Yellowlegs/Pectoral Sandpiper/Semipalmated Sandpiper/Dunlin
- Lower MS River Valley host >500K shorebirds/yr including 27 species; provides critical migration and nesting habitat for wading birds such as herons, egrets, spoonbills and storks
- Delta Wind Birds works to: 1) Increase temporary stopover wetlands in working lands, 2) Conduct research on temporary wetland benefits, 3) Protect natural wetlands, 4) Conduct outreach & education
- Project: Acquisition and support of Sky Lake Nature Reserve; Also works to support ecotourism; Upcoming (2022) Field Trips: Jan 8, Feb 12, Apr 9, April 16 (www.deltawindbirds.org)

Current Organization Updates & Hot Highlights:

- NRCS FY2021 Update, Dustin Farmer
 - EQIP: 2,128 Applications, 536 Contracts on 98.2K acres, \$22.8M Obligated
 - CSP: Classic -601 Applications, 112 Contracts on 67.3K acres, \$11.1M Obligated
 - : Renewals - 324 Applications, 120 Contracts on 73.6K acres, \$8.8M Obligated
 - : Grassland Initiative - 69 Applications, 33 Contracts on 1779 acres, \$160.1K Obligated
 - WRE: 373 Applications, 27 Easement Agreements on 8.28K acres, \$26.1M Obligated
 - WREP: Tri-state - 40 Applications, 4 Easement Agreements on 772 acres
 - : Batture - 3 Applications, 3 Easement Agreements on 3434 acres
 - WRP/WRE LA Easements (Since inception - 1992) = 1124 on 340.7K acres
- Open Floor for Partner Updates

Working Group Updates

- Tri-State Conservation Partnership (TCP), Steve Brock/Ron Seiss
 - The TCP has completed development of seven video series “Managing Your Wetland Reserve Easement”
 - The landowner focused series includes an introductory video, four videos focused on wetlands management and two on bottomland hardwood plantation management
 - Each state NRCS office (AR, LA & MS) will send, to all WRP/WRE easement landowners, a copy of the series on a thumb drive, along with a series information card that includes a URL link and QR code to access the videos on YouTube (see Appendix A for copy of information card)

- Forest Mgmt WG: Planning to develop a non-commercial treatment guide for easement landowners
 - Funding & Project Development: Awarded ~\$5M for FY22 Tri-state WREP project; project will restore ~1500 acres and includes 50% in separate funding pool targeted for Historically Underserved Producers
 - Coordination: Multiple actions targeted at improving awareness & relationship with ACEP/WRE national NRCS office staff, including joint virtual mtg w/Tri-C leadership; Plans for 2022 MAV field trip
 - Wetland Conservation Policy Coalition: ongoing policy planning, particularly planning for next Farm Bill
- Working Ag Lands Working Group (WG), Austin Klais - Chair
 - Turn-row Credibility Planning
 - The WG has recently begun meeting again to consider and address Working Lands related objectives for the CDN
 - The first priority will be to host additional Turn-row Credibility training(s) in 2022; WG made the decision to go to single day field tours (as opposed to the past two-day workshops)
 - A survey was distributed to attendees to help the WG identify CDN members potential tour topic priorities (See Appendix B)

Action: The survey will be emailed to all CDN members requesting additional input
 - Opportunity to participate in WG
 - The Working Ag Lands Working Group is always open to new members; please Austin Klais and/or Steve Brock if you are interested in participating

Action: Please contact Austin Klais and/or Steve Brock if you are interested in participating in WG

Project Spotlight – Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW)/LA Shore Birds, Karis Ritenour (Manomet)

- “Shorebirds of LA Wetlands Initiative” focuses on the importance of LA as a critical stopover for more than 35 shorebirds in both fall (last refueling stop before crossing Gulf) and spring migration (first refueling stop in North Am.) and some migrants that overwinter in LA
- Estimates of a 50% decline in shorebirds over the past 40 years
- Short-billed Dowitcher and Lesser Yellowlegs are two species of high conservation concern in LA
- This WLFW project seeks to foster the use of on-farm practices beneficial to these and other shorebirds
- Key migration habitat components include: Open Habitat, w/Minimal Vegetation, Shallow Saturated Flooding (6” or less), Little Disturbance, and presence of Invertebrates
- On-farm practices offered include Supplemental Wetland Disking, Crawfish/Fallow Field Manipulation & Flooding, Rice/Row Crop Manipulation and Flooding
- In 2021 there were 20 contracts established totaling 10,333 acres (\$627K) all in South LA Delta; hoping to expand into NE LA MAV in 2022
- A key part of the program will be to monitor results of implemented practices

Lunch - Provided by Lower Delta Partnership

Waterfowl RICE Incentive Conservation Enhancement Program/WRICE, Luke Naylor (AGFC)

- Waterfowl and other wildlife benefit from seasonally flooded rice field and other wetlands
- However, food availability for ducks in rice fields has declined substantially due to changes in production methods and varieties; fall tillage also has a negative impact on food availability
- An analysis of AGFC aerial survey data indicates that highest number of ducks are present in flooded rice fields; Mallards use a mosaic of habitats, extensive surface water is needed; Mallards use more soybean fields due its abundance, compared to the rice that is less abundant
- Duck Abundance Drivers: managed habitats are an important anchor and are necessary; but natural wetlands are also critical; Ag lands are an important component over large landscape
- AGFC partnering with NRCS thru its Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Initiative to 1) help farmers increase waterfowl food availability, 2) provide permitted hunting opportunities on rice fields, 3) Provide hunting/viewing opportunities on WRP/WRE

- Program provides incentive payments for flooding during key fall/winter periods on farms within 10 miles of public lands; allows permitted hunting on program tracts, including WRP/WRE
- Farmer participants are required to suspend fall tillage and flood harvested fields
- AGFC post fields and conduct draws, randomly selecting parties of ≤four each weekend
- 2020-2021: 24,257 rice acres and 835 WRE acres offered, w/3,855 rice acres and 520 WRE acres enrolled; 1,093 hunter applicants w/305 drawn, \$5 application fee, 40 fields available for hunting each weekend
- 2021-2022: 2,898 acres re-enrolled from year one with 9,079 new rice acres offered, 493 acres of WRE offered for re-enrollment
- Program funding available thru 2022-2023

Fall Water Bird Habitat Use in the MS Delta, Jason Hoeksema

- It is estimated that more than 500,000 shorebirds of 27 species, move through the MS Delta each spring and fall migration; the region is critically important for these birds as a refueling stopover
- As part of its shorebird focused interest and mission, [Delta Wind Birds](#) is working to create stopover habitat in Ag working lands and protect existing natural stopover habitats within the MS Delta; Hoeksema working with EPA on a farmer to farmer research project:
 - o Project based on utilizing tailwater on working Ag lands to create fall shorebird habitat on crop fields, without pumping groundwater
 - o The initial phase of the study was conducted from 2018 to 2020 in Sunflower Co., MS; it included three flooded and three unflooded harvested corn fields w/focus on quantifying bird usage
 - o USDA hypothesized that holding surface water in fall has additional benefits, especially denitrification and sediment retention; In 2019 & 2020 the project collected data on denitrification, sediment runoff, bird & macroinvertebrate densities, as well as subsequent corn yields on study fields
 - o The initial results indicate that fall flooding in harvested fields benefited denitrification, improved sediment retention, improved soybean yield in the following crop season (4-5% increase in flooded vs unflooded fields) and an increase in shorebird use in flooded fields
- A Fall option for EQIP-644 Wetland Wildlife Habitat Mgmt is now offered in MS; this could be used as a beneficial tool for increasing fall surface water
- Fall flooding concerns expressed by farmers: early fall flooding takes away from harvest & field prep; it can erode beds that have already been prepped; can cause stubble drifts that impacts planters; delays spring access to field; hardens soil, reducing yields; also forms a crust which can impede planting; “locks up” phosphorus, reducing yields
- Many of these farmer concerns have been disproven through modern research
- The project will be expanded to look at: Effect of flood timing (fall vs. winter); Effect of crop rotation (corn vs. soy); Consistency among farms; Effects on soil health; Mechanism of any yield effects

Winter Flooding Effects on Soil Health and Pathogens in Rice Systems, Lexi Firth, (MSU/REACH)

- REACH (Research & Education to Advance Conservation & Habitat) focuses addressing the costs and benefits of implementing conservation practices on Ag landscapes; REACH works to provide conservation demo's on working farms, on-farm research trials and outreach & education events
- Firth's research project was intended to assess the potential impact of winter waterfowl/goose use on Ag field soil health; the strategy is based on a large management concept termed “Low-External-Input-Sustainable-Agriculture” or LEISA
- LEISA focuses on: adapting and designing the agriculture system **to fit the environment** of the region; Optimizing use of **biological and chemical/physical resources** within the agroecosystem; Developing strategies that **minimize changes** to the natural environment and energy used manipulating the environment
- Firth's research project was designed to evaluate a LEISA vs. Conventional approach to rice production
 - LIESA = Continuous Rice; Repeated fallow season flooding 10+ years; No till: 130 kg/N/ha w/fecal matter quantification

- Conventional = Continuous Rice; First year winter flooding fields; Post-harvest rice stubble incorporation; 180 kg/N/ha
- Soil Health Testing included assessment of 1) Nutrients, 2) Microbes and 3) Pathogens
- Conclusions: Winter flooding **as part of a larger system strategy** has the potential to increase soil health and lower need for N fertilizer; But results may not be seen after one year; Bird use impacted soil pathogen levels, but without risk to human health; Regular monitoring is recommended

Questions/Discussion/Wrap up

Attendees

Darby Simmons/LDWF
 Stephen Bourque/LDWF
 Dustin Farmer/LA NRCS
 Jeff Denman/ Retired FWS
 Darrin Hardesty/MDWFP
 Owen Best/LDWF
 Jason Hoeksema/Univ. of Miss
 Nick Biasini/DU
 Michael McVay/DU
 Becky Rosamond/MS FWS Refuges
 Amber Floyd/MS FWS Refuges
 Troy Mallach/LA NRCS
 John Dickson/LA FWS Refuges
 Matthew Harrison/MSU-REACH
 Lexi Firth/MSU-REACH
 Steve Smith/LDWF
 Kevin Nelms/MS NRCS
 Giles Kelly/Wildlife MS
 Austin Klais/Quail Forever
 Cody Cedotal/LDWF
 Steve Brock/LMVJV

Appendix A

NEW VIDEO SERIES

MANAGING YOUR WETLAND RESERVE EASEMENT

Video guide to wetland and forest management

VIDEO SERIES VIEWING OPTIONS:

1. Scan the QR code with your mobile phone
2. Visit <https://www.youtube.com/user/LouisianaNRCS/playlists>
3. Use the USB flash drive included

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Natural Resources Conservation Service

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

<p>Wetland Management for Waterfowl: A Handbook</p> <p>https://www.ltrsv.org/v/wetlandmanagementhandbook.pdf</p>	<p>Habitat Improvements in Hardwood Plantations on Wetland Reserve Easements: Landowner Guide</p> <p>https://www.ltrsv.org/v/landownerguide.pdf</p>	<p>Tools for Assessment and Treatment of Reforested Bottomland Hardwood Stands on Wetland Reserve Easements</p> <p>https://www.ltrsv.org/v/forestmanagementtool.pdf</p>
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Appendix B

LA/MS MAV CDN Working Ag Lands Working Group Workshop Planning

Please give each item in the following list a 1 to 10 rank or score based on how beneficial it would be as a field day/workshop topic.

Row Crop Topics (Turn-row Credibility)	Rank each topic from 1 (low) to 10 (highly beneficial)
Wildlife management integration on working ag lands	
Irrigation water management	
Conservation Tillage (No till, Cover crops, etc.)	
Conservation planning with practice specific discussion	
Considerations for land leveling (When to land level, soils, and other considerations)	
Fall flooding - management for waterfowl and shorebirds; Also Economics of	
Annual Farm Management & Business (with farmer & consultant)	
Farmer & Consultant share views on integrating conservation practices	
Pollinator plantings-What to know and how to plan successful plantings	
Pasture Topics (Fence-row Credibility)	
Annual farm management & Business of a cattle farmer	
Prescribed grazing (rotational grazing, creep grazing, strip grazing, forward grazing, mob grazing, water, and stocking rates)	
Forage types and management (cool season, warm season, introduced, and natives)	
Conservation Planning with practice specific discussion	
General CDN Topics (not necessarily Working Ag Lands related)	
How to restore/manage wetlands	
WRE restoration and management	
Wetland laws and permitting	
What is LA/MS doing with the North American Waterfowl Management plan	
How are refuges managing for the NAWMP (Potentially be a tour with Coop Farming focus)	
WRE vs CRP-what are the differences and how do they fit on the landscape	

Meeting Notes

CDN Working Ag Lands Working Group Virtual Planning Meeting Jan 12, 2022 - 1:00 p.m.

- Goals: 1) Discuss results of Workshop Planning Survey
2) Begin formulating agenda and logistics for 2022 Turn-row Credibility Field Day
-

Welcome and Objectives - Klais

- Reviewed outcomes from previous Working Group meeting (10/6/21)
 - o Original purpose of WG establishment (i.e., was CSP enhancements & MS IWM tour)
 - o Education and outreach goals associated with WG's Turn-row Credibility Workshops
 - Agreed on shifting to one-day field training in 2022 vs two-day workshop (as in past)
 - Turn-row training is to be designed for benefit of CDN members first and foremost
 - Formulated list of topics for CDN member training survey
 - o Discussed potential for developing and submitting CSP Enhancements for 2023

Develop New CSP Enhancements

- Question raised for possible early fall flooding practice
 - o Affirmed that it is needed
 - o Should be easy to draft by refining draft from existing winter/spring enhancement practices

Actions: Nelms will pull existing CSP scenarios and share with core group (Farmer & Hoeksema) to draft a proposed enhancement

: Core group will share draft enhancement out to full WG for comment

: Havens will also share out draft to MDWFP private lands program for additional input

Turn-row Credibility Field Day

- Klais summarized results of CDN training survey
 - o The top five responses are presented in Appendix (below)
 - o WG revisited question of offering a two-day workshop vs one-day field training
 - Reaffirmed that we would move to doing one-day field trip training events
 - With Fall Flooding as number two of top five, Hoeksema offered to host a related field day in the North/Central MS Delta (Sunflower Co.)
 - Discussed best time of year for fall flooding field day (possibly Mid-Dec)
 - Discussed whether we should try to host two topics in one-day e.g., fall flooding & wildlife integration; general agreement that in most cases one-day is not adequate to cover two topics
 - o Next steps? Agreement we need to consider potential sites in both LA & MS that may fit with each of the priority five Turn-row field day priority topics

Action: Farmer will start the process of formulating the potential field day location list for LA then share with Brock who will setup person by person review and input for the WG

New Member

- Hoeksema suggested we invite Karis Ritenour to participate in the WG

Action: Hoeksema will contact Ritenour to invite participation

Next Meeting

- Agreed on mid-Feb for next planning meeting

Action: Klais will share out Doodle Poll to set Feb meeting

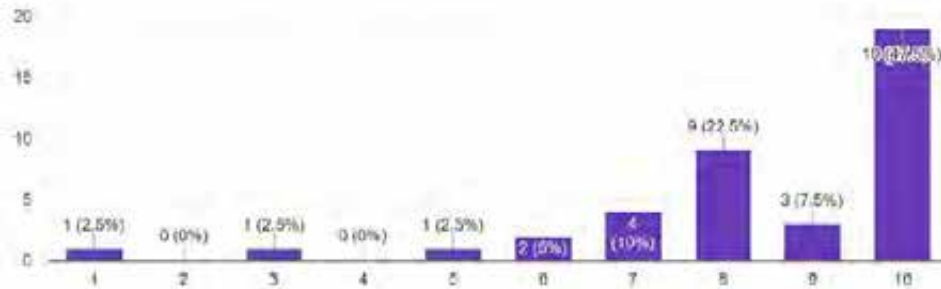
Appendix

CDN Workshop Training Survey

Top Five Survey Responses

Wildlife management integration on working ag lands

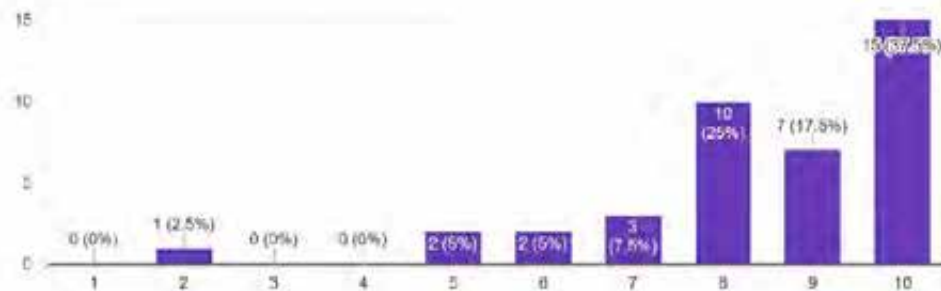
40 responses



averages	8.45
% responses 7 and above	89.74358974
% responses 8 and above	79.48717949

Fall flooding - management for waterfowl and shorebirds; Also Economics of

40 responses



averages	8.45
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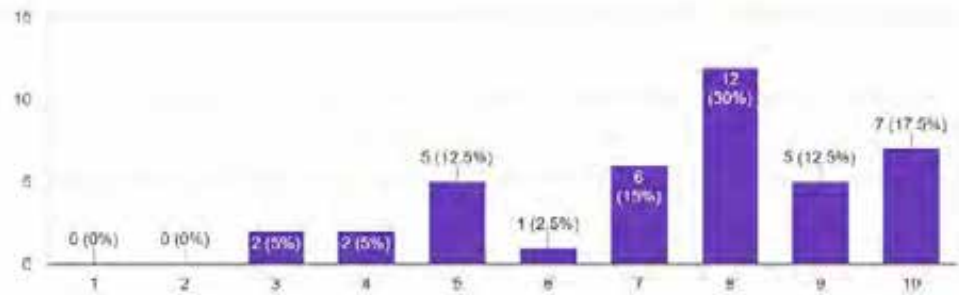
% responses 7 and above	89.74358974
% responses 8 and above	82.05128206

How to restore/manage wetlands
40 responses



averages	7.575
% responses 7 and above	76.92307692
% responses 8 and above	71.79487179

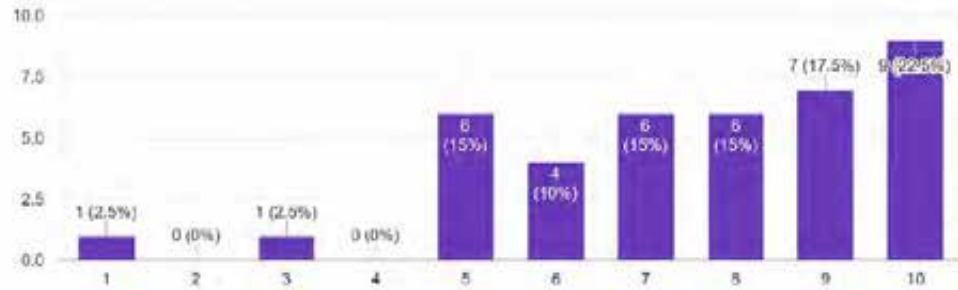
Farmer & Consultant share views on integrating conservation practices
40 responses



averages	7.45
% responses 7 and above	76.92307692
% responses 8 and above	61.53846154

Conservation Tillage (No till, Cover crops, etc.)

40 responses



averages	7.525
% responses 7 and above	71.79487179
% responses 8 and above	56.41025641

Data Links-These links should allow you to look at the entire data.

Google Form with summary charts

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1iReSfLCN4omSLbwV0JoX8NtGHTJ7iwNmJ8Rvz2SeUTO/edit?usp=sharing>

Google Sheet with summary stats

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1i6zl8-TzxgtqYa8fGeVTc-Y8cCOKFuhxKu8-rR4eDk/edit?usp=sharing>

Meeting Notes

CDN Working Ag Lands Working Group

Virtual Planning Meeting

Feb 14, 2022

Participants: Austin Klais, Kevin Nelms, Dustin Farmer, Karis Ritenour, Jason Hoeksema, Michael McVay, Houston Havens, Nathan Yandell, Seth Swafford, Steve Brock

- Goals:**
- 1) Discuss status of initial work on CSP Fall Flooding Enhancement
 - 2) Address development of Turn-row priorities planning spreadsheet

Welcome and Objectives - Klais

- Reviewed outcomes from previous Working Group meeting (held on 1/12/22)
 - o Agreed to begin crafting a proposed Fall Flooding CSP Enhancement practice
 - o Also agreed to begin formulating a list of core topics (based on top five survey outcomes) for WG's Turn-row Credibility Field Tour planning
 - Will use list to identify several one-day field days topics for 2022 turn-row training
 - Turn-row training will focus on needs/benefit of CDN members first

Status of New CSP Fall Flooding Enhancement Development

- Nelms reported that he, Farmer and Hoeksema had initiated review and refinement of Fall Flooding Enhancement based on the current Winter Flooding CSP Enhancement
 - o The current winter practice starts on Nov 15; planning group will propose an earlier (Aug) start date
 - o Will also have to further refine the payment scenario to fit fall flooding objective

Actions: Once a draft is complete, planning team will share out to entire working group for review
: Havens will also share with MDWFP private lands staff for any input and Klais will coordinate with Breithaupt on similar LDWF staff outreach

Turn-row Credibility Field Day

- Farmer and Brock have initiated development of topics/locations spreadsheet based on top five survey responses for Turn-row topics
 - o The top five survey responses are presented in Appendix (below)
 - o The group agreed that "Restoring Wetlands" is not a good fit for Turn-row Credibility planning; it will be removed from the planning spreadsheet with the goal of addressing it in broader CDN planning/training
 - o Also agreed that a new tab should be added to capture existing trainings/workshops that fit with working lands training objectives and that working group members are involved in or aware of
 - o It was also mentioned that the top two training priorities i.e., Wildlife Integration on Working Lands and Fall flooding, may most logically be the first two goals we focus on for 2022
 - o The revised spreadsheet will be shared out to the entire working group for input from all and returned to Klais and Brock to integrate input into a draft final

Action: Klais will share out the revised planning spreadsheet to the entire working group to request additional input – with deadline in advance of next working group meeting

New Member

- Hoeksema suggested we invite Karis Ritenour to participate in the WG

Action: Hoeksema will contact Ritenour to invite participation

Next Meeting

- Agreed on mid-Mar for next planning meeting

Action: Klais will also share out Doodle Poll to set Mar meeting

Meeting Notes

CDN Working Ag Lands Working Group Virtual Planning Meeting Mar 24, 2022



Participants: Austin Klais, Dustin Farmer, Michael McVay, Steve Brock

- Goals:**
- 1) Discuss status of sub-committees work CSP Fall Flooding Enhancement
 - 2) Address results of Turn-row priorities planning spreadsheet effort
 - 3) Nail down some specific objectives for fall MS & LA Turn-row field trips
-

Update - Klais

Status of New CSP Fall Flooding Enhancement

- Nelms has shared draft enhancement with national CSP leads for review and input
Update: Nelms has spoken with national leads since the Mar 24 WG mtg and advises that some questions/concerns were raised about stacking our proposed CSP Enhancement practice on the current approved winter water practice (E646A); Nelms was also advised that Apr 15 is the deadline for submitting any CSP recommendations to the national office – based on questions raised and nearness of the deadline, we will hold the enhancement to gather more input nationally and to further vet this and other related CSP opportunities/recommendations in preparation for next year’s request for input

Turn-row Credibility Field Day Planning

- Klais reviewed outcomes from Turn-row spreadsheet planning effort
- Group discussed best options for formulating agendas and getting field days scheduled:
 - Agreement that we will host one Turn-row field day in MS and one in LA for fall 2022
 - Determined that coordinating with Hoeksema and Nelms to explore a fall flooding related field day is best first option for MS
 - If Nelms and Hoeksema are in agreement, they and Brock will be leads for planning the event; the full WG will be kept aware and invited to participate in planning as interested and feasible
Action: Klais/Brock will set call with Hoeksema/Nelms to discuss and initiate MS field day planning
Update 1: Call held with Hoeksema/Nelms on 4/4; Generally agreed on field day agenda for MS that may include 1) Farmers perspective/interest/planning associated with fall flooding, 2) Potential farmer incentives for incorporating fall flooding, 3) Fall Shorebird biology and ID, 4) Infrastructure and practices that encourage fall flooding, 5) Also consider issues/questions associated with water sources e.g., accessing surface sources, tailwater recovery, etc
: Hoeksema will contact the prospective farmer to determine which of these three dates might work for the field day Sep 28, Oct 5 or 12th
Update 2: Hoeksema/Nelms/Brock are scheduled to conduct a MS field day site tour on July 12th; any working group members that would like to participate, please advise Brock to be added to mail list
- Agreed that Klais & McVay with support from Dustin, will lead the LA planning group; they will convene a call and/or site visits to form up a LA field day agenda; discussed field day tour site possibilities in both Richland and Morehouse Parishes
Action: Klais will coordinate initial planning effort in LA; working group members that would like to participate in the LA planning process, please advise Klais
- Klais and Brock will coordinate to keep the working group apprised of planning efforts
Action: Klais to schedule/Doodle next working group meeting

Arkansas-Louisiana CDN

Arkansas-Louisiana Conservation Delivery Network

Historical Benchmark 2014-2020

The Arkansas-Louisiana Conservation Delivery Network (AR-LA CDN) was established in 2014. On 8/19-20/2014, fifteen (15) Joint Venture, agency, and organization leaders met at Rick Evans Grandview CEC to establish the CDN's purpose, goals, and objectives, identify the CDN geography, and create a Steering Committee. The Steering Committee then established a Delivery Prioritization Work Group that would define the priority habitats to support management in the CDN area.

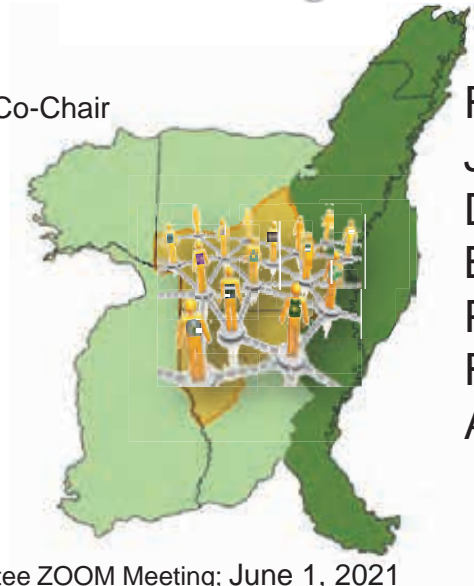
- **2014 AR-LA CDN met to established a foundation of the partnership**
- **2015 AR-LA CDN – SC formed Delivery Prioritization Working Group, 2/2015**
 - Work Group would develop habitat prioritization map, timelines, and membership
- **2016 AR-LA WGCP CDN Steering Committee, 4/14/2016, at the Crossett Experimental Forest**
 - Approved AR-LA CDN Delivery Prioritization group process and map
 - Refined Delivery Team tasks, timelines and Delivery Team membership to address the methodology deficiencies in the Open Pine Landbird Decision Support Model (DSM); revision of that DSM would provide the potential for a CDN Decision Priority Tool.
- **2016 AR-LA CDN Membership / Steering Committee, 7/16/2016, Lake D'Arbonne State Park**
 - 34 met to review Delivery Work Group products and process tasks
- **2017-18 Focus shifted from CDN to AFF/Drax/Morehouse Family Forests Initiative (MFFI)**
 - QF engaged the CDN partnership to focus delivery in specific Counties and Parishes
- **2019 AR-LA CDN Leadership discussion 1/9/2019 Meeting**
 - AR-LA re-boot – Bubba Groves, Bill Bartush, Ricky Chastain, and David Breithaupt
- **2019 AR-LA CDN Leadership discussion 1/9/2019 Meeting and CDN Plan**
- **2019 Re-Established Steering Committee and priorities through 2020**
 - 3/21/2019 – Stood-up SC, working groups, timelines and membership
 - MFFI Membership Meeting, 8/29/2019; Conference Calls with SC, 3/21 and 9/26
- **AR-LA CDN Full Membership Meeting 1/23/2020 Magnolia AR**
 - Organization and Training – Develop cross-training of State NRCS professionals; Forestry community outreach and engagement to bring into AR-LA CDN
- **AR-LA Virtual (COVID) Conferencing Spring-Winter, 2020**
 - Due to COVID restrictions, convened virtually through balance of 2020
- **AR-LA CDN Steering Committee and RCPP Proposal, 2020**
 - SC members explored options for an RCPP “classic” proposal for the AR-LA
 - Revised 2020-21 calendar; filled remaining Steering and Work Group positions
- **AR-LA Steering Committee Meeting Notes, August-November 2020**
 - Formally launched AR-LA CDN effort to pursue an NRCS - RCPP “classic” proposal
- **Morehouse Family Forest Initiative (MFFI) 2018 Report**
- **Morehouse Family Forest Initiative (MFFI) 2019 Report**
- **Morehouse Family Forest Initiative (MFFI) 2020 Report**



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AR-LA Conservation Delivery Network Steering Committee

David Breithaupt, Co-Chair
Bubba Groves
Dan Weber
Jeff Fore
David Hayden
Jeremy Everitts
Ryan Diener



Ricky Chastain, Co-Chair
Jason Nolde
Darren Spinks
Bill Holimon
Pat Stinson
Rick Williams
Amanda Mathis

AR-LA CDN Steering Committee ZOOM Meeting; June 1, 2021

AR-LA CDN History

- *Formed 2012 & AR-LA CDN Charter 2014*
 - *Steering Committee New Members*
 - *Delivery Team - Private land **Open Pine***
- *2016-17 QF Stewardship, Fire, & Morehouse FFI*
- *Re-Engaged 2018 - 2020*
- **2021 – RCPP awarded \$5.9 mil**
 - Contributions made award Possible
 - Initial Signup 12/15/21 -2/18/22

CDN 2019-21 Review

- ***Steering Committee Reorganized 2019***
- ***CDN January 2020-June 2021***
 - *Private Lands - Open Pine Delivery*
- ***Morehouse FFI Catalyst***
- ***AR-LA CDN - RCPP***

AR-LA CDN Steering Committee ZOOM Meeting; June 1, 2021

CDN Functions



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*Forum where agencies and organizations responsible for natural resource conservation **coordinate on-the-ground delivery** of otherwise independent efforts, **prioritizing** delivery actions that target high priorities for conservation.*

Primary Functions

1. Communication, coordination, and collaboration among delivery leaders, to include conservation organizations from within and beyond the current JV partnership.
2. Communication between planning/design and delivery.

CDN Expected Outcomes



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- ❑ **Increased communication** among delivery staff
- ❑ Capitalizing on (otherwise lost) **opportunities**
- ❑ **Unified** voice to communicate
 - ❑ Potential funders
 - ❑ Landowners
- ❑ More focused and strategic collective efforts
 - ❑ **Identification of priorities**
 - ❑ Geographic and functional focus where positive outcomes are most likely
- ❑ **Increased resources (\$\$) dedicated to conservation priorities**
- ❑ Bigger, Better, Measurable results

AR-LA CDN Steering Committee ZOOM Meeting; June 1, 2021

Morehouse FFI Partnership

Set Stage for Farm Bill Opportunities

- Includes ½ of RCPP county/parishes
- AGFC/ADAF, NRCS & QF
- Backlog acres for FSI/Rx Fire



RCPD Overview



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- Adjusted from \$7 to \$5.9 million
- Contribution Match - \$9 million
 - Calculating & Reporting
- 70% - Landowner financial assistance
 - Funds stay with NRCS
 - \$413k/state/yr for 5 years

AR-LA CDN Steering Committee ZOOM Meeting; June 1, 2021



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RCPD Principles

- Innovation, Partnership, and Management
- Co-investment approach:
 - Impact and Partner Contribution (IVM)
 - Demonstrate experience working effectively with agricultural producers (MFFI)
 - Measurable conservation goals

RCPD Overview



Lower Mississippi Valley
JOINT VENTURE

- Adjusted from \$7 to \$5.9 million
- Contribution Match - \$9 million
- **30% - technical assistance (\$1.7+mil)**
 - **7% NRCS** (\$408k Field Office Support)
 - **16% delivery partners** (\$950k ABC fiduciary)
 - **7% Monitor, Communicate, F&A** (ABC)
- **ALL of Us = Reporting Responsibilities**

Contributors and POC

- *Entergy - Brent Davis*
- *PotlatchDeltic - Kit Hart*
- *Enable Midstream - Connie Oslica*
- *So Central Electric Coop – Kyle Armstrong*
- *Ouachita Electric Coop- Robby Stinnett*
- *Claiborne Electric Coop – Joey White*

Over \$6 million contribution via IVM

Contributors & POC

- *AGFC - Ricky Chastain*
- *LDWF - David Breithaupt*
- *AGFR - Darren Spinks*
- *ABC - Bill Bartush*
- *ANHC - Bill Holimon*
- *Quail Forever - Ryan Diener*
- *TNC (AR & LA) - Jeff Fore & Dan Weber*
- *USFWS (Partners & JV) – Jonathan Baxter*

AR-LA CDN Steering Committee ZOOM Meeting; June 1, 2021

Steering Committee Task

- *Activate Delivery Working Group*
- *Identify Agency/Org IMP/POC*
 - *Initiate Contribution April 26th*
 - *Annual reporting*
 - *Develop contribution report protocol*
 - *Use RCPP standard rates, or*
 - *Agency accounting*

RCPP – POC Implementation Team

- **AGFC Private Lands Biologists**
 - Chastain, Lawson, Groves
- **LDWF Private Lands Biologists**
 - Yeldell, Hanks
- **QF Biologists**
 - Klais, Claeys, Neumeier, Scott

Implementation Team Task

Refine RCPP Priority Map

- *Identify Highest Priority Polygons*
 - *Delete no/low work areas*
 - *ID priority R.O.W. corridors*
 - *Conservation Estate*
- *Document Criteria to rank/refine*
- *Include Farm Bill Priorities*

Progress & Assessment of RCPP 2021

- 2021 summary of RCPP – annual report (Bartush)
 - \$1.7 mil contributions 2021, 80-100 initial signup
- Fact Sheet, sign-up steps, partner contacts, and summary/assessment (POCs)
- RCPP workload (Diener, Chastain, Breithaupt)
- **Rx Fire Capacity (In-House & Contractors - QF)**
 - Leadership to develop & improve capacity for fire
 - Seeking resources for Rx Fire (TNC)

RCPP Cash Contribution Plan

- **\$157k sideboards** - what & how we use \$
 - Should we prioritize Habitat, Outreach, or Science?
 - Non FA Habitat-Incentive payments?
 - Outreach/communication?
 - signs/recognition?
 - Supplement FA implementation (Habitat related practices/incentive payments)
 - Science & Monitoring

Signups By County	
Ashley	8
Bradley	7
Calhoun	3
Clark	5
Drew	25
Lincoln	11
Nevada	1
Ouachita	8
	68

Signups By Parish	
Bienville	4
Claiborne-6F/T	10
Jackson	1
Lincoln	8
Morehouse-1F/T	8
Ouachita	0
Union-3F/T	9
Webster	1
	41

Challenges – signup, state differences, practices open pine etc expectations.

