



MOBCI HABITAT NEWS

A Publication of the Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative Summer, 2011

Dear MoBCI Partners and Friends,



MoBCI, by design, is a “partnership” organization created to more efficiently and effectively meet our mission to conserve, restore, and protect bird populations. The partnership approach prevents overlap of competition between organizations and broadens the scope of success. One of the really great aspects of our partnership is how it brings together and enhances personal relationships, especially in the area of game and non-game organizations. Frankly, I would be very happy to, right now, do away with that reference in our bird world communications. At this time in our history it just seems divisive, especially when we all have the same goals and objectives. We all are anxious about the future of all birds, and we all recognize all the challenges ahead.

You know another really great thing about partnerships? They reproduce like rabbits. When you start a project or program with one partner, the next thing you notice there is another organization that has a common interest, and wants to join in. Then other persons, organizations, and the community become curious about what all the action is about, and suddenly you or your organization’s representative is being interviewed by a TV, or newspaper, or a magazine reporter, or maybe you will invited to meet with a State Governor, or the State “First Lady”. And, yet another important fact, funding sources like foundations, businesses, and Federal, and State Governments, always rank partnerships higher on the competition ladder, because it typically signifies more maturity, and stability of a project.

All of us are aware of the present, and at least the near future economy. We are seeing everyday significant funding threats to the environment. It is to be expected, we are going to be taking funding reductions in the world of conservation, and the environment. It is only by banding together in our partnerships that we can succeed in minimizing the detrimental impact on our environment.

Now, on the positive side, there are some great examples of success in partnerships. Over the past three years, the Greater Ozarks Audubon Society has had a wonderful experience in partnering. We have included the story line, and pictures about their project in this newsletter. Please read closely, and enjoy the warm feeling you will have when you see the results. Oh yes, be sure to count the partners participating in this success story. The Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative now has 60 partner organizations committed to “working together to conserve and restore bird populations and their habitats.”

Charles Burwick, Chair
MoBCI Steering Committee

Green Leadership Academy for Diverse Ecosystems (GLADE)

A Project Developed by the Greater Ozarks Audubon Society and Missouri State University

2011 Season Update

The GLADE project aims to attract 16 motivated teens each year, from under-represented, rural communities, to increase their ecological knowledge and awareness of nature and the impacts of their actions, to expose them to environmental professionals and potential career opportunities, to restore habitat that is globally and regionally critical to species in Missouri, and to develop conservation leaders in rural communities across the Ozarks.

The GLADE program targets tenth and eleventh grade students living in Ozarks communities, who are underserved with respect to enriched curriculum, proximity to resources like nature and discovery centers, and the ability to connect to peers. We work through high school science, gifted, and AG class educators and Community Foundation of the Ozarks Rural Schools Partnership to help us recruit students. This year, we forged a new partnership with the Springfield Plateau Master Naturalist group to extend our peer-mentored component both vertically (age-wise) and horizontally (new partners that reside in the rural communities where our kids live). We continue to build upon a network of ambassadors for the academy through our partners, teachers, grads, grads' families, and their communities.

This year the week-long residential ecology camp was free of charge to students, and made possible through grants from National Audubon's *TogetherGreen* Innovation program, Community Foundation of the Ozarks Rural Schools Project, the L-A-D Foundation which funded 5 scholarships to GLADE, and The North Face. In-kind donations of supplies and volunteers from Greater Ozarks Audubon, Missouri State University, Missouri Department of Conservation, Springfield Plateau Master Naturalist, James River Basin Partnership, and the Watershed Center support GLADE.

The students are exposed to a diverse group of leaders, representing a wide range of environmental professions, including avian biologists, water ecologists, geohydrologists, botanists, entomologists, herpetologists, resource planners, and conservation and wildlife managers. They participate in group problem solving and leadership-building exercises, and in collaborative projects. A key aspect of the academy is a day devoted to hands-on, glade-savanna habitat restoration (or giant cane restoration as weather conditions permit). The peer-mentored, service-learning format provides the template for the participants to return to their schools and communities to initiate a conservation project of their own.

Between the conclusion of GLADE, June, 2011 and May, 2012, grads may apply for a project grant up to \$250, or work with a Mentor Team to leverage their grant up to \$500. GLADE participants receive a "Green Tool Kit" including backpack, books, reference materials, and the leadership skills that prepare them to become tomorrow's conservation leaders. GLADE graduates present programs about the camp to community groups in their home towns and to the Greater Ozarks Audubon chapter. Several return to camp each year to assist with habitat restoration and mentor the new class's project planning sessions.



