



# LESSER PRAIRIE CHICKEN INITIATIVE

## QUARTERLY PARTNERS' REPORT

### APRIL - JUNE 2018



It has been a busy spring and early start to summer to end our FY 18. I have been working on a variety of projects over the last three months through different programs. I have had the opportunity to work with TX NRCS Wildlife subcommittee meeting, outlining priorities to enhance wildlife habitat for the future. I also attended our Pheasants Forever/Quail Forever regional meeting that took place in Missouri. Here we were able to build relationships with other employees across the southern region of our team and learn about other things that are taking place for wildlife habitat conservation.

Some of the projects that I have been working on this quarter are LPCI EQIP which consisted of one new applications being funded in my area. This contract will be focused on mesquite management and deferment of pastures. I have also been assisting with WAFWA vegetation monitoring this quarter, assisting for a couple of days up in the NE TX panhandle. I have also been assisting with CRP/CCRP emergency grazing plans for producers. I was able to certify a few LPCI EQIP prescribe grazing contracts this spring.

I had the opportunity to work one on one with a producer that is currently working with us under LPCI EQIP. Under his 645 Upland Wildlife habitat management, we require for the producer to do a quail call count. I got the opportunity to show the producer in the field, how to conduct these call counts, set up monitoring points and go over bob-white quail habitat evaluations.

It has been a productive quarter and looking forward to the next Fiscal Year. I continue to enjoy working with landowners and various partners that are involved within LPCI and hope to continue this relationship down the road.

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*Whistling Scaled Quail posing on an H-brace in Bailey County, TX.*

## Pictures A-Field

- Discussing with producer habitat components of Bob White quail and going over requirements of spring whistle counts for 645 Upland Wildlife Habitat management practice



Training/ Presentation / Workshop	Location	Outcomes
PF/QF South Regional Meeting	Lake of the Ozarks, MO	Regional meeting to meet with other PF/QF colleagues that make up of the South Region. Talk and discuss initiatives that are taking place in across the region.
Wildlife Subcommittee Technical Meeting	Austin, TX	Attended the Texas NRCS State Technical meeting in Austin, TX on progress of farm bill programs and conservation strategies going into next FY for wildlife implications.

Other Programs	Conservation Planning (acres)	Certification of completed practice (acres)
<b>EQIP</b>	<b>19952</b>	<b>8220</b>
<b>Total acres impacted</b>	<b>19952</b>	<b>8220</b>

*“Take nothing but memories,  
leave nothing but footprints!”  
Chief Seattle*

Landowner Contacts	<b>20</b>
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Vegetation Transects	<b>29</b>
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CRP/CCRP Practices	Acres impacted
CP 38E –SAFE	<b>539.6</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>539.6</b>

### Jordan Menge

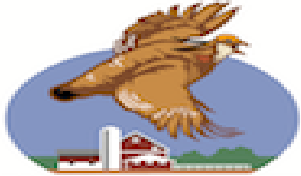
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QUARTERLY PARTNERS' REPORT

APRIL - JUNE 2018



LESSER PRAIRIE-CHICKEN  
INITIATIVE



This past quarter has been a whirlwind of effort to get annual LPCI monitoring accomplished. I coordinated and conducted annual monitoring on seven active LPCI contracts, and assisted WAFWA with vegetation monitoring on two in Kansas. While vegetation has been my focus over the last couple of months, I also worked to deliver other conservation programs and outreach in my area. I have begun to recruit landowners for Colorado Parks and Wildlife's Lesser Prairie-Chicken Habitat Incentive Program to focus habitat improvement efforts to Colorado's Lesser prairie-chicken (LPC) occupied area.

Additionally, I attended a meeting with the National Park Service to provide LPC habitat recommendations for Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site. The discussion included the potential to recruit adjacent landowners into LPCI or other cost-share programs to improve habitat. Lastly, I attended Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health Version 5 training in Cheyenne, Wyoming, which will allow me to stay up-to-date with protocols for conducting Rangeland Health Assessments for NRCS programs.

**Marina Osier**

Range/Wildlife

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*In this photo we are looking at a shrub planting on USFS land in Baca County.*

## Pictures A-Field

- A little help from some cows on an LPCI ranch. The cows picked up the transect tape and started to walk away with it!



