

VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT TRAILBLAZER RC&D AND CHECK OUT UPCOMING EVENTS

Trailblazer news

good for the land . . . good for the people

In this issue:

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April 18, 2019 - Livestock Field Day - Winnsboro

We are looking forward to getting together with all of you again at upcoming workshops! **Trailblazer is coming back!**

Volume 10
Issue 6
June 2020

Dear Friends,

Gradually, Louisiana is opening up for business again, and so is Trailblazer RC&D! While honoring the directives of the governor and local leaders and keeping in mind social distancing and safety practices, Trailblazer will begin organizing and hosting workshops and events during June. We will make every effort to ensure a safe environment for our participants. We hope you will join us as we begin to visit your communities!

Our first workshop is tentatively scheduled for June 23 or 25 in Minden. This workshop will focus on pollinators. Whether you are a farmer or a backyard gardener, pollinators are essential to production of your crop. Join us to learn how to create a habitat that will encourage pollinators to visit your farm or garden. Watch our website – www.trailblazer.org – for a final date and time for this workshop.

Trailblazer is coming back better than ever! We hope to see you soon!

Ellzey Simmons
Chief Executive Officer
Trailblazer RC&D

Upcoming Event

Pollinator Workshop



Tentative Date: June 23 or 25
Tentative Time: 6:00 p.m.

Minden Farm and Garden
1307 Sibley Road
Minden, Louisiana

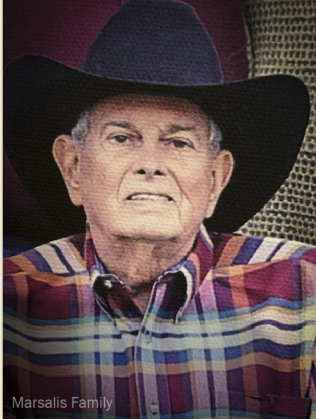
- Pollinator identification
- The current status of bees and other pollinators
- Creating pollinator habitats
- Plant choices

Watch our website for up-to-date information on this training opportunity and others!

www.trailblazer.org

⁵“That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God”

1 Corinthians 2:5
King James Version
(KJV)



After a long illness, **James "Jimmy" Egan Marsalis, Jr.**, went to be with his Lord and Savior Friday, May 29, 2020. He passed away peacefully at home surrounded by his loving family. Jimmy was a dear friend and loyal Trailblazer RC&D board member. He served on Trailblazer's board since 1988. Many of his years of service, including the current year, were spent as treasurer. We are a better organization for knowing him, and he will be greatly missed.

Tribute to a Friend

Jimmy was born in Homer, Louisiana, on October 10, 1950. He lived his life serving his God, family, community, and agriculture! Jimmy was a true servant in our community volunteering to make it a better place to live. He was a lifelong member of the First Presbyterian Church of Athens where he served faithfully as an elder.

We will miss you.

A graduate of Athens High School and Louisiana Tech University, "Mr. Marsalis" spent 32 years touching many young lives in Claiborne Parish while teaching agriculture and science and serving as a 4-H leader for the parish. During his education career, he was awarded the Outstanding Teacher of the Year by the D'Arbonne Soil and Water Conservation District.

If you knew Jimmy, you knew he had a huge heart for serving others. He volunteered for many community and state organizations. He served as President of the Claiborne Parish Farm Bureau Organization for over 40 years. During this time he was elected and served four years as the District 1 board member for the Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation Board of Directors. Jimmy also served on the Louisiana Livestock Brand

Commission and the Sparta Aquifer Commission. He was also elected president of the boards of The Presbyterian Village and Claiborne Parish Fire District 5. He served as a Reserve Deputy Sheriff for Claiborne Parish for many years.

Jimmy, "Farm Boy," was most proud of his family farm where he was raised. The Marsalis farm was passed down through four generations and has been operated continuously for over 120 years. This farm was recognized at the 2019 Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation Convention as a Louisiana Century Farm. Farming allowed him to be a part of the Claiborne Parish Cattleman's Association where he and his wife were named Cattle Producers of the Year in 2007. Jimmy was also a Louisiana Master Farmer.

