

LEADERS ON THE LAND

The Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture (LMJVJ.org) exists to collaborate in the protection, restoration, and management of birds and their habitats in the Mississippi Alluvial Valley and West Gulf Coastal Plain/Ouachitas regions.

From the Joint Venture Coordinator and Chair

Welcome to the summer edition of Leaders on the Land. We hope you enjoy and benefit from a newsletter packed with information and updates – while you take a break from the heat outside!

In **Private Landowner Spotlight** you'll get to know a private lands champion doing truly great things in South Louisiana. In **JV Partnership in Action** we highlight an exciting research project testing the capabilities of drone-borne photography in monitoring waterfowl, and we celebrate the phenomenal forest restoration and protection success made possible by partners in the Mississippi Alluvial Valley. You may be particularly interested in the bottomland hardwood forest management and invasive plant species management resources found in the **Hands-on** section. **Conservation in the News** is packed with snippets from a wide variety of topics relevant to land stewardship and wildlife management. Finally, in **Meet Our Staff & Partners** please get to know two more of our incredible professional staff making great things happen with private landowners in Mississippi and Texas.



JOINT VENTURE



Harvey Kieffer's healthy longleaf pine understory

2021 Champs

Find out more about all of our Conservation Champions on the Private Landowner Conservation Champion page on the LMJVJ web site. (lmvjv.org/plcc-main)

Mr. Harvey Kieffer Conservation Champion

“One and Done” may be a useful approach to some things, but rarely is this a recipe for good land stewardship. It may be hard to find a better example of ongoing, hands-on, dedicated private lands conservation than that employed by our friend and 2021

Jeff Raasch

LMVJV Management Board Chair



Keith McKnight

LMVJV Coordinator &
Leaders on the Land Editor



Private Landowner Conservation Champion, Harvey Kieffer. Acquiring a mixed pine forest with dense, brushy understory in 2006, he had a different vision for what this South Louisiana forest could be. His many efforts since then have transformed this Beauregard Parish property into an example of well-managed, diverse habitat for an array of wildlife.

From the beginning, Mr. Kieffer desired to improve the habitat for wild turkey, while benefiting as many wildlife species as possible and managing the timber for economic return. He enjoys hunting and fishing, but also enjoys bird watching, learning about wildflowers and observing pollinators. Shortly after purchase, he enrolled in the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and began a prescribed burning program. Since then, he has worked through various programs (WHIP, EQIP, CRP) with multiple agencies to convert the impenetrable brush into an open pine forest with an herbaceous understory.



Harvey Kieffer

He worked with the National Wild Turkey Federation to develop a management plan that would guide action to achieve his vision. Then, through partnerships with USDA-NRCS and Farm Service Agency (FSA), The Nature Conservancy, and Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, he planted trees and native warm season grass (NWSG), conducted forest stand improvement, and continued his prescribed burning. Mr. Kieffer has managed his timber with selective harvests, targeting a basal area of approximately 70. After thinning, he installed additional acres of NWSG and conservation cover. Mechanical and chemical control of the Chinese privet and other undesirable brush, along with consistent prescribed burning, have ushered in a healthy herbaceous understory, creating habitat for grassland nesting birds, including wild turkey.

Pollinator plants have been broadly promoted by conservationists in recent years. Mr. Kieffer not only bought into the value of these important species, but went beyond by finding native milkweeds on his property, collecting seeds, propagating plants, and transplanting them back onto his property to enhance monarch butterfly habitat. He has created two ponds on the property that hold perennial water and two moist soil/shallow water areas



Pine Snake, a species of the longleaf pine forests - James Childress

where he manages early successional vegetation and plants periodically to provide food for wintering waterfowl. These areas also benefit wading birds.

And he has not stopped learning or leading! Since he started managing his property, Mr. Kieffer has become a Louisiana Certified Prescribed burner and has spoken at several meetings, including the LA Prescribed Fire Council, promoting the use of prescribed burning and encouraging private landowners to use prescribed fire. He continues to support efforts to establish a Prescribed Burn Association in his area and has hosted a local garden club to observe the native wildflowers in his understory.

Unsurprisingly, he continues to strive to improve his property and hopes to continue those efforts with NRCS's Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). Hurricane Laura decimated a portion of his timber, and a salvage harvest was just completed. He plans to replant this area with longleaf pine! Mr. Kieffer, with his passion and tireless efforts to steward his property and provide leadership to others doing the same, stands tall among his peers and makes him a most worthy LMVJV Private Landowner Conservation Champion!