Measuring Success:

Twenty-five high school students competed to attend the GLADE Year 3, through application, essay, and letters of recommendation. The applications were scored to select students that met GLADE admission criteria, resulting in 16 students accepted into the program. One later declined to attend summer school.

Four thousand square meters of glade-savanna habitat was restored in Drury-Mincy Conservation Area, Taney County, Missouri in 2011. In 2009 and 2010, four thousand square meters of giant cane habitat was restored each year. An initial goal of GLADE was to build a network of 1500 young conservation leaders over 5 years.

In two years (year 3 grads are just getting projects started):

- 42 high school students directly engaged
- 15 community conservation action projects completed
- 1250+ volunteers recruited by GLADE grads to help implement community projects
- 150+ people attended programs presented by students about GLADE and their projects
- 50+ volunteers contributed 2600+ project hours
- 20 articles written about GLADE and the students by area media
- 25+ Ozarks non-profit organizations, schools, and government agencies partnered or assisted

GLADE grads in their community projects

Participants were given pre- and post-tests, which measured knowledge and basic environmental attitudes. There was a significant difference between pre- and post-knowledge ($p < 0.001$). The attitude section included 19 statements modified from the Environmental Concern Survey. These students arrived with (and were selected for) a high science and environmental knowledge base so therefore their attitudes are expected to be high already. There was not a significant difference between pre- and post-attitude scores ($p = 0.508$).

Challenges:

The fundamental challenge we face is building financial sustainability for this project. Project support is most easily raised from the area and audience that benefit from the project. When the target is youth from rural, underserved communities, the potential philanthropic support base reflects the same condition. This year we are presenting GLADE programs to Rotary Clubs, Chambers of Commerce, and PTA groups, reaching out through both business and student testimonial strategies.

From the Springfield News-Leader: June 30, 2011, Opinion/Readers' Letters



This past week I went to a program called GLADE -- Green Leadership Academy for Diverse Ecosystem. One of the many activities we did was stream analysis. We used nets to catch different species of bugs and they showed us if the stream was healthy or not. Most of us caught mayflies which are in streams with low pollution, so that showed us this stream was healthy. We also tested to see if the stream had high levels of dissolved oxygen and nitrogen. In Bee Creek there were OK levels of nitrogen and the dissolved oxygen was low due to very slow current in the stream. GLADE was a great time for me and I hope many others get the chance to go just like I did. (Jessie Ballard, Highlandville, Missouri)





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The 2011 MoBCI Grant Program; We Escaped With Only a Few Feathers Missing From Federal Budget Deficit Reductions

by Gene Gardner, Missouri Department of Conservation

To say that 2011 was a challenging year to secure federal grant funds would be a gross understatement! For a complete picture of this past year's challenges, read Amy Buechler's article "State Wildlife Grants are in Trouble!" in this Newsletter. As the war to reduce federal budget spending rages on between our Congressional members in Washington, DC, funding for fish and wildlife conservation continues to be one of the casualties! Most of the federal grant programs (e.g., North American Wetlands Conservation Fund, Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, Cooperative Endangered Species Fund, Land and Water Conservation Fund) were reduced significantly from previous year's allocations. As Amy Buechler has explained, the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program, which is where MoBCI grant funds originate, was reduced to \$63 million nationally for Federal FY11; Missouri is eligible to receive only about \$931,000 in reimbursements from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service FY11 appropriations. Since the reimbursement amount from the previous fiscal year sets the project budget totals for MoBCI grants in the next (future) fiscal year, the total MoBCI grant funding for FY12 had to be reduced by almost \$30,000 below our \$112,000 approved level. However, after applying matching cash funds from Partners for Fish and Wildlife (USFWS), matching cash funds from National Wild Turkey Federation, and one private donation, we are still able to provide \$98,500 for bird conservation projects in Missouri, not much less than the previous two years (see Table 1 below). Although we got our feathers ruffled pretty good, we didn't lose many feathers in our grant project cap.

This reduction is due, in large part, to U.S. Congress' efforts to reduce the federal deficit (i.e., Department of Defense and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act of 2011; PL 112-10). We hoped that Congress would re-authorize FY11 SWG funding at \$90 million during the Continuing Resolution being worked on at the time, which would have given Missouri nearly \$1.5 million in apportionment. We did not anticipate an actual 38% reduction in reimbursements for FY11. However, **it is important that people understand that Missouri (and other states) would have received \$0.00 in funding through the zeroed-out SWG program in FY2011 if it were not for the tremendous level of advocacy and support for SWG funding expressed to our eleven Congressional representatives through members of our Missouri Teaming With Wildlife Coalition – over 300 member organizations strong!!** This advocacy provided the moderate level of funding we received!



