



State Coordinator Quarterly Partners' Report



Dustin Lamoreaux - Statewide

January – March 2021

Position Update!

It's hard to believe the third quarter of FY2021 for Pheasants and Quail Forever has already slipped by. The quarter has been busy working on Audubon Conservation Ranching (ACR) items. One thing in particular to note is a webinar hosted by Audubon, NRCS, and Pheasants and Quail Forever. This webinar was coordinated with Dr. Carol Crouch, OK NRCS Tribal Liaison, to spread the message of ACR to the Tribes of Oklahoma. The webinar was well received and we received some very thoughtful questions. Since the webinar Dr. Crouch has received some follow-up correspondence, where we will be addressing any additional questions and talking to any of the interested Tribes or Tribal members.

In addition, I have been in contact and had multiple calls with a large ranch in western OK regarding ACR. An on-site visit and meeting have been conducted and we are now in the process of writing their Habitat Management Plan (HMP). This is a ranch with lots of diversity and falls within the LPCI range. Lesser prairie chickens have been seen on the property within the last year.

Audubon Conservation Ranching

This quarter has involved working on various parts of the ACR program, specifically with a couple ranches.

First off, Double P Ranch located south of Tulsa has been fully certified, making them the second certified ranch in OK, and the first OK exclusive market partner. Their marketing platform, REP Provisions, is already selling products to the public. We will be shooting a ranch profile video in late-April to tell their story and the great things they are doing on the landscape.

In addition, I have completed and submitted the Habitat Management Plan for a ranch in southern OK, which will be the third certified ranch. This ranch is also part of the Grassfed Livestock Alliance (GLA).



Photo: Taken at Double P Ranch. This is the owner of Double P Ranch and REP Provisions. This was also part of a Facebook post.

Conservation Planning

- 10 Landowner Contacts
- 2 Site Visits
- 2 Habitat Management Plans



Local SWCDs

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!

Other Programs	Acres Impacted
ACR Upland Habitat Management	1,837
CTA Upland Habitat Management	160
Total	1,997

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Outreach & Education

- Coordinated with NRCS, FSA, and ODWC on a press release for the CRP SAFE signup period in Oklahoma. This was to highlight the CRP SAFE and try to get landowners interested in signing up.
- Created a Facebook post for Double P Ranch's ACR certification, making them the second certified ranch in Oklahoma. This post also had a link to their marketing platform, REP Provisions where they are currently selling products.
- OK ACR Tribal webinar press release. Coordinated with NRCS, Audubon, and others to get a press release drafted and shared across several outreach channels.
- OK ACR Tribal webinar. Assisted in coordinating and presenting at ACR Tribal webinar. Webinar covered all of the ACR components in detail and gave attendees a great picture of what ACR really is. There has been some follow-up with Dr. Carol Crouch and she is gathering information for follow-up conversations with those that have reached out to her since the webinar.



Figure: This was the introduction slide for my ACR presentation to the Tulsa Audubon Society.

- I had the opportunity to give a presentation to the Tulsa Audubon Society (TAS) at their, virtual, January monthly meeting. Presentation titled "Audubon Conservation Ranching Initiative in Oklahoma." This was well received and offered TAS members a look at what the initiative is all about. Also discussed where they can buy ACR certified products.

Outreach & Education	Count
Workshop Participants	49

Outreach & Education	Count
Presentations	2
Informational Literature, Press Releases	3
Conservation Outreach Event	2
Total	7



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January – March 2021

Audubon Conservation Ranching (ACR) site visit & meeting!



Photos: Taken while on an ACR ranch visit in Ellis County. This large ranch, located in the LPCI range, is a new ACR project in Oklahoma. Currently, in the process of writing their Habitat Management Plan (HMP).