JV Partnership in Action

Forest Restoration in the Delta *30 Years of Hard Work & Great Success*

The Mississippi Alluvial Valley (MAV) is iconic in many ways: as home to the world-renowned Stuttgart Duck Capital, as the bread basket of the Southeast, as birthplace of The Blues. This enormous river floodplain, dubbed by locals as simply “The Delta,” stretches from the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers at Cairo, Illinois to the Gulf of Mexico — a distance of 500 miles. At its widest point, a traveler going west to east remains in The Delta for 120 miles (roughly Little Rock to just south of Memphis)! In all, it encompasses 22 million acres and some of the richest alluvial soil on the planet. And it is now iconic as one of the great conservation stories of our time!

The Way it Was

What you see today in a trek across the valley is a landscape dominated by wide open fields of row crop agriculture: soybeans, cotton, corn, and rice. The Delta's rich alluvial soils have attracted agricultural production since early European settlers discovered them. As an example, at least 65% of the rice produced in the U.S. is grown in The Delta. Here is where our story requires reaching back in time a bit, because the valley wasn't always this way. Before European settlement, the Lower Mississippi River Valley was the largest and most productive forested wetland ecosystem in North America. The complex, if subtle, topography of the floodplain was a mosaic of ridges, swales, meander belts and backswamps that supported a diverse and ecologically rich forested wetland community. To grow crops, however, the trees had to go. And not only that, but taming the floodwaters that came with great force and frequency became a high priority for local, state, and federal interests. So, by the 1950s, as a result of drainage projects, levees, and deforestation, only the wettest, most flood-prone portions of the floodplain remained in forest — about 9 million acres. As commodity prices increased over time, so did motivation to clear significant amounts of the remaining wet, poorly-drained sites such that by 1992 only 6.4 million acres of forest remained. As you might assume, numbers of forest-dwelling creatures such as black bears, panthers, mallards, ivory-billed woodpeckers, and numerous other forest-nesting birds dwindled as a result. But here's where the story takes an encouraging turn!



Eastern Towhee - James Childress

An Early Model for Success

Agronomists, wildlife conservationists, and economists alike recognized the ultimate folly in clearing trees on exceptionally flood-prone ground to grow crops during the very driest times, only to suffer crop failure from too much water during the more frequent years of normal or wet conditions. Costs to the farmer, local community, tax payer, and ecological integrity of the system were just too high to ignore. Wildlife conservation partners began in the late 1980s to rally around the concept of ‘joint ventures’ focused on habitat conservation for the benefit of continental waterfowl (duck, goose, and swan) populations, in response to the 1986 North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP). NAWMP set population objectives for the continent’s waterfowl, to be translated



Bottomland hardwoods - Dale Yocum

into habitat objectives and action by regional partnerships (joint ventures). As one of the most important wintering grounds for waterfowl on the continent, the Lower Mississippi River Valley was among the very first regions in North America to form one of these partnerships — the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture (LMJVJ). Conservation partners in portions of Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana quickly went to work identifying the highest priority actions and locations within The Delta for wetland conservation in support of wintering waterfowl needs—and getting it done! The legacy of this early work can be seen on just about every state wildlife management area, USFWS Refuge, and National Forest across The Delta, as well as on numerous private land tracts. Shallow water areas managed to produce abundant natural seeds (‘moist soil units’), low levees and water control structures that retain water on agricultural fields during fall and winter, and various other habitat projects provide feeding and resting habitat for non-breeding waterfowl, and habitat for a diversity of other wildlife.

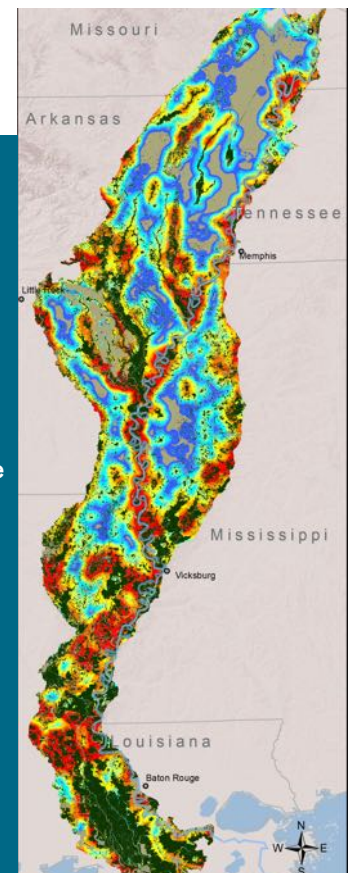
Expanding the Success

With the partnership’s firmly established experience and success in waterfowl conservation, the LMJVJ expanded its scope in 2001 to include habitat conservation for all migratory birds within its geography. The highest priority task under this