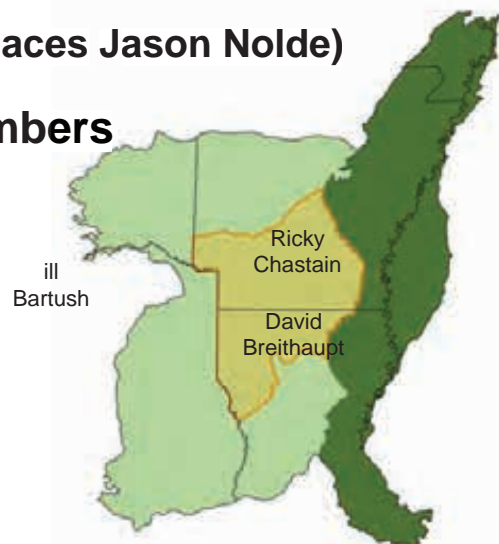
2021-22 CDN Business



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Vacancies - Actions Identified

1. **New Steering Committee Member**
 1. Rob Smith USFS Kistachie (replaces Jason Nolde)
2. **New Work Group Tasks & Members**
 1. QF (Ben Neumeier) & USFS
3. **RCPP Open Pine – re-assess**
 1. Patch Size & Connectivity
 2. 7/22 & 12/22 Progress Reports



2022 JV Science & RCPP Teams

- ≠ **Delivery Working Group (CDN)**
 - ≠ New Members & Charge established
- ≠ **Implementation (RCPP)***
 - ≠ POCs – AR & LA (working 2022)
- ≠ **Science (JV)**
 - ≠ Anne Mini LMVJV Science Coordinator
 - ≠ Social/HD (JV & RCPP)*
 - ≠ Monitoring (RCPP *tbd*)
- ≠ **Communication (RCPP)***
 - ≠ Gregg Elliott (AR & LA representatives)

AR-LA CDN Steering Committee Meeting
24 March 1:30 - 4 pm
Virtual Meeting ONLY

David Breithaupt and Ricky Chastain, Co-Chairs, will convene this meeting to conduct important business for 2022. We had a successful start to the RCPP in 2021 – but with progress comes even more work! We have decisions and plans for 2022-23 to consider, and we have cash contribution funds to be directed.

1:30 pm Welcome and Co-Chair Messages - David Breithaupt and Ricky Chastain

1:45-2:15 pm **Progress of AR-LA CDN and RCPP (consider existing and future partner members)**

- Review 2021 summary of RCPP – annual report (Bartush)
- Fact Sheet, sign-up steps, partner contacts, and summary/assessment (POCs)
- RCPP site visit overload (Diener in-general, Chastain AR, and Breithaupt LA)
- Building Rx Fire Capacity (In-House and Contractors led by QF)

2:15-2:40 pm **Overview of RCPP Cash Contribution Plan RCPP** – Funds require clear sideboards of what and how we will use this money. Should we prioritize Habitat, Outreach, or Science?

- Outreach and communication; signage and recognition
- Supplement implementation (Habitat related practices and incentives)

Break

2:45-3:15 pm **Review JV Science and RCPP teams**

- Implementation
- Science
- Social/HD
- Communication

3:15-3:45 pm **Discuss and Plan for CDN Steering, Delivery/Planning Working Group members**

- Vacancies to fill; Steering Committee and Delivery Work Group (Bartush)
- Refining the Open Pine Model – Charge for Delivery Work Group (McKnight)

3:45-4 pm **Wrap-up, calendar, and planned field days**

- Calendar for 2022/23
- What to expect; open discussion of other opportunities

Morehouse Family Forest Initiative

Updates from the Field

July 2021—September 2021

Partnership Update



Forest stand treatment measurements. Arkansas Department of Agriculture, Forestry Division

The MFFI I ended this quarter, at the end of the federal fiscal year, on 9-30-2021 and all partners are now working in the MFFI II grant. Drax provided a press release for the MFFI in August which included the MFFI landowner videos and can be found at the Drax website under the sustainability press releases.

This quarter is the driest time of year which meant it was a great time for

getting conservation on the ground in the MFFI region. The Arkansas Department of Agriculture, Forestry Division has been busy installing firebreaks and conducting prescribed burns.

Both LFA and AFA have sent out landowner postcard mailers this quarter. This resulted in outreach to over 4,200 landowners and responses are flowing back in. Partners have begun reaching out to these landowners and site visits with conservation planning will continue to follow.

The LSU AgCenter has continued to analyze the survey data and is communicating that data to internal partners

Tree farm promotion sign frames were designed with a template built to be used as a model prior to delivering to landowners. Arkansas Department of Agriculture, Forestry Division



to develop presentations for professionals and landowners in the region. LSU has begun presenting preliminary data at national conferences as well.

As a reminder, the MFFI NFWF extensions were approved and the new deadline for the MFFI II is 6-30-2022. Partners are making progress towards this goal but have had some delays in in-person landowner workshops due to the most recent covid restrictions.



Tree Farm promotion signs were received to be distributed to landowners for promotion of certification in the region. Arkansas Department of Agriculture, Forestry Division

Site preparation prescribed fire is typically conducted in late summer and early fall by partners. Arkansas Department of Agriculture, Forestry Division





Arkansas Partner Accomplishments

Partner	Landowner Contacts	Site Visits	Conservation Plans	Planned Acres	Landowner Workshops Conducted	# Workshop Participants	New Tree Farm Inspections	New Tree Farm Acres	Recertification Tree Farm Inspections	Recertification Tree Farm Acres
July 2021—September 2021										
AFA	2,031				7	113	3	181	21	2,296
ADAFD	170	170	109	8,969						
AGFC	6	4	4							
QF	37	14	1							
August 2018— September 2021										
AFA	14,737				31	1,001	87	14,829	55	7,710
ADAFD	1,023	1,013	892	69,015						
AGFC	38	37	11	185	6	182				
QF	520	207	33	4,161.7	9	174				





Louisiana Partner Accomplishments

Partner	Landowner Contacts	Site Visits	Conservation Plans	Planned Acres	Landowner Workshops Conducted	# Workshop Participants	New Tree Farm Inspections	New Tree Farm Acres	Recertification Tree Farm Inspections	Recertification Tree Farm Acres
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July 2021—September 2021

LSU	1	1								
LFA	2,184									
LDAF										
LDWF										
QF	29	8	47	5,255	1	11				

August 2018– September 2021

LSU	72	12			2	94				
LFA	3,984				2	131				
LDAF	120	6	6	375						
LDWF	40	3	1	80						
QF	194	72	122	12,072.6	12	427				



**Arkansas/Louisiana WGCP Conservation Delivery Network
Delivery Working Group – Prioritization and Decision Support**

The Arkansas Louisiana WGCP (“AR-LA”) CDN Delivery Prioritization Working Group (“Working Group”) was established to support the CDN in identifying delivery priorities through (a) the development of a Delivery Priority Tool (DPT) which identifies priority focus areas, (2) identifying appropriate conservation actions – especially in line with the RCPP project, and (3) identifying potential projects in the AR-LA CDN geography.

Working in partnership with the LMJVJ GIS Applications Biologist and other partners, the Working Group is tasked to revise a Conservation Delivery Strategy and Decision Support Tool that spatially identifies landscapes within the AR-LA CDN geography that represent the highest known conservation priorities.

Conservation priorities for the CDN should be based on the goals and objectives of the collective priorities of CDN partner organizations and those set by the LMJVJ, and especially in support of the Open Pine RCPP Project. The CDN Delivery Strategy should employ methodology that is scientifically justifiable and clearly demonstrates concerted thought and planning on the part of the CDN partnership.

The working group includes:

- Don Bragg (U.S. Forest Service)
- Nathan Yeldell (Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries)
- Bill Holimon (Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission)
- Clint Harris (The Nature Conservancy, Arkansas)
- Steve Nipper (Natural Resources Conservation Service, Louisiana)
- Doug Akin (Natural Resources Conservation Service, Arkansas)
- Rob Smith (U.S. Forest Service)
- Mike Stroeh (U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service)
- Marcus Asher (Arkansas Game & Fish Commission)
- Chris Rice (The Nature Conservancy, Louisiana)
- Griffin Park (Arkansas Game & Fish Commission)
- Ben Neumeier (Quail Forever Arkansas)
- Austin Klais (Quail Forever Louisiana)

The Working Group is charged in 2022 to:

1. Solicit from CDN organizations maps that spatially define resource conservation priorities;
2. Utilize latest available land cover information;
3. Utilize 2022 Open Pine species data (Brad Thornton, Miss. State Univ.) to refine DPT priority areas;
4. Draft a CDN Delivery document describing the Working Group’s DPT revision process.

The AR-LA CDN Co-Chairs, David Breithaupt and Ricky Chastain, will be informed in advance of all Working Group meetings/conference calls. Meeting notes/correspondence by the Working Group should be copied to the CDN Co-Chairs to keep the CDN Steering Committee apprised of the progress of the Working Group. The first report from the Working Group to the CDN Steering Committee will be 7/2022, with the Draft Working Group report due 12/2022.



Regional Conservation Partnership Program



Amanda Mathis
 Arkansas Assistant State Conservationist- Partnerships
 LMVJV Board Meeting, June 2, 2021

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RCPP Principles



- Critical feature is a *co-investment* approach
- Four key principles of RCPP:
 - Impact
 - Partner Contributions
 - Innovation
 - Partnership and Project Management.
- Successful RCPP applicants-
 - Bring an array of financial and technical capabilities,
 - Demonstrate experience working effectively with agricultural producers, and
 - Propose innovative, sustainable, and measurable approaches to achieving compelling conservation goals

Successful RCPP Project Proposals

AR-LA Open Pine Restoration Project



3 Mission Support Services

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United States Department of Agriculture

AR-LA CDN Open Pine Landscape Restoration Project Geography

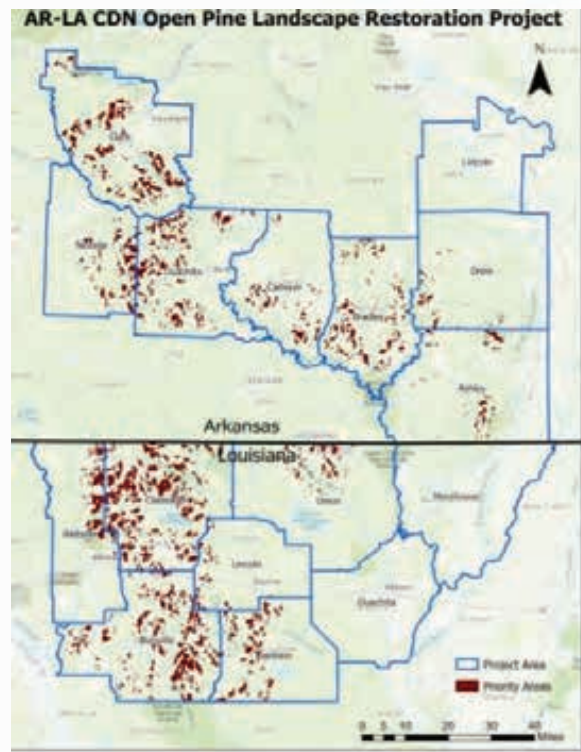
8 Counties and 8 Parishes

Includes all MFFI Area

- NRCS Office & Staff
- QF & State partners

Strategic Priority Areas

- Open Pine Opportunity
 - connecting
- Conservation Areas



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Overview AR-LA RCPP Project

- Lead Organization: American Bird Conservancy
- Lead State: Arkansas NRCS
 - Partner State- Louisiana NRCS
- Funding Amount: \$5,900,000
 - Equally distributed between states
- INNOVATION
 - Industry, Science & Outreach (MFFI model)
- CONTRIBUTION
 - ~\$9 million from partners
- PARTNERSHIP
 - AR-LA Conservation Delivery Network (CDN) of LMVJV
 - 19-member partnership



5

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Overview AR-LA RCPP Project

- Open Pine Landscape
 - Advance the recovery of species of conservation concern
 - Desired Forest Condition management practices
 - 30,000 acres of private lands
- Northern Bobwhite, Henslow's and LeConte's sparrows, Louisiana Pine Snake, and Red-cockaded Woodpecker.
- Partnership with the University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff
 - Historically Underserved farmers participate meaningfully
- Practices include such things as
 - Prescribed Fire & Firebreaks
 - Forest Stand Improvement
 - Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities



6

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Next Steps for Project Delivery

AR-LA Open Pine Restoration Project



7 Mission Support Services

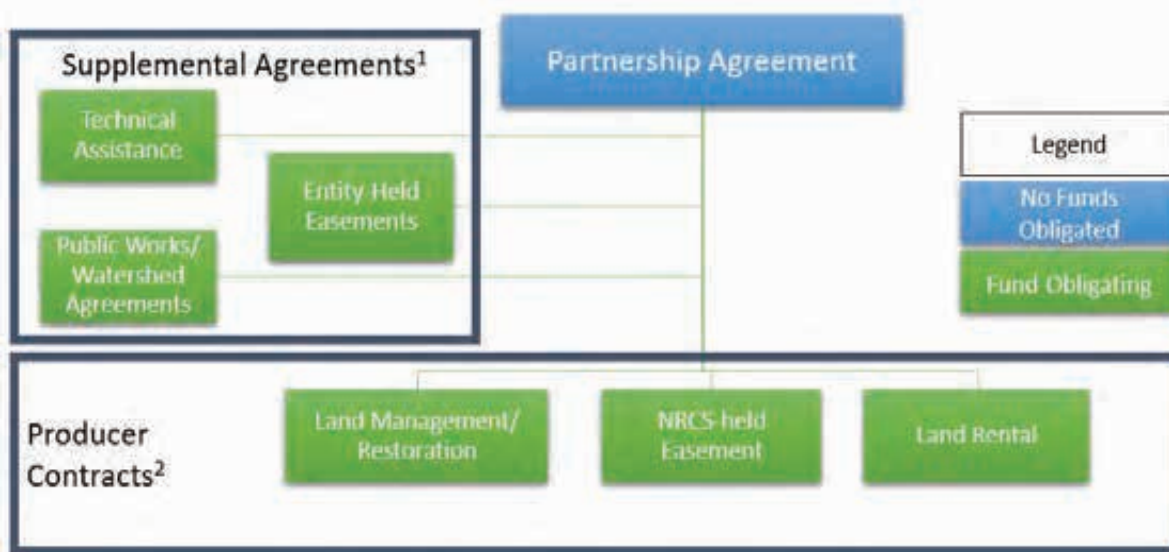
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RCCP Project Structure



8

Natural Resources Conservation Service

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AR-LA CDN Steering Committee
24 March, 1:30 – 3:30 pm, Virtual Meeting

Co-Chairs, David Breithaupt and Ricky Chastain, convened this meeting to conduct important business for 2022. They conveyed that we had a successful start to the RCPP in 2021; the 8 weeks of December and November passed quickly after learning the sign-up phase would begin prior to 2022, and that the Fact Sheet needed a revised map. Today's meeting was focused on 2022, with decisions and plans for 2022-23 to consider. We also have \$157,000 in RCPP cash contributions; we need to develop a process to utilize those funds in the most effective manner, and in a way the partners expect us to focus our resources for the RCPP.

Bill Bartush reviewed the CDN, and especially progress of the AR-LA CDN since the initial 2012-2014 establishment, MFFI in 2017-18, and Magnolia Steering Meeting in 2019. Current work load discussion:

- Fact Sheet, sign-up steps, partner contacts, and summary/assessment (POCs)
 - Map on Fact Sheet needs to be re-evaluated after Delivery Work group convenes; NRCS needs to receive any recommendations by early October, 2022.
 - Sign-up steps have been bumpy – mostly because of timing during holidays and COVID, but also due to a larger number of sign-ups from new clients. FSA overload in certain areas (Drew/Ashley Co) was discussed, but with extended dates to get F&T numbers, most are comfortable with all sign-ups getting counted and into the system.
- RCPP site visit overload (Diener in-general, Chastain AR, and Breithaupt LA)
 - All POCs (Implementation Team) voiced comfort with ability to work with all sign-ups; each state POCs should stay in communication and identify areas where bottlenecks may arise. QF staff believes the effort is manageable, but POCs do need to be in touch.
- Building Rx Fire Capacity (In-House and Contractors led by QF)
 - Several expressed little concern with 338 fire contractors; however, hand crews for TSI, as well as other intermediate treatments (666), are worrisome.
 - Options in LA and AR for “learn to burn” do not really bolster contractors, but does more for landowners and coops. LA has more restrictive requirements for burn plans and burn boss credentials, and this could impact LA outcomes. Discussed the opportunity to “cluster” projects to improve support by Rx Fire managers and work more efficiently.

Issue – Consulting Foresters in some areas are advising clients not to sign up for RCPP, due to project focus on low basal area. Chandler Barton expressed an opportunity for our partnership to develop a presentation to explain the program at upcoming CF meetings: (a) Ferndale and (b) Hope/Arkadelphia. Ricky Chastain is already slated for a presentation at the Ferndale meeting; suggest we discuss in depth with AFD (Chandler Barton, Ricky O’Neill, John McAlpine, and possibly others at AGFC and AFD).

Overview of RCPP Cash Contribution Plan RCPP – Good discussion regarding the use of cash contributions from partners for the RCPP project. It was agreed these funds require sideboards for what/how we will use money for the project objectives of Technical Assistance (practices) Implementation for habitat work (incentives, etc.), or Enhancement - communication and outreach, or science-related items. Ad Hoc Team will develop proposals for use of funds on (a) Habitat, (b) Outreach, or (c) Science. **David B, Ricky C, Austin K, Ben N, and Luke L; report due 6/15/22.**

- Possible options for outreach and communication are signage and recognition.
- Consider supplementing implementation consideration for habitat-related practices and incentives.

JV Science and RCPP teams – Bartush provided a quick overview of the JV history and development of science efforts, with existing teams that cover the 9 JV states. The AR-LA CDN is one of 7 delivery networks. This RCPP will need specific teams to fully function over 5+ years. Development is as follows:

- Implementation Team (10 POCs; 5 in each state – **group lead Austin Klais**). This group is self-driven by close coordination within each state; possible replacement may be needed in LA.
- Science/Monitoring (to be developed by Anne Mini, Chair)
- Social/HD (5 members, Anne Mini, Chair)
- Communication (4 members - 2 in each state; Gregg Elliott, Chair)

Discuss and Plan for CDN Steering, Delivery/Planning Working Group members

- Vacancies to fill; Steering Committee and Delivery Work Group (Bartush)
 - Bartush displayed Steering and Delivery WG recommendations (consensus, no objections)
- Refining the Open Pine Model – Charge for Delivery Work Group
 - Provided one-page charge in draft form, all SC members are requested to review and provide comments; if no objections, the group will convene in April/May 2022.

Wrap-up, calendar, and planned field days

- Calendar for 2022/23 (Doodle July-August for next Steering Committee Meeting)
 - July 19-21 or 26-28, or August 9-11 or 16-18
- What to expect with RCPP and Open Pine Model; open discussion of other opportunities
- LA “open pine” field day for POCs on April 13 in the Minden-Ruston area

AR-LA RCPP Open Pine Annual Report 2021

Overview

- **Brief Narrative to date**
- **Project Challenges – if any**
- **Project Outlook**

Contributions (see table at end document from portal)

Contributions success – challenges

Outlook and Milestones

Executive Summary (Brief Narrative)

Between May 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021, the Arkansas-Louisiana (AR-LA) Conservation Delivery Network (CDN) Partnership convened meetings (virtual and in-person) of the CDN Steering Committee Contributors, and proposed an Implementation Delivery Team. On April 26, 2021, per the NRCS news release, it was announced that the Open Pine proposal was successfully awarded 5.9 million dollars, over five years in 16 counties and parishes, to restore 30,000 acres of open pine habitat. Beginning on May 1, 2021, Partners were notified that their participation in coordination, planning, and developing the partnership and supplemental agreements could be included as contributions for calendar year 2021.

The Steering Committee and Delivery Working Group met regularly during this eight-month period, with Lead Partner American Bird Conservancy (ABC) developing the partnership agreement (PPA), which was executed on September 13, 2021. A subsequent supplemental agreement between ABC and USDA NRCS was signed on December 15, 2021, allowing the partnership to proceed with landowner outreach and project development in both states. Contributions during the eight-month period were substantial in both Implementation Technical Assistance (ITA) and Enhancement Technical Assistance (ETA). Contributions for land management efforts provided through in-kind efforts by partners in the 16 counties and parishes totaled **13,584 acres and 1,343 miles of right-of-way corridor**; preliminary outreach and coordination reached approximately 700 landowner contacts through a variety of means. The total value of partner contributions was approximately **\$1,723,841**.

The development of the delivery aspect, or ITA responsibilities, of this Open Pine project included regular meetings of partners to communicate and coordinate efforts between the two states. A formal Implementation Delivery Team (IDT) was formed with partners in both states; other ETA aspects of the project included a Communications Team, Social or Human Dimensions Team, and a Monitoring-Science Team; these teams were formed to develop science-based outreach and education for understanding the many social elements of private

landowner incentive programs. A key to the Open Pine project's success continues to be the significant contributions from 19 partners, including private industry. American Bird Conservancy serves as grantee for this complex partnership effort which will continue through 2026.

Project Successes

Calendar year 2021 was a resounding success! The AR-LA Open Pine RCPP made significant strides in 2021. Between notification of award (April 26, 2021) and December 15, 2021, the partners met consistently to strategically reach out to partners, coordinating a uniform and open approach to galvanizing the collective strength of our 19 contributing partners. Though a challenge, COVID-19 did not deter us from meeting virtually on numerous conference calls to discuss details.

As lead partner, ABC harnessed the strength of its nation-wide expertise on a number of RCPP projects to allow our Open Pine effort to move quickly into the partnership agreement phase, and then into the supplemental agreement phase. The administrative support at lead-partner ABC is exceptional.

NRCS Lead - Arkansas has positioned our Open Pine RCPP to respond quickly to agreement development, portal challenges, and reporting. The knowledgeable staff at NRCS and their generous availability to respond to questions, have been greatly appreciated.

2021 Coordination and Planning Summary

- ITA Report – Coordination, accomplishment, and planning meetings continued regularly from May 2021 through December 2021. Soft rollout of the RCPP (without a Fact Sheet or executed PPA or SA) allowed us to initiate discussions in each county and parish.
- ETA Report – Our ETA effort was focused on identification of duties, team roles and responsibilities, and efforts with partners on various communication, outreach, innovative science, and administrative topics. Synopsis and Team membership of each ETA item are as follows:
 - Implementation – 10 members (County/Parish POCs), QF Lead
 - Communication – 5 members, LMVJV Lead
 - Monitoring/Science – 6 members, LMVJV Lead
 - Human Dimensions/Social – 7 members, LMVJV Lead

Project Challenges

With COVID-19, collaborating in a traditional sense was challenging, but with virtual platforms available and strategic planning early and consistently, our partners and their

agencies/organizations managed this difficulty through virtual forums and public platforms like agency commission meetings and webinars. Familiarization with the new portal items at various steps, kept ABC busy for the Proposal, PPA and SA.

NRCS 2022 Project timeline (2/10/22 NRCS Bulletin) – The jump from an executed Supplemental Agreement (SA) on December 15, 2021, to the RCPP sign-up closing on February 18, 2022, was a challenge that we handled, albeit at the cost of changes in holiday plans. Some November refinements to the Fact Sheet map were also a challenge; but using best boundaries to connect priority areas allowed us to proceed.

Outlook and Milestones

Project outlook is great; the Open Pine RCPP is not just on target – it is ahead of schedule! NRCS has reasons to be proud because they have provided our partners with the tools to move quickly, yet in a very thoughtful and deliberate way. Local support by NRCS is very much appreciated and recognized by all of the partners. Because of this collaborative success, we have surpassed our expectations in 2021. With contributions reported in the initial eight-month period of the project exceeding 20% of our expected total, we are well-positioned to succeed. At this pace one could project that, by 2026, we are well positioned to meet our contribution commitments as defined within our 2020 RCPP proposal.

Our Natural Resource and Social Outcomes cannot be reported in this initial year, as our implementation phase has not yet begun. However, our science-based strategy, and close coordination with agencies and organizations in our planning region of 16 parishes and counties, have us poised to report in 2022. We have a significant foundational baseline to work from, in terms of satellite imagery, mapping, and species targeted.

Ouachita Electric Cooperative Arkansas

Contact: Robby Stinnett Contribution: \$125,573 (in kind); plus 1,440 habitat acres

Ouachita Electric Cooperative of AR is a major Contributing Partner as one of our Private Sector Partners. Expenditures for Land Management - were accomplished using Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) practices on existing Rights-of-Way to promote native herbaceous grasses and forbs for priority species by connecting over 2,700 miles or 6,757 acres of habitat corridors within the open pine landscape.

Claiborne Electric Cooperative Louisiana

Contact: Stephen E Faulk Contribution \$312,372 (in kind); plus 2,141 habitat acres

Claiborne Electric Cooperative of LA is a major Contributing Partner as one of our Private Sector Partners. Contributed expenditures for Land Management were accomplished using Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) practices on existing Rights-of-Way to promote native herbaceous grasses and forbs for priority species by connecting over 700 miles or 8,500 acres of habitat for a value of \$1,389,268 of conservation land management through IVM practices on existing Rights-of-Way during the five-year span of this project.

Enable-Midstream (Energy Transfer) of Arkansas and Louisiana

Contact: Connie Oslica Contribution \$100,239 (in kind); plus 1,446 habitat acres

Enable-Midstream was the company which originally committed to our partnership as a contributor for the RCPP during the project proposal phase. During 2021, Enable-Midstream was purchased by Energy Transfer, who has accepted the original commitment to contribute "In-Kind" work. Energy transfer expenditures for Land Management were accomplished using Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) practices on existing Rights-of-Way to promote native herbaceous grasses and forbs for priority species by connecting over 300 miles of managed ROW corridors will provide over 300 miles or 1,460 acres of habitat corridors (with a value of at least \$300,550) during the five-year span of this project.

Entergy of Arkansas and Louisiana

Contact: Brent Davis Contribution \$502,560 (in kind); plus 4,188 habitat acres

Entergy is another private sector partner operating in both AR and LA and has committed to provide \$1,900,000 value of conservation land management through Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) practices during the five-year span of this project. This focus on native herbaceous grasses and forbs supports a host of priority species, with these "In-Kind" efforts connecting over 1,100 miles or 14,750 acres of habitat corridors within our planned open pine landscape project.

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

Contact: David Breithaupt Contribution \$37,500 (cash); plus \$20,002 (in kind)

As a primary Active Partner, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) worked closely in 2021 with the lead partner to plan project implementation and management; LDWF collaborated with partners during working meetings and participated in communications for implementing RCPP activities with field staff. LDWF has been a long-term partner of the LMVJV and our CDN and provides valuable outreach to its many private landowner connections in north Louisiana.

LDWF was instrumental in laying the ground work in north Louisiana with landowners and partners; with the lead partner field staff provided facilities and arranged meetings to plan project implementation and management. LDWF Iso collaborated with partners during working meetings, and participated in communications for implementing RCPP activities with field staff. Their assistance with outreach through hosted events was valuable.

National Wild Turkey Federation – Arkansas & Louisiana

Contact: Jeremy Everitts Contribution \$50,000 each (cash)

The Arkansas & Louisiana Chapters of the National Wild Turkey Federation are active and engaged in the RCPP. As a Contributing Partner, the NWTf Cash Contributions have been accepted by the lead partner; these funds will be foundational in our ability to establish incentives above and beyond the RCPP funds for FA. NWTf has already provided assistance in outreach, communication, planning and most importantly the Arkansas Chapter paid the full \$50,000, five-year commitment for land management practice and other incentives in 2021.

PotlatchDeltic

Contact: Kit Hart Contribution \$127,000 (In-Kind) plus 3,300 acres of habitat

PotlatchDeltic is another private sector partner operating in AR and has committed to restore habitat for the Red-cockaded Woodpecker on over 17,000 acres managed as a wildlife and conservation area in conjunction with other partners to include ANHC, AFD, QF and AGFC. As a Contributing Partner performing land management practices to benefit native plant communities, PotlatchDeltic is setting a real world example for local landowners on how to make both conservation and "good business sense" go hand-in-hand.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Arkansas

Contact: Jeff Fore

Contribution: \$87,182 (In-Kind)

In 2021, Arkansas TNC provided leadership in open pine management, especially through prescribed fire treatments in the project area. Arkansas TNC has worked closely with lead partner to engage in project planning and is already working with other partners to essentially be engaged in field-level aspects of implementing and evaluating RCPP activities. Arkansas TNC has worked closely with the lead partner to support project planning in all eight counties and is working with other partners to engage field aspects of implementing RCPP activities.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Louisiana

Contact: Dan Weber

Contribution: \$30,000 (In-Kind)

During the 2021 months May-December, Louisiana TNC provided important support to the LA Natural Heritage Sites and the landowners who manage those sites; these are the benchmarks of the open pine concept. They have been a leader in open pine management and outreach across North Louisiana. Louisiana TNC has worked closely with lead partner to support project planning in the eight Parishes and is working with other partners to engage field aspects of implementing and evaluating RCPP activities.

Quail Forever (QF)

Contact: Ryan Diener

Contribution: \$13,211 (In-Kind)

QF is the Primary Active Partner that is working closely with lead partner ABC to engage in all aspects of project implementation and management. In 2021 extensive planning, dissemination of information to partners, especially to NRCS for project ranking was vital to development of the Fact Sheet and scoring effort of future projects. Field Staff worked endlessly to develop communications to landowners and laying the groundwork for sign-up efforts in the 16 Parishes and Counties. QF has and will continue to be key to implementing RCPP related activities.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service – Migratory Bird Joint Venture (USFWS-LMVJV)

Contact: Keith Mcknight

Contribution: \$3,979 (In-Kind)

The LMVJV is the umbrella organization/partnership of the AR-LA CDN. The science and strategic habitat planning for this project is founded on work by the "JV". As an active partner they have supported the science and provided material essential for the Lead Partner to operate in the RCPP area. The JV and ABC are working hand-in-hand for project supervision; contracting and administration of 3rd party support service agreements, communications, reporting; essentially being engaged in all aspects of implementing RCPP activities.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS-PFW Arkansas)

Contact: Jonathan Baxter Contribution: \$764 (In-Kind)

AR Partners for Fish and Wildlife field staff (PFW) was an Active Partner in 2021. PFW-AR engaged in planning and preparing for 2022 land management; connecting with private landowners in the RCPP area to promote conservation practices on private lands in the project area to complement the RCPP.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS-PFW Louisiana)

Contact: Seth Bordelon Contribution: \$1,168 (In-Kind)

LA Partners for Fish and Wildlife field staff (PFW) was an Active Partner in 2021. PFW-LA engaged in planning and preparing for 2022 land management; connecting with private landowners in the RCPP area to promote conservation practices on private lands in the project area to complement the RCPP.

In summary, the 19 Contributors to the Open Pine RCPP far exceeded expectations.

- Contributions for land management: **13,584 acres** (includes 1,343 miles ROW corridor);
- Outreach and coordination reached approximately **700 landowner contacts**;
- Total value approximately **\$1,723,841 of partner contributions**.

AR-LA Conservation Delivery Network Open Pine Landscape Restoration Partnership

Regional Conservation Partnership Program Fact Sheet

Project Overview

The Arkansas-Louisiana Conservation Delivery Network Open Pine Landscape Restoration Partnership Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP) Project will address wildlife habitat, fire management, and water quality concerns in Arkansas and Louisiana. By implementing open pine forest management practices across private lands in Arkansas and Louisiana, this project will advance the recovery of species of conservation concern. Partnerships with the University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff and other entities will help to ensure that historically underserved farmers and landowners participate meaningfully in the project.



AR Department of Agriculture Forestry Division photo

Primary Resource Concerns

Primary resource concerns include worsening of degraded plant condition; significant decrease in fire management; deterioration of terrestrial forest habitat, mainly due to changing land uses.

This loss of forest structure and plant diversity has caused declines in wildlife like Northern Bobwhite, Henslow’s and LeConte’s Sparrows, Louisiana Pine Snake, Red-cockaded Woodpecker and many other species.

Project Goals

Improve open forest conditions. Reduce hazardous fuel and the threat of wildfire and improve watershed condition.

Conservation Practice Funding

Funding will be available to eligible landowners through RCP. NRCS will provide financial assistance for a systems approach using approved conservation practices to address resource concerns. Land and producer eligibility and all other program criteria for participation must be met to participate in this initiative. Agricultural lands are eligible for enrollment in the initiative.

