

# State Coordinator

Quarterly Partners' Report



#### Dustin Lamoreaux - Statewide

#### January – March 2020

# Position Update!

Although things near the end of this quarter have taken a turn, one that none of us anticipated, there were still many productive items to note. This quarter kicked off with a Audubon Conservation Ranching booth at the OK Grazing Lands Coalition Annual Meeting. Throughout the quarter I have been participating in multiple teleconferences and meetings relating to Audubon Conservation Ranching, PF/QF Pollinator Habitat Working Group, Oklahoma Monarch and Pollinators Collaborative, and field days for wildlife habitat management. What an experience this quarter has been, learning to conducting everyday business through video and phone conferences.

I have also been diving deeper into the logistics of the Audubon Conservation Ranching program which been valuable and I now have a much greater understanding of the components that drive the program. As a result, I am now starting to work on a Habitat Management Plan for our second Audubon Conservation Ranching property looking to gain the Audubon seal for their products.

## **5th Annual State Meeting**

The OK Quail Forever Team held it's 5th Annual State Meeting in Oklahoma City February 28-29, 2020. Overall, it was a great meeting with lots of educational material, great speakers, and some really good food. We kicked our Friday night social off at ODWC Headquarters with group introductions, a few awards, and topped it off with certified beef through Audubon Conservation Ranching, raised by Godfrey Farms near Newkirk Oklahoma.

Saturday was the main event at the Renaissance Waterford with a morning general session, lunch keynote speaker, several afternoon breakout sessions, and concluded with a fundraising banquet. What a great event and a big thank you to everyone who attended and assisted.



Photo: Taken at the Oklahoma Quail Forever 5th Annual State Meeting in Oklahoma City.

	Acres Impacted
CTA Upland Habitat Management	150
Total	150

#### Conservation Planning

- 31 Landowner Contacts
- 5 Site Visits
- 1 Management Plan



Thank you so much for your support! Without this partnership, we wouldn't be able to provide assistance to private landowners and positively impact conservation in Oklahoma!

**Dustin Lamoreaux** 

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# State Coordinator

Quarterly Partners' Report



#### January – March 2020

#### **Dustin Lamoreaux - Statewide**

## **Outreach & Education**

- Hosted a booth for the Audubon Conservation Ranching program while attending the Oklahoma Grazing Lands Coalition Annual Meeting in Weatherford, OK. Provided the opportunity to speak with Oklahoma ranchers about ACR and the concepts behind the program.
- Oklahoma PF/QF Team planned and delivered our 5th Annual State Meeting. This was an educational meeting where attendees had the opportunity to expand their knowledge of all things wildlife, habitat, soil health, and good conversations.
- Assisted with a Youth Mentor Hunt near Hinton, OK in conjunction with SWOSU and the Canadian Valley QF Chapters. There were 4 kids at the event where they learned about all things safety and important aspects of quail habitat. Everyone got to harvest some birds, including the dogs!
- Created an ACR presentation for an informational meeting, I was asked to speak at, with the Tulsa Audubon Society. Everything was lined up and I was excited about presenting to the group. This was cancelled 2 days prior to the event due to COVID-19. Plan to speak at their meeting this fall!



Photo: Taken during Youth Mentor Hunt near Hinton, OK



Photo: Audubon Conservation Ranching booth at Oklahoma Grazing Lands Coalition Annual Meeting in Weatherford, OK.

Outreach & Education	Count
Outreach Events	2
Youth Events	1
Total	3

Outreach & Education	Count
Workshop Participants	15

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# State Coordinator

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January - March 2020

**Dustin Lamoreaux - Statewide** 

# Cherokee WMA Field Day



Photo: Taken while attending the Cherokee WMA Field Day. Pictured is one of our Farm Bill Wildlife Biologists Elizabeth Elliott. Elizabeth talked about what she does as a biologist and how she can assist landowners.