newly-adopted responsibility was to better understand the status and desired future condition of forest habitat in The Delta – with particular attention to the needs of declining species that require large blocks of mature forest. The LMJVJ partnership soon developed an assessment of the amount and distribution of forest within the Lower Mississippi River Valley, and discovered that only 6.4 million acres of forest remained in 1992, with much of that in small, scattered patches of little benefit to species of concern such as Swainson’s Warbler, Hooded Warbler, and Swallow-tailed Kite. What followed was a decision support model (lmvjv.org/mav-breedingbird, map at right) that helped decision-makers prioritize tracts for reforestation in a way that would more quickly and efficiently restore forest blocks large enough to provide quality forest-interior habitat. Public land management agencies in particular (such as

Decision Support Model

Partners have added strategically to the forest habitat base in The Delta with the aid of the LMJVJ’s Forest Breeding Bird Decision Support Model. The model basically prioritizes unforested areas based on the probability that reforestation there will contribute to building large forest blocks – forest core. The highest priority sites are depicted in warmer colors (orange to red), whereas the lowest priorities show up as cool (light blue to blue) in the map. By incorporating these priorities into acquisition and restoration decisions, partners have actively ensured that most of the reforestation accomplished within the Lower Mississippi River Valley since 1992 contributes substantially to forest breeding bird priorities.

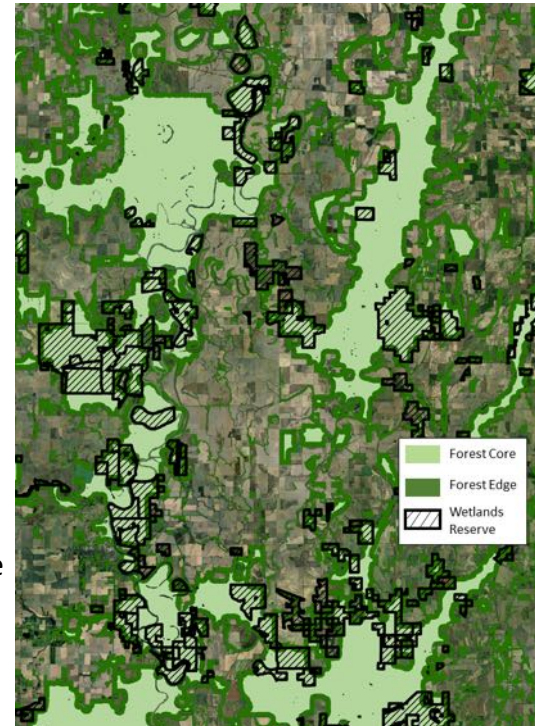


the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, state fish and game agencies) now could effectively target acquisition and reforestation efforts to realize optimum benefits to priority bird species.

Passage of the 1990 Farm Bill saw creation of the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP, later WRE), which was designed to retire poorly-drained, flood-prone, low-producing agricultural lands on wetland soils, and restore significant portions of their natural wetland characteristics. This was a superb fit for much of The Delta's cleared, flood-prone bottomland. So, with a blueprint for optimal placement of forest restoration in hand; a robust partnership of private, state, and federal partners committed to (and already) using it; and an unprecedented funding and implementation program focused on wetland restoration, a recipe for conservation success was written! Conservation partners have joined together throughout The Delta to bring numerous funding streams (in addition to WRP) to bear on targeted reforestation, as well as protection of existing forested wetlands.

Taking Stock After 30 Years

So, what is the net result of all that work? The most recent assessment of forests by the LMJVJ using satellite imagery revealed 7.5 million acres of hardwood forest within The Delta. That's a net gain of over 1 million acres since 1992! Achieving this milestone was not the result of one or even a few organizations or agencies—it is the result of effective partnership! From conservation easements protecting large swaths of mature forest, to protection and management by public agencies, to reforestation on private lands, to conversion of wet ag fields to forest on state and federal lands, to scientists identifying species needs and translating them into practical priorities for action, this achievement is shared by many. And the job certainly is not complete. For one thing, many of these additional forest acres are years away from the mature conditions required by many wildlife species that they are intended to benefit. We know that these tracts can be managed and nudged towards optimal habitat conditions for wildlife (e.g., structure and composition) through active, careful management. LMJVJ partners are actively working to provide and apply basic principles of forest and wildlife management to assist landowners both public and private to manage their forest habitat for desired wildlife conditions [see 'Hands-On Guidance' this issue]. We're not done yet, but progress to date is encouraging. And if the last 30 years is any indication, the next 30 will be something to watch!

