



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • 1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-1300 • Voice: (202) 720-4623 • Email: oc.news@usda.gov • Web: <http://www.usda.gov>

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Julie Quick (202) 720-4623
Mary Cressel (202) 690-0547

USDA AWARDS \$1.2 MILLION FOR BOBWHITE QUAIL HABITAT RESTORATION

WASHINGTON, Aug. 24, 2004—Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today announced the award of \$1.2 million for 11 selected studies in nine states as part of a Bobwhite Quail Restoration Project.

“This grant supports President Bush’s initiative to create 250,000 acres of bobwhite quail habitat by increasing early successional grass buffers along agricultural field borders, which would boost bobwhite quail numbers by 750,000 annually,” said Veneman. “Habitat restoration is key to this important game bird that also is enjoyed by farmers, naturalists and birdwatchers.”

The Bobwhite Quail Restoration Project is being implemented in conjunction with Mississippi State University and includes involvement from the Southeast Quail Study Group and Quail Unlimited. The project evaluates the effectiveness of conservation practices in the restoration of northern bobwhite and its habitat and develops technology that assists field staff in working with landowners. The grants program supports studies and demonstration projects that evaluate bobwhite population response to conservation programs and practices.

Grant applications were reviewed by a technical committee of state and federal government representatives, university staff and private biologists and researchers. Projects can be from one to three years in duration and must demonstrate at least a 1:1 leveraging through cost share, matching funds, other grants or in-kind contributions. During the duration of the project, grant recipients must host at least one field tour, on-farm demonstration days or onsite training course for landowners, natural resource management professionals and NRCS field personnel.

Information on the USDA-NRCS/MSU Bobwhite Restoration Project is at <https://hdclel.cfr.msstate.edu/nbci/default.html>. Following are the seven universities, two state wildlife agencies and two nongovernmental organizations selected to receive the 2004 grants.

Tall Timbers Research Station (Fla.)—Northern bobwhite response to Environmental Quality Incentives Program, EQIP, and Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, WHIP, conservation practices on rangelands in Florida. \$148,364.34

North Carolina State University—Effects of field border shape and landscape context on northern bobwhite and grassland songbird abundance. \$50,000.48

Mississippi State University—Evaluation of native grass field border width on northern bobwhite and grassland songbird abundance and nesting success. \$147,949.40

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Southern Illinois University—Northern bobwhite, arthropod, and vegetation response to mid-contract Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) grassland management. \$123,000

University of Tennessee—Maintenance of native warm season grasslands to promote early successional habitat for northern bobwhites. \$28,000

Clemson University (S.C.)—Evaluation of USDA Farm Bill conservation practices for northern bobwhites, herpetofauna, and small mammals. \$49,440

Nemours Wildlife Foundation (S.C.)—Evaluation of field borders, early successional habitats, perennial vegetation, and native warm season grass plantings on northern bobwhite and grassland songbird abundance and nest success. \$90,850

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission—Response of northern bobwhite populations to large-scale habitat manipulations using USDA conservation practices. \$150,000

Missouri Department of Conservation—Selection of northern bobwhite habitat restoration areas based upon landowner attitudes, knowledge, and willingness to improve wildlife habitat. \$71,511.26

Texas A&M University—Assessing northern bobwhite response to EQIP [Environmental Quality Incentives Program] conservation practices in the Rolling Plains of Texas. \$150,000

Texas Tech University—Evaluation of prescribed burning, prescribed grazing, and brush management on northern bobwhite population response. \$137,731

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