The USDA-NRCS Bobwhite Restoration Project is a cooperative effort among multiple agencies mutually interested in achieving the goals of the Northern Bobwhite Conservation Initiative (NBCI). Partners in this venture include U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Mississippi State University, Forest and Wildlife Research Center, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (MSU), Quail Unlimited, Inc. (QU), and the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA). NRCS-AWCC has the lead role establishing and overseeing the NRCS Northern Bobwhite Restoration Project. NRCS-AWCC is utilizing Mississippi University, Department of Wildlife & Fisheries as the umbrella institution to coordinate the efforts with other partners.

NRCS Agricultural Wildlife Conservation Center

The AWCC is part of USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and is dedicated to developing technology that will better enable farmers and ranchers to enhance wildlife habitat through their conservation practices. AWCC will ensure new technology is available to farmers and ranchers nationwide through NRCS field offices. Each year, fish and wildlife resources provide over a $100 billion dollar boost annually to the U.S. economy. Approximately 70 percent of fish and wildlife habitat is located on private lands.

Conservation Buffers Field Day: Integrating Wildlife Habitat in Agricultural Landscapes

July 18, 2007
Williams Farm, Coahoma County, MS
Hosted by: MSU/ISU/USDA-NRCS
Conservation Buffers

Conservation buffers are narrow strips of land maintained in permanent vegetation, designed to intercept pollutants, reduce erosion, and provide other environmental benefits, including wildlife habitat. In 1997, the USDA launched the National Conservation Buffer Initiative to encourage the use of conservation buffers by agricultural producers and other landowners. The theme of this initiative is "Buffers: common-sense conservation." Buffers come in a variety of forms, including: riparian buffers, filter strips, grassed waterways, shelterbelts, windbreaks, living snow fences, contour grass strips, cross-wind trap strips, shallow water areas for wildlife, field borders, alley cropping, herbaceous wind barriers, and vegetative barriers. These accomplish somewhat different, but overlapping purposes. Producers and conservation planners work together to develop a conservation farming system that meets producer objectives while providing environmental benefits. By providing incentives and cost-share, the National Conservation Buffer Initiative encourages landowners to understand the economic and environmental benefits of buffer strips and implement these practices through various USDA conservation programs.

Agenda

8:00 - 8:30 Registration, Coffee/Pastries
8:30 - 8:45 Welcome - Pete Heard, Ed Hackett, Ross Conover
8:45 - 11:15 Depart for Field Tour
NRCS Practice Standards and Conservation Programs - Glynda Clardy, NRCS
Conservation Buffers
1. Filter strips (CP21) water quality
2. Field Borders (CP33), NWSG, Bobwhite and Grassland songbirds
3. Riparian Forest Buffers (CP22)

Native vegetation Establishment and management for wildlife - Kevin Nelms, NRCS
11:15 - 12:00 Whole field afforestation (CP3a, CP31) (Ross Conover, Stephen Dinsmore)
1. Wildlife use with Succession
2. Research demonstration
12:00 - 1:00 BBQ Lunch at “The Roost”
1:00 - 1:30 Producer and Landowner Perspectives - Tim Morris and Duncan Williams
1:30 - 2:00 Cost-share opportunities - Justin Norris - NRCS
2:00 - 2:20 Economics of Conservation Buffers - Philip Barbour - NRCS
2:20 - 2:50 Conservation Planning at the Farm Scale - Kevin Nelms and Wes Burger
2:50 - 3:20 Concluding Remarks - Pete Heard
3:20 - 3:30 Field Day Evaluation