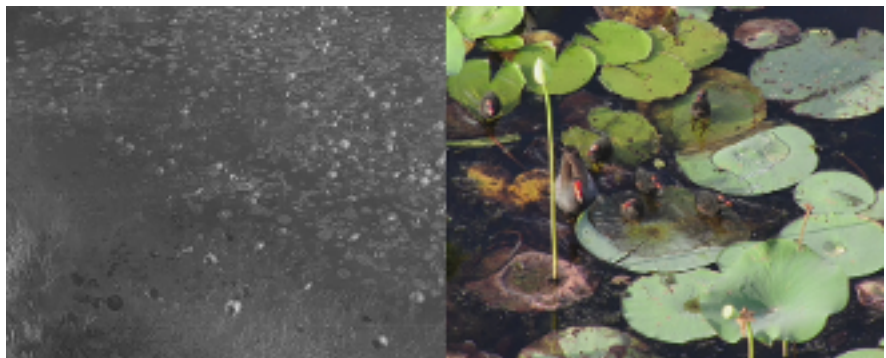


The Wetlands Reserve Program (or, since 2014, Wetland Reserve Easements/WRE) has been responsible for reforestation of 1,000,000 acres within The Delta. What's more, most of this reforestation has been strategically placed to help build forest core. Composed of forest tracts with a 250-meter buffer against surrounding unsuitable habitats, forest core is the basic building block of priority bird habitat in the MAV. A 2011 analysis found that since its establishment, WRP reforestation had helped build well over 500,000 acres of forest core in the Delta, increasing available habitat for priority bird species by 10%!

Monitoring Ducks with Drones

Dr. Kevin Ringelman of Louisiana State University and Zack Loken (M.S. Graduate student) are investigating how drones equipped with high-resolution thermal and optical cameras can be used to monitor waterfowl response to wetland restoration in the Mississippi Alluvial Valley under a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant through Ducks Unlimited. The initial field season was conducted in winter 2021 to determine the best methods for counting waterfowl (e.g., height and range of drone, camera angle). Additionally, the researchers

wanted to determine if species could be recognized, behavior could be differentiated, and whether the camera could aid in monitoring nocturnal use. Fourteen Wetland Reserve Easement (WRE) sites were sampled across LA, AR, and MS, representing over 26,000 acres. The initial field season was a success and provided the data needed to begin assessing the utility of various machine learning algorithms for object detection this spring. Object-based detection will allow for automated counting of waterfowl, automated identification to a species level, and possibly a rapid way to determine general use behaviors (e.g., loafing) in restored habitats. The second and final field season is set to begin early-November of this year, during which they plan to collect drone footage across study sites bi-weekly through mid-February.



At left: Drone above Wetlands Reserve Easement site - Kevin Ringelman

Above photos, left to right: Drone infrared image of marsh and marsh birds; Closeup of moorhen family - Zack Loken

Hands-On Guidance

Invasive Species Identification & Control - *Chinese Tallow*

Chinese tallow (*Triadica sebifera*; a.k.a., tallowtree, popcorn tree) was first introduced into the southeastern U.S. in the late 1700s, variously promoted for production of seed oil, candle and soap making, and honey bee nectar; it continues to be planted as an ornamental. Now distributed across most of the Southeast, Chinese tallow is an aggressive and pervasive invader of a wide variety of sites, but tends to be most problematic in moist and wet sites, shading out native vegetation. By crowding out native trees and other plants, Chinese tallow has negative effects on forest structure and diversity, thus reducing habitat value for insects, amphibians, mammals, and birds. Its tendency to dominate and degrade large areas of prairie and forest make this non-native invasive tree a very high priority for control.

Control

Control of invasive species should be an ongoing activity. An effective way to do this is through the use of herbicides. Chinese tallow is most effectively treated based on the size of the target plant. The following chart presents effective recommended chemicals, application methods, and timing based on the size of the tree being treated. Always follow the manufacturer's label for safe use, mixing, and application of the herbicide. This information is provided courtesy of Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Department (LDWF). Mature trees with fruit producing capability should be targeted first. A follow-up application is recommended the following season to target newly sprouted seedlings. For more information go to lmvjv.org/invasive-species.