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome	
Oklahoma Grazing Lands Coalition Annual Meeting	Had an ACR booth at the meeting, allowing the opportunity to converse with ranchers about the program and how it may benefit their operation. Also, gathered great information from speakers and attendees relating to holistic management.	
ODWC Legislative Planning Meeting	Provided an update to all partners in attendance about the upcoming legislative session and what bills to keep an eye on.	
Cherokee WMA Field Day	Great lineup of speakers with lots of valuable information and a large turnout. Learned about forest stand improvement techniques for thinning, prescribed fire, and wildlife species management.	
OK Natural Resources Conference	Had the opportunity to attend and listen to lots of speakers on prescribed fire, pollinators, quail research, and grazing. Provided plenty of time to network.	
Lesser Prairie Chicken State Implementation Team Meeting	Brought ODWC, NRCS, FSA, PF/QF, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to discuss prairie chickens in OK. Talked about past and future opportunities from all avenues.	
State Technical Committee Meeting	Provided the opportunity to hear more of the latest in regards to 2018 Farm Bill updates and the direction agencies are moving with implementation.	

# **Looking Forward**

- Complete Habitat Management Plan for Oklahoma's second Audubon Conservation Ranching certified ranch.
  - Continue reaching out to ranchers that have already shown some interest in Audubon Conservation Ranching and gauge their interest.
- Keep up to date with all COVID-19 related issues and ensure our biologists have the items they need to continue to be productive while working from home.
- Provide technical assistance to Oklahoma landowners interested in improving habitat on their properties.

\*If anyone wishes to discuss habitat projects or knows others who are interested; please contact me at the information below.

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# **Coordinating Wildlife Biologist**

Quarterly Partners' Report



#### January – March 2020

#### Leslie Elmore- Statewide

#### Spreading the Word, Not the Virus

After months of preparation and anticipation, I finally had sufficient information to begin promoting the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) for Monarch Butterflies in the Central Zone. Moreover, the program was gifted ~\$150,000 more dollars for EQIP, meaning more money for cedar removal and burning. I was ready to share the message to the nine Pheasants Forever/Quail Forever chapters about how this program, designed to conserve the monarch butterfly, also benefits quail. The good news for the 27 NRCS field offices was how I can assist them with fieldwork and writing management plans for landowners likely to be accepted into the program. It all started out so well.

Early on, I presented the program to seven counties at one meeting, giving Monarch RCPP flyers for the attendees to take back to their offices. There was good discussion, questions, and interest. Then one afternoon in mid-March I visited with two field offices and one QF Chapter. There was so

much interest and excitement about the program that day! Then the situation began to drastically change with the threat of coronavirus.

The next chapter meeting where I presented had only four attendees, but they took handouts for themselves and to share with family and neighbors. I have already heard back from one landowner.

Now under the COVID-19 quarantine, all meetings have been canceled or converted to virtual meetings. Although, at first blush, this appears to be less-than-ideal, I am hopeful that by presenting the Monarch RCPP remotely, I will be able to more broadly share the message of monarch conservation and how it can benefit quail.



Teleworking to promote the 2020 RCPP for Monarch Butterflies

I provided flyers and talking points to all the field offices I could not visit in person, and have had several follow-up conversations in which we have discussed logistics and viable candidates for the program and arranged site visits.

#### **Conservation Planning**

- 26 landowner contacts
- 2 site visits
- 2 burn plans

	Acres Impacted
CSP	88.7
Total	88.7

#### Thank you so much for your support!

Without this partnership we would not be able to provide assistance to private landowners and positively impact conservation in Oklahoma!

Local SWCDs

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**Coordinating Wildlife Biologist** 

Leslie Elmore

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# **Coordinating Wildlife Biologist**

