



Quail Times

Summer/Fall 2018

Free Seed Packets

By Joseph Berry

Newberry Soil and Water Conservation District

The Indian Creek Restoration Initiative is happy to offer landowners an opportunity to do something good for pollinator habitats on their property. The committee is offering small seed packets to private landowners to provide native food sources for local pollinators.

The flower seed packets offer two different variety of seeds that pollinators will naturally prefer over exotic flowers and plants. The first mix is of pollinator seeds designed to provide pollinator species a season long natural habitat and food source. The second mix, labeled a monarch seed mix,

contains additional plants (milkweed) with flowers that attract monarch butterflies specifically that these butterflies must have to lay eggs on and feed their caterpillars.



Figure 1: Monarch Butterfly

Both mixes cover an approximate area of 15 square foot area per packet and bloom a range of flowers from April through October. The seeds are best planted in an area riddled of weeds first to reduce competition and to ensure good soil to seed contact. This means for best results, planters should create a loose soil bed before spreading the packet. To ensure good soil contact the landowner should then pack the seeds down to have them just under the surface but no less than a quarter-inch down.

With the seeds being native to the southeast, they do not require any additional fertilizer or any nitrogen. However, it is recommended that the soil bed maintain a close to neutral pH (6.0 or better) to have best results in growing. Beds should also have an appropriate barrier between any non-native grass species to prevent invasions.

Additionally, because the native species will not have to be replanted year after year as long as they are maintained, weeded, and watered appropriately for the first few years. This is in part due to the deep root

structures the flowers will be able to establish in the local soil.

The mixes are made available free of charge to landowners thanks to the Indian Creek Restoration Initiative in partnership with the South Carolina Forage and Grazing Lands Coalition (SCFGLC) and the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf). The mixes are unique blends that are not found through traditional retailers or providers. Larger quantities of the seed mix can be purchased through the NWTf.

The mix is ideal for landowners interested in having pollinators around throughout the year, including master gardeners and flower enthusiasts, butterfly and hummingbird lovers, bee keepers, educators, and anyone wanting to increase flowers that attract pollinator species.

To pick up the packets, landowners can stop by the following locations while supplies last:

Newberry Soil and Water Conservation District
office in the USDA Service Center
719 Kendall Road, Newberry, SC 29108

Laurens NRCS
104 Ashley Lane, Laurens, SC 29360

Union County Clemson Extension Office
120 Kirby Street, Union, SC 29379

New Cost Share Program Available to Landowners

By: Michael Hook

SC Department of Natural Resources

A new cost share program is available to landowners throughout the state who live near National Forest Service (USFS) lands. The Collaborative Landowner Assistance Program (CLAP) is a product of a partnership between the USFS, and the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, through the National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative, and the South Carolina Bobwhite Initiative. The primary goal of CLAP is to create additional, high quality bobwhite habitat on properties adjacent or within close proximity of the National Forests in South Carolina. Landowners who are

interested in creating quality bobwhite habitat on their property would be eligible for monetary assistance to implement practices conducive to creating bobwhite habitat.

Landowners can create quality bobwhite habitat in many ways and often times these practices are things folks are normally doing. For example, there is cost share for individuals to increase prescribed fire on their



Figure 2: Michael Hook Presenting a Landowner with a Bobwhite Initiative Participation Sign

property either through the installation of firebreaks or for assisting with the costs of burning. In past newsletters we have talked about the many benefits of winter disking on your property, now you can get financial assistance to do some winter disking. There's also cost share money available for items such as creating forest openings, establishing early successional habitat, native warm season grass establishment, creating and maintaining field borders, creating hedgerows and controlling sod-forming grasses. There is even cost share available for thinning your timber to 60 basal area or less. Often times cost share programs can be quite cumbersome with a great deal of paperwork but this one is different, there is only a single page application needed to get started with this program.