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
NBTC "Grasslands" Quarterly Call	Quarterly update call with the Grasslands Subcommittee for NBTC. Update on where outreach materials are at and what the subcommittee chair has been up to. Also, had an update from Bridgett Costanzo on WLFW Bobwhite.
Public Lands Resolution Call	Call with TNC and other groups to discuss a Public Lands Resolution topic. This was to see what groups would support something like this and to see who is interested in writing letters of support, for those interested in public lands.
Sack Lunch Series "Build a Wildlife Area"	This was a webinar for PF/QF diving into the details of what our "Build a Wildlife Area" program is all about and how these have been implemented in several states. This provides an opportunity to expand on existing WMA's, create connectivity of habitats, and areas in close proximity to existing beneficial habitat.
NRCS & Partners WLFW Bobwhite Mtg.	Meeting had several presentations showing historical grasslands across the U.S, along with quail habitat basics. Presentations also covered successful NWSG success stories and their approach that could be duplicated. Discussed who was going to take part in this endeavor and what their next steps will be.
State Technical Committee Meeting	Listened in on the technical committee meeting to hear all the updates from USDA and other in-state organizations. This provided good information on CRP status and what direction the program is going. There is a need for promotion of the CRP-SAFE, as there are currently no applications. Will be doing some outreach for SAFE.

Looking Forward

- Complete Habitat Management Plan for Oklahoma's fourth ACR certification.
- Continue seeking additional ranches to reach out to for Audubon Conservation Ranching to increase participation.
- Develop outreach strategy for ACR in Oklahoma to provide more education aimed at attracting more people to the program.
- Support PF/QF staff in Oklahoma as well as our chapters.

**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



Leslie Elmore- Statewide

January - March 2021

Back to My Roots



Planting bare-root longleaf pine on my family's property to replace trees lost in the hurricane.

A few months ago, my husband and I made a trip “home” to visit my family and our property. Although nearly 1000 miles away, this south Georgia land is near to my heart. Growing up on this multi-generation farm, I learned about peanut cropping, boll weevils, and long-passed bird dogs with a nose for quail. In my teens, my family and I spent days hand planting loblolly pine seedlings—transitioning about half the property from highly erodible crop fields into Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

Over the years the CRP pines have supported different various wildlife species while protecting soil and water quality. As it reaches maturity, it is becoming great for quail and gopher tortoises.

Since the 1990's my mother, who now manages the property, has continued to expand soil, water, and wildlife conservation practices to cover nearly every acre of our former farm. Pollinator plantings, buffer strips, prescribed fire, and invasive species control help us achieve our objectives.



CRP planting of loblolly pine

Thinning and prescribed fire in a head of long-neglected hardwoods should provide great habitat for turkey and room for remnant wiregrass to expand. In some boggy areas we have planted declining species like pitcher plants. Elsewhere scores of acres have been planted in longleaf pine, a species that was cleared from this land and much of the Southern Coastal Plains.

As is often the case, land management has its challenges. With its temperate climate, lots of invasive species feel right at home in south Georgia: cogon grass, privet, Japanese climbing fern, and feral hogs, all pose constant threats. But one threat we did not foresee was a Category 5 hurricane this far inland.

In October 2018 Hurricane Michael tore through the region, devastating parts of the Florida Panhandle and southwest Georgia, including our place. Mature pines were blown over or snapped like toothpicks, rendering decades of investment worthless to many landowners. It would take months before we could see positive outcomes from this natural disaster.

Bursts of wind snapped 75-foot-tall trees in half over randomly spaced and relatively small areas. Resulting openings in the forest reduced the basal area, further improving the area for quail. Other areas lost trees needed to maintain their function.

In areas completely uprooted by the storm, my mother, husband, and I seized the opportunity to replant with longleaf pine. Our goal is to transition the landscape to pines suited to the site and adapted to frequent fire, where future generations of turkey, butterflies, gopher tortoises, and quail can thrive, and where we can recount our own stories of hunts with our bird dogs with a nose for quail.

Program	Acres Impacted
CTA	
Wildlife Habitat Planting	15
Total	15
Conservation Planning	
♦ 17 landowner contacts	
♦ 2 seed mixes	



Local SWCDs

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!