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Year	Number Projects Requested	Funding Requested	Number Projects Approved	MoBCI Grant Funds Issued	Funded Projects Match
2004	20	\$ 292,014	16	\$ 249,788	\$ 353,989
2005	19	\$ 259,417	12	\$ 151,788	\$ 333,994
2006	11	\$ 165,842	7	\$ 114,000	\$ 189,386
2007	16	\$ 233,931	9	\$ 142,100	\$ 249,858
2008	12	\$ 170,483	8	\$ 126,933	\$ 186,293
2009	8	\$ 119,000	7	\$ 115,500	\$ 184,000
2010	17	\$ 259,650	8	\$ 102,300	\$ 252,210
2011	12	\$ 198,762	8	\$ 106,000	\$ 190,996
2012	11	\$ 182,587	6	\$ 98,500	\$ 136,000
TOTAL	126	\$ 1,881,686	81	\$ 1,206,909	\$ 2,076,726

Table 1. Summary of annual MoBCI Grant Program awards from 2004 – 2012.

Once again, the 2011 grant cycle (MDC FY2012) was competitive one, with 11 grant proposals submitted for consideration (\$182,587 in funding requested; see Table 1 above). The demand for support for on-the-ground management of our natural communities is still very prevalent, but not getting the funding that we need just delays management projects and that has a negative effect on fish and wildlife. However, once again, our bird conservation partnerships pulled through this year to fund the highest priority habitat work. The MoBCI Steering Committee originally selected eight projects to fund this year, but two projects were cancelled by their project leaders. Therefore, MoBCI has approved funding for six bird conservation projects (\$98,500 in awards). Due to Congressional adjustments in SWG appropriation, \$66,700 (funding for four projects) will be made available to the successful grantees immediately, but \$16,000 (funding for two projects) will receive funding after January 1, 2012, if additional support becomes available during a mid-year budget re-allocation.

Savanna and open woodland Restoration in Northeast Missouri and Southeast Iowa

MoBCI Grant \$20,000: Matching Funds \$20,000

Partnering Organizations: National Wild Turkey Federation (lead), Audubon Society of Missouri, Partners for Fish & Wildlife/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Missouri Department of Conservation.

The Tallgrass Prairie Region (BCR 22) in northern and western Missouri and the Central Hardwoods Region (BCR24) in southern and eastern Missouri was marked by a broad and dynamic oak-dominated savanna. Threats to this landscape of the eastern tallgrass prairie include urbanization,



recreational development, and agricultural expansion. Management to provide bird habitat on 90% of Missouri's private landscape is imperative. For this project, partners will work directly with private landowners and provide cost-share incentives for habitat management on private lands. The NWF and its project partners, including MDC private Lands Conservations, will work to coordinate implementation planning and cost share reimbursement for habitat enhancement practices that favor the restoration and maintenance of savanna and open woodland habitat types. Bird species that will benefit most from oak savanna and open woodlands management include eastern kingbird, brown thrasher, field sparrow, redheaded woodpecker, Baltimore oriole, and bobwhite quail.

Revitalization of Southwestern Missouri Prairies

MoBCI Grant \$20,000: Matching Funds \$23,516

Partnering Organizations: Missouri Prairie Foundation (lead), Audubon Society of Missouri, Missouri Native Plant Society, Missouri Master Naturalists, The Nature Conservancy of Missouri, Kansas City Parks and Recreation Department, and Missouri Department of Conservation.

Funding for this project will be used to control invasive species that threaten the biological integrity of more than 3,000 acres of prairie and other grassland communities in southwestern Missouri. Invasive species to be controlled include sericea lespedeza, tall fescue, and invasive shrubs and trees. Control of invasive species will be done through herbicide applications, prescribed fire, and may also include cutting and chemical treatment of stumps of woody growth. A prairie revitalization crew under the supervision of MPF and MDNR or MDC staffs, will control invasive species on 20 or more prairie and grassland tracts on public and private land. Bird species documented as breeding within these prairie habitats that will benefit from this project include Henslow's sparrow, greater prairie-chicken, northern harrier, dickcissel, eastern meadowlark, grasshopper sparrow, northern bobwhite, field sparrow, upland sandpiper, and Bell's vireo. Success will be determined through vegetation monitoring and breeding bird survey updates, including updates to the SPARKS and CACHE bird occurrence databases.