Approved Conservation Practices

- 338 — Prescribed Burning
- 394 — Firebreak
- 643 — Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities – Woodland, Glade, Barren, Savanna or Prairie Restoration
- 645 — Upland Wildlife Habitat Management – Habitat Monitoring and Management, Medium Intensity and Complexity
- 666 — Forest Stand Improvement

Note: Additional financial assistance may be available through the partnership for certain areas and conservation management practices.

How to Apply for RCPP

NRCS and associated conservation partners will deliver this program collaboratively.

In Arkansas: Applications may be obtained and filed at the following Arkansas NRCS county offices:

Ashley – (870) 853-9881, ext. 3
310 N Cherry St
Hamburg, AR 71646-3002

Bradley – Serviced in Monticello (870) 224-7313
419 W Gaines St
Monticello, AR 71655-4723

Calhoun – Serviced in Monticello (870) 224-7313
419 W Gaines St
Monticello, AR 71655-4723

Clark – (870) 246-9816, ext. 3
640 S 6th St
Arkadelphia, AR 71923-6231

Drew – (870) 367-8400, ext. 3
419 W Gaines St
Monticello, AR 71655-4723

Lincoln – (870) 628-4542, ext. 3
303 North Lincoln Avenue
Star City, AR 71667

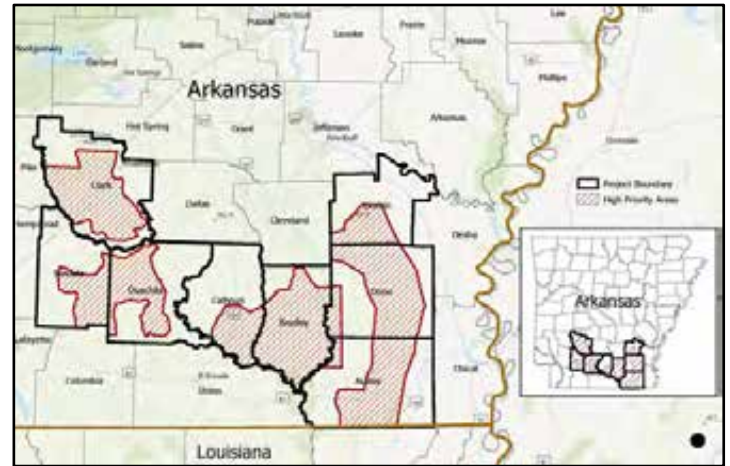
Nevada – Serviced in Hope (870) 777-8800, ext. 3
300 West Commerce Blvd
Hope, AR 7180

Ouachita – (870) 836-2089, ext. 3
151 South Adams Avenue
Camden, AR 71701

In Louisiana: Applications may be obtained and filed at the following Louisiana NRCS Parish offices:

Bienville – (318) 932-4352, ext. 3
1311 Ringgold Avenue
Coushatta, LA 71019

Claiborne – (318) 377-3950, ext. 3
216B Broadway St
Minden, LA 71055-3301



Jackson – (318) 255-3136, ext. 3
1412 Celebrity Drive
Ruston, LA 71270

Lincoln – (318) 255-3136, ext. 3
1412 Celebrity Drive
Ruston, LA 71270

Morehouse – (318) 281-1561, ext. 3
9604 Marlatt St
Bastrop, LA 71220-9758

Ouachita – (318) 343-4467, ext. 3
2410 Old Sterlington Rd Ste B
Monroe, LA 71203-2668

Union – (318) 368-8021, ext. 1
501 Glory Road
Farmerville, LA 71241

Webster – (318) 377-3950, ext. 3
216B Broadway St
Minden, LA 71055-3301



NE Texas CDN

The Northeast Texas Conservation Delivery Network Historical Benchmark 2011-2020

The Northeast Texas Conservation Delivery Network (NETX CDN), formed in 2011-12, was the first CDN established by the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture in the West Gulf Coastal Plain region. The NETX CDN was organized in an effort to more strategically meet the landscape restoration and wildlife habitat management needs identified by our collective conservation organizations. Recent years have witnessed an expanded delivery of wildlife habitat improvements on both private and public lands. Chairs and Vice-Chairs from several agencies and organizations have led a 9-member Steering Committee to ensure conservation continues well into the future.

- **2012 CDN Concept and Initial Membership Meeting 2012, Caddo State Park**
 - NETX CDN Planning Team 5/16/2012 meeting (Charter)
- **2013 CDN 2nd Full Membership Meeting 5/2013 at TPWD Nature Center, Tyler TX**
 - 32 participated from 7 agencies and organizations
- **2014 NETX CDN 3rd Membership Meeting 1/15/14 at TPWD Nature Center, Tyler TX**
 - 43 participated and developed Operational and Strategic Plan
- **2015 NETX CDN Steering Meeting 6/10/15 at Alazan WMA, Nacogdoches TX**
 - 11 participated to develop watershed-based strategy for delivery
- **2015 NETX CDN 4th Membership Meeting 6/10/15 at TPWD Nature Center, Tyler TX**
 - 42 participated and reviewed and ratified Watershed Work group concept
- **2016 NETX CDN Watershed Work Groups developed priority projects**
- **2017 NETX CDN 5th Membership Meeting 7/12/17 at TPWD Nature Center, Tyler TX**
 - ~60 participated with overview watershed group concept projects
 - Habitat Incentive Program (HIP) via TPWD/NFWF funds and NWTF
 - Watershed restoration projects initiated
 - Hosted a Rx burn workshop in Nacogdoches County (30 participants)
- **2018 NETX Membership CDN Meeting and Expanded priority project funds**
 - 7/2018 – Expanded HIP and Neches River project efforts within Priority areas
 - 9/6/18 – Understory Plant I.D., Fairchild State Forest, led by Michelle Moore TFS
 - 9/26/18 – 48 at Full CDN Tyler TX (GRIP, TFS fire expanded delivery opportunity)
 - Caddo/Cypress WG hosted H. Landel of Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center
- **2019 NETX Membership CDN Meeting and Expanded priority project funds**
 - 4/10/19 – Work group meetings and Steering Committee to prepare RFP
 - 9/19/19 – 55 at Full CDN, TX A&M Extension, Overton TX
 - Continuing Ed Credits, Extension support, and Outdoor Demonstrations
 - 22 NETX HIP Projects 2017-19 complete; 7,384 ac, \$398,425 or \$53.95/ac
- **2020 NETX Virtual CDN Meetings – overcoming C-19 obstacles**
 - 5/7/21 – SC Meeting to reshape & build our leadership post-COVID
 - 7/15/20 – New Chair Andy McCrady, V-Chair Reuben Gay RFP concept revised
 - 9/14/20 – Virtual CDN Meeting

NETX CDN Working Group Leads
1 March 1:30-3 pm
Virtual ZOOM Meeting

Leads - Be prepared to discuss – What have YOU have done this year with your Team to promote CDN priorities – see NETX Strategic Plan - <https://www.lmvjv.org/ne-texas-cdn>

*- The Northeast Texas Conservation Delivery Network (NETX CDN) has been organized in an effort to more strategically meet the wildlife and landscape restoration and management; the cornerstone of NETX CDN is communication and collaboration through a networking...set priorities for projects related to **focal species by watershed** - High priority species in “Open Pine”, Bottomland Hardwood; Migratory Birds & freshwater Fish & Mussels.....*

Tickler Questions –

What have you done to promote Open Pine – Forest & Rx Fire? Fish or Mussels?

Welcome – 1-1-:10 Lee Andersen & Annie Farrell (Lee -The NETX CDN Steering Committee will be convening later in March - a working group meeting prior to SC will provide items for agenda & action.

What is a CDN – 1:10-1:25 Bartush

Group Leads – 1:25 – 2:15 what have you done to promote “Priority Restoration & management” (such as Open Pine - Rx Fire) on your Team; accomplishments, group makeup changes or suggestions.

Leadership needs (alternates); discuss conservation 2020 accomplishment/evaluation; 2021 needs.

Upcoming efforts - Options and opportunities for NETX CDN in 2021.

2:20-2:30 – Annie Farrell - 2020 RFP status, NETX HIP totals & ongoing projects

Q&A – all participants

Lee Andersen - Propose Dates 7 or 14 September

March – May Virtual Tours

Robert Speight – Cypress Basin; Thoughts on a Fish/mussel lead

Ragan White – Red River (grasslands) Paris solar farm

Penny Wilkerson – Sulphur River Opportunities

Larry Lebeau – Sabine River and WMA alignment

Jeff Reid – working with TIMO’s on Shortleaf & FRC

Rueben Gay – Expanded HIP

Shawn Benedict & Brandon Belcher – TNC Fire 2021

Jamie Hooker – Open Pine opportunities with Jason Ellis – the opportunity for virtual tours & NRCS video plans would also be good as well as the QF schedule via facebook.

Clay Shipes – Wetland activities & BHWD (stewardship planning - TFS)

- **Bartush** Provide DFCW objectives & relation to Strategic Plan (LMVJV website) TLIT and coordination in the counties of overlap (use map as graphic)
- **Jenny Sanders**- TLIT issues of common concern like fire and BHWD
- TX by Nature application and shared video work – virtual field days/cont. ed.

Note to all - Let us know about future Grant Opportunity - Safari Club

Annie Farrell - summary of 2020

Q&A - all

Closing Comments

NETX CDN



Lower Mississippi Valley
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How did we get here?

Bartush CDN "Refresher" Presentation - 3/1/2021 CDN Meeting

LMVJV Function



Lower Mississippi Valley
JOINT VENTURE

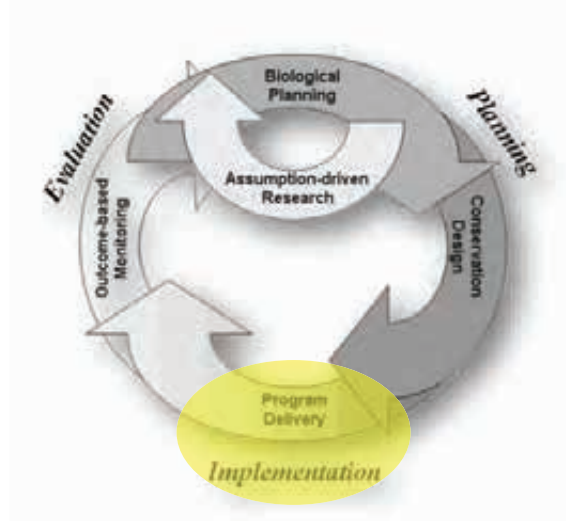
LMVJV Mission

The LMV Joint Venture functions as the forum in which the private, state, federal conservation community develops a shared vision of bird conservation for the LMV region; cooperates in its implementation; and collaborates in its refinement

Strategic Habitat Conservation

STRATEGIC conservation can be truly realized only when each component is functional and interrelated to all other components

In the end, only one of these five functional elements is the target



LMVJV - CDN Connection How a CDN Functions



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JOINT VENTURE

Forum where agencies and organizations responsible for natural resource conservation coordinate on-the-ground delivery of otherwise independent efforts, prioritizing delivery actions that target development of sustainable landscapes.

Primary Functions

1. Facilitate communication, coordination, and collaboration among delivery leaders, to include conservation organizations from within and beyond the current JV partnership.
2. Facilitate communication between planning/design and delivery

CDN



Lower Mississippi Valley
JOINT VENTURE

Expected Outcomes

- ❑ Increased communication among delivery staff
- ❑ Capitalizing on (otherwise lost) opportunities
- ❑ Unified voice to:
 - ❑ Potential funders
 - ❑ Landowners
- ❑ More focused and strategic collective efforts
 - ❑ Identification of priorities
 - ❑ Geographic & functional focus where positive outcomes are most likely
- ❑ Bigger, Better, Measurable results

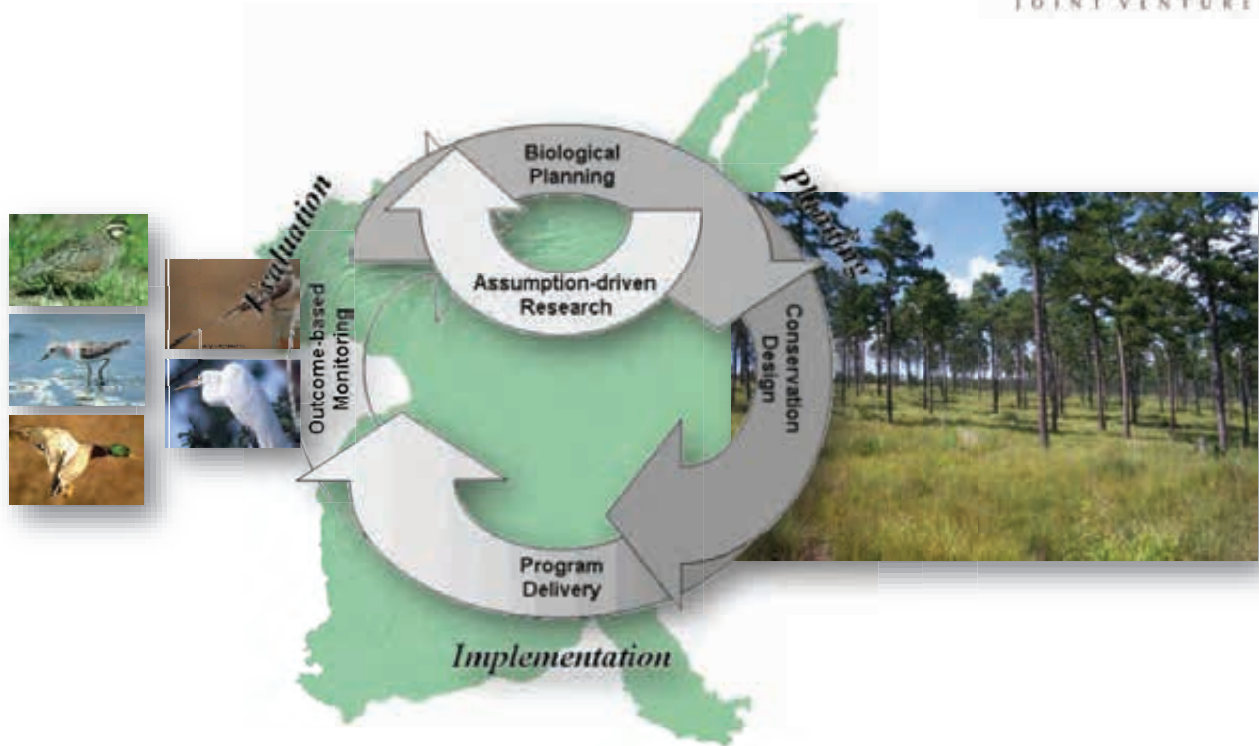
CDN



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Relevant Documents

- ❑ CDN Charter
- ❑ Two-page Summary
- ❑ Operating Guidelines
- ❑ Initiation Standards & Geography
- ❑ AR MAV CDN Governance Document



Defining CDN Geography



Geographic Features – LMVJV Region & CDNs



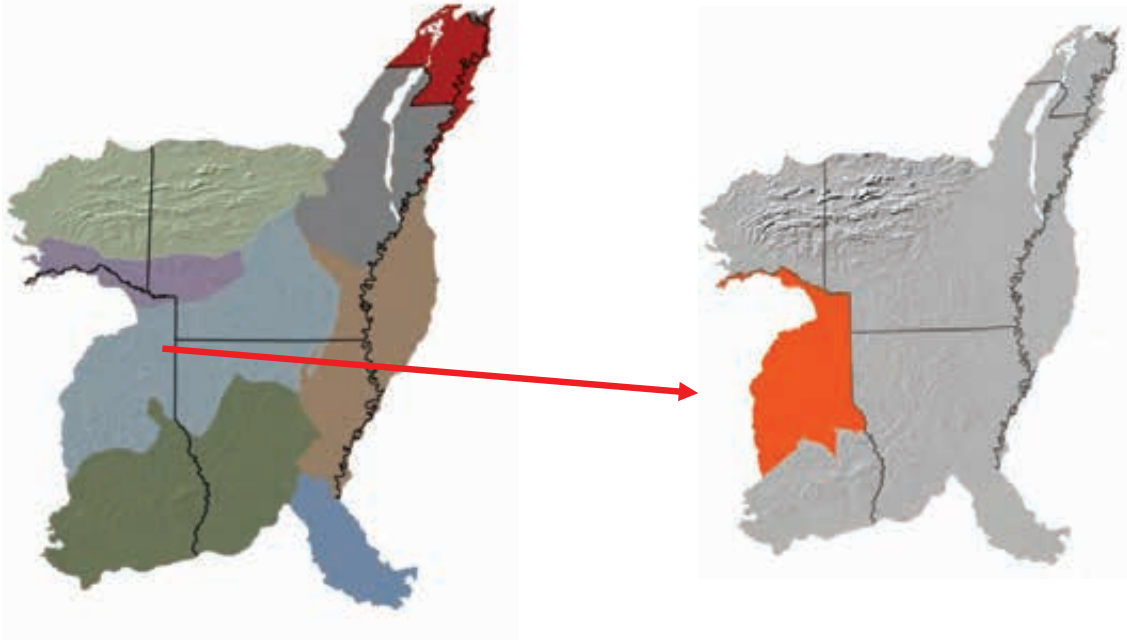
- Large enough to be relevant
- Common resource issues
- Small enough to be logistically manageable
 - Travel
 - Group Size

NETX(BCR25) WGCP CDN



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JOINT VENTURE

How did WE get from Here ---- to Here?

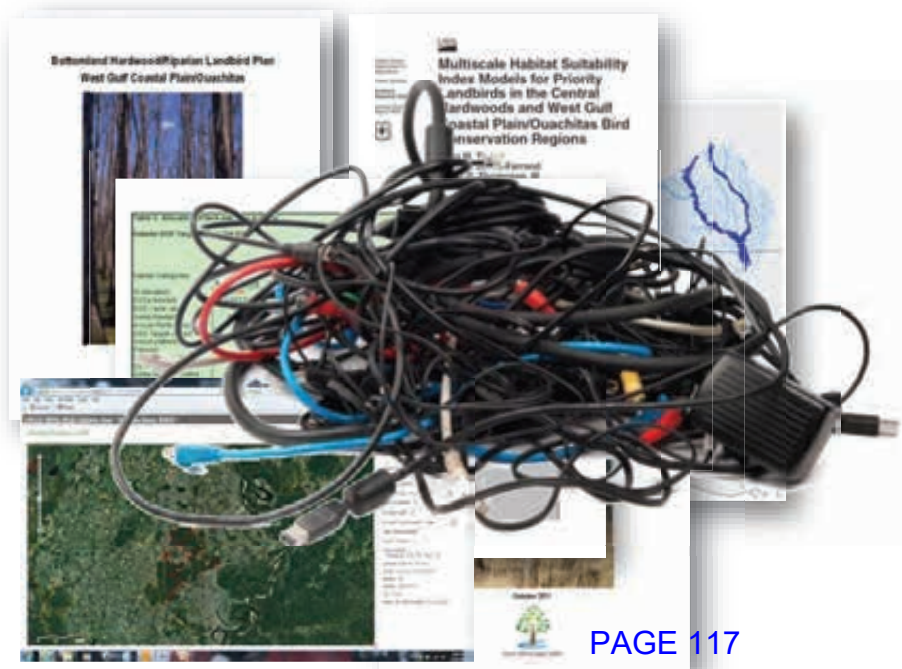


LMVJV



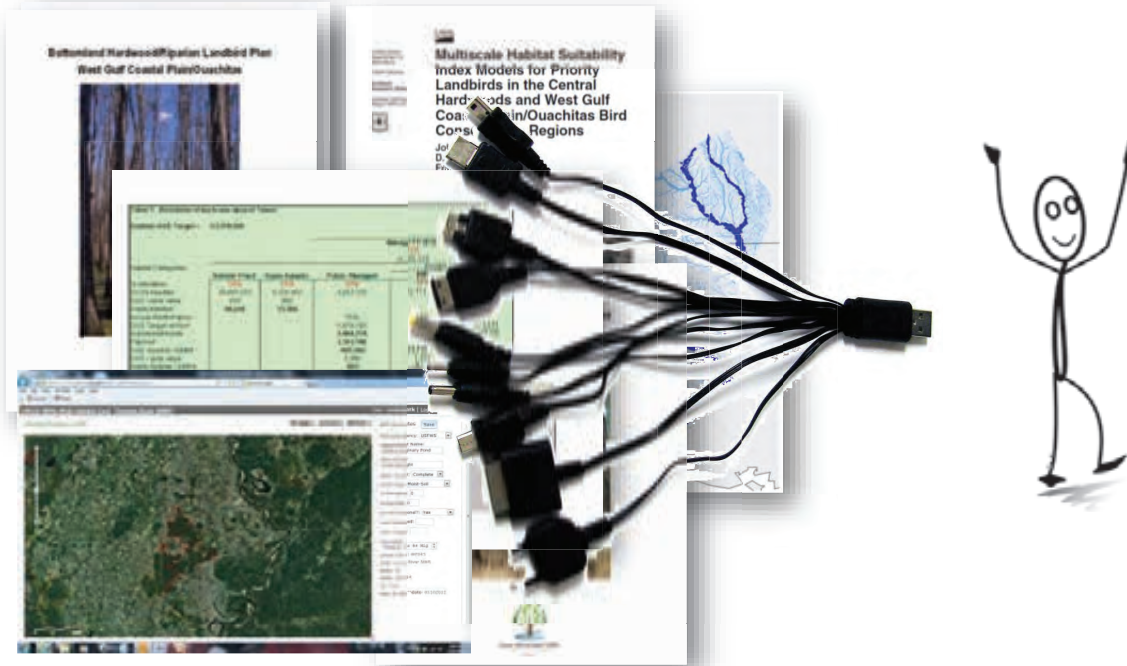
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NETX – How can WE Continue Working Better Together





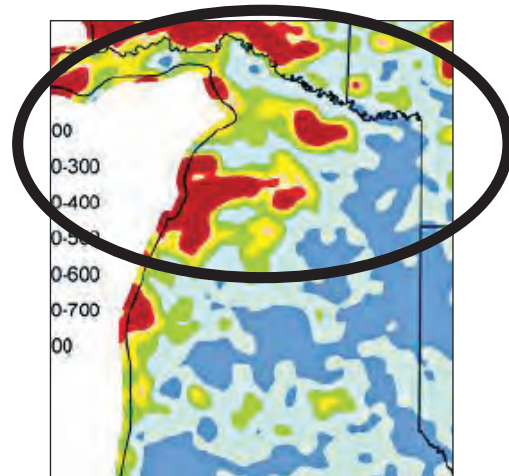
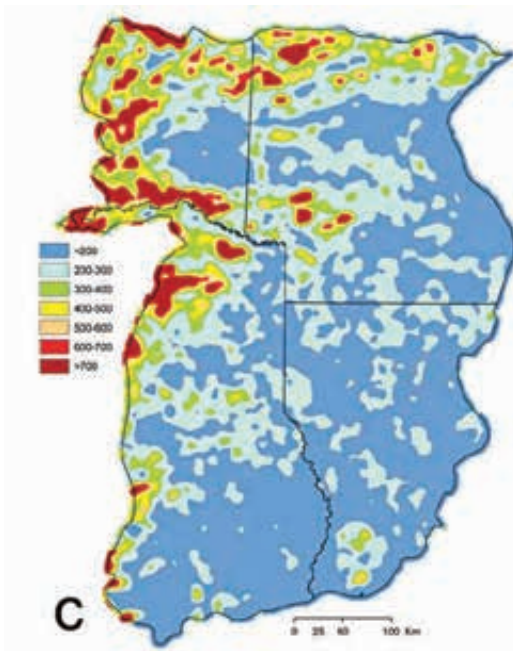
Support/Coord/Lead Conservation Design & Shared Vision



NE Texas CDN



Twedt et. al. (2007) Northern Bobwhite Model - GRIP

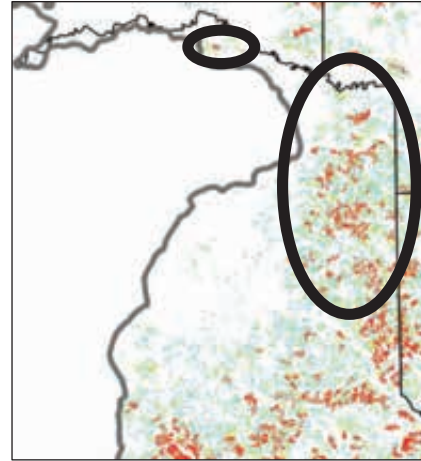
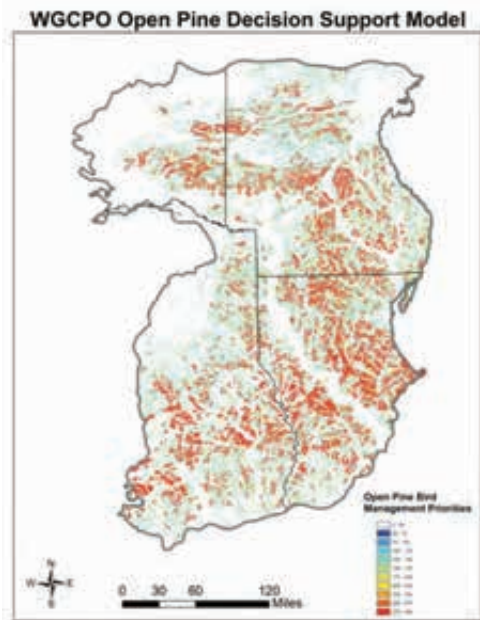


NE Texas CDN



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LMVJV Open Pine Management DST – SLP & LLP



NE Texas CDN

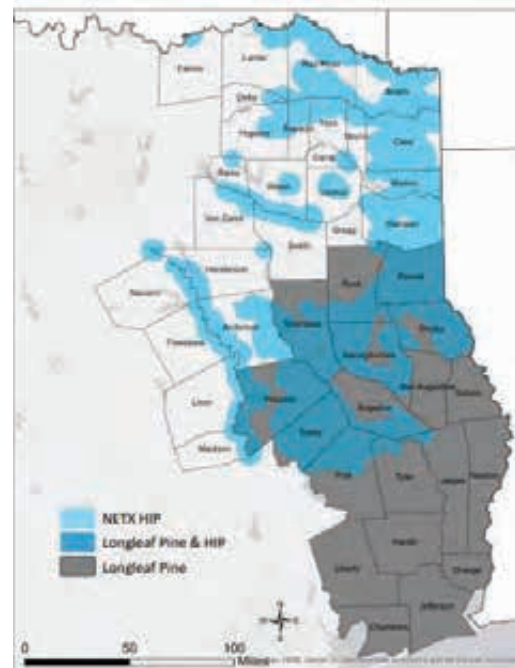
10 Year Evolution

Expanded NETX to include:

- GRIP Counties from OPJV
- Neches River Corridor
- Middle Trinity River
 - GRIP

Greater role – BCR25 Coordination

- AR-LA CDN
- LA Longleaf
- TLIT



Approximate location of NE TX CDN Draft Focus Areas in relation to the "Arkansas" Wild Turkey HSI model.

NE Texas CDN



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JOINT VENTURE

- ❑ NETX CDN continues to address priorities;
- ❑ NETX CDN has expanded geographic focus;
 - Partner involvement and enthusiasm
 - Species targets, landscape potential, and landowner pool
 - Ability to monitor “success metrics”

- ❑ Changing Leadership – Working Groups

- ❑ Expand Grasslands and Forested Wetlands

NETX CDN Working Group Leads
1 March 1:30-3 pm
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Leads - Be prepared to discuss – What have YOU have done this year with your Team to promote CDN priorities – see NETX Strategic Plan - <https://www.lmvjv.org/ne-texas-cdn>

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Penny Wilkerson – Sulphur River Opportunities

Larry Lebeau – Sabine River and WMA alignment

Jeff Reid – working with TIMO’s on Shortleaf & FRC

Jason Ellis Fairchild efforts, fire, RCW and mechanical

Andy McCrady fire summary for 2010 to date

Rueben Gay – Expanded HIP

Shawn Benedict & Brandon Belcher – TNC Fire 2021

Jamie Hooker – Open Pine opportunities with Jason Ellis – the opportunity for virtual tours & NRCS video plans would also be good as well as the QF schedule via Facebook. Brought in many issues about fire and NRCS and the focus on how we can work closer with NRCS on fire application using farm bill.

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Note to all - Let us know about future Grant Opportunity - **Safari Club**

Annie Farrell - summary of 2020

Q&A - all

NETX Steering Committee Notes

The NETX Steering Committee met and has the following recommendations and actions:

- Search Committee (Andersen, Farrell, and Bartush) will seek SC recommendations for Chair, and submit proposed action on or before July 16, 2021.
- Proposed Face-to-Face All Hands CDN meeting on September 7, 2021 (alt date 9/14).
- All SC members will review Working Group Leads and SC membership; seek new members as needed, and alternates, to assure continuity of leadership.
- Projected May/June RFP; expected CDN SC Meeting for RFP review in mid-July 2021.

0930 ZOOM meeting opened to 34 participants (see attachment to Notes for names of attendees).

NOTE - the meeting was recorded; for ease of review, segments on the recording will be listed in the Notes with start/stop times.

This virtual meeting included all Steering Committee (SC) members (except Brian Pope), and was an effort to get the NETX leadership back on track with an overview of roles and responsibilities, and planned 2021 activities.

Welcome (0-5 min) - Lee Andersen, Chair and Annie Farrell, Administrator, introduced the meeting and provided an Agenda Review and SC Roll Call.

CDN Overview (5-30 min) - Keith McKnight described the origin of the CDN concept within the Joint Venture (JV) partnership. It is all about working together better, to leverage additional conservation funds and ensure better coordinated conservation actions. At the same time, the CDN is more than project funding for conservation incentives; it is about coordinated conservation – building a Shared Vision for East Texas – as described on our NETX Strategic Plan <https://www.lmvjv.org/ne-texas-cdn>. *The Northeast Texas Conservation Delivery Network (NETX CDN) has been organized in an effort to more strategically meet the wildlife and landscape restoration and management; the cornerstone of NETX CDN is communication and collaboration through networking...setting priorities for projects related to focal species by watershed ... to include priority species in "Open Pine" as well as Bottomland Hardwood ... for Migratory Birds & freshwater Fish & Mussels...*

Leadership and Work Groups (30-45 min) - Lee Andersen and Bill Bartush initiated discussion on leadership at all levels of the CDN. Discussion included avenues to revitalize CDN efforts post-COVID (as we build on previous CDN overview), reminding SC members of their responsibilities – you are here to lead and speak up. If you have questions or concerns, “say something.” Your leadership and oversight is essential. Also, help us assure successional planning and CDN continuity; we need all of the SC members to offer suggestions for membership and build future leaders. Marcos DeJesus suggested we continue to find ways to integrate riparian and water quality efforts, perhaps by incorporating Fisheries funds on public waters. Laura-Ashley Overdyke identified a landowner on Little Cypress in Marion County, with significant cut grass problems and tallow. Let’s find avenues to support projects to remove those invasive species, and continue DFCW discussions with NCRS for improved bottomland

hardwoods, and restored areas through replanting. We need future NCRS participation for forestry opportunities, not just for pine, but hardwoods as well.

OPJV-GRIP (45-49 min) - Derek Wiley provided the current status of personnel, and progress in seeking a new OPJV coordinator.

HIP Progress Report (49-59 min) - Annie Farrell provided a summary of funds and projects, especially as related to considerations for project extension requests. Our funds are time-sensitive, and this fact needs to be firmly impressed on project managers and landowners. Emphasis needs to be placed on Project Managers to ensure the projects are completed on time; in the future consider penalties, ie if a landowner/manager is tabbed with late or incomplete projects, perhaps their future proposal requests should be penalized through denial or reduced cost-share.

Hip Support 2021-22 (1.1-1.13min) - Jeff Raasch described statewide landowner recognition, and specifically HIP-related signs for a landowner's participation in conservation. The sign was displayed for review, and will be produced for delivery to existing cooperating landowners. Also, the funds for HIP do not have to be "open pine," but could include wetlands and bottomland hardwoods. Lee Andersen addressed Winter 2020-21 RFP; the delay status was due to funds still in process, and we cannot allocate project funds until money is received by NWTF. A lesson learned – we probably should not make announcement until the funds are in hand.

Alternative Funding Opportunities (1.13-1.21 min) - Will Newman covered farm bill opportunities to supplement HIP, such as RCPP or the Working Lands program for partners.

Jenny Sanders 1.21-1.22) - Jenny Sanders described TLIT connection to NETX, and expects news regarding TX by Nature application. A TLIT 4/15 RFP is being planned.

Partner News (1.24-1.30) - **TPWD** news on potential new "large-property" project funding was described by Steve Lange. Carbon Sequestration on public lands is also a possible opportunity, depending on proximity to power plants (example used was Reliant Energy and Old Sabine WMA). **TNC** David Bezanson appreciated participation with Brandon Belcher. **TFS** updates Lee Andersen introduced Jake Donellan, East Texas Operations, who stated Chris Kirby is taking over duties from Lee Andersen; Jake wants to ensure to continue TFS's close working relationship with TLIT and CDN. **CLI** - Lara Ashley Overdyke encouraged continued discussion about wetlands and hardwood riparian conservation efforts, and would like to see those elements amplified and be a greater part of the CDN.

Closeout - Lee Andersen thanked the group and encouraged all to stay in touch – email or call to make recommendations or offer ideas. The meeting has been recorded and will be posted soon.

Attendance

Lee Andersen (Chair)

Annie Farrell (Vice Chair – Administrator)

Steering Committee

Caddo Lake Institute/Cypress Basin

USDA – NRCS

National Wild Turkey Federation

The Nature Conservancy

Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept.

Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept.