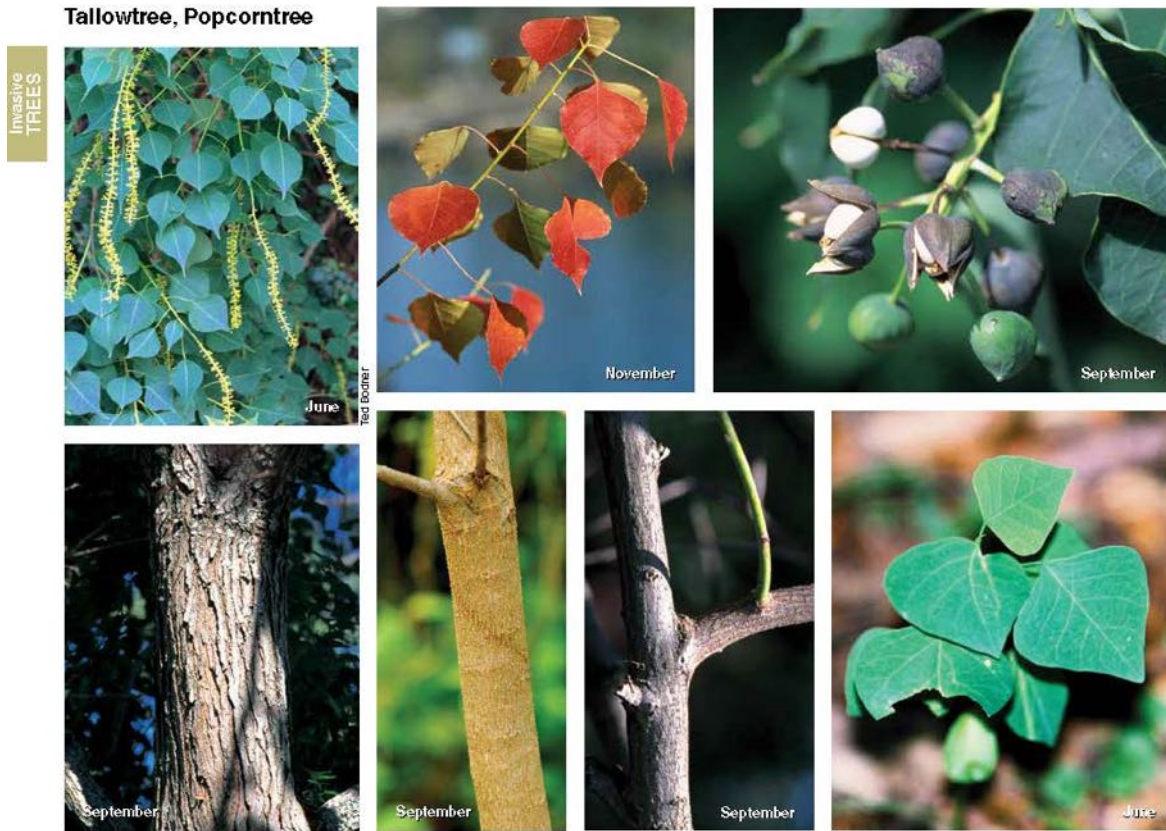


Photo collage source:

Miller, James H., Chambliss, Erwin B., and Loewenstein, Nancy J. 2010. A field guide for the identification of invasive plants in southern forests Gen. Tech. Rep. SRS-119.

Tree Size	Application Method	Chemical/Mix Rate	Most Effective Timing
Saplings (8' or less, but more practically 6' or less; must be able to spray all leaves) and resprouts 3' to 4'	Foliar Spray – wet all leaves but avoid runoff. Frequently requires multiple applications to be effective	Glyphosate 6-10 oz/gallon	Following full leaf expansion to fall, before leaves color
		*Imazapyr 3 oz/gal **with surfactant	Late summer or fall
Small trees with smooth bark and less than 6" in diameter	Basal treatment - Lower 12" to 18" treated around entire base of tree	Triclopyr ester 6 oz/gallon	Late spring to early summer
Small trees with smooth bark and less than 6" in diameter	Basal treatment - Lower 12" to 18" treated around entire base of tree	25% Triclopyr ester / 75% basal oil	Following full leaf expansion to fall, before leaves color
Trees larger than 6" diameter	Hack and squirt- Using a hatchet or other blade, "hack" through the bark into the sapwood making a cup to hold the "squirt" of herbicide. Make at least 1 "hack and squirt" per every 3 inches of tree diameter	*Imazapyr 2:1 (herbicide:water) ** with surfactant	Effective year around, except during heavy sap flow in early spring.
Cut trees - less than 3" diameter	Stump completely covered with herbicide mixture	*Imazapyr 8-12 oz/gal	ASAP after sawdust is removed and before stump dries
Cut trees 3" diameter and larger	Herbicide applied to the outer edge of the cut, thoroughly covering the sapwood but prevent runoff	25% Triclopyr ester / 75% basal oil	Use Triclopyr/Oil option if stump has begun to dry