Invasive Species Control and Natural Community Restoration at Cuivre River State Park

MoBCI Grant \$6,700: Matching Funds \$7,823

Partnering Organizations: Cuivre River State Park (lead), St. Louis Audubon Society, Missouri Master Naturalists, Bodine Aluminum Corporation, and Missouri Department of Conservation.

The purpose of this project is to continue to control serious exotic invasive species such as garlic mustard and bush honeysuckle in the floodplain of Big Sugar Creek, including Lincoln Hills Natural Areas and Big Sugar Creek Natural Area. In addition, upland savanna/woodland habitat will be restored with the control and removal of invasive woody plants, like exotic European buckthorn, autumn olive, and native species like shingle oak and sassafras. Cuivre River State Park contains some of the last few prairie remnants in the entire St. Louis region. This project will allow the woodland and savanna to be thinned and exotic species to be removed. Also, some areas that were too thick to apply prescribed fire in the past will be thinned, so that they can have fire management applied in the near future. Improvements to floodplain habitats along Big Sugar Creek will benefit resident nesting species that are PIF priority species like the Cerulean warbler, Kentucky Warbler, yellow-throated warbler, Acadian flycatcher, Louisiana waterthrush and yellow-billed cuckoo. Restoring savanna habitat by thinning and removing invasive species will benefit species like the northern bobwhite, red-headed woodpecker, eastern wood pewee, great crested flycatcher, and field sparrow.



Romine Pine Forest Restoration Project

MoBCI Grant \$20,000: Matching Funds \$20,440

Partnering Organizations: Gary Romine (lead), Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Missouri Department of Conservation.

A 108-acre native pine-oak complex will be restored on private property in Carter County, Missouri. The private landowner has worked with the Partners for Fish and Wildlife (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; USFWS) to restore this tract of pine and oak woodlands that were in great need of restoration. Establishment of pine will be completed through tree plantings and forest stand improvement. Also, an adaptive forest management plan for the 108-acre tract will be developed through further coordination with USFWS and MDC staff. Nine priority species of birds that have been identified as high priority by PIF and other Regional plans will benefit from this project.

River Hills Forest Habitat Project

MoBCI Grant \$6,000: Matching Funds \$6,000

Partnering Organizations: Missouri Ruffed Grouse Chapter/Quail and Upland Wildlife Forever (lead), Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Audubon Society of Missouri, and Missouri Department of Conservation.

The River Hills Project area includes portions of Callaway, Montgomery and Warren counties in central Missouri. A partnership was formed in 2000 to regenerate oak/hickory forest habitat in these three counties that focused on encouraging landowners to conduct management practices that promote young oak/hickory forest regeneration. Cost-share assistance is provided to landowners to implement practices that improve young forest habitat, including woodland improvement and edge enhancement. Dense young forest and edge habitat would be expected to benefit local birds such as ruffed grouse and northern bobwhite quail, but migratory song birds that would benefit include American woodcock, Bell's vireo, Bewick's wren, blue-winged warbler, prairie warbler, and many more species. Private landowners control the majority of forestland in Missouri, so it is essential that they participate in wildlife management activities that will improve habitats and populations of wildlife species. A habitat evaluation project has been conducted and the data is being analyzed to assess the success of the project activities since 2000.

Ozark Forest and Glade Bird Habitat Restoration

MoBCI Grant \$10,000: Matching Funds \$10,000

Partnering Organizations: The Nature Conservancy Missouri Chapter (lead) and Missouri Department of Conservation.

Fire-adapted woodlands are one of the most endangered natural community types in the Ozarks Highlands, and the best conservation outcomes in woodland management come from working at the landscape level. This project would work on restoration of the forested lands in the Chilton Creek Preserve, Thorny Mountain Preserve, and Shut-In Mountain Fens as the highest priority sites. Although these lands were originally high-quality pine/oak woodlands, altered fire regimes and land use have degraded bird habitat on these sites. Populations of several priority species such as the Louisiana waterthrush, Kentucky warbler, whippoorwill and others will benefit from this management effort directed toward restoring and enhancing native woodland and glade habitat at these high priority places.



Prairie-Chicken Translocation Update: July 25, 2011

by Max Allegor, Missouri Department of Conservation

Missouri Department of Conservation staff and volunteers moved 28 male and 53 female prairie-chickens from the Smokey Hills of Kansas to Wah'Kon-Tah (WKT) Prairie this spring. Our change in strategy from recapturing hens with broods during summer to that of moving hens during spring appears to have been a good decision. Prevailing dry conditions, for the first time since translocations began in 2007, have improved production tremendously.