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Coordinating Wildlife Biologist

Quarterly Partners' Report



Leslie Elmore - Statewide

January - March 2021

Outreach & Education

- My article titled, "When to Hang up the Gun" was published on the national *Quail Forever* website in February. This article covered potential impacts to quail during late-season hunting and harvest.
- This quarter's social media posts covered native plants wildlife feed on in the winter, financial assistance programs, an early monarch sighting, monarch biology, and the groovy monarch license plate. My post that linked to my late-season hunting article gained the most traction, by far. Currently, these posts have reached >13,100 people and engaged nearly 800 followers on OK-QF's Facebook page.
- An artist and naturalist interviewed me for assistance with her outreach projects focusing on native wildlife and the plants they rely upon.
- I drafted Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guides for all Land Use types, Stream Visualization Assessment Protocol, and the Northern Bobwhite in collaboration with the NRCS State Biologist. These new WHEGs will be used by conservationists to more thoroughly assess wildlife habitat on different land uses of producers applying for the Conservation Stewardship Program or managing their property for bobwhites.
- I created a flyer to share with NRCS field offices stating how I could partner with them to benefit wildlife on private lands.
- I created a flyer to share with FO explaining how CP's other than planting benefit monarchs and pollinators.



Kate and me after a successful early-season quail hunt.



Think Outside the Box! Planting a native seed mix can be a great way to provide habitat for monarchs and pollinators, but it is not always appropriate or the most effective practice. Brush management and prescribed burning can make great habitat.

Outreach & Education	Count
Social Media Posts	6
Media Articles	1
Flyers Created	2
Total	9

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Leslie Elmore - Statewide

January - March 2021



Different practices can be used in the Crosstimbers to benefit turkey and deer. Cut-stump treatment, hinge cutting, and hack-and-squirt may be used to achieve different objectives.



Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
2021 Natural Resources Conference (virtual)	I learned from biologists around the country conducting research on wildlife-to-human diseases.
WLFW: Northern Bobwhite, Grasslands and Savannas National Partnership Meeting (virtual)	I joined in the sessions focused on how to best apply conservation programs on the landscape to benefit quail and how states could work together to optimize efforts.
OSU's "Cross Timbers Management for Wild Turkey" training	This training demonstrated how, where, and when to conduct IPT for FSI in oak stands and invasive woody species.
WHEG Training	I completed NRCS's Conservation Planning for Wildlife training.
NRCS webinars for NRCS Team 9	I joined in NRCS's "Conservation and Programs" and "Central Region Monarch Project: Communicating Success Stories" webinars.
Level III Certified Conservation Planner	I have completed four courses towards the Level III Certified Conservation Planner Certification.
Various online webinars	I watched 16 webinars hosted by Monarch Joint Venture, National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative, NRCS, and Pheasants Forever.

Looking Forward

- Collaborating with the Oklahoma NRCS State Wildlife Biologist to finalize land use Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guides (WHEGs), update the Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator WHEGs, and synthesizing 3+ planting calculators into one simplified format.
- Working with my Oklahoma QF Team to schedule R3 events for 2021 and beyond.
- Fieldwork and habitat evaluations.
- Organizing and conducting an online workshop or webinar.

**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 Wildlife Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



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

January– March 2021

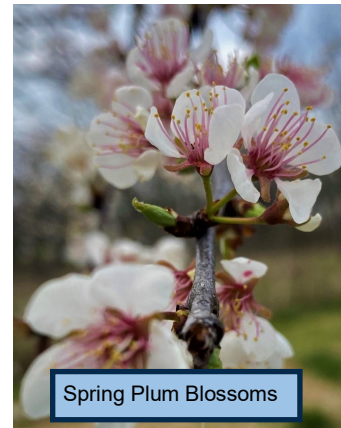
Front Page News...

On March 27, 2021 volunteers from the Quail Forever Big Bluestem Chapter out of Bartlesville, OK came out to help plant 500 sand plum saplings on Copan Wildlife Management Area in Washington County, OK. This was the first of many habitat work days to come for the chapter over the next few years.