JOIN THE TRAILBLAZER TEAM

COMMUNITIES · CORPORATIONS · COMPANIES

Opportunities With Trailblazer

- ✓ Increase Your Community Involvement
- ✓ Increase Your Brand Visibility
- ✓ Attract New Customers

Become a Trailblazer Sponsor Today!

Call (318) 255-3554 or email ceo@trailblazer.org

SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES

Opportunities Through Trailblazer

- ✓ Advocacy for USDA program participation
- ✓ Effective communication with USDA agencies
- ✓ Info on USDA financial/technical assistance

Contact Trailblazer to Arrange a Meeting

Call (318) 255-3554 or email ceo@trailblazer.org

Assistance to Farmers

USDA Announces Details of Direct Assistance to Farmers through the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program



USDA NRCS

Farmers and Ranchers to Receive Direct Support for Losses Related to COVID-19

On May 19, 2020, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced details of the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP), which will provide up to \$16 billion in direct payments to deliver relief to America's farmers and ranchers impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. In addition to this direct support to farmers and ranchers, USDA's Farmers to Families Food Box program is partnering with regional and local distributors, whose workforces have been significantly impacted by the closure of many restaurants, hotels, and other food service entities, to purchase \$3 billion in fresh produce, dairy, and meat and deliver boxes to Americans in need.

Beginning May 26, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), through the Farm Service Agency (FSA), will be accepting applications from agricultural producers who have suffered losses.

CFAP provides vital financial assistance to producers of agricultural commodities who have suffered a five-percent-or-greater price decline due to COVID-19 and face additional significant marketing costs as a result of lower demand, surplus production, and disruptions to shipping patterns and the orderly marketing of commodities.

Farmers and ranchers will receive direct support, drawn from two possible funding sources. The first source of funding is \$9.5 billion in appropriated funding provided in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Stability (CARES) Act to compensate farmers for losses due to price declines that occurred between mid-January 2020, and mid-April 2020 and provides support

for specialty crops for product that had been shipped from the farm between the same time period but subsequently spoiled due to loss of marketing channels. The second funding source uses the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act to compensate producers for \$6.5 billion in losses due to on-going market disruptions.

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previous page

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Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP)

Non-Specialty Crops and Wool

Non-specialty crops eligible for CFAP payments include malting barley, canola, corn, upland cotton, millet, oats, soybeans, sorghum, sunflowers, durum wheat, and hard red spring wheat. Wool is also eligible. Producers will be paid based on inventory subject to price risk held as of January 15, 2020. A payment will be made based 50 percent of a producer's 2019 total production or the 2019 inventory as of January 15, 2020, whichever is smaller, multiplied by the commodity's applicable payment rates.

Livestock

Livestock eligible for CFAP include cattle, lambs, yearlings and hogs. The total payment will be calculated using the sum of the producer's number of livestock sold between January 15 and April 15, 2020, multiplied by the payment rates per head, and the highest inventory number of livestock between April 16 and May 14, 2020, multiplied by the payment rate per head.

Dairy

For dairy, the total payment will be calculated based on a producer's certification of milk production for the first quarter of calendar year 2020 multiplied by a national price decline during the same quarter. The second part of the payment is based a national adjustment to each producer's production in the first quarter.

Specialty Crops

For eligible specialty crops, the total payment will be based on the volume of production sold between January 15 and April 15, 2020; the volume of production shipped, but unpaid; and the number of acres for which harvested production did not leave the farm or mature product destroyed or not harvested during that same time period, and which have not and will not be sold. Specialty crops include, but are not limited to, almonds, beans, broccoli, sweet corn, lemons, iceberg lettuce, spinach, squash, strawberries and tomatoes. A full list of eligible crops can be found on farmers.gov/cfap. Additional crops may be deemed eligible at a later date.

Eligibility

There is a payment limitation of \$250,000 per person or entity for all commodities combined. Applicants who are corporations, limited liability companies or limited partnerships may qualify for additional payment limits where members actively provide personal labor or personal management for the farming operation. Producers will also have to certify they meet the Adjusted Gross Income limitation of \$900,000 unless at least 75 percent or more of their income is derived from farming, ranching or forestry-related activities. Producers must also be in compliance with Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation provisions.