Since mid-April, confirmed mortalities among 2011 birds include 9 males and 17 females. Three additional males and 12 females are MIA (missing in action), leaving 24 males and 21 females from 2011 alive and, 'on the air'. In addition, staff continue to track 2 males and 9 females moved prior to 2011. Keep in mind that not all birds present in the landscape are tagged with active transmitters; hence these totals do not represent all of the birds in the landscape.

Staff and students from the University of Missouri-Columbia have tracked twenty-seven hens which attempted 29 nests within the Wah Kon Tah / Taberville Focus Area this year. Of those hens, 16 were translocated this year, six were released in 2010, two in 2009, and three were chicks that hatched on WKT Prairie since 2008. Twenty-three of these nests were successful (79%). Six were confirmed lost to predators.

Staff have conducted 15 brood counts to date. Four hens had no chicks, but a total of 52 chicks have been observed; very encouraging! Brood counts will continue into August for late nesting hens.

Following are some interesting pictures and observations from this nesting season.



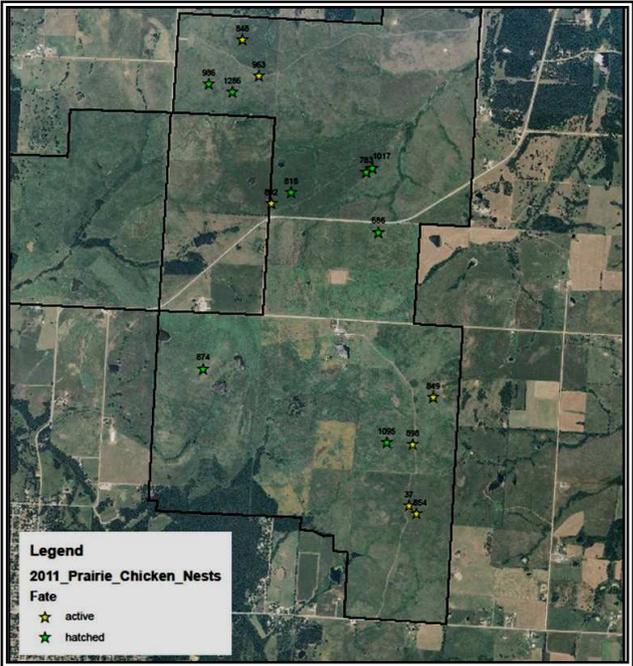
Nesting hens are flushed once to count eggs. Eye-level view of a sitting hen (left), and a nest in native prairie (right).





(Left) A helicopter telemetry flight located a hen that had been MIA from the release site for nearly six weeks. She flew 39 miles south to take-up residence in the Stony Point/Horse Creek COA in northern Dade County. Frank Loncarich confirmed her location as being on grazed, privately owned prairie immediately east of MPF's Penn-Sylvania Prairie and SSW of Niawathe Prairie. She had no brood.

(Right) 2011 nest locations on WKT Prairie confirm earlier findings that hens tend to select nest sites near trails, or where two different management treatments meet. Len Gilmore and the Wildlife crew at El Dorado Springs manage 40-acre units to the extent possible to maximize, 'soft edge' and the extent of good brooding habitat which is adjacent to suitable nest sites.



MoBCI Grants are Made Possible by Federal State Wildlife Grants.....and State Wildlife Grants are in Trouble!

by Amy Buechler, Conservation Federation of Missouri

The Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative has funded approximately \$100,000 in grants each year since 2003. Funding for this program comes through the Missouri Department of Conservation as a result of reimbursement from the federal State Wildlife Grants program.

State Wildlife Grants are a national funding source created to prevent species from becoming endangered by protecting and restoring native habitats. Missouri has received more than \$12.4 million over the past 10 years (averaging about \$1.2 million annually) to help ensure that Missouri has healthy, sustainable plant and animal communities for future generations to use and enjoy. Part of this vision is to have fish, forest and wildlife resources in appreciably better condition tomorrow than they are today. That is why projects and other conservation actions are developed through citizens, government agencies and non-governmental organizations working together to protect, sustain,



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enhance, restore or create sustainable plant and animal communities of local, state and national significance.

This spring, State Wildlife Grants were cut from \$90 million to \$63 million nationally. This reduction affected amount that Missouri received, and as a consequence several MoBCI grant projects approved last year were delayed until 2012 to determine if funding will be available.