Center Newspaper is the Bartlesville, OK Examiner-Enterprise

Working together with Clay Cooper the Chapter President and John Remppe the ODWC WMA Manager, I helped create a habitat management plan for an estimated 855 acre site. The goals of this project is to help support habitat for upland game species– specifically Bobwhite in NE OK and to help address limiting factors such as habitat loss on site. Included in this plan is a multi-year patch burn rotation, treatment of invasive herbaceous species, and pollinator plantings. The chapter working together with ODWC will help build fences, plant pollinator plots, and much more. It has been amazing to work with the local chapter to develop such a big project in my work area. I am thrilled to get the chance to have an active hand in implementing one of my plans. I am very excited to work with the chapter to shift this site to a place that quail can thrive!



Spring Plum Blossoms

It has been a very busy quarter with NRCS program deadlines. I attended a number of site visits in Osage, Rogers, and Craig counties for the EQIP Program. Meeting landowners on site to discuss their management goals and evaluate existing resource concerns on their property. I conducted multiple Quail and Monarch WHEGs, brush and sericea transects. I helped Wagoner County with five pollinator seed mixes for CSP. In between program work I meet with a number of local landowners for CTA burns and habitat development projects.

Conservation Planning

- 34 Landowner Contacts
- 24 Site Visits
- Burn Plans: 2
- Habitat Plans: 1

A note from the field for spring blooms...

Remember as the weather warms and our pollinators start to emerge from their winter slumber they are looking for something to eat. Native trees and shrubs like the Mexican Plum shown in the picture on the right are an important source of early spring nectar and pollen.

Other Programs	Acres Impacted
CSP Seed Mixes	0.57
CTA Burn Plans	28
CTA Habitat Plan	855
Total	883.57



Local SWCDs

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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Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



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

January– March 2021



Bird dog in Osage County on public land

Outreach & Education

Posted a number of Social Media Posts:

- Grassland Restoration Incentive Program (GRIP) outreach
- Perspective changes for grassland managements
- Quail season highlights
- Why do you hunt?
- Cuckoo Bee

I attended a virtual meeting with Clay Cooper the Big Bluestem Quail Forever Chapter President, John Rempé ODWC WMA Manager, Laura McIver, and Dustin Lamoreaux to discuss the proposed multi-year habitat project on Copan WMA. We spoke about the chapters goals for the project, management history of the property, future ODWC leases, how the chapter can help ODWC, and any potential concerns. After a day of hunting public land in NE OK in early February Clay showed me the potential project site on Copan. We toured the property looking at areas of concern and discussing possible chapter projects to create better quail habitat.

Trying to imagine life as a quail chick moving through this stand of grass is pretty hard. In the current state it is way to thick, lacks bare ground, and the flower components. Sometime we have to change our perspective to get a better idea of how our landscape will impact the species we wish to manage for.



At the March 2021 Tallgrass Heritage Quail Forever monthly meeting a representative from the Tulsa Gathering Place met with us to discuss potentially working together to help with a project onsite to manage the prairie plantings at the park.

Outreach & Education	Count
Social Media Posts	5
Total	5

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Quarterly Partners' Report



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

January– March 2021



Traffic Jam in Osage County During March 2021 EQIP Site Visits!

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
Oklahoma Quail Forever team conference calls	The OK team has had a number of video conference calls over the past three months. This has allowed us to continue to stay in touch and complete work in a timely manner.
NRCS Virtual Meeting	New conservation planner teams training. This meeting was for us to ask planning and program questions.
NRCS Virtual Meeting	NRCS East Zone quarterly teams meeting discussion on CART and Program Rankings.

Looking Forward

- Looking forward to continued working with the Quail Forever chapters in NE OK to develop conservation projects!
- QF Team Fishing Day in May!!
- Continued development of CTA habitat plans
- with producers in my counties
- Getting out in the sunshine and going on hikes, kayaking, camping, and fishing adventures this Spring!
- Attending Big Hill Quail Forever Banquet on April 16, 2021

**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

January – March 2021

Position Update

As we enter a new year, a new line of opportunities, challenges, and experiences present themselves. EQIP is in full swing, as we wait to find out what projects are getting funded this year. Burn season is also ramping up, and many new faces are interested in applying fire to their properties. Producers are still coming and wanting assistance for cedar removal and prescribed fire, so that is where most of the focus has been. Hopefully we are able to help as many producers as possible this year with addressing their resource concerns!