USFWS (Partners)

USFWS (Refuges)

Laura Ashley Overdyke

Rigoberto Lopez

Annie Farrell

David Bezanson

Stephen Lange

Marcos DeJesus

Steve Arey

Erik Duerkop

Working Group Leads

Robert Speight NETMWD

Jeff Reid – USFWS

Reuben Gay - TPWD District Biologist

Penny Wilkerson, TPWD Wildlife Biologist

Jamie Hooker, NWTF Forester

Caddo Lake-Big Cypress Bayou Priority Area

Neches River Working Group Lead

Trinity River Working Group Lead

Sulphur River Working Group Lead

Open Pine Working Group Lead

Derek Wiley TPWD Delivery Coordinator – OPJV

Timothy Bister TPWD Fisheries Biologist Caddo WG

Roger Wolfe TPWD District Leader

Rusty Wood TPWD District Leader

Will Newman TPWD farm Bill Liaison

Brandon Belcher The Nature Conservancy

Jamie Hooker NWTF Forester

Clay Shipes TPWD Migratory Game Bird Biologist

Alan Shadow NRCS Pinewoods PMC

Frank Baca NRCS Zone Wildlife Biologist

Jason Villwock NRCS Zone Forester

Brian Townsend NRCS State Forester

Andy McCrady TFS Fire Program

Jake Donellan TFS East TX Operations Head

Thomas Janke QF/OPJV - Coordinating Wildlife Biologist and Rx Fire Coordinator

Jenny Sanders TLIT Coordinitor

Jeff Raasch TPWD

Keith McKnight USFWS and Coordinator LMVJV

Bill Bartush Partnership Coordinator LMVJV

AGENDA

July 19, 2021 1-2:30 pm ZOOM Steering Committee Meeting

Northeast Texas Conservation Delivery Network –NETX CDN

Leadership -

(A) Introduce 2021-22 Working Group Leads and SC membership; discuss possible new members and SC alternates. As discussed in March, named alternates would be an effective avenue to ensure continuity and successional strength for the NETX CDN. Other members introduced (Texas Land Conservancy) - discussion

- *The Search Committee recommendations for Chair/Vice Chair **(Action)***

2021-2022 RFP Habitat Incentive Program -

(B) Review RFP results and offer recommendations for funding:

Overview of proposals submitted and recommendations for SC approval

- *Standard Habitat Incentive Program (HIP) \$100,000*
- *Neches River Priority Area (PA) \$73,500 (additional funds are available) **
- ***Action on project recommendations***

(C) Changes in RFP process and project protocol

*For a number of reasons, a more logical process is being discussed for funding and defining NETX habitat incentive project funds. Rationale and details will be presented to the steering committee for consideration. Because the NETX partnership has a well-defined priority map for delivery – **proposal is to drop the Neches River priority area and consider funding from all sources in all counties.***

Future of RFP Opportunities – Larger pool of funds

- *TPWD has provided dedicated Federal Aid sourced funds (\$161-200k annually) for larger-scale fire-based, multi-year projects as described by Steve Lange during our March 2021 Steering Committee Meeting.*
- *State stamp “HIP funds” will still be available at ~\$100k annually; our recommendation is to use these funds for select properties that may require a wider breadth of practices.*
- *Discuss the value of the \$20,000 maximum o(CAP) for project proposals*

OTHER BUSINESS - Discuss plans for our Face-to-Face “All Hands CDN Meeting” on September 7, 2021. We hope to convene the full membership at TX A&M Overton (same venue as 2019); serve meals and include field trip to nearby forest stands managed by TX A&M Forest Service.

- *August 9-13 Rx Fire Managers Course (Engling WMA)*
- *October 5 Wetlands Workshop (Engling WMA)*

Northeast Texas Conservation Delivery Network

Steering Committee Meeting

July 19, 2021

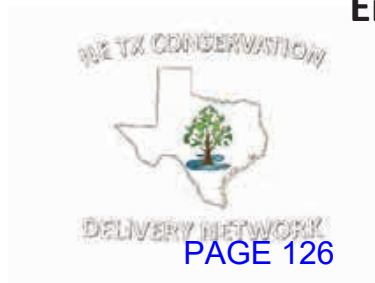


Chair: Andy McCrady Texas A&M Forest Service
Vice Chair – Reuben Gay Texas Parks & Wildlife

Steering Committee

Caddo Lake Institute
USDA – NRCS
National Wild Turkey Federation
Texas A&M Forest Service
The Nature Conservancy
Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept.
Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept.
USFWS (Partners)
USFWS (Refuges)

Laura Ashley Overdyke
Rigo Lopez
Annie Farrell
Brian Pope
David Bezanson
Stephen Lange
Marcos DeJesus
Steve Arey
Erik Duerkop



Watershed Working Groups

Caddo Lake-Big Cypress Bayou Priority Area

≠ Robert Speight NETMWD

Neches River Corridor Priority Area

≠ Jeff Reid USFWS

Red River Corridor Priority Area

≠ Ragan White TPWD

Sabine River Corridor Priority Area

≠ **Vacant**

Sulphur River Corridor Priority Area

≠ Penny Wilkerson TPWD

Trinity River Corridor Priority Area

≠ Reuben Gay TPWD



Steering Committee

Recommendation – Action by 7/30

Chair: Andy McCrady Texas A&M Forest Service

Vice Chair: Rueben Gay Texas Parks & Wildlife

Other Considerations

Working Group Leads – Sabine vacancy

Membership – Other Agencies or Organizations



RFP Discussion Points

FY 2021-22 HIP RFP; 6/16 – 7/15 (35 days)

- ✓ 35 proposals received (NR & Std HIP)*
- ✓ Acres - 7,213 & Cost - \$289,035
- ✓ Average Cost per Acre - \$35 & \$58
- ✓ Available RFP Funding - \$160k NR/\$88.5k Std

Action Requested New Proposals

- Proposals – Recommendation to fund green projects
- Suggest - obligate slightly more than budget

Questions, Comments & Assessment?

Other Business

- **Membership & Leadership of Working Groups**
- **CDN Membership Meeting September 7th**
 - Location Overton TX A&M Extension Center
 - Lunch Provided
 - Field Trip
- **Other Calendar**
 - August 9-13 Rx Fire training – Engling WMA
 - October 5 Wetlands (BHWD-DFCW) Engling WMA
 - Shortleaf Pine Field Day(s) – Fall TBD

AGENDA

NETX CDN General Membership Meeting

**1.2 miles North of TX A&M AgriLife Research Center on FM 3053 – Overton TX
September 7, 2021 9:00 am – 2 pm (lunch, water, snacks provided)**

- 9:00 – 9:15** Introductions - Andy McCrady (chair) Reuben Gay (vice chair)
- Orientation & Safety
 - NETX CDN & Group Leads (NETX Ops Plan Handout)
- 9:15-9:30** NETX, TLIT & HIP (Bill Bartush - Map & Handouts)
- Working better together – What is a CDN (Jeff Raasch)
 - Setting Objectives – We Invest in a Strategy (Keith McKnight)
- 9:30-12 Noon** Managing Pine Plantations (Eric Taylor & Chris Kirby TX A&M FS)
- Walk through stands (Handouts)
 - 9:45 Site History & Evaluation
 - Multiple Stops at Stands & end at SMZ
 - Harvest outcome (Kirby)
 - Using a prism (BA); aging stands – basic tools
 - 10:15 Divide into groups (10-15) 30 minutes per group & Rotate
 - SMZ (Group #1 Wood/Hardin)
 - Plantation Objectives/Options (Group #2 Kirby/Willis)
 - Herbicide 101 – what are your options (Group #3 Taylor)
- 11:30-12:15** **LUNCH** (Provided by LMVJV) **Discussion on Plantation Management**
- Handouts** - Cost Share List – what, why and how we use practices;
Decision Support Tool for Projects (screenshots – connecting the dots)
- 12:30 pm** **Pastures to Prairies Ideas (Gay/Perez/Wayland – OPJV/PUB/ET Native**
- 12:50 pm** **Open Pine Options (LLP/SLP) – cut/replant/conversion (Sanders/Wood)**
- 1:15 pm** **Fire in East Texas – Successful projects (McCrady/Farrell)**
- 1:30 pm** **Open Discussion & Closeout**

East Texas Shortleaf Pine Tour Agenda

November 16, 2021

Emphasis – This tour will focus on the management of Open Pine through use of mechanical, chemical, and fire practices to promote landscape-scale habitat for priority Species. With emphasis on shortleaf pine management and restoration, we will specifically look at management scenarios, plant and wildlife associations in ways useful by consultants, landowners and managers. Speakers on this tour will include shortleaf experts, resource scientists and fire ecologists. With its focus on the Neches River corridor, this is the fifth installment of the NETX Shortleaf Initiative.

Hosted by: Northeast Texas Conservation Delivery Network and key partner sponsors - Texas Parks and Wildlife, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Texas A&M Forest Service. **Who should attend: forest landowners, consultants, agency personnel, and anyone interested in shortleaf pine restoration and management.**

****** We will have a scheduled lunch break. ***Please bring a sack lunch or field snacks*** to eat between stops or during discussions. Water and drinks will be provided.

Schedule

8:30 AM – Meet at Fairchild State Forest (FSF). Welcome and introductions (Jason Ellis, TX A&M FS Brian Townsend, NRCS & Rusty Wood, TPWD). Coffee, maps and handouts available.

9:10-9:20 AM – **Travel to Site #1, caravan style; consolidate passengers if possible.**

9:30-10 AM - Site #1 – Stand 3A, young shortleaf stands, plus logging operation to promote native grasses. See results of seed tree regeneration and removal; discuss silvicultural treatments, seedling response, herbaceous understory, and fire regime. (Jason Ellis & Rusty Wood) – drive through forest.

10:15 AM - Site #2 – Stand 4, discuss 9-year shortleaf stand, part of stand burned in year 6, and discuss understory during walk between burned vs unburned portion of stand; discuss stand conditions, seedling/sapling response, herbaceous understory, and fire regime.

11:00 AM - Site #3 – Stand 3B, adjacent to previous stand, this is a natural shortleaf stand, pre-commercially thinned, prescribed fire planned; drive through FSF by shortleaf Demo site.

11:30 AM - Site #4 – Forage 10, RCW recruitment stand; NWTF grant funding for herbicide and mulching treatment; explain practice applications (Jason Ellis & Donna Work)

12:00-1:00 PM – Break for lunch; portable toilets on site.

1:00-1:30 PM - Site #5 – Stand 26, 2nd thinning, and forest opening planted with native grasses; (Jason Ellis & Tyler Wayland) FSF drive by Stand 25 – young shortleaf stand towards FRC sites on private land.

1:30-2:00 PM - Site #6 – Private land (FRC) View 4-year shortleaf stand; discuss stand history, 1st planting and inter-planting and fire; impacts on herbaceous understory, burn regime (Todd Thomas & Don Dietz).

2:00-3:00 PM - Site #7 – Shortleaf stand same age site #6 better site; discussion of site index and ecological context; suitable shortleaf soils, desired forest conditions, wildlife response, etc. (Led by Don Dietz, Forestry Consultant; Tyson Hart, Ecologist, NRCS; Reuben Gay and Rusty Wood, TPWD).

Final Comments and Discussion – Mike Black, Director, Shortleaf Initiative

Invitation – 2021 East Texas Shortleaf Pine Tour

When: November 16, 2021 – 8:30 coffee; 9:00 tour begins. Where: Fairchild State Forest – Park at residence area, approximately 4 miles west of Maydelle, Texas, at the intersection of State Highway 84 and FM 747.

This link will take you to the map: <https://goo.gl/maps/KEiiXmD3J9k1ctax6>

Guest Speakers and Tour Leaders:

Mike Black, Director of Shortleaf Initiative – Knoxville, TN

Rusty Wood, Dist. 6 Supervisor – Texas Parks and Wildlife

Jason Ellis, District Forester – Texas A & M Forest Service

Brian Townsend, State Forester – USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service

Don Dietz – Wildlife Biologist & Forestry Consultant, East Texas

Tyson Hart, Ecologist – USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service

Tyler Wayland, East Texas Natives Texas A&M, Kingsville & Pineywoods PMC

Donna Work, Wildlife Biologist – Texas A & M Forest Service

Contact Phone Numbers:

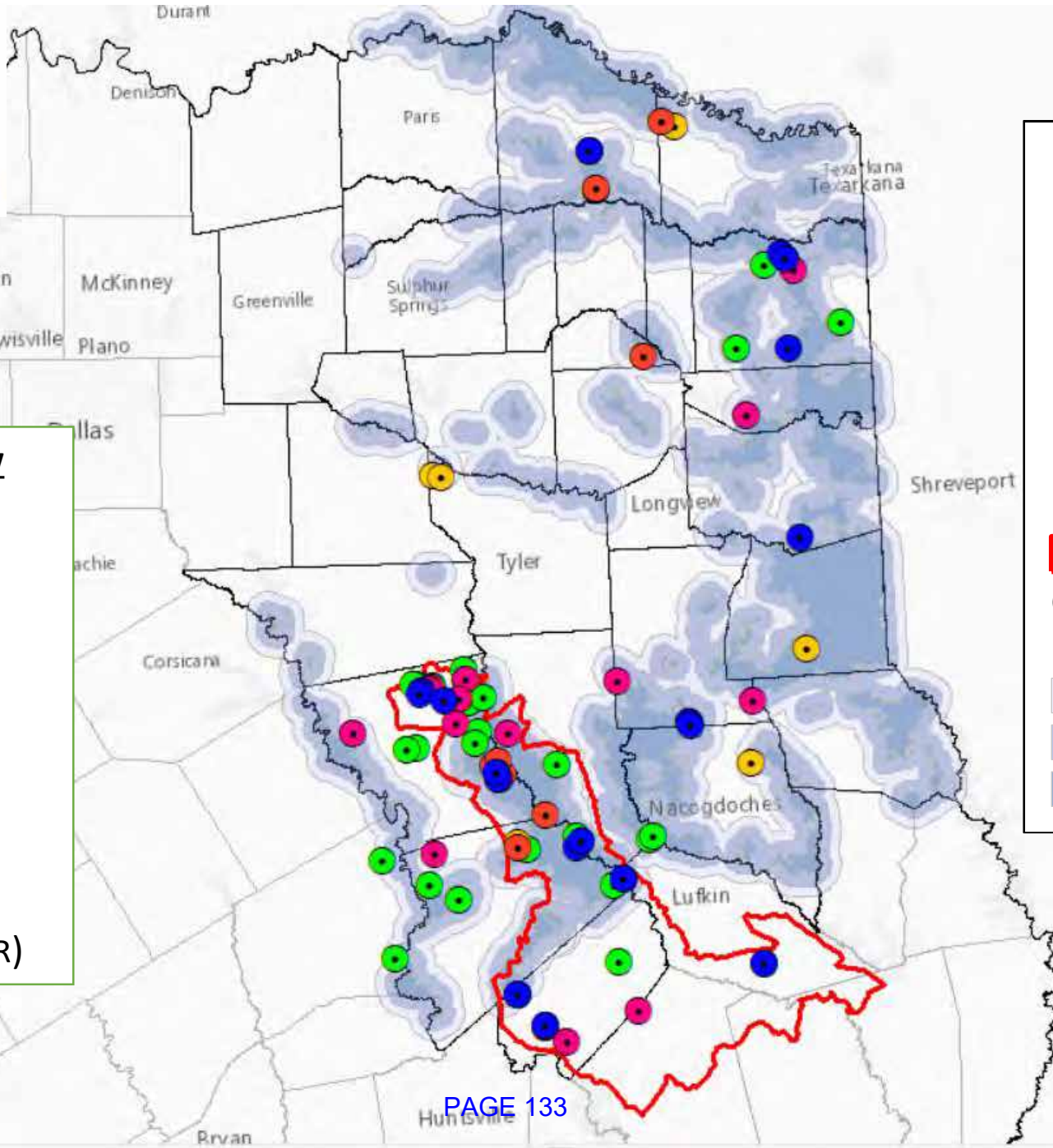
Rusty Wood – (409) 383-8065; Jason Ellis – (936) 545-6026; or Bill Bartush – (903) 570-9626



www.shortleafpine.net

Year	Dollars (Standard and NR HIP)	Acres Impacted
FY17	\$187,599	942
FY18/19	\$210,827	6,442
FY20	\$140,215	3,543
FY21	\$241,583	5,225
FY22	\$11,418	354
Totals	\$792,848	16,502
FY22 (In Progress)	\$269,275	6,853





Legend

HIP Projects

RFP Year

- 2017
- 2018-19
- 2020
- 2021
- 2022

CDN Priority Areas

Rank

- 4 mile
- 2 mile
- 95 Conf

Neches River Priority Area

NETX CDN HIP Overview
2017-2021

- 2017 – 8 projects
- 2018 – 13 projects
- 2019 – 18 projects
- 2020 – 16 projects
- 2021 – 19 projects
- 2022 – 30 projects

TOTAL – 104 projects

- ✓ 76 complete (62 STD, 14 NR)
- ✓ 28 in progress (11 STD, 17 NR)



Texas Longleaf Team



TLIT February 9, 2021
Steering Committee Meeting Notes

Meeting Tasks and Actions

- RFP deadline coming in April; Review Applications for funding
- Revised Project Evaluation Criteria – **voted and approved**
- Wendy Ledbetter – will send Stewardship Council information
- Jenny Sanders will send email listing current Working Group members. Via email to Jenny, (a) Agree to continue with Group, or (b) Drop your “assignment”

Welcome Jenny Sanders, TLIT Coordinator

- State of the Team Update – Jenny Sanders, TLIT
 - NFWF Grant Submission for the full \$300,000
 - Thanks to partners who provided in-kind match to help with 2021 grant
 - Forest Resource Consultants, Hancock Forest Management, Boggy Slough Conservation Area, & Texas Land Conservancy contributed amounts required to meet in-kind support for NFWF grant.
 - Conservation Wrangler Submission – Jenny Sanders
 - Focus on Texas-led, on-going conservation projects in Texas
 - <https://texanbynature.org/programs/conservation-wrangler/>
 - Provides in-kind funding support.
 - Funding Position/Outlook – Hughes Simpson, TFS
 - \$100,000 available cost shares for projects/outreach
- Partner Updates
 - Longleaf Accomplishments / Planned Activities / Collaborative Opportunities
 - ALRI – Stephanie Hertz
 - Longleaf Partnership Council <http://www.americaslongleaf.org/who-s-involved/partnership-council/>
 - BTA – Wendy Ledbetter
 - Big Thicket National Preserve collaboration
 - TPWD – Jason Estrella
 - TX Farm/Ranch Lands Conservation Program - easements for working lands
 - FRC – Don Dietz
 - Pending change of ownership – but conservation actions continue
 - Partners for Fish and Wildlife – Jeff Reid, USFWS
 - Crest Natural Resources and Scrappin’ Valley; burning RCW/LPS habitat
 - ABC – Bill Bartush, with Steve Jack
 - Burning via NETXCDN; conservation actions include SMZs
 - Burning on a landscape scale; not stand-by-stand; fire burns into SMZs
 - Beneficial to note these landscape ecological benefits in our virtual seminars



Final Notes

- LLA – Ryan Bollinger
 - Water Resources included in latest project; includes water quality/quantity, drinking water, and examines groundwater and land restoration/protection
 - Longleaf 101: Planning for next year; hopes to make academies virtual, and some in person
 - Online web mapping tool will be available from Florida Natural Areas Inventory <https://www.fnai.org/>
 - Longleaf Alliance is now virtual with Longleaf Academy. Currently addressing herbicide; Longleaf 101 in South Carolina is planned <https://www.longleafalliance.org/what-we-do/education/longleaf-academy-program>
 - LLA new website is about to open; extensive literature review and library
- Texas Forests and Drinking Water Partnership – Hughes Simpson, TFS
 - Deals with watershed services
 - Conducted watershed assessment a few years ago. Map of priority areas important for drinking water sources: <http://bit.ly/TFDWP> Click on “Priority Watersheds” and Story Map
- LEO Update – Ryan Bollinger, LLA
 - Have contract with Azimuth Forestry/Suzanne Walker to do field work; surveyed/visited 60% of the sites. Contract ends - October
 - Have secured funding for second “round” of LEO (outside TLIT/LL polygons); will conduct surveys next year
- TLIT Steering Committee Business – Jenny Sanders
 - Project Ranking Criteria for May RFP
 - Applicants will receive application packet.
 - Includes current TLCAP Project Evaluation Criteria and TLCAP Priority Map
 - April 15 and September 30 – designated annual RFP deadlines
 - Layers used to create Priority Map, in order of “importance”:
 - Soils suitability; Anchor sites – where longleaf exists, historic range, and priority habitat
 - Revised Project Evaluation Criteria – **(reviewed, voted, and approved)**
 - Geographic Priority – see map; Landowner Cooperation History, Project size
 - **Nomination of Steering Committee Chair** – Jenny Sanders, Bill Bartush
 - Bill Bartush is current Chair; position works directly with Coordinator
 - Coordinator and Chair discuss ideas, issues, etc.
 - Chair responds to some calls received by Coordinator
 - Contact Jenny or Bill with nominations; or, volunteer self as candidate
 - Vote to be taken at May Steering Committee meeting
 - 2021 Work Plan Discussion
 - Should funds be limited for April RFP? Or save a certain amount for September RFP?
 - Flexibility needed to fund good projects; no hard numbers on what is allowed
 - Will fund good proposals; if none, funds set aside for September
 - Ranking/Scoring



Final Notes

- Decision: Jenny will do initial ranking/scoring; will then circulate to Chair of the Steering Committee and Chair of the Project Review Committee
- Define a minimum score for funding
- Goal – Steering Committee meets to review scored applications within 2 weeks of RFP deadline

- Working Group Reports and Discussion
 - Communications – Stephanie Hertz
 - 2020 Accomplishments:
 - Met goal of 10% increase in overall visitors to website! LARGE increase (808%) in visitors
 - Most visitors arrived at site via search engines (48%), or direct link/bookmarked page (39%).
 - New ecosystem management pages among the top visited.
 - Home page; Bird species page; Places to see longleaf; History of longleaf; Groundcover plants; Cost-share opportunities; Tree nurseries
 - Slight decrease in social media acquisition, expect increase with new TLIT Facebook page
 - Spike in visitors, April and August 2020, coincided with rollout of plant gallery and bird pages
 - December 2020 Working Group Meeting – discussed:
 - Want to grow sense of community and TLIT audience; new longleaf-related videos; new educational content, i.e., blogs, videos, webpages, and archived TLIT news e-blasts
 - New TLIT Facebook page
 - Placing a longleaf topic on conference/meeting agendas
 - “Texan by Nature” Conservation Wrangler program and application
 - Priority Action Steps and Timeline for 2021
 1. Generate new educational content
 - a) Texas A&M NRI “Texas Longleaf Landscapes” story map
 - b) New webpage - reptiles and amphibians. Paul Crump (TPWD) and Matt Cunningham (TXDot) volunteering to assist with effort
 - c) Goal: 4 blog posts per year
 2. Longleaf-related videos
 - a) Stockpile existing videos from partner agencies, i.e., Texas A&M Forest Service and NRCS
 - b) Virtual open pine tours
 - c) Informal footage captured during field work and site visits
 - Texas Longleaf Landscapes Story Map
 - Private land stewardship lesson created by Texas A&M NRI Engagement Team
 - Live now: <http://bit.ly/TXLLLandscapes>
 - Open Pine Virtual Field Tours – Annie Farrell
 - NETXCDN members want delay until spring – better look at habitat with good “leaf-on;” Cliff Shackelford suggested late March/early April
 - Farrell working with someone on video spotlight about Louisiana pine snake
 - Groundcover Working Group – Tyler Wayland, East Texas Natives
 - This time of year – cleaning seeds, planting in greenhouse, etc.
 - Working on video with NRCS about open pine topic
 - Available for advice with seeding recommendations



Meeting Notes
Spring Texas Longleaf Implementation Team
May 6, 2021

TLIT approved 7 projects (1,240 acres of enhancement and 639 acres of restoration) for just under \$145,000! For those who weren't able to join, click here for the meeting recording and slides: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1qf58gjbT-vC3x6VYgpbjby1P6HNV7woN?usp=sharing>

Find the final ranking and Steering Committee notes here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KsoGMPO3DG7vXnKJtkEo8_cUGZ8Xtu3-/view?usp=sharing

- Projects highlighted in YELLOW will be funded in full
- Projects highlighted in GREEN have been approved for partial funding
- Projects in white failed to make the cut, but will be given an opportunity to remain in the pool for consideration in September.

Some additional items:

Longleaf Alliance Meetings – Texas. We discussed the linked draft itinerary for **Carol Denhoff's (Longleaf Alliance President) visit to Texas**, and will be in contact as details are confirmed. Please send thoughts/ideas, or comment directly on the google doc file, linked above.

- We are considering having our upcoming **"FALL" membership meeting on Tuesday, October 19, at the Fredonia Hotel, Nacogdoches**, in conjunction with the TFA Annual Meeting. Please hold date for final details.
- **Finally, the Nominating Committee for Chair-Person** – Bill Bartush, Hughes Simpson, and Jenny Sanders have visited with a number of Steering Committee members over the last several months. They have recommended **Ragan Bounds to be our next Steering Committee Chairman** (replacing Bill, who has served in that role for the last year).

Ragan has accepted the nomination, and those on the call expressed support for the nomination. If you were not on the call, please send an email by NEXT FRIDAY, May 14 (copied to Jenny, Hughes, and Bill) expressing your vote for/against Ragan to serve as our next Steering Committee Chairman. Not hearing any concerns, we will then welcome Ragan as our new TLIT Chair-Person.



Meeting Notes
Fall Texas Longleaf Implementation Team
October 15, 2021

Texas A&M Forest Service and the Texas Longleaf Pine Implementation Team have funding available for private landowners who are interested in restoring and enhancing longleaf pine ecosystems on their property. Through the Forestland Stewards Initiative, grants are made available on a biannual basis by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and International Paper. Funding was granted to help conserve and restore this iconic and important American landscape.

The Fall 2021 RFP received project applications that totaled \$129,760. This is just under our total available spending of \$140,000. In preparation for our call on Friday (info below), I have scored each application with our approved project evaluation criteria, and assigned scores on the spreadsheet linked here.

The projects are ordered by score (column with RED border, high to low). You will remember that we had a few projects that rolled over completely, or partially, from the April RFP – those are noted with a green highlight, with explanation listed in the right-hand column. A couple of additional things to note about the spreadsheet:

1 – Each project name is hyperlinked to the full application packet and scorecard; feel free to click there for more information, or to verify how I scored them.

2 – There is a screenshot of our priority map, with project locations embedded at the bottom of the spreadsheet for reference, and where each project is located within priority boundaries.

All projects were scored, and will be funded in full as ranked, or adjusted per questions that arose as to costs and requested practices. Projects include longleaf planting and management with ten landowners on almost 2,000 acres in early October. Since 2014, this brings our total impact to 39,000 acres enhanced or restored.

Texas Longleaf Implementation Team: A Recipe for Success

By Jenny Sanders,
Texas Longleaf Taskforce Coordinator



The Texas Implementation Team

Since its formation in 2014, the Texas Longleaf Implementation Team (TLIT) has leveraged \$1.1 million cost-share funds into longleaf projects on more than 35,000 acres, resulting in a total longleaf restoration and enhancement value of over \$2 million.

The recipe for this success? The right people, guided by sound science, utilizing defensible and transparent processes, with tools and technologies that allow them to engage forest landowners in a quality product of longleaf restoration.

PEOPLE

The most critical element of any successful effort is the team that leads it. Largely due to the leadership of founding coordinator Kent Evans, the TLIT has quickly developed into a diverse, dedicated, and experienced partnership of longleaf champions.

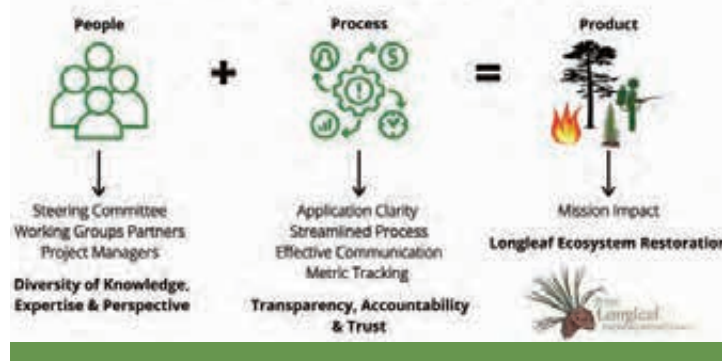
DIVERSITY isn't just a critical concept for ecosystems – it's also a key ingredient for effective teams. The TLIT is no exception. Comprised of state and federal agency personnel, NGOs, academia, Timber Investment Management Organization (TIMO) and Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) representatives, industry professionals, and individual landowners, the group reflects the landscape they are charged with impacting.

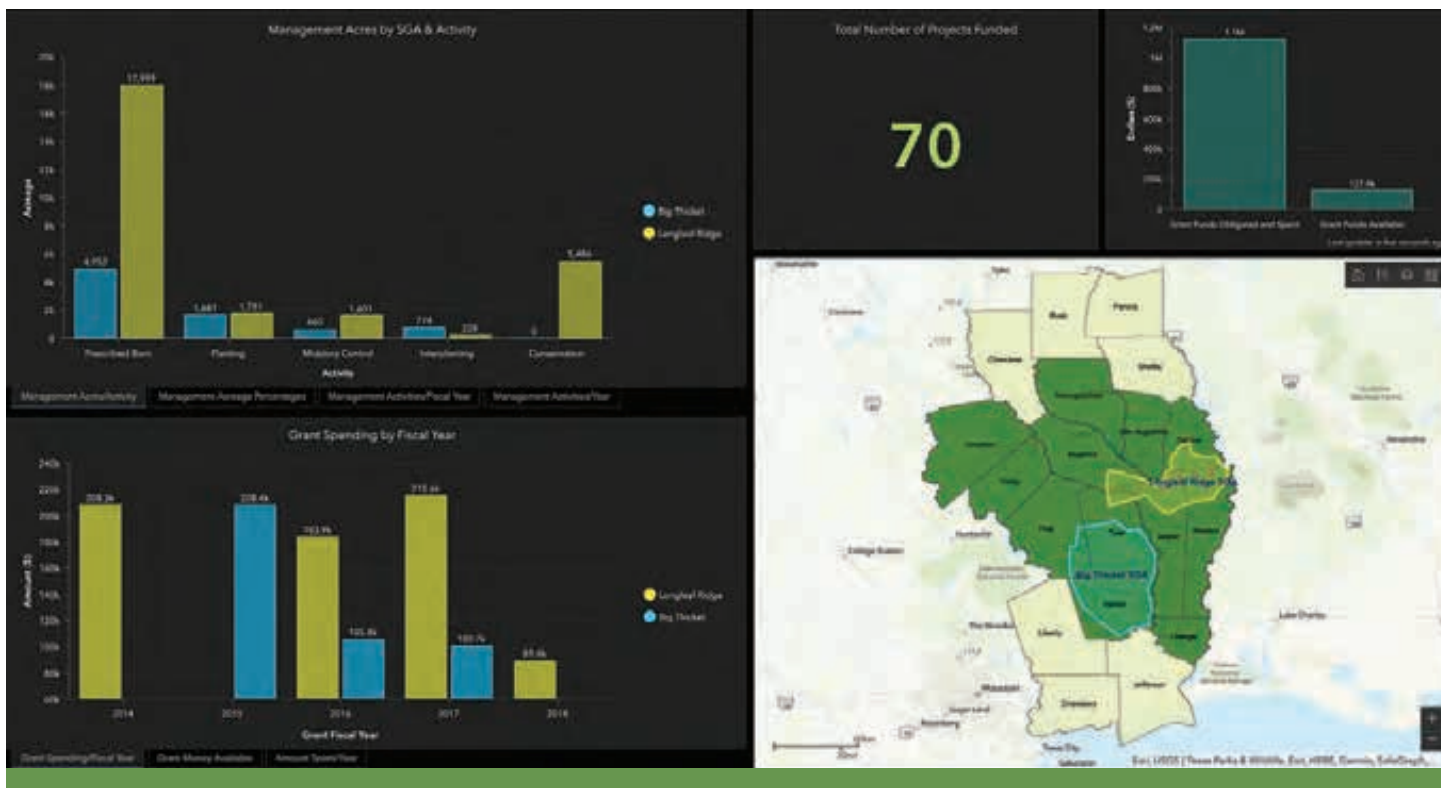
This diversity of expertise, programmatic contribution, perspective, audience reach, and available resources allows the Texas team to reach landowners where they are and provide the resources needed to get them over the finish line of longleaf restoration and management.

Land ownership trends, as well as evolving landowner goals, have proved to be compatible with longleaf restoration efforts in Texas. With non-industrial private forest (NIPF) owners increasingly focused on the wildlife and recreational values of their forestland, and TIMOs and REITs placing more emphasis on social responsibility and ecosystem health, the case for longleaf restoration becomes easier and easier to make.

The TLIT also benefits from numerous partnerships with overlapping missions and target audiences. Notable examples include the Northeast Texas Conservation Delivery Network (NETXCDN) and the East Texas Natives (ETN) Project. The NETXCDN gathers grant funding for deployment across much of the same range as the TLIT, and with significant membership overlap, the partnership facilitates leveraged effort for maximization of resource development and conservation impact. Similarly, ETN is a collaborative effort to

3 Ps of TLIT Success:





Texas longleaf accomplishments dashboard

develop regionally adapted native seed sources to support native plant restoration efforts in East Texas. Tyler Wayland, the local director for the project, serves as the chair of the TLIT Groundcover Working Group and provides critical resources and guidance for our groundcover restoration efforts. These and other partnership groups bring a diverse team-approach to our restoration challenges.

PROCESS

The TLIT is eternally focused on adaptability and maintaining relevance for funders, partners, and especially landowners. Active working groups and teams provide insight and perspective needed to achieve these objectives.