Training/ Presentation / Workshop	Location	Outcomes
Interpreting Rangeland Health	Cheyenne, WY	Training to stay up-to-date with protocols for conducting Rangeland Health Assessments for NRCS programs.
Western Regional meeting	Phoenix, AZ	PF and QF staff gathered in Arizona. This provided the opportunity to network and learn from our peers in different states. I was grateful for the chance to brainstorm new solutions and gain new perspectives from my peers.

Other Programs	Conservation Planning (acres)
<b>EQIP</b> Brush mgmt., Upland Wildlife Habitat mgmt., Prescribe grazing, shrub establishment	<b>3500</b>
<b>Total acres impacted</b>	<b>5992.29</b>

“Nature, it seems, has a way of returning things to how they should be.”

<b>Landowner Contacts</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Vegetation Transects</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>CRP/CCRP Practices</b>	<b>Acres impacted</b>
<b>CRP 647</b>	<b>547.8</b>
<b>MCM 528</b>	<b>387.9</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2492.29</b>

### Marina Osier

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**LESSER PRAIRIE-CHICKEN INITIATIVE**



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This quarter I attended several meetings and workshops including the PFQF West Region Meeting where I was introduced to new conservation methods I hope to incorporate here in Eastern NM. During the regional meeting Marina, PFQF Biologist CO, and I gave a brief presentation over LPC conservation efforts taking place in our states. I also had the opportunity to attend CEHMM's LPC and DSL Strategic Meeting where we selected ranking criteria for their CCA/A Projects; as well as their Ranking Team Meeting where I represented PFQF/NRCS as we voted on funding for project proposals.

I also worked on various trainings this quarter, for example I attended a NRCS Conservation Desktop Program overview put on by the State Toolkit Specialist and completed 11 AgLearn courses. I also lead a brief training over proper protocols for LPCI Vegetation Monitoring for NRCS and NMACD Employees ahead of our monitoring season.

From helping NMDGF with lek survey routes, to completing NRCS Biological Opinion Flow Charts/WHEGS/Habitat Threats Checklists- this field season has proven to be a busy one. I had the opportunity to lead the vegetation monitoring for LPCI contracts, and with the help of NRCS/NMACD Employees, we were able to finish ahead of schedule. Currently, we have accomplished roughly 82 transects across 3 counties. We will move forward with additional monitoring once the current applications are funded and obligated. I have also had the opportunity to assist NMDGF with vegetation monitoring on their Prairie Chicken Areas, and have offered CTA to multiple Land Owners over a multitude of topics ranging from range health to prairie chicken biology.

Overall this quarter has been a productive one. From field work to meetings to trainings, each opportunity to interact with Partners has truly been a delight. I couldn't think of a better way to wrap up my first year here on the Plains. I look forward to the good times, the challenges, and (hopefully) rain this next quarter will bring.

**Amber Brown**

Range/Wildlife

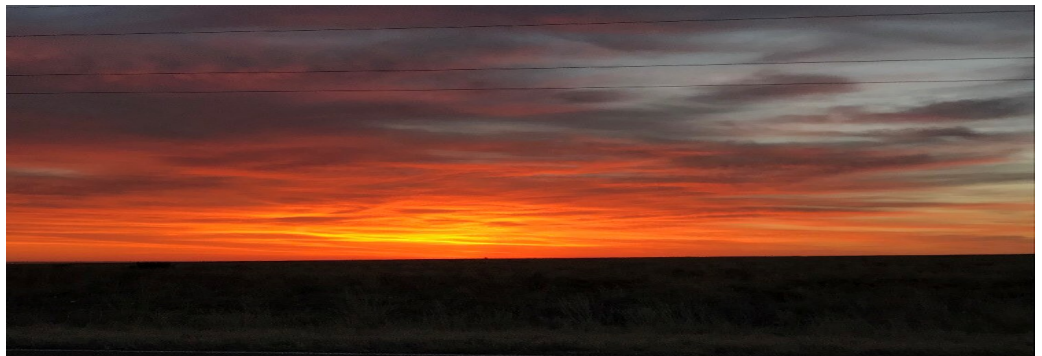
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*Sunrise on Lek survey route in Eastern NM.*

## Pictures A-Field

- Prairie rattlesnake taking cover in prairie dog hole while conducting vegetation monitoring.