Even though it is a relatively easy process to get started, there are some guidelines that need attention. First and foremost, you must live in a county that has National Forest land. Applicants will be ranked according to proximity to the National Forest lands. Those landowners who are adjacent to the National Forest will be the highest priority. Landowners who are less than or equal to 1 mile from National Forest land are the medium priority. If you own land farther than 1 mile but less than 5 miles from the National Forest you fall into the Tier III category. Finally, landowners who are further than 5 miles from the National Forest but are in the same county as the National Forest may be funded based on availability. A wildlife management plan prepared by a professional wildlife biologist is required but we do have staff available to visit each property and provide a plan as needed. Finally, CLAP is a cost share program so as such landowners will have to pay for the practices up front and then once the practices are completed a biologist will come out to ensure the work was done. It is then after the practices are marked as completed the landowner will receive 75% of the predetermined cost associated with each practice. Funds are limited so currently there is a

\$10,000 cap on the funds available to each landowner.

To print an application and see a list of the practices and 75% cost share rates you can either visit:

<http://www.dnr.sc.gov/quail/docs/CollaborativeLandownerAssistanceProgram.pdf>

Or you can Email:

newberrysoilandwater@gmail.com for a copy of the application.

If you are interested in having more bobwhites on your property and would be interested in receiving some financial assistance to create bobwhite habitat please contact Joe Berry at the Newberry Soil and Water Conservation District and he can get you in touch with a biologist that can help you begin the process of having more and better quail habitat.

2018 Omnibus Bill Nixes DUNS and SAM Requirements for Farmers

By: Sabrenna Bryant

Natural Resource Conservation Service



Effectively immediately, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) financial assistance program participants will no longer need a Dun and Bradstreet Universal Number System (DUNS) number, or to register in the System for Award Management (SAM). The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018 (2018 Omnibus Bill), signed by President Donald Trump on March 23, eliminated these requirements.

According to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue, DUNS and SAM were designed for billion-dollar government contractors, not everyday farmers trying to support their families. These changes help streamline the customer experience of farmers, which is a top priority at USDA, he said.

The exemption does not apply to any current or

future agreements or federal contracts with eligible entities, project sponsors, vendors, partners, or other non-exempt landowners or producers.

DUNS/SAM registration is still required for:

- Partnership agreements entered through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP).
- All agreements with eligible entities under the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP)
- Agreements under the Agricultural Land Easement (ALE) component of ACEP.
- Partnership agreements under the Wetland Reserve Enhancement Program (WREP) component of ACEP-Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE).
- Watershed operations agreements with project sponsors.
- Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP) agreements with project sponsors, including Recovery and Floodplain Easements.
- All cooperative, contribution, interagency, or partnership agreements of Federal contracts used by NRCS to procure goods or services.

NRCS advises participants in its programs to ignore any emails, phone calls or other communications from third-party vendors offering assistance for registering in SAMS or applying for a DUNS number.

To learn more about NRCS financial and technical assistance, go to www.nrcs.usda.gov.

Million Dollar Programs Offered in Newberry, Laurens, and Union Counties

By Staci Henry

Natural Resource Conservation Service

Counties around the Indian Creek area are looking to get a boost of over a million dollars this year from the Federal Government. The money is available to landowners through the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) major cost share programs.

Two of the larger programs NRCS offers are the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). Both of which focus on assisting in the implementation of conservation practices and applying enhancements respectively for private land owners.

EQIP allows NRCS to provide cost share and one-on-one help to plan and implement improvements for

agricultural producers to address resource concerns. These improvements can lead to cleaner air and water, healthier soil, and better wildlife habitat, while also improving agricultural operations.

CSP is NRCS's way to further existing practices while continuing to improve operations for landowners. With both programs the first step is completing an application.

Newberry, Laurens, and Union counties are continual leaders in agricultural production in South Carolina benefits greatly from programs put on through NRCS. Currently, previous Indian Creek Participants are encouraged to sign up for CSP to enhance their existing management system.