The Communications Team focused recent efforts on digital content development, including resource pages on www.txlongleaf.org that educate visitors about the values of longleaf, effective management strategies, available assistance, and new pages highlighting birds and groundcover plants of the longleaf forest. A bi-weekly e-newsletter and Facebook page were each launched over the last year to help disseminate new content, share news, and develop a sense of community among longleaf enthusiasts and partners.

The Mapping and Data Support Group continually tracks the progress of efforts across the landscape; it utilizes the best historical data, past successes, and current conditions to establish strategic priorities for project funding. Most recently, this group worked with the Texas A&M Forest Service to develop an interactive dashboard to track program accomplishments and evaluate needs and trends.

The Project Review Working Group develops grant funding protocols, including the establishment of application procedures and reimbursement rates, identifying approved practices, and project management, monitoring, and tracking.

Lastly, a newly-formed Partnerships Working Group works to develop and nurture partnerships with mission-aligned organizations and groups to further the work of longleaf restoration.

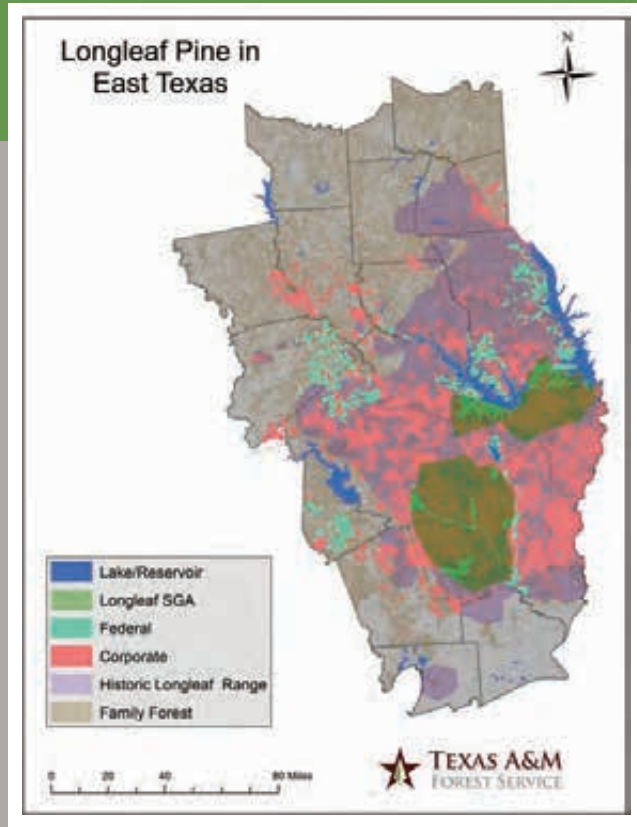
PRODUCT – LONGLEAF ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION

Each year brings new challenges and new accomplishments, but the TLIT continues to grow and improve. 2020 brought the greatest interest in cost-share funding the team has ever seen. Thanks to the creative use of digital resources and active promotion by members and partners, the TLIT leveraged over \$250,000 of cost-share funds into longleaf projects on more than 6,000 acres, resulting in a total longleaf restoration and enhancement value of over half a million dollars in 2020 alone!

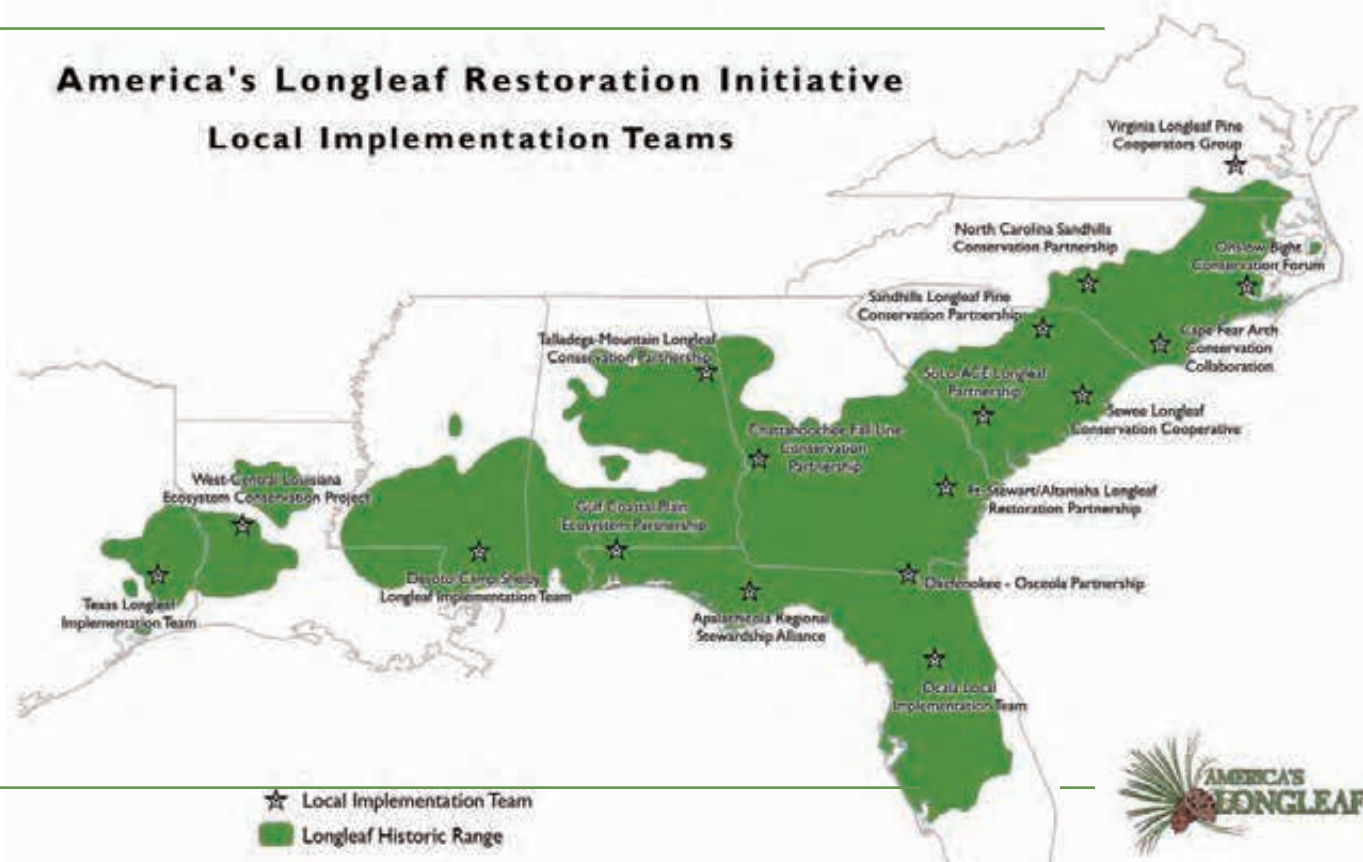
As the team looks to the future, they anticipate continued success across the range. Relationships with TIMOs and REITs will continue to be critical components of success and will take priority in the development of future outreach and communications efforts. Additionally, the TLIT expects continued growth of restoration efforts in the NIPF sector and will continue to provide field days and participate in partner-driven outreach and education efforts to promote wildlife-friendly forests, prescribed fire, conversion through silviculture, and other beneficial management practices.

LAND OWNERSHIP MAP

Texas timberland is primarily privately owned, and corporate ownership represents a large majority of that land base. This creates unique challenges for longleaf restoration, but the TLIT has benefited from strong relationships with several TIMOs/REITs in the region, leading to the development of successful outreach strategies and significant impact on the industry landscape.



America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative Local Implementation Teams





**COORDINATION MEETING
AUGUST 23, 2021**

Location: Virtual and In-Person at Texas Forestry Association, Lufkin Texas

Update on current funding – more money than anticipated; \$115k is available for projects, plus some CE closing funds could be added. We can continue to discuss overlapping counties with CDN, and perhaps cooperate to fund high priority projects.

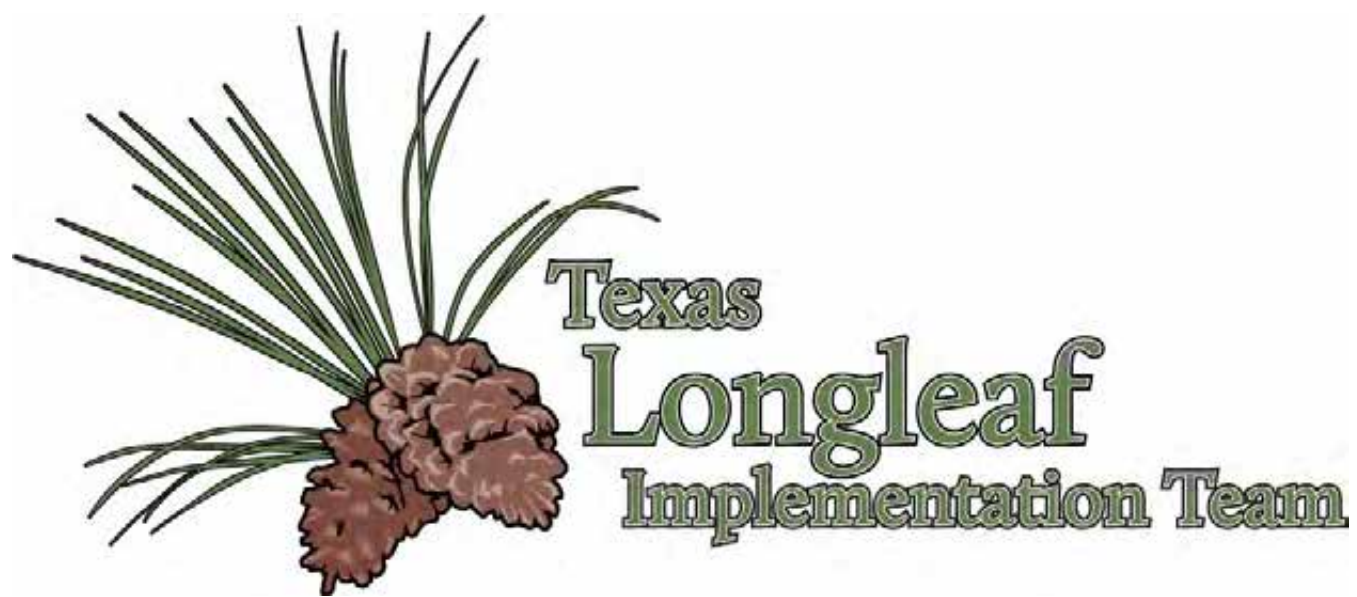
RFP options: (a) Continue with Fall – put un-funded projects from spring into the mix, and try to fund best projects; (b) Continue Fall RFP, but consider re-prioritizing after submission, negotiate project costs, and reduce TLIT expenses; (c) Consider a low \$80k max RFP; our focus is not to strand our existing projects, but rather pay into our investment. Other Incentives NRCS:

(a) Partnership Programs should push for support of CSP forestry practices for quality landowners (encourage those we have worked with, and have good track record, etc. Push the county or zone to get those landowners picked up in a conservation plan/CSP for annual conservation payment considerations; and here is our continued thought on RCPP:

(b) RCPP NRCS may award up to 15 Alternative Funding Arrangement projects, which are more grant-like and rely on added partner capacity to implement conservation activities; perhaps TX JVs? TX JVs and partnerships could consider a statewide AFA, managing the funds and the projects like we do now – with PUB, LIP, etc., as well as NETX or TLIT.

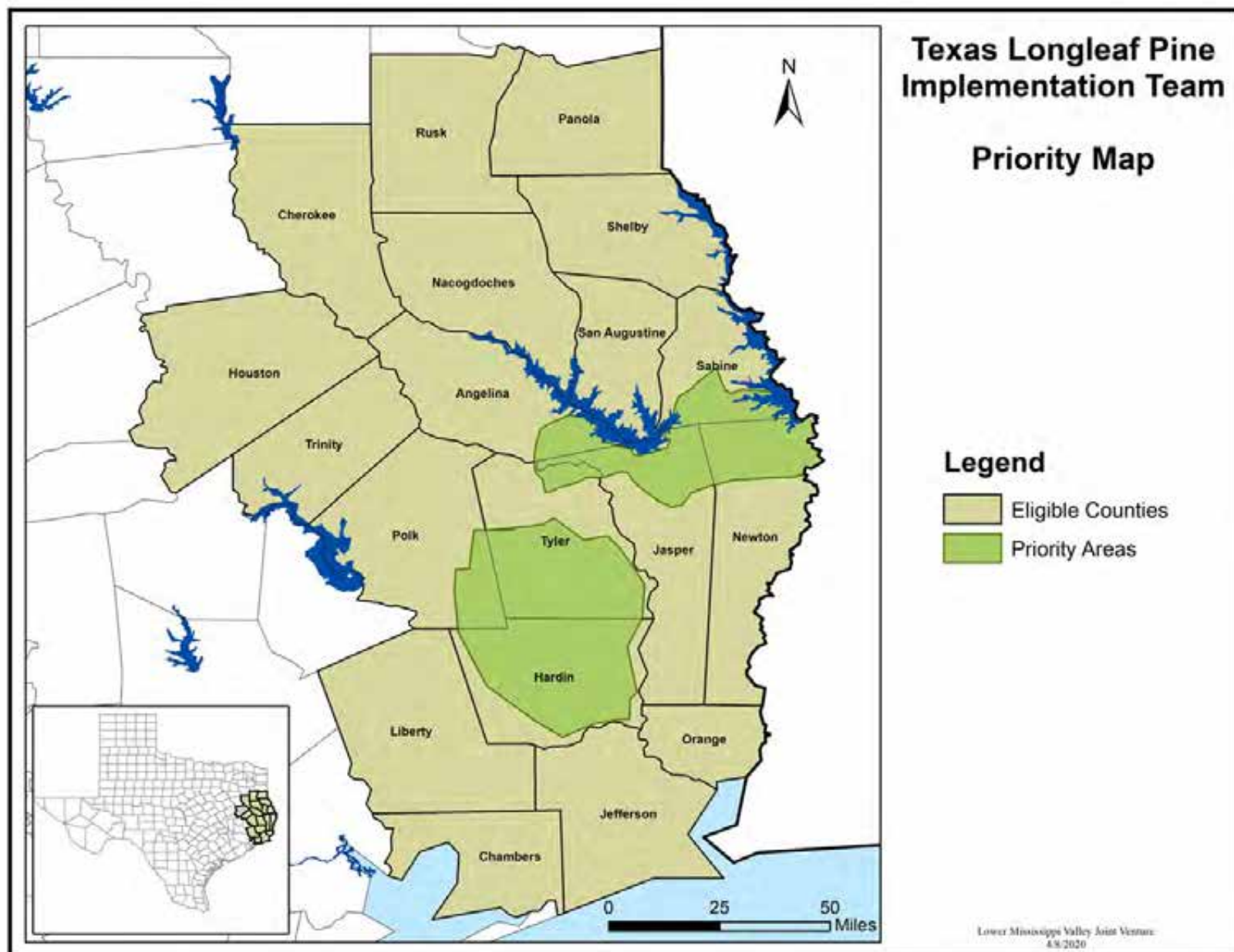
(c) TPWD – NETX opportunities for funds leveraging with CDN – Bill/Andy/Annie
Shared Counties include: Panola/Cherokee/Trinity/Houston, Nacogdoches and Neches River

Fall Task Force Meeting - 10/19/21 Nacogdoches



FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

For Forest Landowners



50%

COST-SHARE:

Approved participants will receive 50% reimbursement of total costs up to the maximum amounts below:

Prescribed Burning - \$30/ac

Site Preparation/Planting - \$450/ac

Forest Stand Improvement - \$275/ac

WHY LONGLEAF?

Asset Protection

Longleaf is more resistant to insects, wind, and wildfire than other southern pine species.

Wildlife Value

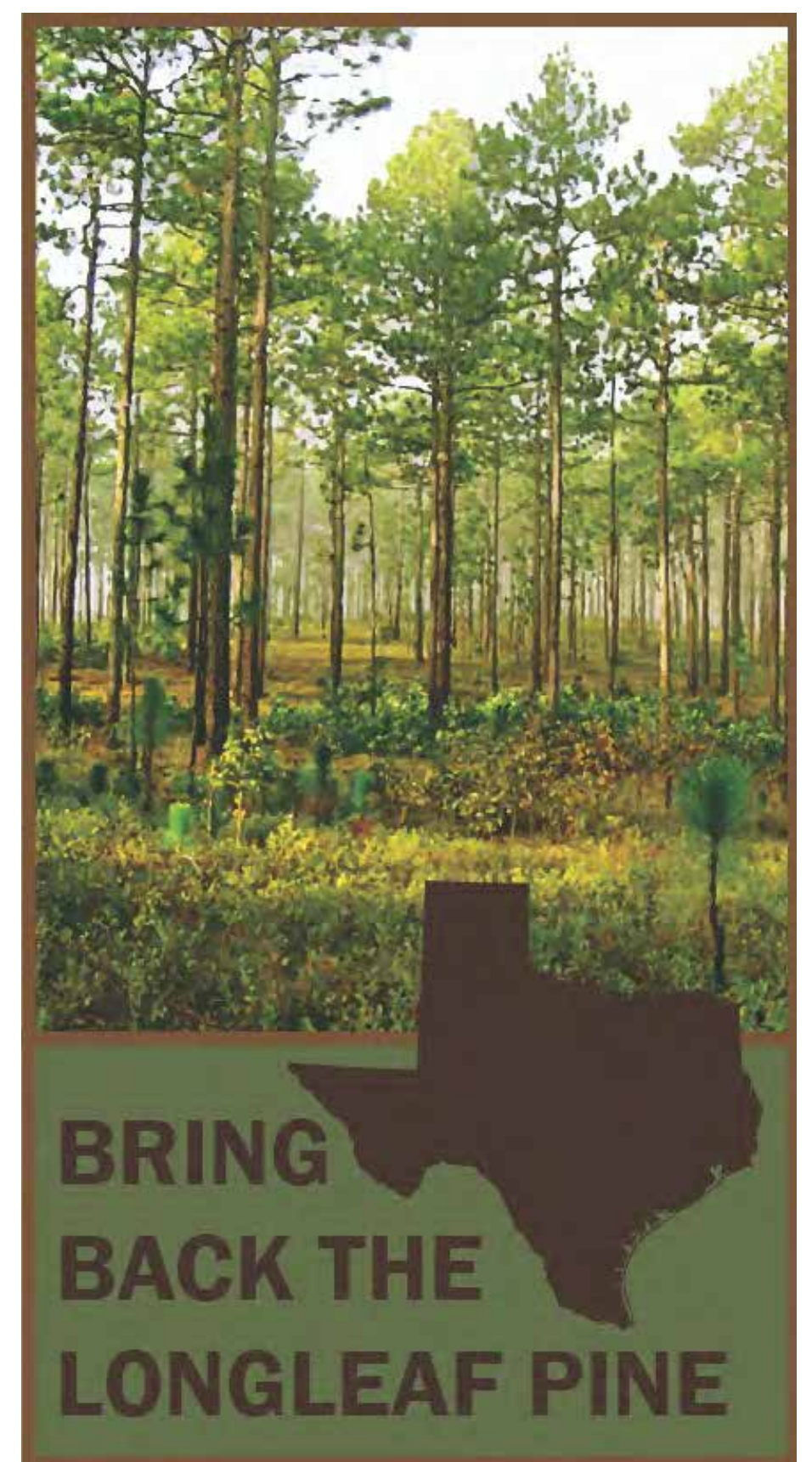
Longleaf thrives on prescribed fire, which stimulates the growth of important understory plants and promotes habitat conditions critical for many wildlife species, including white-tailed deer, wild turkey, bobwhite quail and more!

Value from Wood Products

Longleaf is known for producing great quality lumber with superior strength, durability and appearance. In addition to providing pulp wood from thinning, a well-managed longleaf stand can produce excellent quality utility poles starting at age 30 - 35. Trees sold for utility poles provide much higher prices than trees sold for pulp.

Low Up-front Costs/Offset Returns:

Cost-share programs can help offset the initial investment with a new longleaf stand. Depending on the soils selected, the first thinning of longleaf may not occur on the same time interval as similar-aged loblolly stands. Some producers consider this offset by the incentive payments at establishment.



Contact Jenny Sanders, Texas Team Coordinator, to learn more | jennyreenesanders@gmail.com | (936) 225-2175
www.txlongleaf.org



NFWF

INTERNATIONAL PAPER



TASK FORCE MEETING
OCTOBER 19, 2020

Location: Texas Forestry Association Annual Meeting – Fredonia Hotel & Conference Center

10:30 AM Welcome Ragan Bounds, TLIT Steering Committee Chair and
Rob Hughes, TLIT Steering Committee Member & TFA Executive Director

10:40 State of the Team Update
Jenny Sanders

10:50 Texas Longleaf – The Western Edge of a Range-Wide Restoration Effort
Ryan Bollinger, The Longleaf Alliance

11:20 Panel Discussion: *Priorities, Opportunities, and Challenges for Longleaf
Restoration in Texas* (5min Intro by each speaker, followed by facilitated
discussion/audience participation)
Rusty Wood: Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
Don Dietz: Private Forestry Consultant
Brian Townsend: Natural Resources Conservation Service
Jeff Reid: US Fish & Wildlife Service
Andy McCrady: NE Texas CDN/Texas A&M Forest Service

Panelist initial remarks should include:

- 1) *Introduction and LL history and role, personally/professionally*
- 2) *Agency priorities related to LL restoration*
- 3) *Agency accomplishments related to LL restoration*

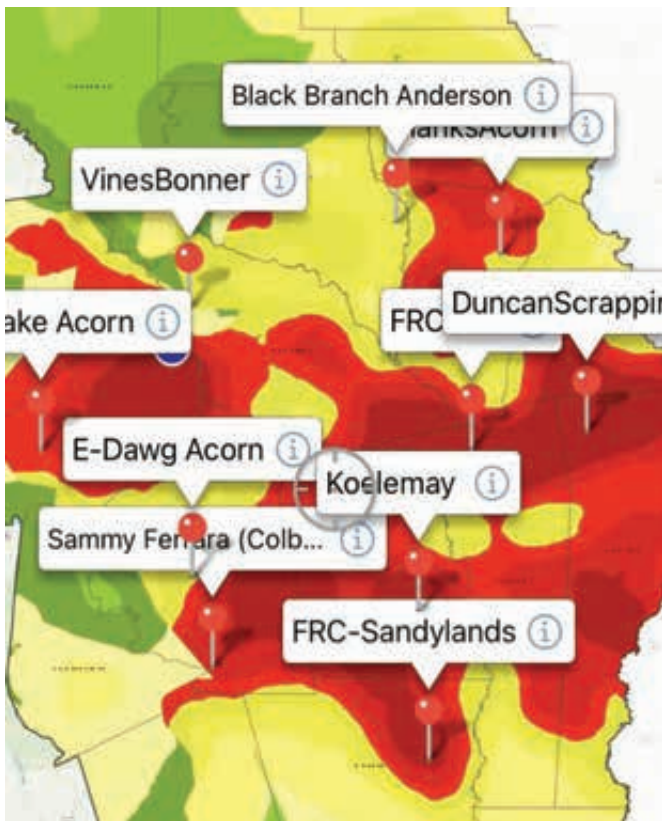
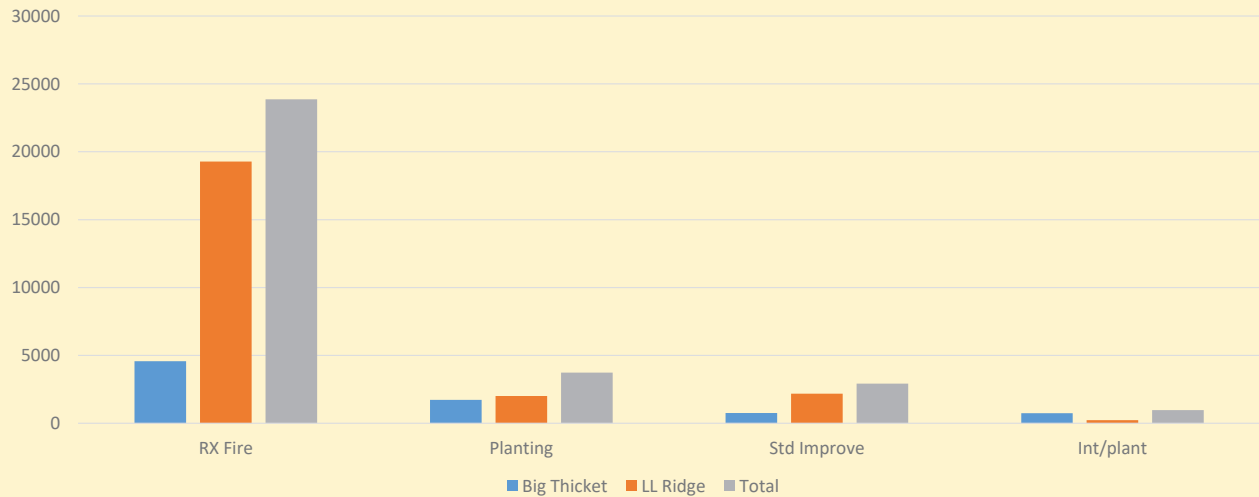
Questions for panel:

- 1) *What are the biggest challenges you see relative to successful LL restoration in Texas?*
 - a. *How do we address those challenges most effectively?*
- 2) *As we look to the future and growing our effort, where/who is the low-hanging fruit relative to accomplishing the goals of the Conservation Plan?*
 - a. *What strategies should we be employing to engage landowners and partners?*
 - b. *What incentives will help private landowners pursue restoration of longleaf pine?*
- 3) *How do we prioritize where and how to spend the limited funds available to assist in the restoration, especially for long-term goals beyond individual projects?*

Noon Adjourn

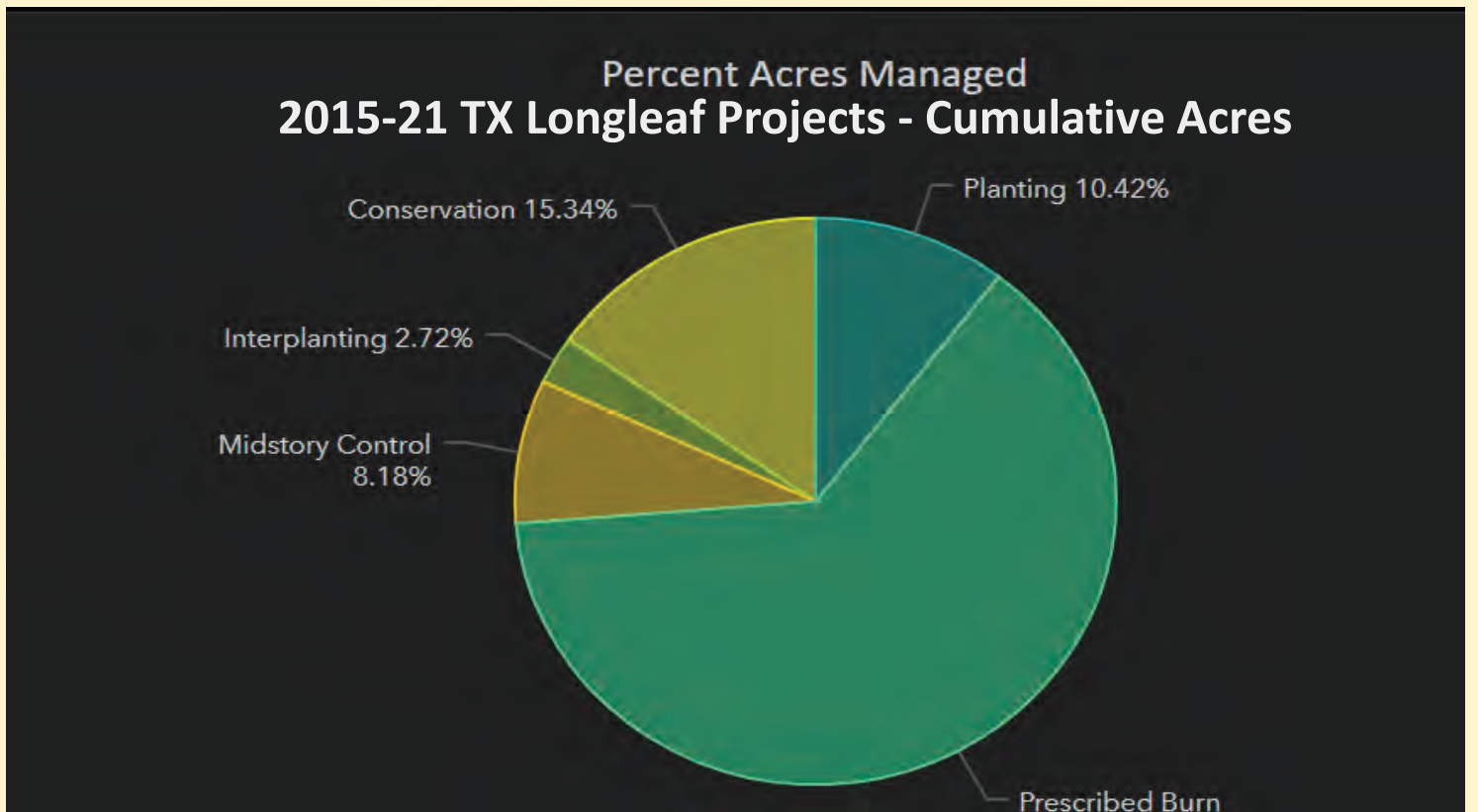
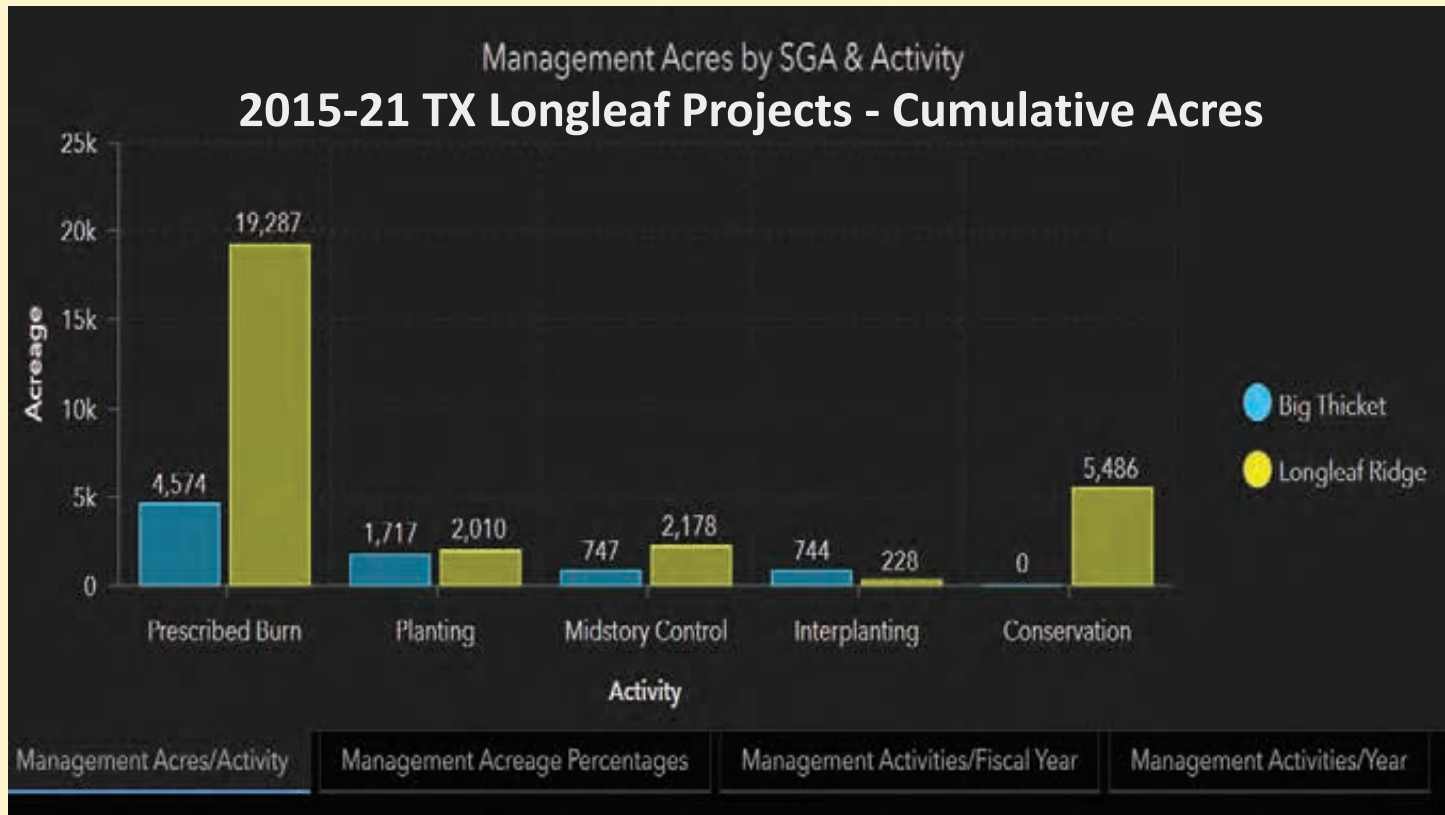
Texas Longleaf Implementation Team Transitions to Texas Longleaf Team 2022

Accomplishment TLIT 2015-2021



Project Name	Landowner Name	Project Manager	County	Total Acreage	Project ac	Reimburse
Duncan N203	Rufus Duncan	Jeff Reid	Newton	3800	475	\$9,500.00
FRC LLR	FRC	Jeff Reid	Jasper	?	223	\$44,109.00
Sandylands FRC	Creek-Pine TTT (Don Dietz)	Jeff Reid	Hardin	?	294	\$19,110.00
Koelemay	Glen Koelemay (Keelin Parker)	Ragan Bounds	Tyler	416	416	\$27,040.00
Vines Bonner Farm	David Vines	Micah Poteet	Angelina	4025	130	\$13,348.80
Saron Lake	WCR Family Limited Partnership	Bernie Buckner	Trinity	700+	78	\$18,146.00
E-Dawg Ranch	Fred Smith (Acorn)	Ben Plunkett	Polk	600?	263	\$60,410.00
Sammy Ferrara	Sammy Ferrara	Ben Plunkett	Polk	325	52	\$11,028.16
Black Branch Tract	Terry Anderson	Rusty Wood	Nacogdoches	345	79.2	\$7,524.00
Hanks Tract	Neal Sutton (Acorn)		San Augustine	1100	90	\$20,673.00

Spring 2021 RFP
 Yellow – funded in full
 Green – Partial Funding



West-Central LA Ecosystem Partnership

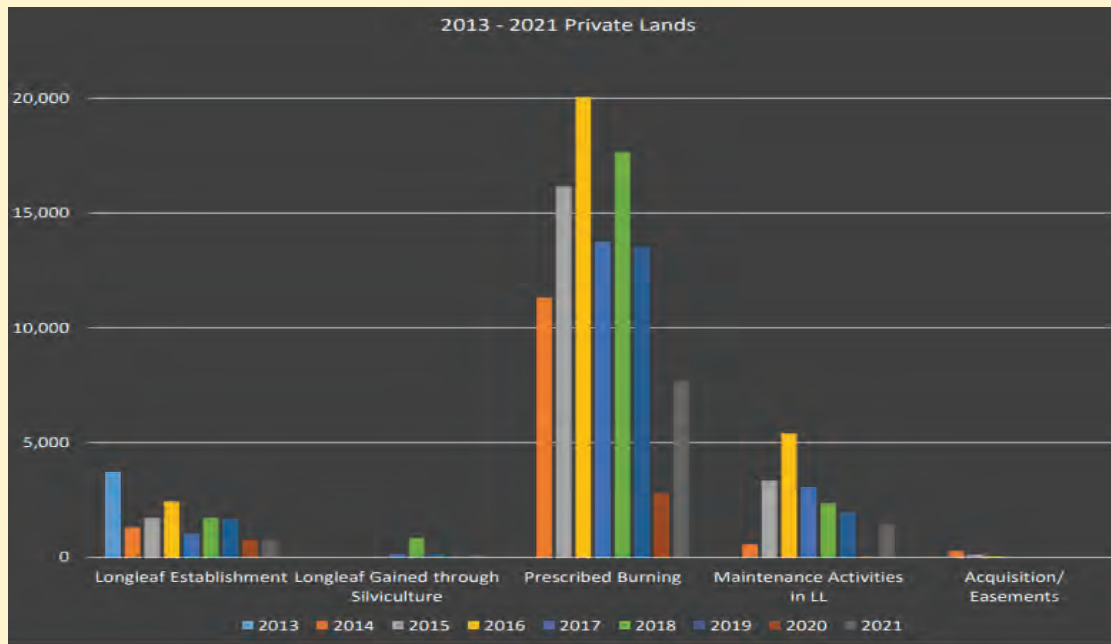
West-Central Louisiana Ecosystem Partnership WLEP 2021 Accomplishments

- **2,024 acres** Restored (planted) in longleaf pine
 - 1,646 of those acres were within the SGA (six Parish WLEP work area)
- **48,489 acres** treated with Rx Fire.
 - 27,799 of those were within the SGA
- **90 acres** Converted to longleaf via silvicultural treatments
- **9,109 acres** maintained or enhanced 2021
 - 4,164 acres within the SGA.