Table Footnotes: *Imazapyr is a soil-active pesticide. It moves through the soil and can be taken up by roots. **Do not use Imazapyr within twice the drip line (the area in which rain runs off the canopy) of desirable trees.** Also, these recommendations are for Imazapyr products with 2lbs. of active ingredient per gallon, not for products labeled with trade names including the “AC” distinction.

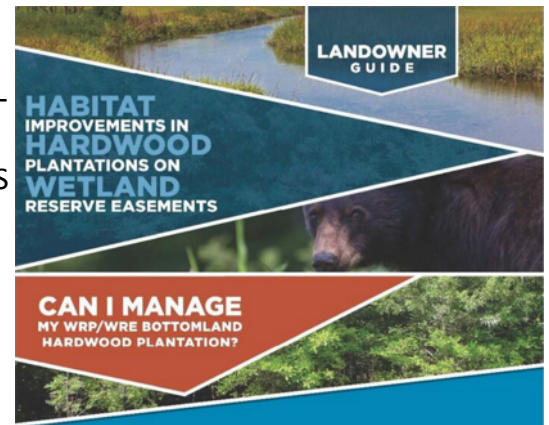
**All surfactant recommendations are 0.25% by volume (1/3 oz. per gallon).

NOTE - Vegetation control varies tremendously when treatments are applied under less than optimum conditions and/or with inexperienced applicators. The information here discusses key elements to successful application; **however, users should, in every case, refer to the respective herbicide labels prior to making any application.** Further, we urge any landowner planning a first-time treatment to **seek the guidance of one of our cooperating agencies or organizations,** and get first-hand advice for the local and state considerations prior to any application. Information presented here is no substitute for on-site professional advice.

Supporting Landowner Interest in WRE Forest Management

In past issues of Leaders on the Land, we shared the conservation community’s awareness and interest in the ever-growing need expressed by WRP and WRE landowners in managing their forest plantations. Here we highlight two tools developed specifically in support of this interest.

The first is a guide released in 2019. Working with NRCS, MAV conservation partners published a brochure titled “Landowner Guide – Habitat Improvements in Hardwood Plantations on WRE” lmvjv.org/s/landownerguide.pdf. The brochure provides information on basic NRCS objectives and approaches to managing forest plantations on Wetland Reserve Easements. It includes general guidance on how to conduct your own plantation assessment and is designed to assist landowners in determining if their forest is adequately developed to consider initial treatment. The brochure offers simple and straightforward guidance on how to evaluate two basic components of your forest plantation, 1) Ground Vegetation, and 2) Percent Live Crown. It includes specific information on several important invasive plants to watch out for on your easement. It also provides additional information on how, if you feel treatment may be warranted, to initiate consultation with your local NRCS office.



In addition to the Landowner Guide, there are two recently released videos developed specifically to support landowners with understanding and addressing easement forest management. The two videos are titled

“[Managing Timber on Your Wetland Reserve Easement](#)” and “[Forest Management Planning and Treatment Implementation.](#)” These videos address the fundamentals of NRCS’s forest management guidelines, as well as share details related to making forest treatment decisions. They also discuss how to work with your local NRCS office to obtain guidance and approval for initiating forest plantation treatments. The two forest management videos are part of a broader seven-video series.

The first of the other five videos in the series focuses on the purpose and objectives of the Wetland Reserve Easement program. The remaining four videos focus on wetland management. Many private landowners are finding these new videos very beneficial to their easement management interests and objectives, and we hope you will find them beneficial as well. All of the videos in the series may be viewed and downloaded at lmvjv.org/wrp-wre-management.



Conservation in the News

Prescribed Fire

Does Prescribed Fire Threaten Quail Nests?

Prescribed burns conducted during the spring and summer, called growing season burns, occur when Northern Bobwhite quail and many other wildlife species are breeding and nesting. Researchers at Fort Bragg have found that if timed correctly, prescribed fire poses a low threat to northern bobwhite quail nests. In fact, according to the study, 67% of nests successfully hatched during the three-year observation period. Only two of the 48 nests were burned by prescribed fire.