Training/ Presentation / Workshop	Location	Outcomes
Western Regional meeting	Phoenix, AZ	PF and QF staff gathered in Arizona. This provided the opportunity to network and learn from our peers in different states. I was grateful for the chance to brainstorm new solutions and gain new perspectives from my peers.
Audubon Grazing Workshop	Portales, NM	Attended Audubon Grazing workshop with guest presenter, Dr. Allen Williams on high intensity grazing management system.

Programs	Conservation Planning	Certification of completed practice
EQIP	11391	4
Total acres impacted	11391	4

“Plans to protect air and water, wilderness and wildlife, are in fact plans to protect man.”

— [Stewart L. Udall](#)

Vegetation transects	95
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Lek Survey Points	72
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QUARTERLY PARTNERS' REPORT  
APRIL - JUNE 2018



LESSER PRAIRIE CHICKEN  
INITIATIVE



The last three months were all about the lesser prairie chicken and monarch butterfly. April started with lek surveys for lesser prairie chicken leks in Harper, Ellis, and Woodward countries. I am happy to report that I was able to locate several leks along the routes. The most exciting morning occurred late in the season when I was finally able to see an Oklahoma lesser prairie chicken! Along with lek surveys, was the start of annual vegetation monitoring for LPCI as well as the Range Wide plan with WAFWA. I enjoyed the opportunity to see a variety of LPC habitats from far southwestern Kansas to the shinnery oak shrubland of western OK.

In between chasing prairie chickens, I worked with NRCS staff on cedar brush inventories and evaluations for numerous Monarch EQIP applications. Looking at the applications let me experience new parts of my counties. These cedars may be cut in the name of the Monarch, but it will greatly benefit prairie chicken habitat as well. The level of cedar infestation ranged from very minor to an impenetrable forest. For the Monarch we are recommending a prescribed burn to follow the removal of cedar in low to moderate density stands.

I was grateful for the spring rains. Not just because we desperately needed the moisture, but because the flowers bloomed in full force and I was able to hone my plant identification skills. I also found some plants I'd never seen in the wild.

## Haley Lockard

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This photo of Broadleaf Milkweed was taken June 2018 while evaluating applications for the Monarch Initiative.

## Pictures A-Field

- This photo was taken in June 2018 of a guzzler installed at the Beaver WMA. During the Field Day, we discussed managing invasive salt cedar for turkey, shrubs for quail and water for all wildlife. We even found a turtle trying to enjoy the benefits.



Training/ Presentation / Workshop	Location	Outcomes
PF/QF South Regional Meeting	Osage Beach, MO	PF and QF staff gathered at Lake of the Ozarks in Missouri. This provided the opportunity to network and learn from our peers in different states. I was grateful for the chance to brainstorm new solutions and gain new perspectives from my peers.
OSU Extension Field Day	Beaver, OK	Wildlife professionals and local landowners gathered at ODWC's Beaver WMA to discuss wildlife management for quail, turkey and deer. We looked at the removal of invasive salt cedar to restore cottonwoods for wild turkey, shrub preferences for quail, effects of strip disking, and supplemental water for wildlife.

Programs	Conservation Planning (acres)	Site visits
EQIP	10732	33
Conservation impacted	10,732	33

**"Only the mountains have lived long enough to listen objectively to the howl of the wolf."**

— [Aldo Leopold](#)

Lek Survey points

148

Vegetation Monitoring  
Transects

76

### Haley Lockard

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**LESSER PRAIRIE CHICKEN  
INITIATIVE  
QUARTERLY PARTNERS' REPORT  
SWAT CUMALATIVE FISCAL  
2018 IMPACT**

<i>Category</i>	Completed Practices	New Plans	Revised Plans	Veg Monitor- ing	Lek Surveys	Field Days Tours	Meetings Workshops
unit	Acreage			Count			
Jordan Menge (PF)	15,526	18,454	11,786	72	-	-	51
Marina Osier (PF)	1,663	15,942	38,043	120	8	2	11
Haley Lockard (PF)	-	15,179	-	74	226	1	45
Amber Brown (PF)	850	12,244	10,513	219	86	2	61
Jess Crockford (KPFC)	-	-	42,000	-	-	-	4
Roger Tacha (KPFC)	-	17,932	28,475	27	-	2	16
<b>SUM</b>	<b>18,038</b>	<b>79,751</b>	<b>130,818</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>188</b>