Adapt and Overcome

It was a challenging beginning to the year adjusting to new Covid protocols, meeting deadlines, trying to meet safely with producers, and still executing our goals to positively impact the land. There is a light at the end of this long tunnel. This spring has largely been playing catch-up, with many producers being able/willing to meet safely with their vaccines. There has been a drastic increase in interest in applying prescribed fire out here, for brush management as well as wildfire prevention and overall range health management. There is still much to do, many producers to visit, and impact to be made. The green invasion will never stop, so neither can we!



This photo was taken in February, during a site visit looking at brush management through EQIP Monarch to control cedars for turkey habitat improvement.

Conservation Planning

- 148 Landowner Contacts
- 12 Habitat Plans/Conservation Plans
- 53 Site Visits

	Acres Assessed	Acres Impacted
CTA USDA/Nonprogram/State Cost Share		1,557
EQIP Brush Management, Conservation Cover, Forest Stand Improvement, Wetland Restoration, Prescribed Fire	32,858.72	160
CRP		160
Total	32,858.72	1,877



Local SWCDs

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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Farm Bill Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



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

January– March 2021



This photo was taken in March during a prescribed burn. This landowner was conducting his first prescribed burn on his property, and myself along with the local prescribed burn association assisted him. The landowner was VERY pleased, and is wanting to conduct more in the near future!

Outreach & Education

- I met with the members of the Oklahoma Economic Development Authority, who are revising a hazard management plan for Beaver county. They had questions regarding land impacts from wildfire, drought, and soil erosion, and ways to prevent/mitigate/limit impacts.
- I joined in on the Woodward Conservation District board meetings, where I asked them to consider adding brush management and prescribed fire to their priority list to fund this year with state cost share. I then developed ranking sheets for brush, range planting, and Rx fire practices.
- There are multiple E&O opportunities upcoming. However, unfortunately many of these will be virtual events. While these are an excellent form of education, hopefully as vaccines roll out we can get back to in-person outreach in some aspect.

Outreach & Education	Count
Newsletter Articles/State Facebook Articles Written	4
Conservation/Outreach Event	1
Total	5



Farm Bill Biologist II

Quarterly Partners' Report



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

January – March 2021



This photo was taken in March conducting a site visit looking at brush management on cedars. This is clear evidence what happens to a field when cedars are left un-checked.

Training/Meeting Type	Outcome
WHEG Training	Attended NRCS virtual training on revised WHEGs, including wildlife and range health.
Team 3 EQIP	Attended virtual team 3 meeting regarding EQIP, discussing deadlines, as well as upcoming work loads, EQIP Monarch. Also, practice completion/checkout for payment.
Partner Training	Provided brush inventories for cedar and range health assessment trainings to fellow QF Biologist Leslie Elmore.
ECCD Board Meeting	Presented to Ellis County Conservation District board meeting about adding brush management to their priority resource concern list for state cost share.
WCCD Board Meeting	Presented to Woodward County Conservation District board meeting about adding brush management to their priority resource concern list for state cost share.

Looking Forward

- I will be assisting partners such as ODWC, NWTF, and OSU conduct a follow-up video docuseries on wild turkey management in Oklahoma.
- I will be writing plans for those EQIP Monarch applications that are selected for funding for the team, and potentially surrounding teams as well, depending on what gets funded.
- I will be checking on the status of current EQIP contracts to track progress in their management.
- I will be working with landowners individually, interested in burning their land, providing technical assistance for proper burning techniques.
- I will also be meeting with several ranches in the near future for furthering their management needs.
- Once EQIP is complete, I will be resuming CTA site visits with producers.