[Read more.](#)

Using Fire to Manage for Oak Regeneration in Eastern and Southeastern U.S. Oak-Hardwood Ecosystems

A new report from the Southern Fire Exchange concludes “Prescribed fire, often in conjunction with other management practices such as thinning, can be used to restore upland oak ecosystems by promoting environmental conditions favorable to oak acorn germination, seedling survival, and recruitment into the canopy.” [Read or download the oak-hardwood report.](#)



Longleaf prescribed fire - Adam Butler

Prescribed Fire Liability Report for the Southern United States: A Summary of Statutes and Cases

The Southeast Regional Partnership for Planning and Sustainability (SERPPAS) works across geographic and organizational boundaries to promote collaboration in making resource-use decisions supporting national

defense, conservation of natural resources, sustainable working lands and communities, and coordination among states, communities, and military services in the Southeast U.S. Their new report covers prescribed fire liability laws in 13 Southern states.

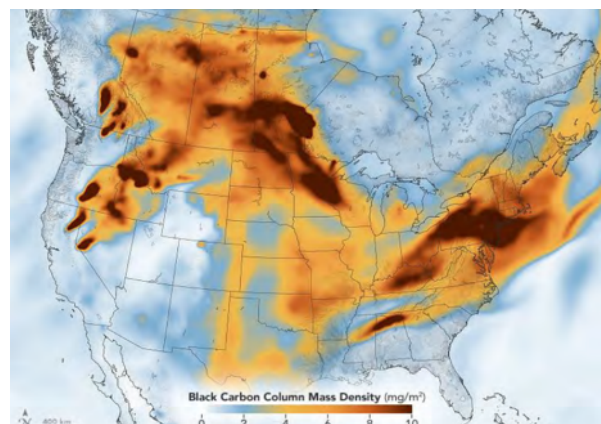
[Read or download the liability report.](#)

From the Fire: A Legacy of Longleaf

The Nature Conservancy in Texas and the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas are working together to restore and manage the imperiled longleaf pine tree using prescribed fire. Beyond its ecological value, the longleaf has historically played a critical role for the tribe, with its needles being used for woven basketry and medicinal purposes. They have produced a beautiful video about their work putting more beneficial fire on the ground in Texas. [View the video on YouTube.](#)

Can Prescribed Fires Mitigate Health Harm? A Review of Air Quality and Public Health Implications of Wildfire and Prescribed Fire

The [American Lung Association’s report](#) assessed the impacts of wildfire and prescribed fire smoke on the American public. In general, the report found that prescribed fire has an important role in mitigating wildfires and hazardous wildfire smoke.



2021 Wildfire Smoke Transport. Plumes of wildfire smoke from fires in western North America passing across the continental U.S. and Canada, July 2021 (Source: NASA, 2021).

Conservation in the News

Wildlife

A bill to save threatened and endangered wildlife has passed the House but could stall over funding

The U.S. House of Representatives on June 14, 2022 passed the Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA), legislation that would provide \$1.4 billion annually to states and tribes for threatened and endangered wildlife programs. The 231-190 vote included yeas from 215 Democrats and 16 Republicans. The fate of RAWA now falls to the Senate, which in April advanced it out of committee. The bill has 36 bipartisan sponsors and cosponsors in the Senate; however, questions remain about sources of funding for RAWA. [Read more](#)

New Framework Guides Conservation Action on America's Central and Eastern Grasslands and Savannas

The USDA has a new plan to accelerate voluntary conservation efforts for the Northern Bobwhite quail and the grassland and savanna landscapes that the species calls home. This plan, the [Northern Bobwhite, Grasslands and Savannas Framework for Conservation Action](#), outlines how USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will work with agricultural producers and partners like Quail Forever to increase adoption of targeted conservation practices that are good for farmers, ranchers, the bobwhite and natural resources. [Read more from NRCS.](#)

The 'Extinct' Ivory-billed Woodpecker May Not Be Extinct After All

Since 1944, nobody—in a way that can be unequivocally verified, anyway—has seen an Ivory-billed Woodpecker alive. Trail cameras, drone cameras, audio recordings, and, just as importantly the eyes and ears of a research team in Louisiana, confirmed to members of the study that Ivory-billed Woodpeckers had survived in small numbers after all. They published their findings in spring 2022 in a not yet peer-reviewed paper. [Read more in Adventure Journal.](#)

Wild Hog Program in Mississippi

The destructive habits and health risks caused by wild hogs have been a growing concern since their introduction. Wild hogs are a non-native invasive species that have been spreading at an alarming rate throughout North America. According to a 2010 USDA study, \$1.5 billion in damage can be attributed to wild hog activity each year.