Quarterly Partners' Report

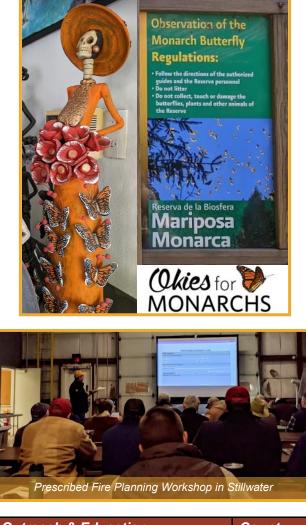


#### Leslie Elmore - Statewide

#### January – March 2020

#### **Outreach & Education**

- Inspired by my visit to the monarch wintering grounds in Mexico, I published the first in a series of #MonarchMonday posts on OK QF's Facebook page.
- "Okies for Monarchs" invited me to write an article about my trip to the monarch wintering grounds in Sierra Chincua Mexico.
- I wrote a news release to give guidance to producers interested in cedar removal, prescribed burning, and/or plantings through the Monarch RCPP EQIP or CSP.
- I crafted a letter inviting producers who had taken the "Okies for Monarchs" pledge to contact a QF wildlife biologist to learn about assistance programs to benefit monarchs.
- To the attendees at the Prescribed Fire Planning Workshop in Stillwater, I talked about assistance offered by QF and highlighted the Monarch RCPP for brush removal and prescribed burning.
- Co-staffing the "Okies for Monarchs" table at the OACD Meeting, I visited with attendees about monarch habitat, QF assistance, and available programs.
- I presented the Monarch RCPP at the Red Bud and Land Run QF chapter meetings.
- I teamed up with Dwayne Elmore to visit a Hughes County landowner interested in improving his property for white-tailed deer, wild turkey, and monarch butterflies.
  I pointed out several monarch-preferred plants growing on his property and gave him a small seed packet he has planted in his yard to attract monarch butterflies.



Outreach & Education	Count
Workshop Participants	48
Workshops/Outreach Events	6
Presentations Delivered	6
Marketing Tools Produced	5
Promotional/Outreach Items	3
Media Articles	2
Flyers Created	1
Social Media Posts	8
Total	31

Leslie Elmore

Coordinating Wildlife Biologist

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# **Coordinating Wildlife Biologist**

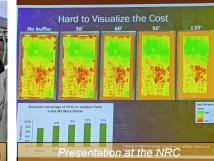




#### Leslie Elmore- Statewide









Training/Meeting Type	Outcome	
Information Security	This required training by the NRCS is designed to help employees understand the	
Awareness	importance of confidential record-keeping to protect personal information.	
Conservation	I learned how to navigate CD and met NRCS employees from four of the counties within	
Desktop 2.3 training	the 2020 RCPP focal area.	
Prescribed Fire	In addition to seeing a burn plan and fire tools demonstrations, I had an opportunity to	
Planning Workshop	share the RCPP for Monarch Butterflies with ~20 attendees.	
NWTF Forest Management for Wildlife Field Day	Presenters covered pros and cons of various methods and combinations of methods of tree thinning, as well as assistance available to landowners.	
Natural Resources	I attended most of the wildlife-focused presentations and capitalized on multiple	
Conference	networking opportunities. It was a great opportunity to reconnect with Dr. Wes Burger.	
Prescribed Fire Training	I wrote two approved burn plans for a Payne County producer. This relieved some work on the Stillwater Service Center staff and helped me meet a requirement for Prescribed Burn certification.	
OK Association of	In addition to attending several of the presentations, I also co-staffed the Okies for	
Conservation Districts Meeting	Monarchs booth, where I visited with several landowners interested in improving habitat for monarch butterflies.	
	I communicated with five speakers, including inviting the luncheon speaker, to present	
OK QF State Habitat Convention	at the Convention. Days before the meeting, she came down with the flu and was	
Convention	unable to attend.	
USDA State Technical	I heard updates to the 2018 Farm Bill, networked with former colleagues, and received	
Committee Meeting	an invitation to speak at a Creek County outreach event on pollinator programs.	
Ag Learn coursework	I completed three more courses for Conservation Planner Apprentice Certification. I am getting very close to completing this required certification.	

# **Looking Forward**

for a Payne County producer

- Complete all requirements for burn certification
- Complete training for the Apprentice Conservation Planner classification
- Join RCPP conference call; complete quarterly report
- Expand my knowledge through webinars by Monarch Joint Venture, NRCS, etc.
- Gain approval and submit five more burn plans

 Site visits and Monarch WHEGs, galore! Field offices and I have received an influx of interested

landowners requesting information and applying for the Monarch RCPP. Cedar inventories are

beginning, and WHEGs will follow in May-July.

Review and finalize ranking sheets for the 2020

\*If anyone wishes to discuss habitat projects or knows others who are interested; please contact me at the information below.

Leslie Elmore

**RCPP** for Monarch Butterflies

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**Coordinating Wildlife Biologist** 

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Quarterly Partners' Report



## Elizabeth Elliott– Craig, Nowata, Osage, Rogers, Washington

#### January-March 2020

## Spring is Here!

This quarter was all about the Fifth Annual Oklahoma State Convention held in OKC February 28-29, 2020. The OK QF team worked hard through conference calls and individual planning to put together a successful weekend of events. Throughout the weekend I ran the registration table, where I got to meet many wonderful chapter attendees and partners from across the state. The weekend was filled with lots of hard work and learning from our amazing roster of speakers that traveled to share their knowledge with us!