District Conservationist for the Newberry NRCS office, Staci Henry, is excited about this funding. "I am thrilled to continue to be able to help landowners in my district with implementing a variety of conservation practices" said Henry who expects her initial approval to increase to hopefully 2 million dollars by the time all the applications have been processed. District Conservationist for Laurens and Union County, Lisa Good has received a great deal of funding in those counties where Lisa is also excited about future funding that will still come through until the end of the fiscal year. Henry also noted that "applications are always being accepted for all programs throughout the year."

"NRCS continues to fund different and unique practices and enhancements, and the Indian Creek Focal Area counties are trendsetters in the execution of special projects." said Henry, who is happy to assist farmers and landowners in determining individual needs through various projects and programs offered in that area.

Interested landowners from Newberry County are encouraged to complete an application from the NRCS office at 719 Kendall Rd. Newberry, SC 29108 or contact Henry at 803-597-3166. Those interested in Laurens and Union County are encouraged to complete an application from the NRCS office at 104 Ashley Lane, Laurens, SC 29360 or contact Good directly at 864-984-6921.

Indian Creek Field Day

By: Jeff Fellers

Clemson Extension

Every year the Indian Creek Quail Restoration Initiative Committee host a field day to showcase habitat management techniques that are being used in the project area. This year we hosted our field day on March 27, 2018. We had 46 people in attendance



Figure 3: timber harvest operation at Long Lane

who visited three different tour locations.

Our first stop was Long Lane, which is located on National Forest Service land. Here, participants learned how timber operations are being used to manage for wildlife. A recent thinning had been conducted to reduce basal area and enhance habitat for quail. Tarri McKinney, with the National Forest Service, stated that they incorporate wildlife objectives into their forest management, and anytime they make changes to a site there are site specific plans to meet their management goals.



Figure 4: After the timber harvest at Long Lane. A reduction of basal area to enhance quail habitat

Our second stop was a location on McCullough Church Road, which was also located on National Forest Service land. This site demonstrated how patch burning and winter discing is an effective management tool for quail. Patch burning reduces the size of the prescribed burn to allow different successional stages across an area. This helps benefit quail during different stages of their life. Winter discing is also beneficial to disturb the soil and set back plant succession. October through January has been shown to produce a higher percentage of foods, such as ragweed, that attract quail. When done correctly, discing and



Figure 5: Patch burning provides different successional habitat to meet the different needs of quail at different life stages

prescribed burning can provide an inexpensive and beneficial wildlife management tool.

The last stop of the day featured the Delta site, which is also located on National Forest Land. Here, the Forest Service is working to restore native grasses in what used to be a pasture dominated by fescue and Bermuda. Participants were able to see demonstrations that featured, no planting, winter discing, and planting native seeds.



Figure 6: Winter discing to promote native plant growth that is currently in the seed bed

To wrap up the field day, all the participants gathered at the Whitmire Community Center for lunch and the rain fall simulator provided by SC Department of Natural Resources and the South Carolina Forage and Grazing Lands Coalition. The rain fall simulator provides an in-depth look at how properly managed vegetation helps prevent soil erosion and promotes water quality.



Figure 7: Rain Fall Simulator demonstrated by SC Department of Natural Resources

If you missed the field day we do plan to offer more in the future as new management practices are installed.

Due to funding, mailings are becoming harder to offer. If you would like to receive our newsletters and field day notifications electronically please contact Jeff Fellers at 864-427-6259 Ext: 115 or at fellers@clemson.edu.

Forest Management Calendar Provided by SC Forestry Commission

Treatment	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Request A Forest Stewardship Plan												
Apply For Equip Or Cost-Share Programs With NRCS												
Apply For Cost-Share Assistance with The SC Forestry Commission												
Road Maintenance												
Site Preparation Burning												
Insect & Disease Inspection												
Chemical Herbaceous Weed Control												
Chemical Site Preparation/Release												
Fire Breaks												
Food Plot Planting												
Harvesting (Includes Thinning)												
Mechanical Site Preparation												
Order Seedlings												
Prescribed Burning												
Tree Planting												

Indicates appropriate month for technique