In July, the House Appropriations Committee passed an Interior Appropriations bill that included huge cuts to many conservation programs, including **slashing State Wildlife Grants nearly 75% to only \$22 million nationally**. The debt ceiling discussions prevented this bill from being discussed on the House floor before August recess, however the future of State Wildlife Grants remains uncertain at best.

The House won't continue working on the Interior appropriations bill for 2012 until September at the earliest. It's likely that the bill will get rolled into a larger omnibus bill. The Debt Ceiling compromise is also worrisome. A bipartisan super committee will be tasked with reducing the deficit by nearly \$1.5 trillion before Thanksgiving. Anything and everything is on the table for cuts, and it is likely that conservation and environmental programs will continue to see a disproportionately large amount of cuts.

Because of this uncertainty in State Wildlife Grant funding, we are unable to announce a MoBCI Grant program for this fall. **Please take this opportunity to call your congress member and let them know that State Wildlife Grant funding is important. Tell them to oppose cuts to State Wildlife Grants and other conservation funding programs.** If you have been received a MoBCI grant in past years, let them know about the good work you were able to accomplish in their district. Contact information for congress members can be found by entering your zipcode at www.house.gov.

We need to keep the pressure on our congress members – State Wildlife Grants are a proactive approach to keeping habitats healthy and species off the endangered species list. They are matched dollar for dollar by conservation partners and often provide work for on-the-ground conservation contractors.

The State Wildlife Grants Program is a major accomplishment of the Teaming With Wildlife Coalition – a network of over 6,000 organizations and businesses nationally (305 in Missouri) that support additional funding for fish, forest and wildlife conservation. If you would like to get involved or learn more about how you can help, please contact Amy Buechler, Missouri Teaming With Wildlife Coordinator, abuechler@confedmo.org, 573-634-232 or visit www.moteaming.org.

Contact Your Congressional Representatives NOW!!



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NE Missouri & SE Iowa Habitat Initiative Gets Underway!

by John Burk, National Wild Turkey Federation

The mission of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf) is the *conservation of the wild turkey and the preservation of the hunting heritage*. Every dollar we raise and every project we implement is mission driven.

The wild turkey is a habitat generalist existing simultaneously at opposite ends of the successional scale to meet all of its' annual life requirements. Grassland and shrub/grassland vegetation types (early successional communities) provide ideal nesting and brood rearing habitat while mature forest (late successional community) provide required roosting areas and critical fall and winter food sources in the form of mast. The NWTf staff and volunteers in Missouri have always understood that the upland wildlife habitat that our mission driven fund raising have enabled benefits a wide array of other species. This recognition also enables us to work with a very diverse group of conservation partners.

A great example of this is a project that I am excited about in northeast Missouri. The specific project area includes portions of Adair, Putnam, Schuyler, and Sullivan Counties and also contains the Mystic Plains, Thousand Hills and Union Ridge Conservation Opportunity Areas (COAs). Although this part of the state has historically been considered the turkey factory of the state, in recent years (primarily as a result of weather) it has also suffered the greatest declines (harvest rates have dropped more than 40% since 2004). Historically, this region was dominated by prairie, savanna, and open woodland and



a lot of folks are interested in restoring these conditions wherever possible. The ultimate goal of this project will be to increase plant species diversity in treatment areas by restoring open woodlands and savannas, expanding the availability of native grasses, forbs, and shrub type habitats on private lands within the focus area. This will be achieved by providing cost share money to private landowners to implement a variety of practices conducive to creating grass/shrub habitats including: woody cover control (WCC or removal of advanced woody invasion of open woodland and savanna habitats), prescribed burning, timber stand improvement (TSI or the removal of smaller noncommercial trees within woodland habitats), and fescue conversion. Emphasis will be placed upon assisting landowners interested in

implementing WCC and TSI because these practices are the most valuable in restoring open woodlands and savannas. This type of work is expensive because it requires the mechanical removal of woody material that has no commercial value but requires expensive specialized equipment or labor intensive chainsaw work to make happen. Although areas of public land do exist within the selected landscape, a significant positive impact has to involve private landowners. In most cases, unless cost share money is available through state, federal, or private sources to offset implementation costs (\$130/acre +), significant habitat enhancement on private lands does not occur.



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A meeting was held in Lamoni Iowa at the end of June 2010 to discuss development of a landscape scale initiative involving both states. I developed a proposal based upon guidelines outlined in Lamoni that I submitted for funding consideration to The Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative (MoBCI). The MoBCI grants committee approved the \$20,000 requested back in October of 2010. MoBCI requires a 1:1 match that was made possible by Audubon Society of Missouri (\$3,000), USFWS (\$8,500), and NWTf (\$8,500). Although the requested funding is limited to implementation on the Missouri side, this type of work is already occurring on the Iowa side through the efforts of the Southern Iowa Oak Savanna Alliance.