This guarter was filled with NRCS trainings, including Cultural Resources where we worked with the State Archeologist for two days to learn about the history of archeology and its importance to Oklahoma. I also attended multiple trainings on new and/or updated field assessment and evaluation tools. These Included an updated Pasture Condition Score Worksheet, Resource Concern Packet, and Soil Health Card. I stayed busy over the quarter completing a number of Conservation Technical Assistance and Soil Health Initiative burn plans in Craig, Nowata, and Washington Counties. I also completed a number of EQIP 2020 site visits in Osage County. Working together with my counties I was able to set a personal record of acres impacted in Northeast OK through the QF/NRCS partnership this quarter!

This quarter has been different than any other I have experienced with OK Quail Forever. With everything going on in the world related to COVID-19, I am currently working from home and very thankful for the continued opportunity to positively impact Oklahoma's natural resources. I often have to remind myself that it is important to pause, go outside, see the sun warming the earth and the wonderful colors starting to appear throughout the landscapes.



January in the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve in Osage County Oklahoma.

Other Programs	Acres Impacted
<b>CTA</b> Grazing Plans, Burn Plans	1,253.6
<b>EQIP</b> Grazing Plans, Burn Plans	1,708
Soil Health Initiative Burn Plans	1,105
CSP Seed Mixes	0.7
Total	4,067.3

#### **Conservation Planning**

- 27 Landowner Contacts
- 20 Site Visits
- 24 Management Plans



Thank you so much for your support! Without this partnership, I wouldn't be able to provide assistance to private landowners and positively impact conservation in Oklahoma!

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Quarterly Partners' Report



## Elizabeth Elliott- Craig, Nowata, Osage, Rogers, Washington

January– March 2020

# **Outreach & Education**

- On February 1, 2020 I attended and spoke at the National Wild Turkey Federation's: Wildlife Conservation Field Day at the Cherokee WMA near Tahlequah, OK. I spoke to an estimated 100 people about my role as a QF Biologist and how I can work together with landowners on their properties to manage for wildlife species.
- Oklahoma Quail Forever hosted our 5th annual State Convention in OKC on February 28-29, 2020. On Friday night ODWC hosted our opening social at their new headquarters. Guests heard from JD Strong with ODWC, played games, and had a great meal made with Audubon Conservation Ranching Beef! Saturday saw a host of seminars on topics ranging from current quail research to ODOT Monarch programs, followed by Saturday nights banquet. 120 guests from around the state made the weekend a fantastic event!
- On March 7, 2020 I participated in a seed swap with the Tulsa Garden Center at Woodward Park. I, along with other local groups handed out seeds to the 30 guests in attendance. I also helped to answer questions on native seeds and planting.
- I created content for Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever State Facebook page on the importance of insects for quail chicks and connection to planting pollinator habitats.
- I added my first post to the new QF OK Website!

Outreach & Education	Count
Workshop Participants	150



OK QF Volunteers of the year being honored at the State Convention on February 29, 2020.



Booth setup with native seed packets and information for attendees at the March 7, 2020 Tulsa Seed Swap.

Outreach & Education	Count
Field Day	1
Outreach Event	2
Promotional Literature	2
Total	5

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**Quarterly Partners' Report** 



## Elizabeth Elliott- Craig, Nowata, Osage, Rogers, Washington

#### January-March 2020



This picture was taken in January 2020 at the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve in Osage, OK

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome	
NRCS Resource Concerns Update	On January 26 and 28, I attended team 15 and 16 NRCS training on the new Natural Resource Concerns packet that was released by the National Office.	
OKNRC 2020	From February 10-12, 2020 I went to the Oklahoma Natural Resource Conference in Norman, OK. Where I attended a number of talks on wildlife habitat, quail research, bats, and other subjects. I also networked with Natural Resource professionals from across the state.	
NRCS CART Tool Training	On February 27, 2020 I attended Team 15 CART Tool Training in Dewey, OK. We ran through examples of the ranking process and how to input information into the new system.	
NRCS Pasture Condition Score & Soil Health Training	On March 4, 2020 I attended the NRCS Northeast Zone training on the new Pasture Condition Score worksheet and the new Soil Health Card at a ranchers/farmers site in Ottawa County.	
NRCS Cultural Resource Training	On March 12-13, 2020 I attended the NRCS Northeast Zone Cultural Resource Training with State Archeologist K.C. Kraft.	