West-Central Louisiana Ecosystem Partnership WLEP 2022



West-Central Louisiana Ecosystem Partnership WLEP 2022





Communication

Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture Communications Plan Progress Report 2020-2021

Please note that “Joint Venture activities” not only are the actions of JV Support Office staff, JV Working Groups/Networks, and/or Management Board members, but also include actions and decisions of partners that are informed by the partnership’s planning, design, monitoring, and research activities, which ultimately support the accomplishment of their shared biological objectives.

Organizational Performance

Priorities:

Communicate relevant news of LMVJV activities, accomplishments, partner accomplishments, activities, and needs among Management Board members and their organizations’ staffs, JV Support Office staff, key supporters, and others.

Task Status:

1. Completed & ongoing
2. Completed & ongoing; remote meetings during COVID
3. Completed & ongoing
4. Completed & ongoing (e.g. [First Entry Treatment Assessment Tool](#) and [MAV Waterfowl Step Down State Summaries](#))
5. Incomplete (partner delivery staff polled for feedback regarding use/usefulness of **Leaders on the Land**)
6. Some progress/ongoing (e.g. [Song meter article](#) developed for sharing content with partners once final results have been analyzed.)
7. Some progress (**Leaders on the Land**)
8. Incomplete

Milestones completed:

- Quarterly News & Updates (ongoing)
- Web content updated at least monthly
- Project completions, acquisitions, dedications, etc. communicated by partners to JV staff within two weeks of completion
5 special announcements sent in 2021.
- Four Issues of **Leaders on the Land** published

Tasks:

1. Maintain baseline connection with Management Board members through regular emails, phone contact, and e-news updates regarding time-sensitive announcements, opportunities, and relevant events/accomplishments.
2. Maintain connection with Management Board members through Spring & Fall Board meetings.
3. Maintain and update a website with news items, project examples and information, and JV-developed documents, all of which are easily accessed and downloadable.
4. Provide fact sheets and success stories with current relevant information for use by partners.
5. Solicit feedback from partners (primarily through the Management Board) regarding the most useful forms of communication raw material.
6. Based on #5 feedback, maintain a cache of communication raw material (e.g., State Fact Sheets & Subject Briefs) for quick-turnaround custom uses and objectives, if warranted. .
7. Identify potential new partners for who could benefit from targeted communication.
8. Encourage Management Board to bring new partner outreach needs to JV Office staff to develop and deploy.

Metrics:

- **Newsletters:** 4 quarterly completed. Newsletter analytics:
 - 39% open rate (superior compared to peers in 2 out of 4 newsletters),
 - 13.2% click rate (superior compared to peers in 4 out of 4 newsletters)
- **Website analytics** – see Appendix A showing screenshots from google analytics comparing 2020 and 2021.
- **Squarespace analytics** (a subset of analytics provided directly by Squarespace)
 - Top page or pdf viewed and/or downloaded:
 - [Read more on WREP Phase IV](#) (home page highlight)
 - [Read more on the pine field trip](#) (home page highlight)
 - [Subscribe to the LMVJV news](#)
 - [How to report your sightings](#) (home page highlight)
 - [Why birds matter](#) (featured at top of home page)

Measure	2020	Jan – Dec 2021
Quarterly newsletter open rate	36.5%	39.3%
Single story news blast open rate	(none sent in 2020)	35.1%
Quarterly Newsletter click rate	(not measured in 2020)	13.2%
Single story news blast click rate	(none sent in 2020)	4.1%
Top stories (Squarespace content)	Listening to What Birds are Telling us about Sustainable Forests	NRCS Press Release on 2021 RCPP Awards, including to AR, LA
Total newsletter subscriptions	(not noted in 2020)	Decline in past year from 535 to 530, but 102 subscriber addresses were “cleaned” (dropped), net 97 new subscribers added

- **Number of new case studies, accomplishment reports, etc. developed to communicate JV successes to partners and others** – 16 JV stories posted throughout 2021.

Definitions - Open rate measures how many times people click on an emailed campaign (e.g., e-newsletter) to view it. **Click rate** measures how many times people click on links within the email (& go to a web address). **Peer Industry average** measures millions of emails from comparable organizations by type, size, and demographics. In 2021, non-profit peer average open rate = 39.5% and peer average click rate = 5.2%.

Biological Planning & Conservation Design

Priorities:

Engage science and delivery partners in the planning and design process by conveying the relevance of JV objective-setting to their priorities, interests and day jobs, and vice versa. Share conservation planning and design tools/recommendations with local and regional conservation organizations with similar interests, for example local land trusts.

Task Status:

1. Incomplete
2. Some progress
3. Completed & ongoing (YouTube used to house recorded CDN meetings and presentations; Google Drive used for file sharing and editing.)
4. Two published: Conservation–Protection of Forests for Wildlife in the MAV (2020); Forest Area to Support Landbird Population Goals for the MAV (2021)
5. Completed & ongoing (Summaries of 5 bird conservation plans completed since 2019)
6. Incomplete

Milestones completed:

- Publish at least one planning/design product-related piece in primary literature every two years. (see <https://www.lmvjv.org/technicaldocs>)
- Upload completed planning, design, research, or monitoring documents to the web site within 2 weeks of completion, accompanied by mass (e.g., email) notification to partners.
- LMVJV science staff and/or technical working group leaders attend CDN meetings (full membership and/or working group) to provide science updates and solicit feedback from CDN members.

Metrics:

- New organizations and/or individuals actively participating in/contributing to LMVJV science process and/or actively using products: **~10 new members from RCPP social science working group and waterbird working group**
- Number of LMVJV planning/design related articles published in primary literature over time: **One each in 2020 and 2021.**

Tasks:

1. Refine existing “New Board Member” packet to be generally useful to all new partners.
2. Identify new, more diverse audiences to broaden engagement and awareness of the JV’s planning and design processes.
3. Provide effective, multi-functional, and user-friendly mechanisms for information exchange among CDN, Science Team, *ad hoc* Working Group members, and other interested partners (e.g., ftp site, virtual discussion forum, Google Docs, etc.).
4. Publish planning and design products, as appropriate, in the primary literature outlets (peer-reviewed scientific journals, books, etc.).
5. Publish completed planning and design products quickly, and on easily-accessible media (e.g., .pdf and Word files via the LMVJV web site, GIS files via the LMVJV ftp site, and web enabled maps and databases via various servers such as USGS, GCPOLCC Conservation Planning Atlas, and Data Basin).
6. Actively distribute completed planning and design products to local and regional conservation organizations, including information on how to use the tools and where to get more information. Target product outreach appropriate to organizations (such as MAV Forest Protection Model for land trusts).

Habitat Delivery

Priorities:

- Support and further develop existing CDNs and the TCP, as well as foster development of new CDNs and similar partner networks through regular, concise information exchange among CDN leadership and CDN members (e.g., Steering Committee, bi-annual membership, working group and sub-committee meetings) and other partners.
- Make relevant and timely LMVJV information, news, and documents easily accessible to delivery professionals.

Task Status:

1. Incomplete
2. Uncertain
3. Ongoing
4. Completed & ongoing (Multiple successful efforts in support of NFWF proposals; RCPP project in 2021; **Leaders on the Land**; Private Lands Conservation Champions recognized)
5. Completed & ongoing (YouTube recorded meetings, ftp, meeting products and notes on website)
6. Completed & ongoing (e.g., WRE Management Videos)

Milestones completed:

- Completed CDN products uploaded to the web site within 2 weeks of completion, accompanied by mass (e.g., email) notification to partners.
- LMVJV Office staff maintain positive and active relationship with USFWS staff who administer NAWCA.

Tasks:

1. Refine existing "New Board Member" packet to be generally useful to new and more diverse partners.
2. Improve connections between Board Members and Conservation Delivery Networks.
3. Periodically update Board Members on the opportunity to form new CDN's in relevant portions of JV region.
4. Provide relevant information and success stories regarding the science-driven priorities and effective partnership activities of the LMVJV to potential funders and prospective delivery partners (e.g. Land Trusts).
5. Provide effective, multi-functional, and user-friendly mechanisms for information exchange among CDN members (e.g., ftp site, virtual discussion forum, etc.).
6. Publish and disseminate completed products quickly on easily-accessible media.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Priorities:

- Engage science and delivery partners in contributing to updates and maintenance of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.
- Engage science and delivery partners in appropriate monitoring activities by communicating LMVJV monitoring priorities, and identifying connections between agency/organizational monitoring needs and those of the LMVJV partnership.
- Engage key partner staff in effective exchange of habitat accomplishment and assessment data in support of addressing monitoring and evaluation objectives.

Task Status:

1. Catalogue & summary complete; positive results highlight not attempted
2. Incomplete

Milestones completed:

- Monitoring & Evaluation “success stories” uploaded to the web site and updated bi-annually.
Three distinct monitoring news articles shared.
- Report to the Management Board on progress towards meeting the partnership’s Monitoring & Evaluation objectives and identify barriers to achieving priority tasks **to be delivered Spring 2023**

Tasks:

1. Catalogue and summarize LMVJV monitoring and evaluation activities to date, and highlight positive results of having such information.
2. Provide compelling justification to partner biologists, monitoring specialists, etc. for maintaining, revising, and carrying out Monitoring & Evaluation Priorities.

Metrics:

- Number of projects, annually, with monitoring & evaluation components directly addressing LMVJV objectives and/or Science Priorities: **5**
 - **Bird response to NETX HIP treatments (complete)**
 - **Emergent Wetland Assessment (near completion)**
 - **MAV Forest Assessment (in progress)**
 - **WMU data entry (in progress)**
 - **Breeding Bird Survey assessment of LMVJV landbird population objectives**

Research

Priority Communication Needs:

- Actively seek opportunities to increase research funds available through and to LMVJV partners.
- Maintain and continue to build the depth and breadth of research scientist participation in LMVJV-relevant research topics.
- Improve understanding of private landowner participation in conservation programs to facilitate better/more efficient delivery of LMVJV habitat priorities.

Task Status:

1. Ongoing
2. Nascent, Mostly Incomplete
3. Ongoing
4. Ongoing

Milestones completed:

- Host and/or actively participate in development and delivery of workshops and symposia focused on the status and needs of science related to LMVJV priorities. **Fall 2021 Shorebird Workshop; 2022 Waterfowl Symposium (Oct) planning in progress**
- LMVJV Support Office staff and technical working group leaders attend >2 professional technical meetings annually to network with partners: **Achieved via video participation due to COVID**
- Address LMVJV Science Priorities in research proposals. **At least 2 successful NFWF-funded and 1 RCPP research proposals addressing LMVJV priorities**
- Report to the Management Board on progress towards meeting the partnership's Research objectives and identify barriers to achieving priority tasks **to be delivered Spring 2023**

Tasks:

1. Promote and disseminate updated *Science Priorities* document (revision in development) and *Monitoring & Evaluation Priorities* (completed) to research scientists and partners.
2. Gain a better understanding of how JV partners (especially states) allocate and spend research dollars and work to align research projects (via issuing RFPs and other means).
3. Identify and develop opportunities for increased interaction and information exchange such as symposia, workshops, etc.
4. Assist research scientists with articulating the need for and benefits of addressing key LMVJV science needs to funding entities.

Metrics:

- Number of new scientists who attend or participate in LMVJV workshops, working groups and projects: **At least 10 from RCPP Social Science, waterbird, and Louisiana Waterthrush working groups**
- Number of unique individuals who open the *Science Priorities* document when disseminated/number of web hits: **Revised Priorities document not complete**
- Number of projects initiated that address LMVJV Science Priorities: **8 known**
 - Louisiana Waterthrush HSI
 - MAV Forest Breeding Bird Response to Restored Forest Age & Management
 - Drone-based Waterfowl Monitoring Feasibility in Forested Habitat
 - Crepuscular Bird Response to Forest Management in NE Texas
 - Occupancy rates and detection probability for marsh birds in emergent marshes of Arkansas using ARUs
 - King Rail Nesting Ecology – Arkansas MAV
 - Winter Philopatry of Mallards in the MAV
 - Mallard Movement Ecology (TN)

LMVJV Google Analytics (comparing 2020 to 2021)

Pages with most page views in 2020 and 2021

Page	Pageviews	% Pageviews
1. /		
Jan 1, 2021 - Dec 15, 2021	2,915	22.89%
Jan 1, 2020 - Dec 15, 2020	2,530	22.31%
% Change	15.22%	2.57%
2. /ne-texas-cdn		
Jan 1, 2021 - Dec 15, 2021	481	3.78%
Jan 1, 2020 - Dec 15, 2020	464	4.09%
% Change	3.66%	-7.71%
3. /desired-forest-conditions		
Jan 1, 2021 - Dec 15, 2021	476	3.74%
Jan 1, 2020 - Dec 15, 2020	349	3.08%
% Change	36.39%	21.42%
4. /lmvjv-news		
Jan 1, 2021 - Dec 15, 2021	390	3.06%
Jan 1, 2020 - Dec 15, 2020	233	2.05%
% Change	67.38%	49.01%
5. /conservation-delivery-networks		
Jan 1, 2021 - Dec 15, 2021	370	2.90%
Jan 1, 2020 - Dec 15, 2020	484	4.27%
% Change	-23.55%	-31.94%

Overview

All Users +0.00% Pageviews

+ Add Segment

Jan 1, 2021 - Dec 15, 2021 Compare to: Jan 1, 2020 - Dec 15, 2020

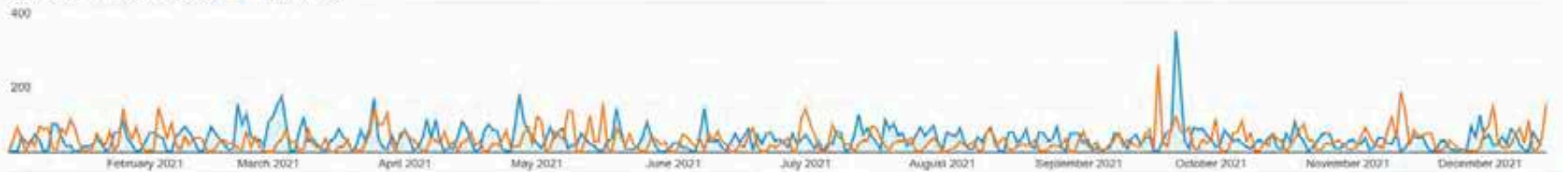
Overview

Pageviews VS. Select a metric

Hourly Day Week Month

Jan 1, 2021 - Dec 15, 2021: Pageviews

Jan 1, 2020 - Dec 15, 2020: Pageviews



Pageviews

12.33%

12,737 vs 11,339



Unique Pageviews

22.77%

10,455 vs 8,516



Avg. Time on Page

-3.19%

00:01:38 vs 00:01:41



Bounce Rate

13.87%

69.17% vs 60.74%



% Exit

20.43%

50.67% vs 42.08%



Try searching "Any anomalies in sessions this month?"



Primary Dimension: User Type

Secondary dimension: Sort Type: Default

advanced [grid icon] [table icon] [refresh icon] [print icon]

User Type	Acquisition		Behavior				Conversions: Goal 1: Download or print		
	Users	New Users	Sessions	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration	Download or print (Goal 1 Conversion Rate)	Download or print (Goal 1 Completions)	Download or print (Goal 1 Value)
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. New Visitor	55.08% 4,854 (12.80%)	55.70% 4,801 (12.29%)	35.28% 3,454 (9.77%)	13.87% 69.17% (vs 60.74%)	16.96% 1.77 (vs 1.35)	31.54% 00:01:38 (vs 00:02:20)	0.00% (0.00% vs 0.00%)	0.00% 0 (vs 0)	0.00% 0.00 (vs 0.00)
Jan 1, 2021 - Dec 15, 2021	4,593 (10.82%)	4,601 (10.02%)	4,601 (77.79%)	79.46%	1.55	00:00:50	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
Jan 1, 2020 - Dec 15, 2020	2,951 (86.19%)	2,955 (100.00%)	2,955 (61.94%)	75.40%	1.73	00:01:11	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
% Change	55.64%	55.70%	55.70%	5.39%	-10.04%	-29.09%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
<input type="checkbox"/> 2. Returning Visitor									
Jan 1, 2021 - Dec 15, 2021	520 (10.17%)	0 (0.00%)	1,853 (28.11%)	43.60%	3.02	00:03:28	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
Jan 1, 2020 - Dec 15, 2020	473 (13.81%)	0 (0.00%)	1,816 (29.06%)	35.89%	3.44	00:04:12	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
% Change	9.94%	0.00%	2.04%	18.19%	-12.15%	-17.20%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Jan 1, 2021 - Dec 15, 2021: Users

Jan 1, 2020 - Dec 15, 2020: Users



Users

55.08%

4,654 vs 3,001



New Users

55.67%

4,600 vs 2,958



Sessions

35.28%

6,454 vs 4,771



Number of Sessions per User

-12.77%

1.39 vs 1.59



Pageviews

12.33%

12,737 vs 11,339



Pages / Session

-16.96%

1.97 vs 2.38



Avg. Session Duration

-31.54%

00:01:36 vs 00:02:20



Bounce Rate

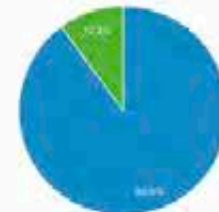
13.87%

69.17% vs 60.74%

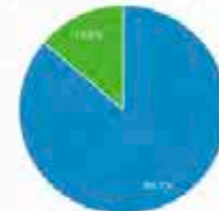


■ New Visitor ■ Returning Visitor

Jan 1, 2021 - Dec 15, 2021

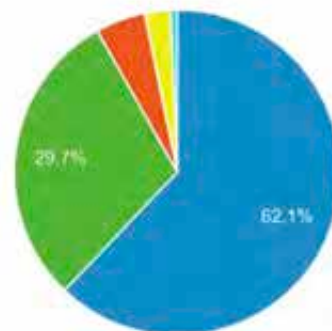


Jan 1, 2020 - Dec 15, 2020



Top Channels

Jan 1, 2021 - Dec 15, 2021



- Direct
- Organic Search
- Email
- Referral
- Social
- (Other)



Science

SAVE THE DATE



- Who?** Students, scientists, managers, and anyone else interested in the state of knowledge regarding waterfowl ecology, habitat management, science, and policy
- Where?** Ducks Unlimited National Headquarters, One Waterfowl Way, Memphis, TN
- What?** Formal (presentations, posters) and informal (social) exchange of information and ideas relevant to waterfowl science and management within and near the Lower Mississippi Valley JV geography
Topics to include **Landscape Ecology, Migration & Winter Ecology, Habitat Conservation & Management, Human Dimensions, Monitoring & Methodology, Conservation Planning, and Public Policy**
- More Info?** Dr. Anne Mini, LMVJV Science Coordinator (amini@abcbirds.org; 541-231-5188)
Dr. Dale James, Ducks Unlimited/LMVJV Waterfowl WG Chair (djames@ducks.org; 601-622-3230)
Dr. Doug Osborne, Univ. Arkansas at Monticello (Osborne@aumont.edu; 618-694-6598)

Symposium details will be updated at www.lmvjv.org/symposium-2022

- WATCH FOR A CALL FOR ABSTRACTS IN MAY -



Call for Abstracts

The LMVJV partnership is excited to convene students, scientists, and managers whose work advances the state of knowledge of waterfowl science and conservation within the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture region. To that end, the planning committee is now accepting abstracts, **through 1 June 2022**, for oral and poster presentations at the **2022 LMVJV Waterfowl Symposium**. Presentations should address one of the following themes of waterfowl science and/or conservation:

- Conservation Planning
- Habitat Conservation & Management
- Human Dimensions
- Landscape Ecology
- Migration & Winter Ecology
- Monitoring & Methodology
- Public Policy

Abstract Details

- Abstracts are to be no longer than **400 words** and in Microsoft Word or PDF format. Abstracts should include title, authors, statement of objectives, brief summary of methods, results, and conclusions.
- Select **one** of the seven themes listed above within which the presentation best fits.
- Specify either Poster **or** Oral presentation. Some submitters requesting oral presentation may be asked to give a poster, depending on content and/or time available on the program.
- Provide **email address, phone number, and affiliation** of primary presenter.
- All abstracts must be submitted to LMVSympo22@gmail.com no later than **1 June 2022**.
- Potential presenters will be notified via email of acceptance determination by 1 July 2022.

Acceptance Criteria

- Preference will be given to work that has been done within or very near the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture geography (please see lmvju.org/lmvju-geography).
- Preference will be given to presentation of results from completed work with clear relevance to LMVJV waterfowl conservation.

Please direct questions regarding the symposium to LMVSympo22@gmail.com

Symposium details will be posted at lmvju.org/symposium-2022 as they develop.

LMVJV Science Team – Science Investment Recommendations FY2022

Benefits of emergent marsh to waterfowl and other wetland bird species

The LMVJV Science Team and LMVJV Waterbird Working Group have emphasized that emergent marsh, such as permanent and semi-permanent wetland composed of sedges, rushes, arrowhead, etc., is an important habitat component for a variety of birds and other wildlife. The Joint Venture has invested funds in the development of an emergent wetland geospatial data layer. This data layer is to be used in planning for waterbirds and waterfowl. However, we lack important information on the full energetic value of this habitat in our geography, especially with respect to subaquatic vegetation (SAV) and invertebrates to a host of waterfowl species. In addition, a high Operational Priority for our Joint Venture is the integration of priorities among bird guilds. Investigating the co-benefits of emergent marsh to waterfowl and waterbirds would help inform how priorities can be integrated between waterfowl and marshbirds. By examining well-managed emergent wetland sites with demonstrated King Rail and other marsh bird breeding and non-breeding use, we can better understand the benefits to multiple species and promote proper management of this habitat type.

We anticipate utilizing one graduate student to complete this project. Potential products include:

- 1) Energetic (density, TME) values of SAV, invertebrates, and emergent plant seeds
- 2) Habitat metrics/Information for the development of a decision support model for waterbirds
- 3) Review and synthesis of management options for waterfowl and waterbirds, including tradeoffs

With additional funding, this project area could accommodate a second graduate project involving drone work and/or other bird monitoring to track bird response to management actions, and test the feasibility of drones to detect and identify non-breeding marsh bird species.

Development of species-habitat model for King Rail (*Rallus elegans*)

Addressing planning needs for King Rail has been identified as a high priority species by our Waterbird Working Group, and addressing conservation planning and design for waterbirds remains our highest Operational Priority. Having an individual focused on synthesizing habitat requirements, management needs, and knowledge gaps would better position our Joint Venture to identify variables to be included in a modeling framework. Based on the synthesis of information, we could begin the development of a framework (variables, data layers, etc.) for a species-habitat model (e.g., Bayesian Belief Network framework) in both the breeding and non-breeding season to identify key areas for management action/attention. However, a lot of uncertainty still exists with regards to population trends and estimates so any additional time would be devoted to the development of a larger-scale monitoring protocol that would inform conservation planning efforts.

We would be seeking a 12-month postdoctoral position dedicated to this project. Potential products include:

- 1) Literature review and synthesis of King Rail habitat requirements, management needs, and uncertainties related to species-habitat model development
- 2) Development of a conceptual model and framework for a King Rail species-habitat model (both breeding and non-breeding), using principles of decision theory, such as probability of uncertainty of management actions and tradeoffs, and solicitation of expert opinion where data is lacking
- 3) Development of a monitoring framework to address uncertainties in population trends and estimates

Assessment of bottomland hardwood forest health as related to hydrologic conditions

To begin to address the health of bottomland hardwood forest as a function of hydrology, our Science Team determined that we need to initiate long-term monitoring efforts. Important aspects of forest health span a wide range, from our understanding of how regenerating seedlings and saplings respond to water stress (prolonged flooding and/or drought conditions) to root stress in mature trees. Our Science Team recommended investing in the infrastructure and monitoring of water tables paired with assessment of forest metrics, including deployment of equipment, such as water meters to measure subsurface hydrology. This information will help to improve how managers plan reforestation efforts, how existing bottomland hardwood forest is managed, and provide a foundation for modeling predicted forest system function relative to current and future hydrologic conditions.

We anticipate deploying appropriate wells and monitors (surface and soil water) in areas where they are leveraged with other ongoing and future forest function monitoring and research work (e.g., acorn production, seedling survival, tree growth, and DFCW management regimes).

Potential products include:

- 1) Baseline hydrological data associated with (potentially informing) bottomland hardwood demographic and health metrics
- 2) Initiation of a long-term hydrological dataset

Assessment of landowner motivations and hurdles to enrolling in conservation programs and long-term adoption of conservation practices

Our work with the Arkansas-Louisiana Open Pine RCPP has three primary goals: 1) maximize applicant pool diversity, 2) increase wildlife-friendly conservation practices used during program, and 3) increase conservation practice persistence after program. To address all three goals requires both qualitative and quantitative social science approaches. The qualitative approach involves interviews with enrolled landowners to better understand their perspectives on conservation of open pine habitat and why they enrolled in the program, and will be carried out through RCPP-related funding. However, an additional quantitative approach using a formal survey design is desirable to reach a greater number and diversity of landowners for greater statistical rigor and broader extrapolation. The Science Team concluded that along with the ongoing social outcomes monitoring we should invest in the quantitative research as well.

Potential products include:

- 1) Quantitative survey and analysis that addresses landowner perceptions of the ecological and economic benefits of the program, conservation ethic, and willingness to conduct management behaviors after the program ends
- 2) Quantitative survey and analysis that addresses barriers to enrollment in the AR-LA Open Pine Conservation RCPP program

Co-Chair, Canada
Daniel Wolfish,
Gatineau, Quebec

Co-Chair, México
Maria Palma Irizarri,
México City

Co-Chair, United States
Jerome Ford,
Washington, D.C.



*North American Waterfowl
Management Plan*

*Plan nord-américain de
gestion de la sauvagine*

*Plan de Manejo de Aves
Acuáticas de Norteamérica*

October 12, 2021

Jeff Raasch
LMVJV Board Chair
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
4200 Smith School Road
Austin, TX 78744

Dear Colleague,

On behalf of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan Committee (PC) we wish to express our gratitude for your time and effort that went into the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture report and presentation on 1 August 2021.

The strong link to science throughout LMVJV planning and implementation was evident throughout the presentation and greatly appreciated. Outlining the connections between the JV operational plan and the Desired Characteristics for Habitat Joint Venture Partnerships Matrix (the “JV Matrix”) was especially useful. The discussion around setting high level planning goals for waterfowl populations and habitat was particularly valuable. We appreciated learning about the adaptive approach taken and consideration of the 2014 NAWMP continental objectives and how to step those down to the JV scale. Related to this effort is your collaboration with the Gulf Coast JV regarding migration chronology using eBird data. This collaboration has potential to be of high value to the LMVJV (and other JVs) thus we look forward to seeing the results of your work in future reports.

Regarding NAWMP people objectives, it was good to see increased work on the human dimension issues pertinent to your region. The PC recognizes the need for more social science funding and capacity to tackle those important issues. We continue to rely on JV partners and stakeholders for much of our conservation work but recognize the need to expand the group of engaged stakeholders. We encourage you to explore ways to engage nontraditional audiences in your region. Among the challenges of engaging people in waterfowl conservation work the PC recognizes the existence of regional variations. The explanation of the LMJV approach was appreciated and the PC acknowledges the importance of the wide variety of work already ongoing in your joint venture. This

includes considerations for ecological goods and services, your habitat videos for landowners, and more.

There is an obvious need to boost communication and marketing capacity for NAWMP relevancy generally, and joint venture activities specifically. The capacity discussion around climate change was noteworthy in that you pointed out there already is a tremendous amount of knowledge and capacity regarding this topic across the scientific community but the need within the joint venture is capacity to synthesize this climate information into a form relevant to the LMVJV and JV staff and partners.

There was agreement that the opportunity to have some extended dialog around the content of the report is of high value to the PC and the JV. We appreciated the experience, knowledge, and scientific expertise brought to our discussions by the LMVJV staff. The PC is committed to continue hosting Joint Venture progress reports with a helpful, conversational dialogue that results in improved planning and performance. As such, we encourage more dialogue to develop synergistic relationships to improve efficiency and effectiveness, especially in establishing links to NAWMP and continental bird initiative goals.

Thank you,

Co-Chair, United States

Co-Chair, Canada

CC:

Keith McKnight, Ph.D.
Coordinator
Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture
11942 FM 848
Tyler, TX 75707



Understanding Alignments in Spatial Conservation Planning in the Southeast

A comparison of spatial conservation planning tools created by the Middle Southeast Blueprint, Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture, and East Gulf Coastal Plains Joint Venture in the Southeastern United States

Authors:

Bradly S. Thornton¹
Kristine O. Evans¹
D. Todd Jones-Farrand²
S. Keith McKnight³
Anne E. Mini⁴
Catherine W. Rideout⁵



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⁴ Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture, American Bird Conservancy, Ridgeland, MS, USA

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Contributors

Analysis provided by: Bradly S. Thornton (MSU) & Kristine O. Evans (MSU)

Valuable comments, review, or data provided by: SECAS – D. Todd Jones-Farrand; LMVJV – S. Keith McKnight, Anne E. Mini, & Blaine Elliott; EGCPJV – Catherine W. Rideout

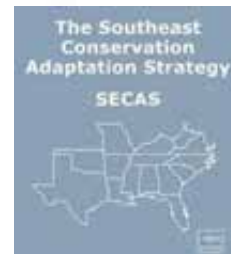
We thank all these partners for their dedicated time and contribution to improving conservation prioritization in the Southeastern U.S.

Acknowledgments

We thank Anna Krainyk (USGS) for initial feedback on analysis metrics.

Suggested Citation: Thornton, B., K.O. Evans, D. Jones-Farrand, S. McKnight, A. Mini, C. Rideout. 2022. *Understanding Alignments in Spatial Conservation Planning in the Southeast, Version 1.0*. Mississippi State University, Mississippi State, MS.