With all of the attention focused on this region the table has been set for lots of willing funding partners including: USFWS, Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC), Audubon Society of Missouri, Missouri Prairie Foundation, Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation, Quail Forever, White-tails Unlimited, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, and Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative. Savannas are important to a broad range of wildlife important to federal, state and conservation organizations. Finding ways to collaborate in a broad sense across political boundaries will help address habitat restoration needs, build upon existing partnerships, and leverage additional funding to assist landowners who voluntarily wish to restore savanna habitat. What is even more exciting is that since the announcement of the approval of the funding in mid-January the entire \$40,000 has already been encumbered and will impact 15 landowners and over 600 acres!

Keep this in mind if you're considering submitting a MoBCI grant in the future. If the project is good enough to get you excited, with a little bit of salesmanship, you should be able to roundup some additional cash partners that allows all of us to make a bigger splash for conservation and outreach.

Raising Revenue to Benefit Birds –

by Susan Hazelwood & Edge Wade, Audubon Society of Missouri

Following a fundraising challenge from a leader in another non-profit organization the Board members of the Audubon Society of Missouri (ASM) assessed the strengths of our organization and its membership, and how we could use those strengths to raise funds. We knew our members would volunteer their time and mileage to go birding as we'd already researched, written, published, and sold many copies of "A Guide to Birding Missouri." That source of revenue was fading as more and more resources for finding birds became readily available (and free) from on-line sources. What could we do to generate revenue?

Discussions between then ASM President Sue Gustafson and Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) employee and ASM member Brad Jacobs resulted in a Cooperative Agreement between the two organizations to establish a web-based database that would be used to collect bird occurrence data entered by ASM members of birds seen at MDC conservation areas. This Conservation Area Checklist Project is known as CACHE. The basic purpose of the agreement was and still is to build dynamic on-line and printable bird checklists and occurrence data for sites owned or managed by MDC. The data is available for use by MDC personnel for management decision purposes and to the public for birding and research uses. This year sees us completing phase six of our CACHE work. As of August 7, 2011 **17,351 trips**, comprised of **307,702 observations of species** are in the database.



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The early and continuing success of CACHE resulted in another Cooperative Agreement with a different state agency. Our next partner was the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

They had the same goals for the work they wanted done, only they are interested in the birds seen in Missouri's state parks. This State Parks Project is known as SPARKS. We are now in phase four and as of August 7, 2011 **3,443 trips**, comprised of **56,679 observations of species**, have been reported to our SPARKS project database.

The Cooperative Agreements with MDC and DNR have been renewed annually with some changes/modifications such as specifying target areas for more frequent birding, changes to the database to ease use and improve its utility, and the writing and publishing of a "Birders' Guide" for specific sites. ASM receives monetary compensation from each partner agency to pay for the creation and maintenance of the database with any excess funds available to ASM for other purposes. The funds from the Cooperative Agreement with MDC must be used in partnerships with other organizations to build a bigger pot for habitat-related projects to enhance the probability of grant funding by generating a larger base for matching funds. The funds from DNR can be used for anything within ASM's mission. Examples of what ASM has been able to accomplish, by simply doing what our members love best, are shown in the table below.

Project	Partner(s)	Date Authorized	ASM Commitment / Expenditure	Status
Purchase of Runge Prairie	MO Grasslands Coalition (26 Member Organizations)	2006	\$3,000	Paid in 2007
Warm Season Grass Restoration, Dade County	MO Prairie Foundation	2006	\$4,600	Proposal Being Prepared
Montrose Wetland Restoration Project	MO Conservation Heritage Foundation	2007	\$5,000	Paid 2011
Mingo Basin, Phase I	Partnership for North American Wetlands Conservation Grant, Lead: Ducks Unlimited	2008	\$5,000	Project still on-going
3 Projects within Teaming with Wildlife Mini-grant Program	Conservation Federation of MO and Audubon MO	2008	\$500	Paid 2009
Bird Survey: Barton/Vernon	MO Prairie Foundation	2009	\$600 / \$390	Paid 2011