## **Looking Forward**

- I'm looking forward to April bringing the Spring Migration of the Monarch Butterfly and Hummingbirds through Oklahoma.
- hosting a PF/QF landowner booth. Working on the new QF OK Website to provide a better experience and more

County Annual Trade Show. Where I will be

- April 17, 2020 EQIP deadline for Oklahoma, being able to get habitat projects on the ground.
- TBA date to reschedule Ottawa and Craig
- Continue providing technical assistance to NRCS offices, landowners, and partners.

information for the general public.

\*If anyone wishes to discuss habitat projects or knows others who are interested; please contact me at the information below.

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# Farm Bill Biologist II Quarterly Partners' Report



### Tanner Swank—Woodward, Blaine, Major, Dewey, Ellis

# **Position Update**

This winter and thus far this spring, I have been in contact with multiple landowners and conducted multiple site visits. I have also been assisting and attending meetings, workshops, and trainings throughout my work area. General CRP signup is behind us and with 85% of CRP applications being accepted by FSA, if landowners accept their offers, I will be assisting in writing Conservation Plans for those contracts. The number of CRP applications were amazing out here, despite low rental rates. EQIP and CRP Grasslands signups are ongoing, with the anticipation of getting as many landowners enrolled as possible. Field season is ramping up fast, just in time for social distancing!

# Nature won't stop, so neither can management!

Many landowners are wishing to start burning their properties, whether it is for CRP, EQIP, or just wanting a burn plan for CTA. As a result, I have been coordinating with NRCS offices, landowners and PBAs to get plans written and fire on the ground. EQIP applications are pouring in as well, as landowners are desperately wanting to get rid of cedars and bring back grasslands to this part of the state. Taking the necessary extra health precautions during this trying time are critical. However, the work continues as sound conservation practices will be recommended and implemented for quality habitat on the landscape.

## **Conservation Planning**

- 127 Landowner Contacts
- 69 Site Visits
- 7 Management Plans



This photo was taken in March, during a prescribed burn that I provided technical assistance at.

	Acres Impacted
CTA USDA/Nonprogram/State Cost Share	2,278.6
EQIP	301
Brush Management, Conservation Cover, Forest Stand Improvement, Wetland Restoration, Prescribed Fire	
CRP	283.67
Total	2,863.27



Thank you so much for your support! Without this partnership, I wouldn't be able to provide assistance to private landowners and positively impact conservation in Oklahoma!

#### **Tanner Swank**

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Quarterly Partners' Report



## Tanner Swank - Woodward, Blaine, Major, Dewey, Ellis

January– March 2020

## **Outreach & Education**

- On January 29th I attended the annual Cimarron Range Preservation Association meeting in Freedom. There I gave a short presentation on who I am, what services I can provide, and that I am more than willing to assist with writing burn plans and providing technical assistance.
- On February 10-12 the Oklahoma team attended the OKNRC, in Norman. This was an excellent event, and a great opportunity to catch up with other biologists and hear brand new research being presented.
- On February 13th I attended the conservation board meeting in Arnett. I gave another position update to the conservation district board members, a CRP signup and incentives update, and what practices could be beneficial for wildlife.
- On February 19th I met with the student QF chapter at SWOSU in Weatherford. They want to establish a nature area featuring native flora from Oklahoma. I gave a presentation on native flora that they could potentially use, resources on where to get them, planting time frames, and an update on what I do as a biologist for QF.
- On March 10th I attended the annual Woodward County Prescribed Burn Association meeting in Mooreland. There I gave a position update and informed the members of my availability to assist with burn plan writing and technical assistance.



This photo was taken in February at our 2020 State Habitat Convention in OKC, looking at the stage podium for our main speakers.

> • <u>On February 28-29</u> Oklahoma QF team hosted our annual State Habitat Convention in OKC. We brought in speakers to talk habitat management and current research. This was a great opportunity to connect with landowners and chapter members from across the state.