Applying for Assistance

Producers can apply for assistance beginning on May 26, 2020. Additional information and application forms can be found at farmers.gov/cfap. Producers of all eligible commodities will apply through their local FSA office. Documentation to support the producer's application and certification may be requested. FSA has streamlined the signup process to not require an acreage report at the time of application and a USDA farm number may not be immediately needed. Applications will be accepted through August 28, 2020.

Payment Structure

To ensure the availability of funding throughout the application period, producers will receive 80 percent of their maximum total payment upon approval of the application. The remaining portion of the payment, not to exceed the payment limit, will be paid at a later date as funds remain available.

Contact your local USDA Service Center for more information.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

USDA Service Centers are open for business by phone appointment only, and field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. While program delivery staff will continue to come into the office, they will be working with producers by phone and using online tools whenever possible. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with the FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, or any other Service Center agency are required to call their Service Center to schedule a phone appointment. More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

CONSERVATION CONVERSATION

URBAN CONSERVATION

**Conservation is a state of harmony
between men and land.**

Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, 1949, p. 207.

Are you urban or rural?

The definition of an “urban area” has changed a bit through the years, but basically, the U.S. Census Bureau identifies two types of urban areas: 1) urbanized areas of 50,000 or more people and 2) urban clusters of at least 2,500 and less than 50,000 people. Are you urban or rural?

According to historical U.S. Census records, in the year 1900, 39.6 percent of the population in the United States was urban. By 2010, the U.S. urban population had grown to 80.7 percent. Louisiana’s urban population grew from 26.5 percent to 73.2 percent during the same time period.*

What happens when rural becomes urban?

With urban growth, comes increased stress to the natural landscape, including reduced wildlife habitat, storm water runoff, soil erosion, and water and air pollution. Fewer farms are available to provide farm fresh foods, and there is a lost connection with people to the land. Through the years, wise conservationists recognized these impacts and worked to address resource concerns. Working with local, state, and federal agencies; communities; and individuals, professional conservationists have assisted with development of constructed wetlands for stormwater management; introduced native plants to conserve soil and improve water quality; established pollinator gardens to support pollinator species; established rain gardens to capture rainwater runoff from impervious surfaces such as parking lots, roofs, and streets; and

encouraged use of pervious paving systems that allow water to infiltrate easily into the soil and groundwater below. Some urban residents have established urban farms using high tunnels to provide a local, healthy, sustainable food source for their communities.

Are you a backyard conservationist?

Many backyard conservationists have implemented the same conservation practices—on a much smaller scale—to improve the natural resources of their land: butterfly gardens, rain catchment systems, permeable paving for driveways to reduce runoff, vegetable gardens for fresh food, and native plantings to reduce erosion.

Do you have natural resource concerns in your area?

Whether in urban or rural settings, landowners and land managers are challenged with keeping their land healthy, productive, and sustainable. Sometimes, a resource concern has an easy fix; such as introducing native plants to control erosion. Sometimes, a more involved solution is best; such as constructing a wetland to control stormwater runoff.



USDA NRCS

Native plants are plants that grow naturally in the area where you live and garden.

*Urban Percentage of the Population for States, Historical, Decennial Census, 1900-2010, U.S. Census Bureau, provided by <https://www.icip.iastate.edu/tables/population/urban-pct-states>.

The best resource to find your best solution to a natural resource concern is the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Professional conservationists, wildlife specialists, plant materials specialists, soil scientists, water quality specialists, and others are available to discuss your concerns and develop a conservation plan to help you meet your goals for your land.