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

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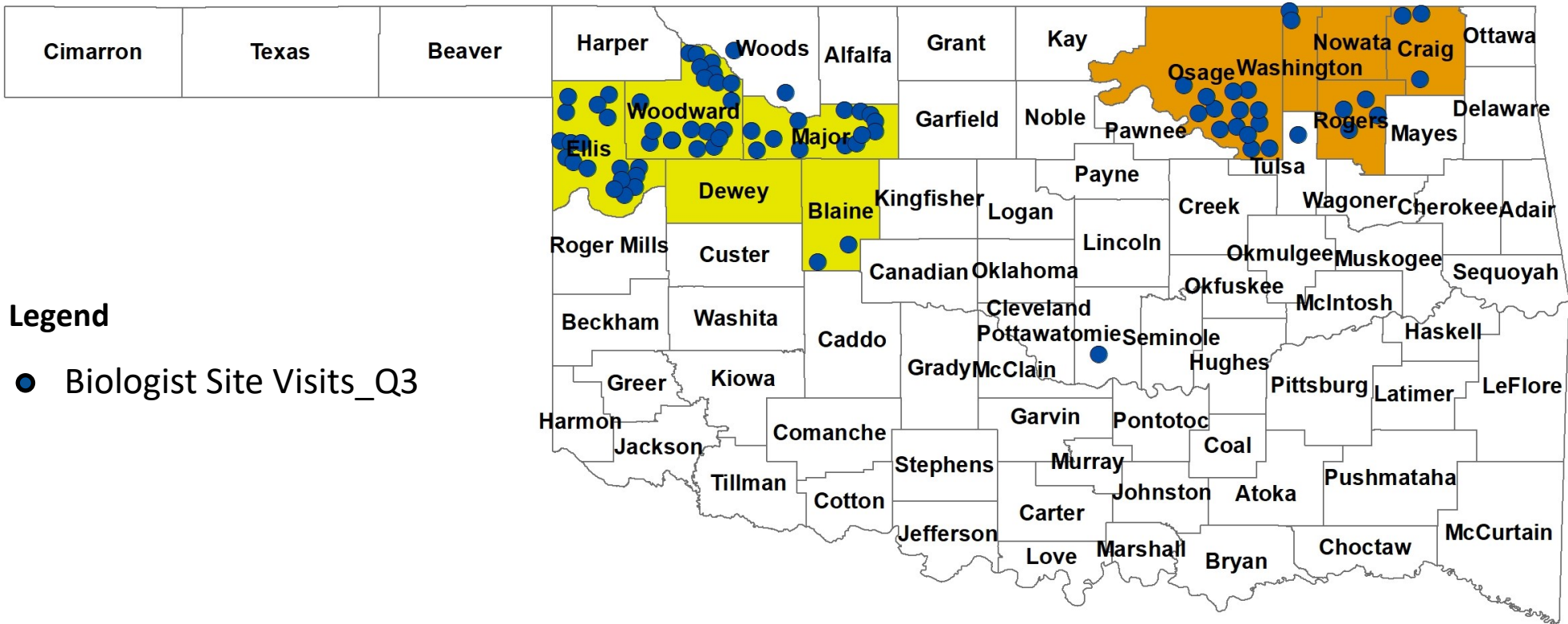
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FY21 Oklahoma PF/QF Biologist Footprint Map January 2021—March 2021



Legend

- Biologist Site Visits_Q3

FY21_Q3 Site Visit Total: 79



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

FY2021, Quarter 3 Summary



Dustin Lamoreaux, Elizabeth Elliott, Tanner Swank, Leslie Elmore

January – March 2021

Oklahoma Accomplishments:

March 31st marked the end of Pheasants & Quail Forever’s Q3 of Fiscal Year 2021. Tables below are a summary of the work performed by Oklahoma PF/QF Biologists over the past quarter.

Conservation Planning

- 209 Landowner Contacts
- 79 Site Visits
- 19 Habitat Plans/Proposals

Programs & CTA	Acres Impacted
EQIP	160
CSP	0.57
CTA	2,615
CRP	160
Audubon Conservation Ranching (ACR)	1,837
Total	4,772.57

Outreach & Education	Count
Presentations Delivered	2
Articles, fliers, outreach materials	21
Youth Events, outreach events, Workshops	3
Total	26

Outreach & Education	Count
Workshop Participants	49