Outreach & Education	Count
Presentations Delivered	4
Newsletter Articles/ Outreach Materials	1
Total	5

Outreach & Education	Count
Workshop Participants	90

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Quarterly Partners' Report



## Tanner Swank - Woodward, Blaine, Major, Dewey, Ellis

January – March 2020



This photo was taken in March while providing technical assistance during a landowners' first burn on his property. This project was done through a Monarch EQIP contract.

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
Conservation Desktop Training	Received CD training per my apprentice planner certification requirements. This will allow me to assist more in the planning process.
CRP Field Assessment Training	Attended field assessment training for CRP, to assist FSA in field evaluations for new applicants and contracts up for renewal.
Playa Lakes Workshop	Attended a workshop on playa lakes in Garden City KS, hosted by PLJV, KDWPT, and DU. This workshop was very informational as to what programs are available to assist in conserving these important wetland communities.
CART training	Received CART training per my apprentice planner certification requirements.
Wildfire Assessment	Attended wildfire relief meeting in Beaver to discuss a Wildfire Initiative program to assist landowners after the recent beaver wildfire.

# **Looking Forward**

- I will be assisting partners such as ODWC with prescribed burn planning and special turkey hunts this spring, as well as any other way that I can be of assistance.
- Prescribed Burn season for many landowners and Prescribed Burn Associations is here, so I will continue to be coordinating with both landowners and PBAs to assist with writing plans and providing technical assistance.

ongoing, and I will be headed out to the field to conduct evaluations and assessments.

- Due to COVID-19, most field days have either been postponed or cancelled. I will be putting out a variety of fact sheets, informative videos, and creating presentations for these upcoming field days to be ready when we are able to physically host field days and workshops once again.
- I will continue providing technical assistance to landowners for habitat improvements, including proper RX burning planning.
- EQIP and CRP Grassland signups are currently

\*If anyone wishes to discuss habitat projects or knows others who are interested; please contact me at the information below.

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#### FY20 Oklahoma PF/QF **Biologist Footprint Map** January 2020—March 2020 OC Ottawa $\bigcirc$ Kay Beager wata Craig Harper Woods Alfalfa Grant Cimarron Texas Osage Washington Noble Pawnee Delaware odvard Rogers Mayes Garfield Major $\bigcirc$ Tulsa Payre Dewey Blaine Kingfisher Logan Creek WagonerCherokeeAda Lincoln Roger Mills Okmulgee<sub>Musko</sub>gee Custer **Canadian** Oklahoma Sequoya Okfuskee McIntosh Cleveland Legend Washita PottawatomieSeminole Hugnes Beckham Haskell Caddo **GradyMcClain Kiowa** Biologist Site Visits Q3 Green Pittsburg Latimer LeFlore Garvin Harmon Pontotoc Comanche Jackson Coal Murra Stephens Pushmataha Tillman Johnston Atoka Cotton Carter **McCurtain** Jefferson Choctaw Marshall Love Bryan and a set FY20\_Q3 Site Visit Total: 96 KI AHO PHEASANTS OUAT Grever rever Oklahoma Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever Farm Bill Wildlife Biologists are funded in partnership cooperation

with the Oklahoma Department Of Wildlife Conservation and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.



# Oklahoma Biologists

Quarter 3 FY2020 Summary



## Dustin Lamoreaux, Elizabeth Elliott, Tanner Swank, Leslie Elmore

January – March 2020

**Oklahoma Accomplishments:** 

March 31st marked the end of Pheasants & Quail Forever's Q3 of Fiscal Year 2020. Tables below are a summary of the work performed by Oklahoma PF/QF Biologists over the past quarter.

## **Conservation Planning**

- 211 Landowner Contacts
- 96 Site Visits
- 34 Habitat Plans/Proposals

Programs & CTA	Acres Impacted
EQIP	2,009
CSP	89.4
СТА	3,682.2
CRP	283.67
Soil Health Initiative State Cost Share Burn Plans	1,105
Total	7,169.27

Outreach & Education	Count	
Presentations Delivered	10	
Articles, fliers, outreach materials	22	
Youth Events, outreach events,	12	
Workshops, field days	12	
Total	44	

Outreach & Education	Count
Workshop Participants	303