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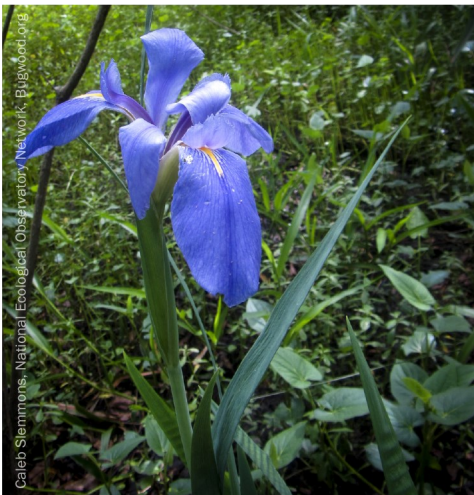
a little something extra

BACKYARD CONSERVATION

Rain Gardens!

What is a rain garden?

A rain garden is a shallow depression in the ground that captures stormwater runoff from your roof, driveway, or yard. The depression is commonly planted with perennial flowers and native plants that will hold the rainwater as it filters into the ground instead of running off into a storm drain.



Rain garden resources:

Rain Gardens . . . absorb water, reduce runoff, prevent flooding. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, 2005, https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/nrcs142p2_011366.pdf

Stormwater and Your Rain Garden, LSU AgCenter, <https://www.lsuagcenter.com/NR/rdonlyres/79E7AA78-F75A-4B03-89CB-97F6B1BB5EC2/27022/Backyardraingarden1.pdf>

Work within the landscape you have, Dan Gill, LSU AgCenter Horticulturist, 5/11/2017, <https://www.lsuagcenter.com/profiles/rbogren/articles/page1494527225856>

Benefits of having a rain garden:

- Protects water quality by reducing stormwater runoff.
- Plants and soil filter pollutants and return cleaner water through the grounds to nearby streams.
- Reduce flooding by sending the rainwater underground.
- Provide habitat for beneficial insects and wildlife.



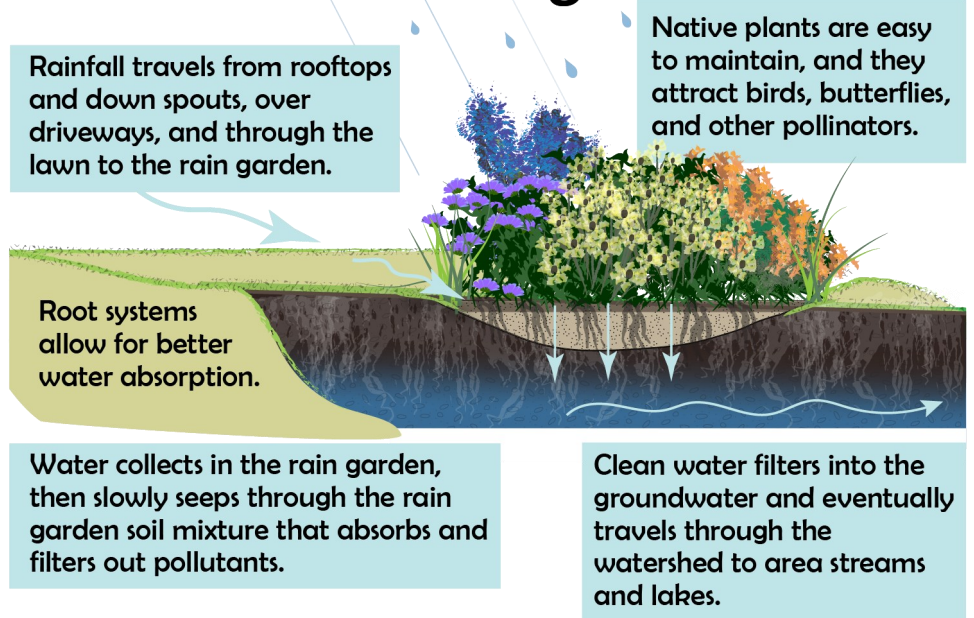
Keran A. Rawlins, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org

What is stormwater runoff?

Stormwater runoff is rainwater that flows over yards, driveways, roadways, rooftops, parking lots, and other surfaces that do not allow the water to soak into the ground. Stormwater runoff moves rapidly to local streams, lakes, wetlands, and rivers, and it can cause flooding, erosion, and pollution of our water bodies.