Cover Photograph: Bottomland hardwood forest, Carol M. Highsmith, Carol M. Highsmith Archive, Library of Congress



Executive Summary

Conservation planning is the process through which organizations develop strategies to utilize limited resources to maximize ecological benefits, such as the protection of biodiversity, ecosystems, natural resources, and landscapes. Ideally, conservation planning products should enable partner organizations to achieve focus, coordination, and increased effectiveness in their investments and actions. This requires clear communication about where and how to act. The increasing availability of large-scale geospatially-explicit data has greatly enhanced the ability of conservation organizations to develop spatial planning resources and decision-support tools, but is not without challenges. As the number of planning tools and resources developed has increased, so has the awareness that independently created tools have the potential to misalign priorities within the same geography, i.e., spatial planning tools may assign different levels of priority to the same location or resource. Yet, conservation planning is a dynamic and ongoing process, and improvements in the quality and quantity of regional datasets and advancements in conservation planning science create a desire to update and refine existing tools to improve alignment.

In the Southeast, some of the largest regional conservation planning projects are partnership-driven and landscape-oriented, intended to facilitate focused, coordinated action within important geographic areas to achieve measurable advances in conservation objectives. Two important partnership structures in the region are Migratory Bird Joint Ventures and the Southeast Conservation Adaptation Strategy. Migratory Bird Joint Ventures (hereafter, Joint Ventures) are partnerships focused on conservation efforts to benefit migratory birds, while the Southeast Conservation Adaptation Strategy (SECAS) has a broader goal to create a connected network of lands and waters for the benefit of ecosystems, species, and people. The primary science and decision product of SECAS is the Conservation Blueprint (hereafter, Blueprint; SECAS purpose statement).

Despite both SECAS and Joint Ventures operating with many of the same partner agencies and organizations, the planning products created by Joint Ventures and SECAS are largely derived independent of one another. While the Blueprint does incorporate geographic priorities and habitat objectives from partners, including Joint Ventures, into its prioritization process, these priorities are only one component of the larger process that incorporates a range of ecosystem and taxonomic priorities (Middle Southeast Blueprint 2020). However, there remain substantial knowledge gaps in identifying and describing the degree to which spatial conservation priorities identified within Blueprint and Joint Venture partnerships align. Any misalignment has the potential for confusion among partners and may lead to challenges in justifying decisions on conservation action, inefficient use of conservation resources, or risk the credibility of planning efforts. Alternatively, alignments in existing planning tools promote convergence in conservation priorities that could strengthen conservation efforts and highlight areas of greatest opportunity. Understanding how overlapping planning tools are created and the cause of differences in landscape prioritization has the potential to improve the use and effectiveness of planning tools and enable conservation planners to mitigate and minimize the consequences of misalignments.

The purpose of this project was to assess the degree of alignment between Joint Venture and SECAS conservation planning tools in the Southeast and to identify opportunities for increased efficiency and communication of priorities. We focused on prioritization tools within the Middle Southeast (MidSE) subregional boundary of the Southeast Conservation Blueprint 2020 project. Our comparisons with the MidSE Blueprint involved multiple input levels (e.g., terrestrial and aquatic) as an attempt to understand how alignment changes at various scales and with inclusion of additional priorities. Though multiple Joint Ventures coordinate conservation efforts in the Southeast, this project focused on prioritization tools created by the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture (LMVJV) and the East Gulf Coastal Plain Joint Venture (EGCPJV). The models selected for this project include the Mississippi Alluvial Valley Forest Protection and Forest Restoration Tools, the West Gulf Coastal Plain and Ouachita Open Pine Tool, the East Gulf Coastal Plain Open Pine Decision Support Tool, and the Mississippi Alluvial Valley Forest Protection and Water Quality Tool.

We developed a framework for quantitative and qualitative assessment of alignment and identified plausible drivers of misalignments using methods from across the conservation planning field. Qualitative analysis included identifying the primary components used to create the planning tools, including the overall objective, geographic extent, base priority unit, spatial resolution, and data inputs. Quantitative analysis included logistic regression, rank correlation, and overlap analysis. We used logistic regression and rank correlation analysis to understand alignment at the base unit level (i.e., pixel). The results of logistic regression can be used to predict the outcome probabilities (i.e., the likelihood that a priority score in one model may result in a certain priority score in the other) while rank correlation coefficients gauge the relative strength of association between conservation priorities. We also assessed the spatial overlap and priority congruence by aggregating priority scores to several landscape planning units (i.e., counties, HUC12 watersheds, and EPA 40km² hexagons) to understand the degree of alignment at a local scale. This may reflect how users interact with the tools to make decisions about where to direct conservation resources locally and reduce slight spatial shifts in priority. We recognize that the complexity and nuance of conservation prioritization complicates the utility of a single or set of analysis metrics. We are confident that this approach could serve as a framework for future comparisons of conservation prioritization tools to provide a ‘pulse check,’ or indication, on the degree sub-regional models or partner priorities influence final conservation prioritizations.

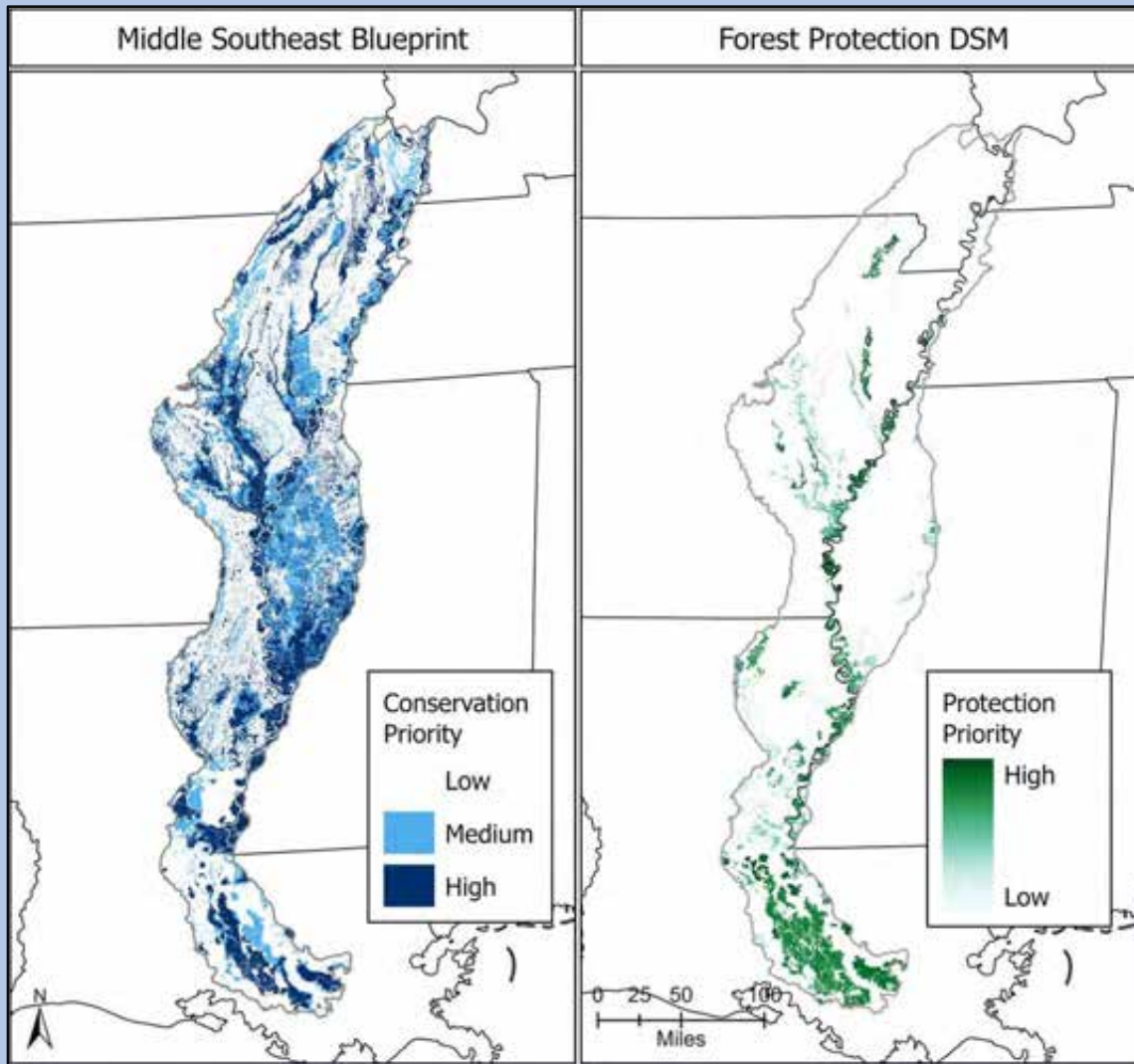
Informed by specific case studies and examples, this project culminates in a list of best-management practices that conservation planners may refer to when designing future spatial models. Through these case studies we found both high and low degrees of alignment between planning tools. Though there may never be perfect alignment between tools created by partnerships with different objectives or missions, there are opportunities for improved congruence and communication of prioritization differences. Seemingly small decisions, such as data sources or management unit, can impact the overlap of spatial priorities and underscores the need to understand how misalignments arise. In our case studies we highlight how variation in programmatic objectives, inclusion of the conservation estate, size of evaluated planning unit, and terrestrial vs. aquatic priorities as potential drivers of alignments in the geography.

As regional conservation planners advance initiatives and frameworks to integrate smaller, sub-regional prioritization tools, it is important to consider how they are designed and the consequences of integration. Conservation goals can largely be stratified by the overarching objective: protect, manage, and/or restore. Each of these actions are incredibly valuable for the conservation and protection of biodiversity and ecosystems, however, the actions required to meet these objectives are not always compatible within a single prioritization framework. The priority or value of an area (pixel, patch, planning unit, etc.) is relative to the overarching objective. For example, communicating priorities from a regional conservation tool designed to identify and value larger, intact habitat for protection will become more difficult with the inclusion of sub-regional tools whose purpose is to communicate restoration priorities. The results of this project may support improvements and refinements to future spatial conservation planning products contributing to increased efficiency in conservation investments and communication clarity to stakeholders.

The structure of this report is intended to provide a comprehensive yet straightforward summary of this project. The Introduction provides relevant background information on spatial conservation planning, and a brief overview of planning products created by the SECAS and Joint Ventures in the southeastern United States, along with the rationale for this project. The focal section of this report is the collection of Case Studies which we have organized into two sub-sections: Alignment Summaries and Drivers of Alignment. The Alignment Summaries section includes an overview of the key results for each of the primary Joint Venture planning tools compared with the MidSE Blueprint. The Drivers of Alignment Section documents the most salient findings from our analyses reinforced with specific examples selected from the planning tools compared. The Conclusions and Recommendations section provides a summary along with key takeaways of this project that can serve as important considerations for future spatial planning projects. Detailed Methods and Results are contained in Appendices I and II, respectively, that provide a thorough explanation of the analytic approach and all associated findings.

Conservation Priority Alignment Summary

Middle Southeast Blueprint and the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture Forest Protection model



LEFT: Conservation priority areas identified by the Middle Southeast Blueprint (2020) clipped to the Mississippi Alluvial Valley geographic boundary (left) beside the Forest Protection Decision Support Model created by the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture (right).

BOTTOM: The primary components used to create both planning tools are listed here, including the overall objective, geographic extent, base priority unit, spatial resolution, and data inputs.

Priority Tool Component	Middle Southeast Blueprint	Forest Protection DSM
Biological Objective	Identify important areas for conservation and restoration that link local actions to regional objectives.	Identify and characterize the conservation–protection status of existing forests and to prioritize additional need for forest protection within this ecoregion.
Extent	Middle Southeast	Mississippi Alluvial Valley
Priority Unit	Pixel	Forest Patch
Resolution	30-meter	30-meter
Base Data (Age)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Species range maps (NatureServe or eBird STEM models) -LANDFIRE land cover (2017) -Protected Areas Database v2 (2020) -Partner Priority Areas -NLCD Landcover change (2001, 2016) -Southeast SLEUTH model (2014) -USGS marsh migration model (2015) -EPA Estimated Floodplain (2018) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Landsat (2011) -GCPO Inundation Frequency Mosaic (2017) -Protected Areas Database v2 (2018) -Conservation Estate, various sources

Middle Southeast Blueprint and LMVJV Forest Protection

Spatial Overlap and Priority Congruence

OVERVIEW

To understand the degree of alignment between the Middle Southeast Blueprint and Joint Venture tools at a local scale, we assessed the spatial overlap and priority congruence using EPA 40km² hexagons. Aggregating priority scores from the pixel level to planning units may reflect how users interact with the tools to make decisions about where to direct conservation resources locally and reduce slight spatial shifts in priority. To keep comparisons relatively consistent between tools, we focused on the areas and scores with the highest prioritization (i.e., top 30% of value scales corresponding with High value in the Blueprint.)

KEY RESULTS

TOP RIGHT: The difference in prioritization of EPA hexagons (40km²) within the Mississippi Alluvial Valley determined as the difference in the proportion of each unit assigned a high priority score within the models. Blue or yellow units represent greater priority by the Blueprint or Joint Venture, respectively.

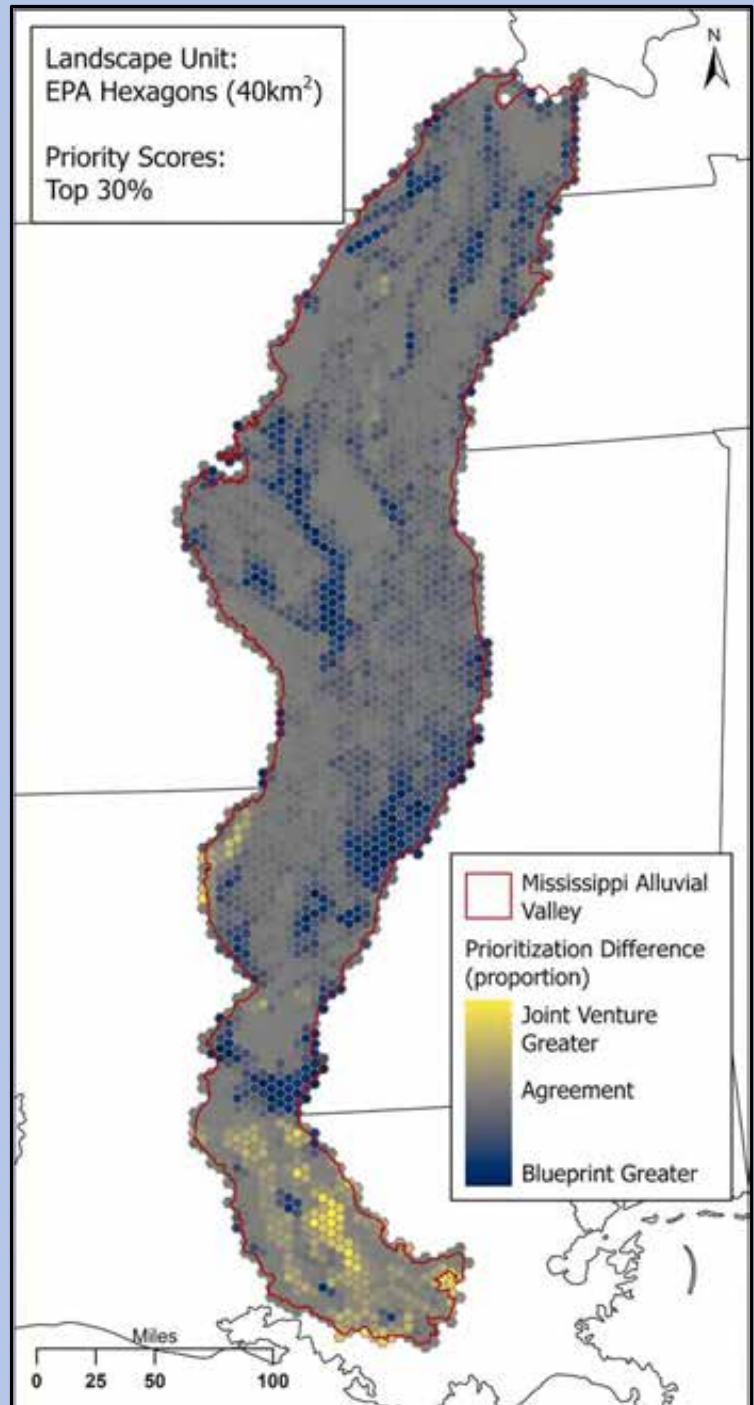
Caveat: Units in relative agreement reflect similar priority, regardless of whether it is high or low priority.

Noteworthy Differences: greater Blueprint prioritization of the conservation estate along the White River, greater Blueprint prioritization in parts of Mississippi driven by aquatic priorities, and greater Joint Venture prioritization of forests in Louisiana.

Accounting for all hexagons, the average difference, or disagreement, in the proportion of highly prioritized area per unit was 0.24 on a scale of 0 – 1 (total agreement to total disagreement), indicating low-moderate disagreement overall.

Average Prioritization Difference = .24

BOTTOM RIGHT: Rank correlation analysis on scores aggregated to EPA hexagons (40km²) determined the correlation between conservation priorities within the Mississippi Alluvial Valley. Larger coefficients may indicate a higher degree of priority alignment between these landscape planning units. Results are shown for multiple levels of the Middle Southeast Blueprint, from habitat to regional focus.

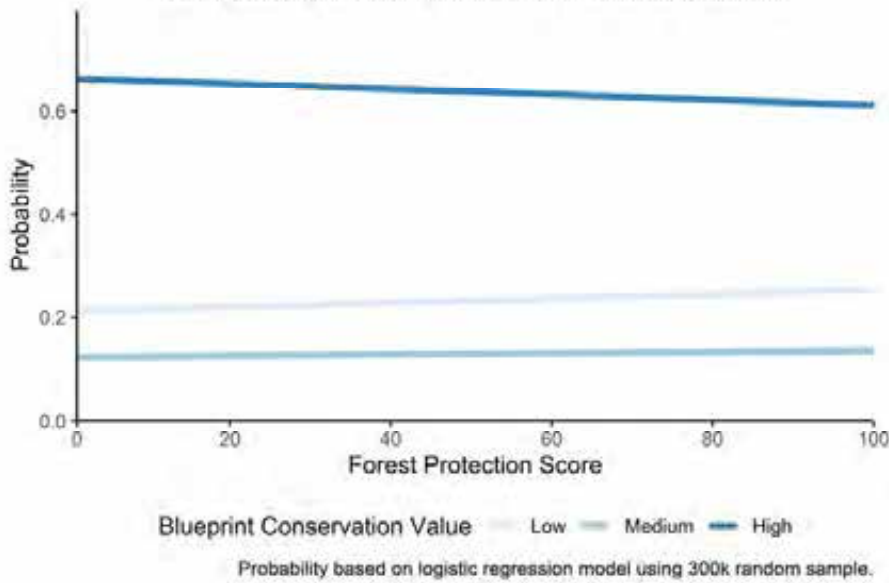


Blueprint Input Level	Priority Scores Summarized	Kendall Correlation Coefficient (τ_b)
Habitat	Total	0.584
Condition	Top 30%	0.387
Terrestrial Conservation Value	Total	0.481
	Top 30%	0.338
Blueprint	Total	0.282
	Top 30%	0.126

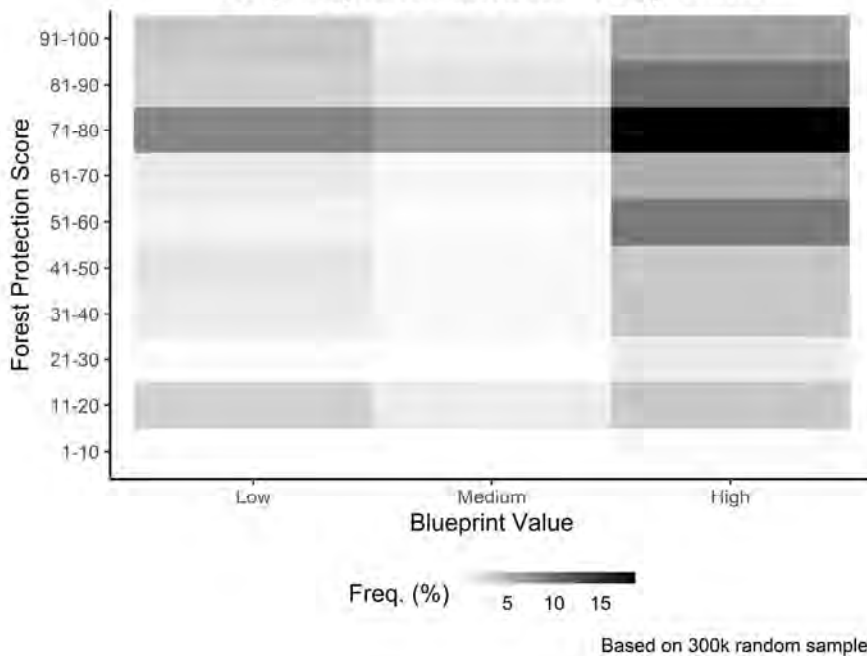
Middle Southeast Blueprint and LMVJV Forest Protection

Logistic Regression and Rank Correlation Analysis

Predicting Middle Southeast Blueprint Conservation Values using the Joint Venture Forest Protection Model



Frequency of Conservation Priority Scores



OVERVIEW

To understand alignment between the Middle Southeast Blueprint and Joint Venture tools at the base unit level (i.e., pixel), we used logistic regression and rank correlation analysis on a random sample of 300,000 points. The results of logistic regression can be used to predict the outcome probabilities (i.e., the likelihood that a priority score in one model may result in a certain priority score in the other). Rank correlation coefficients attempt to gauge the relative strength of association between conservation priorities.

KEY RESULTS

TOP LEFT: Predicted probability that Joint Venture Forest Protection priority scores are associated with Middle Southeast Blueprint Conservation Values determined through logistic regression analysis. Lines represent the predicted likelihood of receiving one of three Blueprint values across the range of Joint Venture scores, and do not reflect linear trends.

Highlight: The likelihood of receiving a High Blueprint value remains greatest across the range of Forest Protection scores, e.g., if the Forest Protection score is 40, the probably that the Blueprint value is High is 0.62, Medium is 0.17, and Low is 0.21.

MIDDLE LEFT: Frequency of conservation priority scores between the Middle Southeast Blueprint and the Joint Venture Forest Protection model. Darker areas represent a higher relative frequency of overlap, particularly between 71-80 protection scores and High Blueprint value.

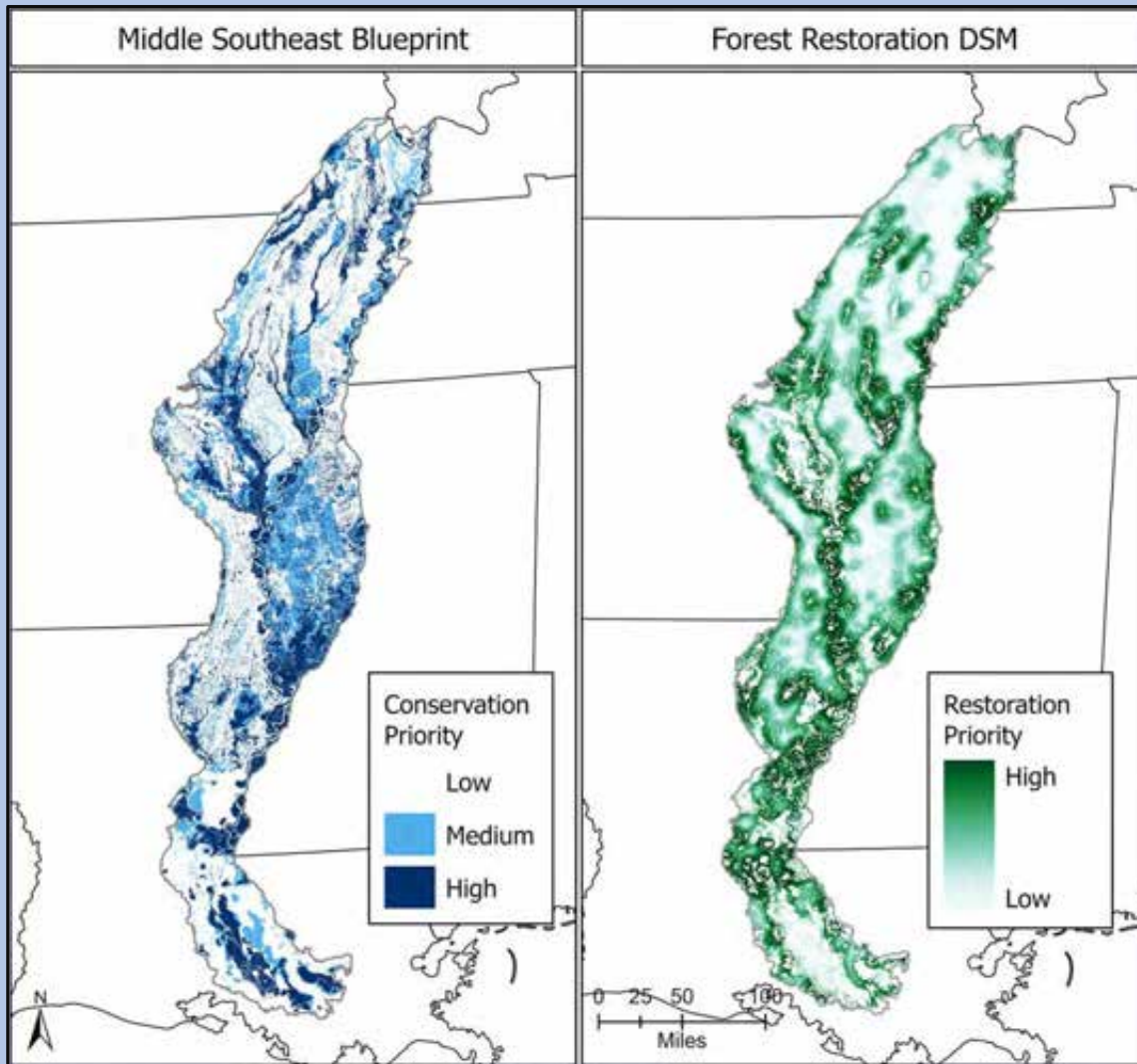
BOTTOM LEFT: Rank correlation coefficients between Forest Protection scores and multiple levels of the Middle Southeast Blueprint, from habitat-level to regional focus.

Blueprint Input Level	Kendall Coefficient Correlation (τ_b)
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Terrestrial Habitat Condition Index	0.106
Terrestrial Conservation Value Index	0.056
Blueprint	-

Conservation Priority Alignment Summary

Middle Southeast Blueprint and the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture Forest Restoration model



LEFT: Conservation priority areas identified by the Middle Southeast Blueprint (2020) clipped to the Mississippi Alluvial Valley geographic boundary (left) beside the Forest Restoration Decision Support Model created by the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture (right).

BOTTOM: The primary components used to create both planning tools are listed here, including the overall objective, geographic extent, base priority unit, spatial resolution, and data inputs.

Priority Tool Component	Middle Southeast Blueprint	Forest Restoration DSM
Biological Objective	Identify important areas for conservation and restoration that link local actions to regional objectives.	Increase the number of forest patches with >2000 ha of core forest, while targeting >60% forest cover within local (320 km ²) landscapes and restoration of higher elevation bottomland hardwood forests.
Extent	Middle Southeast	Mississippi Alluvial Valley
Priority Unit	Pixel	Pixel
Resolution	30-meter	30-meter
Base Data (Age)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Species range maps (NatureServe or eBird STEM models) -LANDFIRE land cover (2017) -Protected Areas Database v2 (2020) -Partner Priority Areas -NLCD Landcover change (2001, 2016) -Southeast SLEUTH model (2014) -USGS marsh migration model (2015) -EPA Estimated Floodplain (2018) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Landsat (2011) -NLCD landcover (2011) - USDA STATSGO data (1995) -USGS digital elevation model (1987) -Protected Areas Database v2 (2018) -Conservation Estate, various sources

Middle Southeast Blueprint and LMVJV Forest Restoration

Spatial Overlap and Priority Congruence

OVERVIEW

To understand the degree of alignment between the Middle Southeast Blueprint and Joint Venture tools at a local scale, we assessed the spatial overlap and priority congruence using EPA 40km² hexagons. Aggregating priority scores from the pixel level to planning units may reflect how users interact with the tools to make decisions about where to direct conservation resources locally and reduce slight spatial shifts in priority. To keep comparisons relatively consistent between tools, we focused on the areas and scores with the highest prioritization (i.e., top 30% of value scales corresponding with High value in the Blueprint.)

KEY RESULTS

TOP RIGHT: The difference in prioritization of EPA hexagons (40km²) within the Mississippi Alluvial Valley determined as the difference in the proportion of each unit assigned a high priority score within the models. Blue or yellow units represent greater priority by the Blueprint or Joint Venture, respectively.

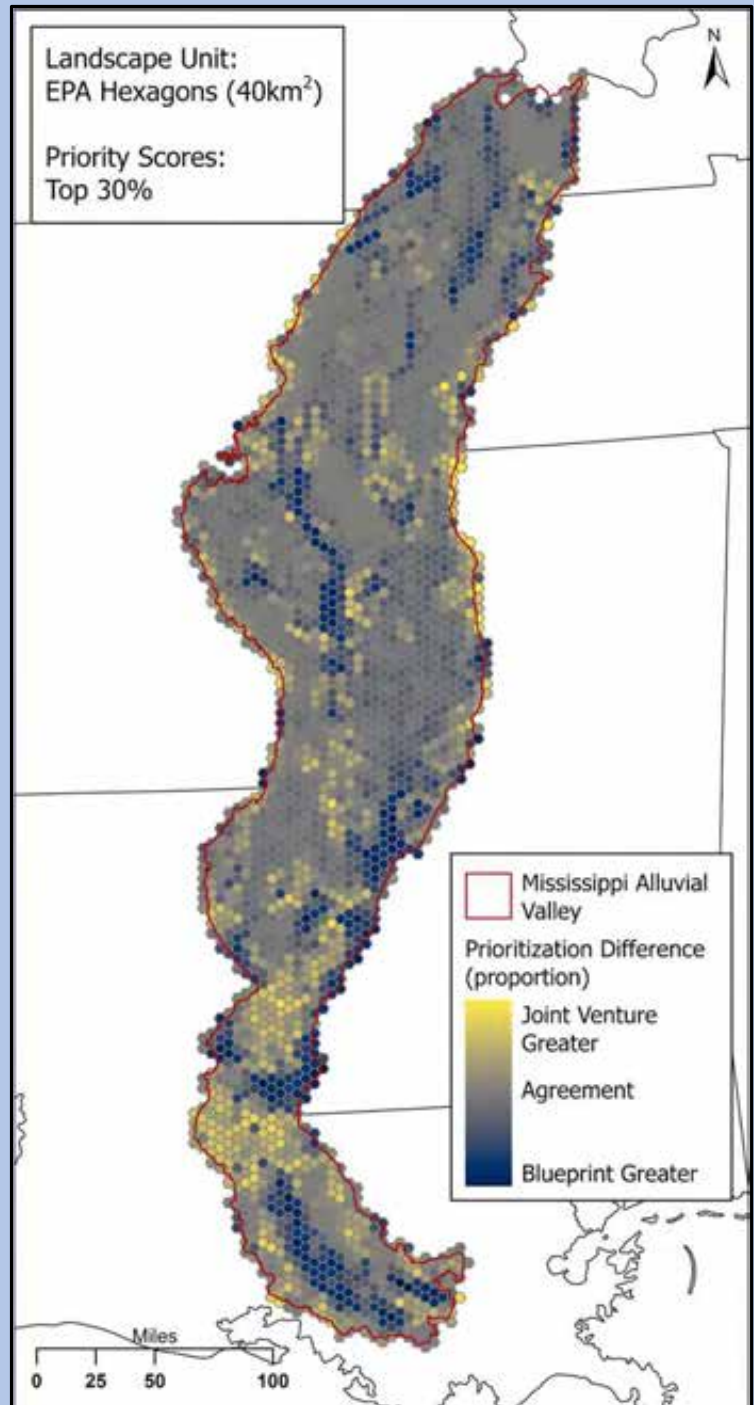
Caveat: Units in relative agreement reflect similar priority, regardless of whether it is high or low priority.

Noteworthy Differences: greater Blueprint prioritization of the conservation estate along the White River, greater Blueprint prioritization of forests in Louisiana, greater Joint Venture prioritization of adjacent areas, greater spatial variation overall.

Accounting for all hexagons, the average difference, or disagreement, in the proportion of highly prioritized area per unit was 0.26 on a scale of 0 – 1 (total agreement to total disagreement), suggesting low-moderate disagreement overall.

Average Prioritization Difference = .26

BOTTOM RIGHT: Rank correlation analysis on scores aggregated to EPA hexagons (40km²) determined the correlation between conservation priorities within the Mississippi Alluvial Valley. Larger coefficients may indicate a higher degree of priority alignment between these landscape planning units. Results are shown for multiple levels of the Middle Southeast Blueprint, from habitat to regional focus.