The purpose of the Mississippi Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) Wild Hog Program is to inform the public of the risks and concerns brought about by the presence of wild hogs, provide technical assistance to private and public landowners for proper control methods, and to assist in or conduct research to better understand how to control wild hog numbers statewide. [Read more from MDWFP.](#)



Feral Hog - James Childress

Texas Longleaf Team Announces New Resource about Reptiles and Amphibians of East Texas Longleaf

These species are incredibly vital to the health of the longleaf ecosystem and serve as both predator and prey for many species. More than just an ID guide, this resource is almost a mini-course in herpetology! Visit [Reptiles and Amphibians of Longleaf Pine Ecosystems](#)

Are you subscribed yet? **SIGN UP** for *Leaders on the Land* quarterly by email at bit.ly/LeadersOnTheLand. If you are reading a hard copy, you can access this newsletter and all its internet links by going to www.lmvjv.org/leaders-on-the-land on the web.

Meet Our Staff & Partners

Jenny Sanders, Texas Longleaf Team

Jenny has served as the coordinator of the Texas Longleaf Team since November of 2020. With degrees in Rangeland Ecology and Wildlife Management from Texas A&M University, Jenny brings unique skills and experience to the Longleaf Team, starting with her M.S. program, which explored motivations for landowner participation in conservation programs, and later as the Conservation Program Coordinator for the Texas Wildlife Association. In that position, Jenny worked to build and nurture partnerships with state and federal agencies, other non-profits and private interests in large scale conservation efforts, including the Leon River Restoration Project, Trinity River Initiative, Edwards Aquifer Recovery Implementation Program, and more. Jenny loves serving as a conduit of support for landowners in their efforts to steward their piece of Texas. Jenny lives in Lufkin with her husband, Robert, sons, Nate (12) and Cade (8), and black lab, Chase.



jennyreeneesanders@gmail.com

(936) 225-2175

Kevin Nelms, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service - Mississippi

Kevin is the area wildlife biologist for the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service in Greenwood, MS. He serves 15 Delta counties where he provides private lands wildlife assistance and guidance for all Farm Bill programs. He also provides statewide leadership for wetland compliance. Kevin has served in this position for almost 24 years. Prior, he served in the same capacity for NRCS in the Missouri Bootheel. Previously, Kevin worked as a wildlife biologist at Fort Stewart Army Installation in Georgia and as a technician at Tall Timbers Research Station in Florida. Kevin received his Master's in Wildlife Science from Auburn University and a B.S. in Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences from North Carolina State University. Kevin's professional interests include integrating wildlife habitat management into agricultural lands, management of early successional plant communities, and restoration and management of wetlands. Kevin is an instructor for the NRCS National Employee Development Center wetland identification cadre. He represents Mississippi NRCS on the advisory board of the Louisiana-Mississippi Conservation Delivery Network and the Tri-state Conservation Partnership. Kevin currently serves as president for the Bear Education and Restoration (BEaR) Group of Mississippi. He is

married to Stacey and has a son Clay, with whom he shares his passion for waterfowl hunting, turkey hunting, and crappie fishing.

kevin.nelms@ms.usda.gov

662-226-5683



If you are reading a hard copy, you can access this newsletter and all of the links by going to our Leaders on the Land page, <https://www.lmrvj.org/leaders-on-the-land>, on the web.

LMVJV
11942 FM 848
Tyler, TX 75707



Acronyms

AGFC - Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
BEaR - Bear Education and Restoration Group of MS
CRP - Conservation Reserve Program
CSP - Conservation Stewardship Program
EQIP - Environmental Quality Incentives Program
ETWP - East Texas Wetlands Project
FSA - Farm Service Agency
JV - Joint Venture
LDWF - Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries
LMVJV - Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture
MAV - Mississippi Alluvial Valley
MDWFP - Mississippi Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks
NAWMP - North American Wetlands Management Plan

NFWF - National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
NRCS - USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
NWSG - Native Warm Season Grass
RAWA - Restoring America's Wildlife Act
SERPPAS - Southeast Regional Partnership for Planning and Sustainability
USDA - U.S. Dept. of Agriculture
USFWS - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
WHIP - Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program
WRE - Wetland Reserve Easement
WRP - Wetland Reserve Program