Project	Partner(s)	Date Authorized	ASM Commitment / Expenditure	Status
Counties				
Bird Survey: St. Francois County	MO Departments of Conservation & Natural Resources	2009	\$800 / \$400	Paid 2011
Mingo Basin Phase II (Mingo NWR)	Partnership for North American Wetlands Conservation Grant, Lead: Ducks Unlimited	2010	\$2,500	Proposal is pending/grant is under review
Mingo Basin Phase III (Duck Creek CA)	Partnership for North American Wetlands Conservation Grant, Lead: Ducks Unlimited	2010	\$5,000	Grant application is being prepared
Oak Savanna Restoration in Thousand Hills CA and Union Ridge CA	National Wild Turkey Federation	2010	\$3,000	Paid 2011
Iatan/Weston MO River Corridor Area	Audubon MO	2010	\$2,000	Paid 2011
Ruffed Grouse Restocking	Ruffed Grouse Society	2010	\$2,500	Project Viability Being Reassessed
Bird Survey Work in Mystic Area	US Fish and Wildlife Service	2010	\$2,500	Awaiting Project Update
Bird Survey Work in Confluence Area	US Fish and Wildlife Service	2010	\$2,500	Awaiting Project Update

ASM has earned and committed \$39,500 direct dollars toward habitat improvement. With our partner organizations using our volunteer hours and cash as matching contributions in their grant requests the effects of our efforts have been multiplied several times over. ASM members are proud of these contributions and that we are able to impact management decisions for wildlife on our state's public lands. Birders have been thrilled to discover the conservation area and state park bird checklists that are continually being updated. It has been a win-win situation for all involved.



Governor's Proclamation - Missouri Bird Conservation Day

May 14, 2011



(From left to right): Dennis Figg (Missouri Department of Conservation), Amy Buechler (Conservation Federation of Missouri), Dave Graber (Duck's Unlimited), Charles Burwick, (Greater Ozarks Audubon Society), Tom Draper (Missouri Department of Conservation), Georganne W. Nixon, (Missouri's First Lady), Wayne Morton (Missouri Chapter of the North American Grouse Partnership), Steve Mahfood, (The Nature Conservancy), Frank Oberle (Missouri Native Seed Association), Linda Tossing (St. Louis Audubon Society), Alan Leary (Missouri Department of Transportation), John Burk (National Wild Turkey Federation).

It has become a tradition for the Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative to recognize Missouri Bird Conservation Day. Typically, it falls on the second Saturday in May, which, in 2011 was May 14th coinciding with International Migratory Bird Day. A Governor's Proclamation is developed each year for the event which is signed by the presiding Governor. We have been fortunate to have Missouri's First Lady, Georganne Nixon as our special guest for the past two years. Planning for it is a whirlwind effort at a busy time but yields unexpected discoveries. For one, Missouri's First Lady has a keen interest in birds and is a birder in her own right!! It takes time, work, and commitment to vie for a place on the Proclamation schedule – in the past a brief, but heartfelt, audience with the Governor. Speaking on behalf of the MoBCI Steering Committee, it has been a delight to meet Missouri's First Lady, and hear her speak about her interest in birds and all-bird conservation. The first lady has been gracious to lend her time and support for Missouri Bird Conservation Day and the work of the Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative – an organization comprised of 60 partner organizations!! The text of the 2011 Missouri Bird Conservation Day Proclamation can be seen on the *mobci.org* website.



WORKING TOGETHER TO CONSERVE AND RESTORE BIRD POPULATIONS AND THEIR HABITATS



Missouri's New Avian Ecologist Takes Wing



Born and raised in Chattanooga, TN, Janet Haslerig graduated from Chattanooga High School in 1981. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science from Middle Tennessee State University, her Master's of Science degree in Wildlife Management from the University of Missouri-Columbia and her Ph.D. in Wildlife Ecology from the University of Florida.

She has worked with US Geological Survey, US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and Tuskegee University. Janet has traveled and worked extensively in protected areas in Tanzania and Ghana on human-wildlife conflicts.

Since October 2010, she holds the position of Avian Ecologist with the Missouri Department of Conservation in Jefferson City. As Avian Ecologist she serves as the principal investigator for the MOFEP Song Bird Project, bald eagle and interior least tern recovery leader, state coordinator for the Breeding Bird Survey, review all bird records submitted to the Heritage database, review and approve or deny Wildlife Collector permits requests for birds, and respond to public and staff inquiries.

She serves on numerous working groups and committees. In her spare time she enjoys reading, traveling, shooting sports, teaching hunter education courses, playing tennis, and spending time with her 7 *dogs*!!!!



Great Blue Heron
Photo courtesy of Allen Smith, Bridgeton, MO