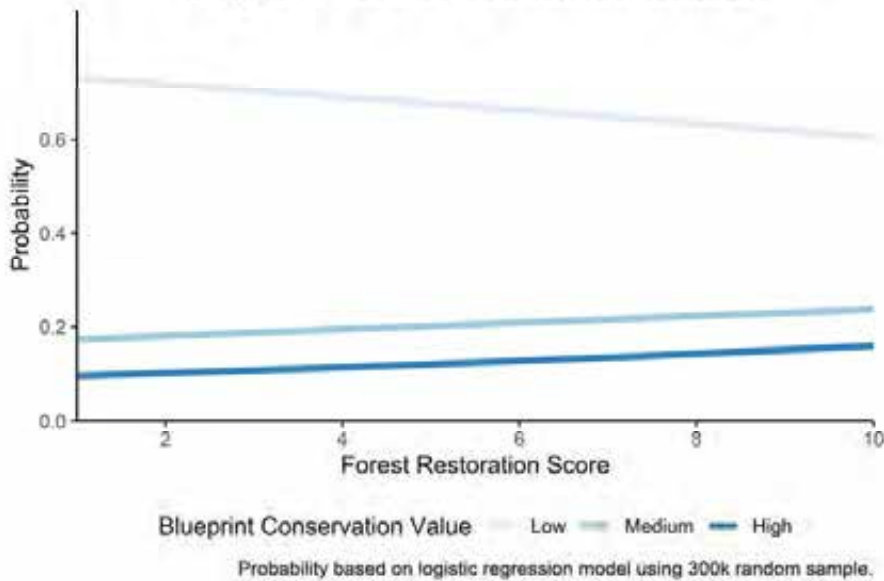


Blueprint Input Level	Priority Scores Summarized	Kendall Correlation Coefficient (τ_b)
Habitat	Total	0.416
Condition	Top 30%	0.231
Terrestrial Conservation Value	Total	0.462
	Top 30%	0.247
Blueprint	Total	0.157
	Top 30%	0.073

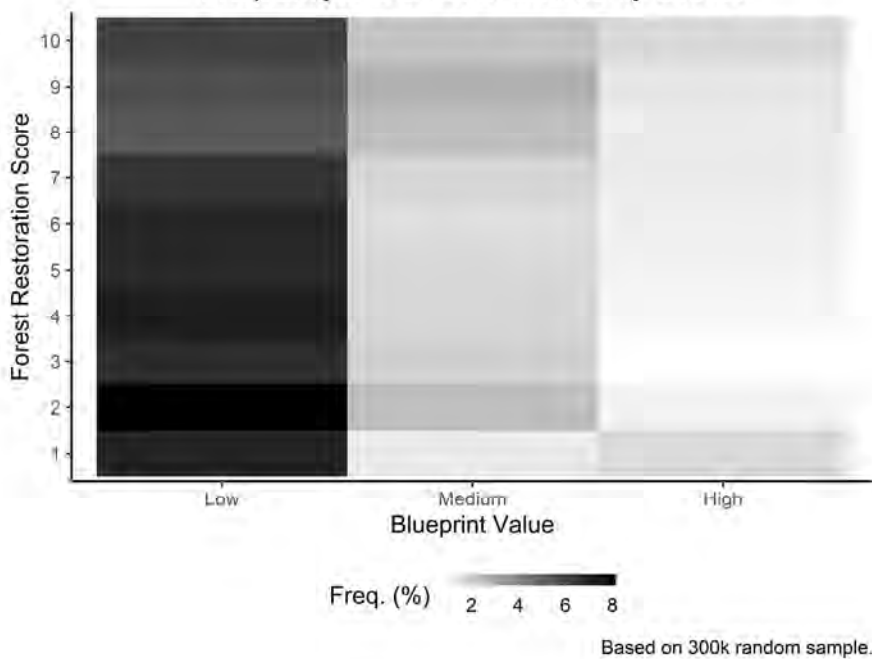
Middle Southeast Blueprint and LMVJV Forest Restoration

Logistic Regression and Rank Correlation Analysis

Predicting Middle Southeast Blueprint Conservation Value using Joint Venture Forest Restoration Model



Frequency of Conservation Priority Scores



OVERVIEW

To understand alignment between the Middle Southeast Blueprint and Joint Venture tools at the base unit level (i.e., pixel), we used logistic regression and rank correlation analysis on a random sample of 300,000 points. The results of logistic regression can be used to predict the outcome probabilities (i.e., the likelihood that a priority score in one model may result in a certain priority score in the other). Rank correlation coefficients attempt to gauge the relative strength of association between conservation priorities.

KEY RESULTS

TOP LEFT: Predicted probability that Joint Venture Forest Restoration priority scores are associated with Middle Southeast Blueprint Conservation Values determined through logistic regression analysis. Lines represent the predicted likelihood of receiving one of three Blueprint values across the range of Joint Venture scores, and do not reflect linear trends.

Highlight: The likelihood of receiving a Low Blueprint value remains greatest across the range of Forest Restoration priority scores, e.g., if the Forest Restoration score is 4, the probably that the Blueprint value is High is 0.15, Medium is 0.20, and Low is 0.65.

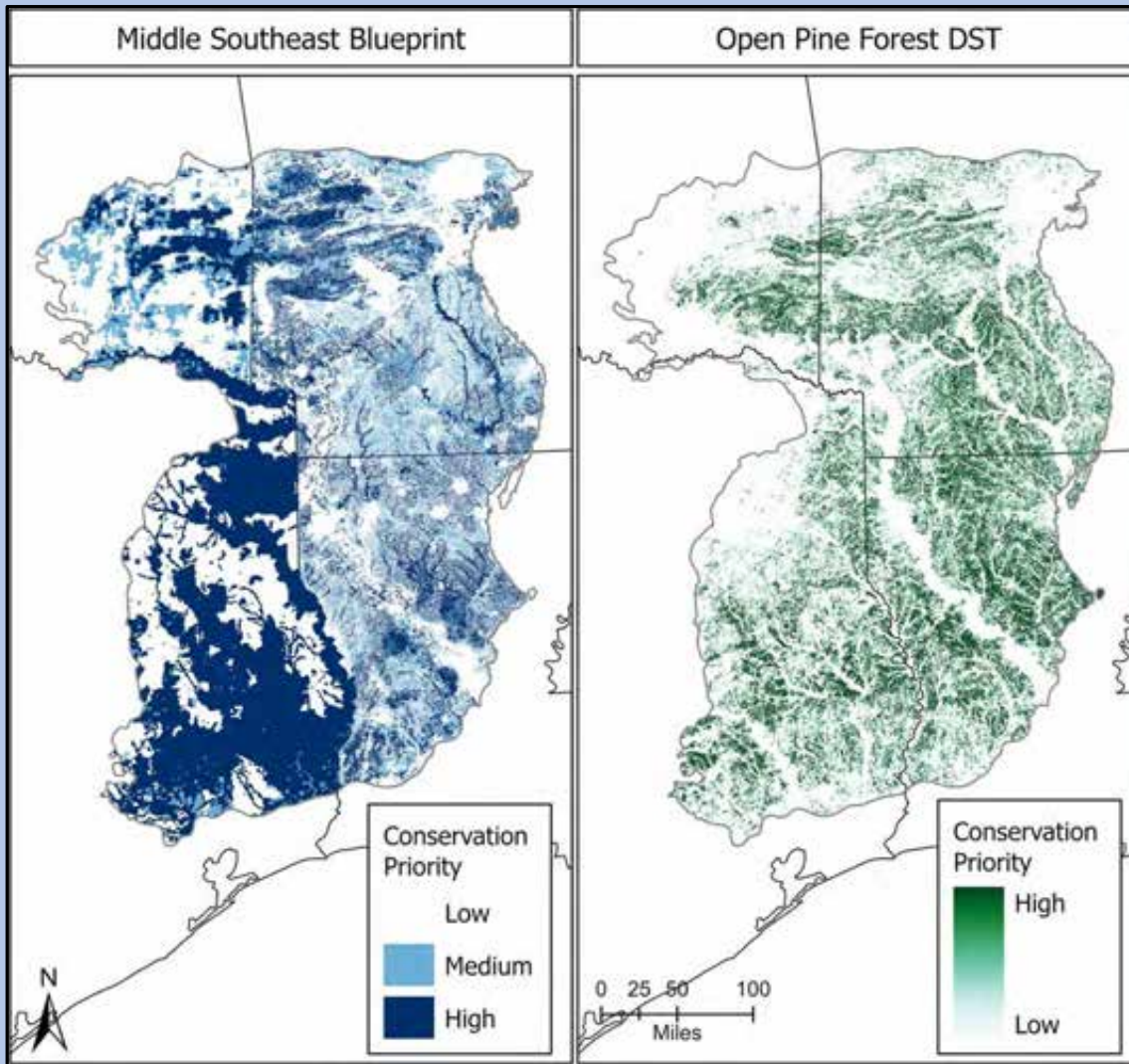
MIDDLE LEFT: Frequency of conservation priority scores between the Middle Southeast Blueprint and the Joint Venture Forest Restoration model. Darker areas represent a higher relative frequency of overlap, largely between all restoration scores and Low Blueprint value.

BOTTOM LEFT: Rank correlation coefficients between Forest Protection scores and multiple levels of the Middle Southeast Blueprint, from habitat-level to regional focus.

Blueprint Input Level	Kendall Coefficient Correlation (τ_b)
Terrestrial Habitat Condition Index	0.357
Terrestrial Conservation Value Index	0.143
Blueprint	0.073

Conservation Priority Alignment Summary

Middle Southeast Blueprint and the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture West Gulf Coastal Plain / Ouachitas Open Pine Forest model



LEFT: Conservation priority areas identified by the Middle Southeast Blueprint (2020) clipped to the West Gulf Coastal Plain / Ouachitas geographic boundary (left) beside the Open Pine Forest Decision Support Model created by the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture (right).

BOTTOM: The primary components used to create both planning tools are listed here, including the overall objective, geographic extent, base priority unit, spatial resolution, and data inputs.

Priority Tool Component	Middle Southeast Blueprint	Open Pine Forest DSM
Biological Objective	Identify important areas for conservation and restoration that link local actions to regional objectives.	Identify areas of greatest potential for supporting viable populations of priority bird species through open pine forest management and protection.
Extent	Middle Southeast	West Gulf Coastal Plain / Ouachitas
Priority Unit	Pixel	Forest Patch
Resolution	30-meter	30-meter
Base Data (Age)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Species range maps (NatureServe or eBird STEM models) -LANDFIRE land cover (2017) -Protected Areas Database v2 (2020) -Partner Priority Areas -NLCD Landcover change (2001, 2016) -Southeast SLEUTH model (2014) -USGS marsh migration model (2015) -EPA Estimated Floodplain (2018) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -NLCD (2001) -Floodplain map (Tirpak et al 2009) -Bird population trends (Grand & Kleiner [2016])

Middle Southeast Blueprint and LMVJV Open Pine Forest

Spatial Overlap and Priority Congruence

OVERVIEW

To understand the degree of alignment between the Middle Southeast Blueprint and Joint Venture tools at a local scale, we assessed the spatial overlap and priority congruence using EPA 40km² hexagons. Aggregating priority scores from the pixel level to planning units may reflect how users interact with the tools to make decisions about where to direct conservation resources locally and reduce slight spatial shifts in priority. To keep comparisons relatively consistent between tools, we focused on the areas and scores with the highest prioritization (i.e., top 30% of value scales corresponding with High value in the Blueprint.)

KEY RESULTS

TOP RIGHT: The difference in prioritization of EPA hexagons (40km²) within the West Gulf Coastal Plain / Ouachitas determined as the difference in the proportion of each unit assigned a high priority score within the models. Blue or yellow units represent greater priority by the Blueprint or Joint Venture, respectively.

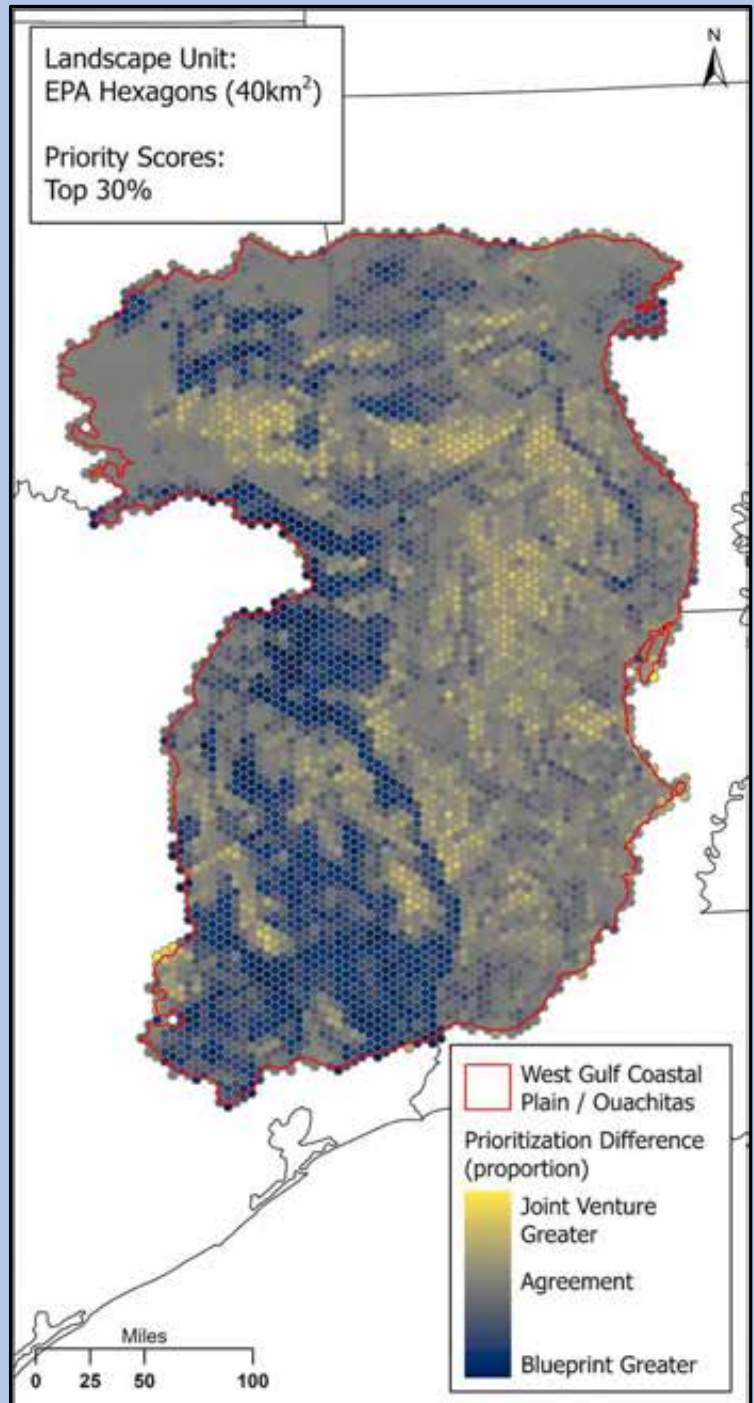
Caveat: Units in relative agreement reflect similar priority, regardless of whether it is high or low priority.

Noteworthy Differences: Variation (i.e., greater Blueprint prioritization in eastern Texas and northern Ouachitas) may reflect Joint Venture emphasis on larger, pine forest blocks, compared to other Blueprint priorities (i.e., hardwoods and aquatics).

Accounting for all hexagons, the average difference, or disagreement, in the proportion of highly prioritized area per unit was 0.30 on a scale of 0 – 1 (total agreement to total disagreement), indicating moderate disagreement overall.

Average Prioritization Difference = 0.30

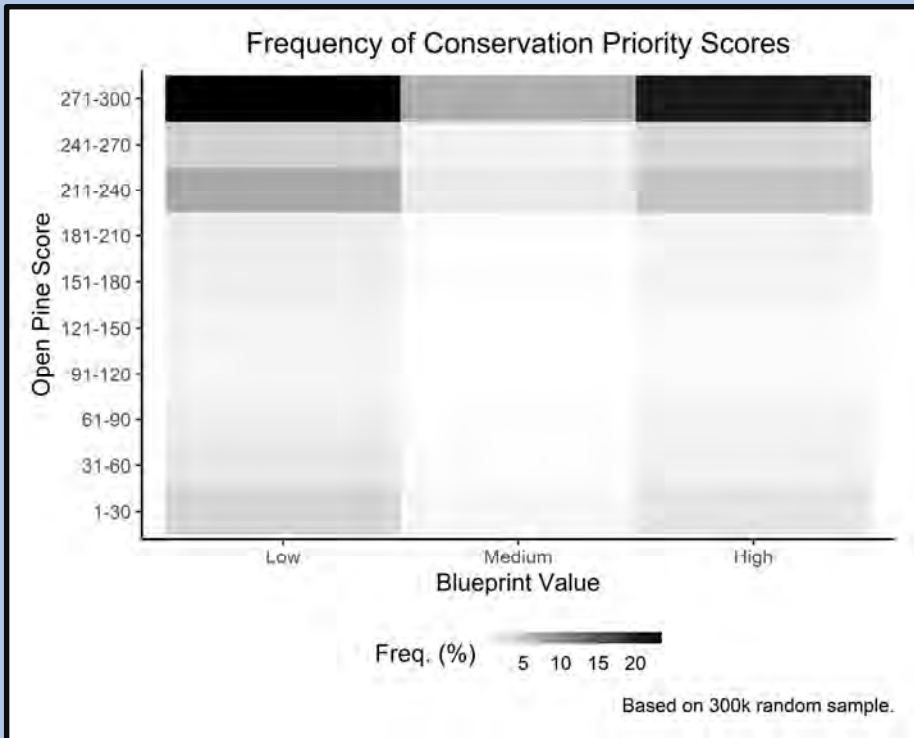
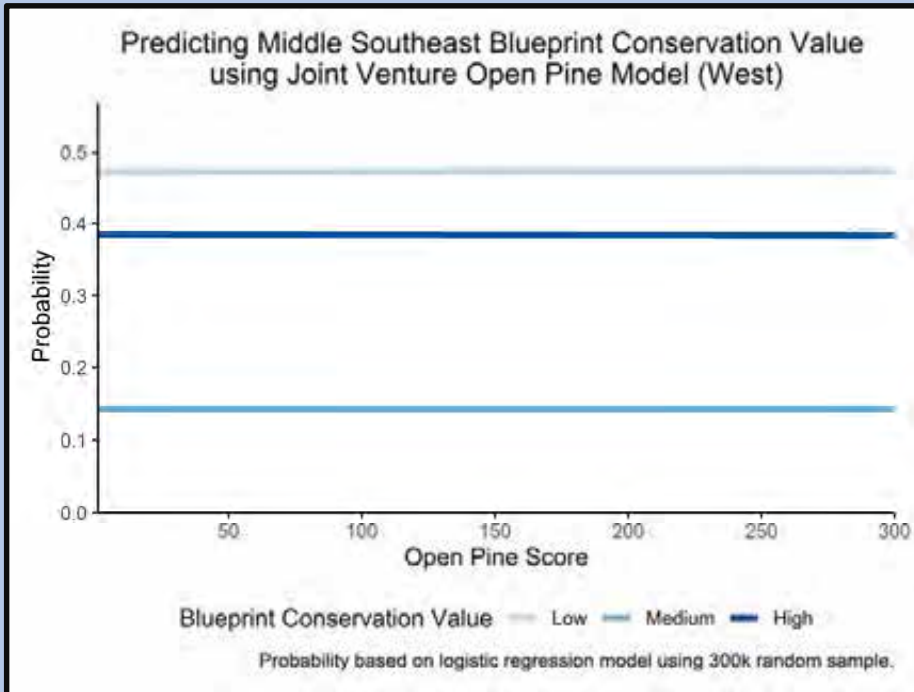
BOTTOM RIGHT: Rank correlation analysis on scores aggregated to EPA hexagons (40km²) determined the correlation between conservation priorities within the West Gulf Coastal Plain / Ouachitas. Larger coefficients may indicate a higher degree of priority alignment between these landscape planning units. Results are shown for multiple levels of the Middle Southeast Blueprint, from habitat to regional focus.



Blueprint Input Level	Priority Scores Summarized	Kendall Correlation Coefficient (τ_b)
Habitat	Total	0.109
Condition	Top 30%	0.255
Terrestrial	Total	0.016
Conservation Value	Top 30%	0.075
Blueprint	Total	0.119
	Top 30%	0.132

Middle Southeast Blueprint and LMVJV Open Pine Forest

Logistic Regression and Rank Correlation Analysis



OVERVIEW

To understand alignment between the Middle Southeast Blueprint and Joint Venture tools at the base unit level (i.e., pixel), we used logistic regression and rank correlation analysis on a random sample of 300,000 points. The results of logistic regression can be used to predict the outcome probabilities (i.e., the likelihood that a priority score in one model may result in a certain priority score in the other). Rank correlation coefficients attempt to gauge the relative strength of association between conservation priorities.

KEY RESULTS

TOP LEFT: Predicted probability that Joint Venture Open Pine Forest priority scores are associated with Middle Southeast Blueprint Conservation Values determined through logistic regression analysis. Lines represent the predicted likelihood of receiving one of three Blueprint values across the range of Joint Venture scores, and do not reflect linear trends.

Highlight: The likelihood of receiving either a High or Low Blueprint value remains consistent across the range of Open Pine Forest scores, e.g., if the Open Pine score is 150, the probably that the Blueprint value is High is 0.38, Medium is 0.14, and Low is 0.48.

MIDDLE LEFT: Frequency of conservation priority scores between the Middle Southeast Blueprint and the Joint Venture Open Pine Forest model. Darker areas represent higher relative frequency of overlap, particularly between forest scores of 271-300 and both Low & High Blueprint values.

BOTTOM LEFT: Rank correlation coefficients between Forest Protection scores and multiple levels of the Middle Southeast Blueprint, from habitat-level to regional focus.

Blueprint Input Level	Kendall Coefficient Correlation (τ_b)
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Terrestrial Habitat Condition Index	-0.009
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Terrestrial Conservation Value Index	0.060
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Blueprint	0.052
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The following messages about Migratory Bird Joint Ventures are shared statements that each of the partnerships support and wish to elevate.

Joint Ventures are partnerships, including states, federal agencies, NGOs, private landowners, and industry, that have been delivering habitat programs under a collaborative landscape conservation framework for three decades. Their work is:

- **Entrepreneurial and scalable**, leveraging funding at a rate of 31:1, maintaining flexibility and an adaptive approach to successful bird conservation.
- **Voluntary**, keeping species from being listed and to remove species that are listed.
- **Science-based**, with investments in monitoring to enact on-the-ground conservation.

Joint Ventures are **key in implementing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) mission** and provide services and support to numerous FWS programs including Refuges, Science Applications, and Migratory Birds. They are working closely with regional landscape conservation efforts between states and FWS to serve as an implementation mechanism for landscape conservation collaboratives.

As partnership-driven entities, Joint Ventures have adapted over time to embrace all-bird full-life-cycle conservation and are now **positioned to address the Three Billion Bird decline** and lead the habitat conservation elements of the FWS 5+1 response, but are only funded at a portion of the needed annual \$41 million funding to be fully operational. FWS has been the primary funder of Joint Ventures given its statutory responsibility for migratory birds. However, opportunities exist to forge agreements between FWS and Natural Resources Conservation Service, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Forest Service to support funding needs due to the value that Joint Ventures can bring to those federal agencies as they strive to deliver their respective missions.

Joint Venture habitat conservation efforts:

- Conserve grasslands, wetlands, and forests to not only provide critical habitats for birds and myriad other species, but are also instrumental in providing **carbon storage and climate resilience**.
- Have a strong nexus with **climate smart conservation** and are building new partnerships to enhance and strengthen those connections.
- Provide opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife watching, and other **outdoor recreation** in urban, suburban, and rural communities.
- **Build industry partnerships**, including agriculture and commercial forestry, to support wildlife conservation while providing fuel, food, and fiber for communities and the nation's economy.
- Benefits riverine and coastal communities by conserving habitats that **buffer communities and infrastructure** from storms, flooding, and water pollution.

Internal AJVMB Core Messages, adapted from Telling the JV Story

These Core Messages of the AJVMB about the Migratory Bird Joint Venture program resonate for both Majority and Minority members of Congress. Your JV may have specific ones to use as well.

- Joint Venture habitat conservation efforts provide opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife watching, and other outdoor recreation.
- Joint Venture partnerships work voluntarily to keep species from being listed, and to remove species that are listed
- Joint Venture program has kept waterfowl and wetlands abundant, and with additional support will expand efforts for declining bird species and their habitats.
- Joint Ventures accelerate efficiency and effectiveness in conservation with a 31:1 leveraging track record.
- Joint Ventures are key in implementing the USFWS mission
- Joint Ventures build industry partnerships to support wildlife conservation while also building a healthy future for things like energy development, local communities and the Nation's economy.
- Joint Ventures focus voluntary, on-the-ground conservation actions based on science and monitoring.
- Joint Ventures help coastal communities by protecting and restoring habitat that buffers communities and infrastructure from storms.
- Joint Ventures partnerships include federal and state agencies, private landowners, industry, and other.
- Joint Ventures work with agriculture and forestry industries to support working lands for wildlife conservation.
- JVs are a well-established resource, flexible and able to adapt and grow our programs and partnerships for successful bird conservation
- The JVs are poised to lead the habitat conservation elements of the FWS 5+1 response to the 3BB decline. The JVs have demonstrated the ability to catalyze and help deliver strategic, partnership-driven, landscape-scale habitat conservation for waterfowl and can replicate that success for other groups of migratory birds currently in steep decline.

Overall, JVs need \$41 million per year to lead the habitat conservation elements of reversing the 3BB decline. The FWS support of the JV program has been vitally important over the last 30 years. Logically, the Service should always be the primary funder of the JVs due to its statutory responsibility for migratory birds. However, it is entirely possible that a portion of future JV funding will be provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, and other agencies due to the immense value that JVs can bring to those federal agencies. AJVMB is working to leverage the JV networks, partnerships, and relationships for the JV Program to be the nexus that brings the various conservation related federal agencies together

The Association of Migratory Bird Joint Venture Boards (Association) exists to strengthen the ability of the Joint Venture partnerships to deliver their bird conservation objectives.

Our mission is accomplished through these Core Actions

The Association of Migratory Bird Joint Venture Boards (Association) will increase the ability of the Joint Venture partnerships to deliver their bird conservation objectives through these actions:

1. Elevate Migratory Bird Joint Ventures as *the* successful model of conservation partnerships by
 - Providing a forum for communication among the Joint Venture Management Boards;
 - Developing clear messages that describe the advantages of the diverse Joint Venture partnership approach to bird conservation and the benefits of that work for people;
 - Coordinating communications of these messages to state and federal agency leadership and lawmakers (elected officials and their staffs) to convey specific needs and accomplishments, and develop similar messages for other potential funding sources;
2. Encourage active engagement by the Joint Venture Management Boards in the Association's efforts;
3. Promote robust funding for Joint Ventures from
 - The federal government and other sources for JV operations;
 - Conservation programs that directly supports migratory bird habitat such as North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA), Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (Neotrop Act), USDA Farm Bill Programs, State and Tribal Wildlife Grants (SWG), Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (Duck Stamp), and Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF); and
4. Respect the individuality, autonomy, and diverse partnerships of each Joint Venture.

Association of Joint Venture Management Boards: Future Paths

April 26, 2019

Recently, numerous Joint Venture Management Board members have expressed a desire to strengthen the Association of Joint Venture Management Boards (AJVMB) as necessary to gain additional support and funding for JVs to catalyze bird habitat conservation through public-private partnerships at expanded scales. JV funding has declined by \$1 million (from roughly \$14 million to \$13 million) since its original high-water mark in FY 2010. Further, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the annual inflation rate from 2010 to 2019 has been 1.72%, meaning that **“flat-line” JV funding in 2019 translates to only 85.78% of the buying power of that of 2010**. Considering that JV funding has declined by \$1 million during that time span, the JV program is operating with essentially only roughly 80% of the funding that was available in 2010. **In today’s dollars, JV program would need \$16.1 million to achieve an inflation-adjusted flat-line level commensurate with the 2010 appropriation of \$14 million**. Measurable expansion of the successful JV program would require an additional several million dollars, leading to the **\$19.9 million** identified in the most recent JV needs assessment and formally supported by the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in 2017.

Over the last 25 years, the commitment to the Association has varied across the 18 U.S. Habitat JVs with strong engagement by Management Board members in some JVs and less interest from members in other JVs. The AJVMB leaders recognize that no activity from JVs on Association priorities is negligence of our future existence, and that progress from here will be best attained through buy-in and participation by Management Board members of most, if not all, JVs. However, there are questions about the return on investment of time dedicated to AJVMB participation. The following is a summary of some of these issues and ideas for paths forward.

Questions of the Day: What is the compelling case for increased Management Board member participation in the Association? Is this the year? What evidence suggests that increased engagement in the Association would result in increased JV funding?

Back Story: There are no solid answers to those questions. All we have is a track record of connections, relationships between IWJV Management Board members and Appropriations Committee leaders – e.g., Rebecca Frank (IWJV)/Sen. Wayne Allard, Joe LaTourette (PBHJV)/Rep. Norm Dicks – and an organized AJVMB effort being successful in the late 1990s through 2009. That organized effort also aligned with the work of FWS DBHC, led by Seth Mott, to strongly champion the JV model with FWS leadership and OMB. Seth facilitated annual meetings of JVCs to brief the OMB Examiner for the FWS as a means of providing information and education about the JV model, specific approaches, and successes in conserving habitat through public-private partnerships. Since 2010, the AJVMB has gone through phases characterized by solid leadership and engagement (under Chair, Jimmy Anthony, Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries) to much less of an organized body searching for purpose and strategic direction.

Future Paths: The following two paths hold promise for strengthening the JV enterprise with additional funding and support. Management Board members for all 18 JVs can and should play a role in championing the JV model through one or both of these parallel paths.

- FWS/DOI Leadership
- Congressional Offices/Committees

FWS/DOI Leadership

The JV model – and particularly the work of certain JVs – appears well-aligned with the priorities of the current Administration. The challenge over the last decade is that while JVs continue to be regarded as a high-performing and popular program, the FWS has only twice recommended increased funding in the President’s Request, one of which was inserted by OMB as a one-time requested infusion to JVs. Neither of those requests were included in the final Appropriations bill. Clearly, the FWS has had other priorities during much of the last decade. However, the public-private partnership model of the JVs should resonate at high levels within the Department and the FWS at this juncture.

The key in this arena is that Management Board members must effectively tell the story of their JVs at multiple levels with the FWS and DOI. Here’s some promising avenues:

- *FWS Regional Leadership:* JVs have initiated a new approach of jointly meeting with FWS Regional Directors (RDs) and their leadership teams to explain JV efforts, understand Regional priorities, and explore common ground. In December of 2018, the JVs that operate in R2 (Gulf Coast, Oaks & Prairies, Rio Grande, Sonoran, and Lower Mississippi Valley) orchestrated a half-day meeting with R2 leadership in Albuquerque. Coincidentally, on the same day, the Pacific Flyway JVs (Intermountain West, Central Valley, San Francisco Bay, and Pacific Bird Habitat) executed a similar meeting with the R8 RD and leadership team in Sacramento. Likewise, individual JV staff and Management Board members have accelerated their dialogue with RDs in recent years. Clearly, more work in this arena is key to building support from the ground up.
- *FWS Directorate:* In addition to building support from RDs, JV Management Board members and staff need to actively communicate and share successes, needs, and opportunities with the FWS Principal Deputy Director and Assistant Directors in Washington, DC.
- *Department of Interior:* Some JVs has Management Board members that are well-connected and work closely with Departmental leadership on an array of issues. Those members should engage the Departmental leaders, typically at the Assistant Secretary and Deputy Assistant Secretary level, in discussions about the work of JVs.

In summary, every JV can and should contribute the time and energy of its staff and Management Board members to sharing the JV model with FWS and Departmental leadership. These activities should be strategically aligned based on Management Board member and staff connections, linkages, and the direction/priorities of individual JVs in relation to FWS and DOI priorities.

Congressional Offices/Committees

Some JVs have Management Board members that work extensively with their Congressional delegations and have developed lasting relationships with members, their staff, and committee staff over the years. Other JVs Management Boards are comprised, at least currently, largely of federal and state agency members without much latitude to engage in Congressional communications. As such, the AJVMB’s efforts to educate Congressional members and staff have, to date, been uneven, with a handful of JVs

(e.g., Intermountain West, Rainwater Basin, Appalachian Mountains, SF Bay, Central Valley, Playa Lakes, Pacific Birds, Sonoran, Northern Great Plains, and Prairie Pothole) carrying most of the weight and bearing most of the cost in sharing the JV message on Capitol Hill. Other JVs have articulated that their Management Boards are not well-positioned to carry out Congressional communications.

The success of the JV enterprise clearly hinges on Congress knowing and appreciating the work of JVs, across the country and across the aisle. Here's some ways to achieve those objectives:

- *Hill Visits:* JV Management Board members with well-developed relationships with Congressional members, staff, and committee staff should strive to collectively execute Hill Visits several times each year. This can be done through the AJVMB's long-standing effort of an organized AJVMB Fly-In but also through smaller groups of JV Management Board members going back to DC, oftentimes as part of other business, and championing the work of their JVs. These efforts should be focused on the members of the Senate and House Appropriations Committee, particularly the Interior and Related Agencies Subcommittees, as informed by the AJVMB's power map.
- *Field Tours:* Management Board members can help educate key members of Congress through JV-organized field tours or legislative days in which board members and staff invite Congressional members and staff out to see JV conservation work on the ground. These types of tours have been effectively executed by the Rainwater Basin JV and several other JVs in the past at times when members were back in their home state or district on recess. In addition, JVs can invite state-level Congressional staff out on other regular JV field tours (e.g., IWJV Management Board meeting field tours).
- *Growing the JV Support Base:* Some JVs have been reluctant to add private landowners, energy company executives, or other private sector members to their Management Boards. Given that many NGOs have their own (at times complementary, but not JV-specific) government affairs priorities and focus their time and resources accordingly, this leaves these JVs without much of a voice on Capitol Hill. This is a fundamental issue that needs to be addressed in the AJVMB is going to be effective; the alternative is half or less of the JVs 'carrying the water' for the whole JV community. While each JV can and should have the prerogative to establish its Management Board as it sees fit, alternative approaches must be explored if JVs are to have a collective presence on the Hill. One novel approach being used by certain JVs is to engage well-connected private landowner agricultural producers – beyond its Management Board members – in JV activities and support those landowners throughout the year in collaborative conservation efforts in their landscapes. Those landowners have, over time, developed an appreciation for the JV and have been willing to participate in Hill Visits to support the JV. This approach has mostly involved farmers and ranchers to date but could be explored with energy companies, the forest products and irrigation industries, and other industries that see value in the work of JVs.

In conclusion, this paper presents some ideas for the future paths forward for the Association that could be very effective in securing a bright future for JVs over the next 30 years!