Stormwater runoff behaves like a train picking up passengers on its way to the local lake—except these “passengers” are often very hazardous to water quality: oil and grease, bacteria, trash, pesticides, pet waste, fertilizers, and more!

How does a rain garden work?



SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

Trailblazer partners with a diverse group of organizations to offer quality training and outstanding events. These groups recognize the value of working with Trailblazer to encourage conservation of our natural resources, help communities address areas of concern, and achieve organizational objectives. As a result of their partnership and sponsorship of Trailblazer activities, communities across northern Louisiana have access to quality training offered by well-known experts who addressed issues identified by communities at no cost to participants.

Thank you for staying with us through these difficult times!

Through Thick and Thin Special thanks to special folks

Some people are always there to help when needed, offer encouragement, and provide resources.

Special thanks go to our special folks:

ENABLE Midstream Partners
Mudd & Holland Consulting Foresters, LLC
Burnham Construction, Dubach, Louisiana
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service



You are a blessing to us.

<p>MUDD & HOLLAND CONSULTING FORESTERS, LLC Tim Holland (318) 286-2802</p>	<p>ENABLE™ MIDSTREAM PARTNERS</p>	<p>USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service</p>	<p><i>Thank You!</i> for your support</p>	<p><i>Friends of Trailblazer</i></p> <p>Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries</p> <p>LSU AgCenter</p> <p>USDA APHIS</p> <p>Claiborne Parish Library</p> <p>Louisiana Forestry Association</p>		
<p>PROGRESSIVE BANK BRIAN D. WADE (318) 729-7089</p>	<p>CANFOR SOUTHERN PINE</p>	<p>ALLSTATE LAND & TIMBER Co., Inc. Haughton, Louisiana 7333 Highway 157, Haughton (318) 949-3672</p>	<p>BUDDY BURNHAM (318) 548-0363 BURNHAM CONSTRUCTION INC. 3490 Highway 67, Dubach, Louisiana 71235</p>		<p>CIRCLE T TRAILERS Jim Towns (318) 422-5700 208 Middle Road . Dubberly, LA</p>	
<p>BIENVILLE PARISH POLICE JURY</p>	<p>BOSSIER PARISH POLICE JURY</p>	<p>CLAIBORNE PARISH POLICE JURY</p>	<p>JACKSON PARISH POLICE JURY</p>	<p>LINCOLN PARISH POLICE JURY</p>	<p>UNION PARISH POLICE JURY</p>	<p>WEBSTER PARISH POLICE JURY</p>

USDA Service Centers Are Open By Phone Appointment Only

Due to current COVID-19 conditions:

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) field offices in Louisiana are open by phone appointment only until further notice, and NRCS staff are available to continue to provide one-on-one, customer-specific advice to producers to help them meet their unique conservation and business goals.

All USDA Service Centers, including those with NRCS field offices, are not currently accessible to customers in person.

Online services are available to customers with an eAuth account, which provides access to the farmers.gov offsite link where producers can view USDA farm loan information and payments and view and track certain USDA program applications and payments. Customers who do not already have an eAuth account can enroll at farmers.gov/sign-in. Online NRCS services are available to customers through the Conservation Client Gateway link which can be found at www.nrcs.usda.gov. Customers can track payments, report completed practices, request conservation assistance and electronically sign documents.

For the most current updates on available services and Service Center contact information, visit farmers.gov/coronavirus.

NRCS staff are working with customers through phone, mail and online communications, and field work continues with appropriate social distancing to help producers with conservation planning and financial assistance through Farm Bill programs.

NRCS Contacts

Bienville Parish:
(318) 377-3950, ext. 3

Bossier Parish:
(318) 872-4949

Claiborne/Webster Parishes:
(318) 377-3950, ext. 3

Jackson/Lincoln Parishes:
(318) 255-3136, ext. 3

Union Parish:
(318) 368-8021

Winn Parish:
(318) 357-8366, ext. 3

Special Thanks to

Chad Kacir

State Conservationist

Amy Robertson

State Public Affairs

Specialist

and the

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Team

for their continued support of Trailblazer RC&D!



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Call before you dig.

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